

The W P F *Alert*



The WPF National Council of Women Award

February 2020



Professor Donna Waters Dean of the Susan Wakil School of Nursing, Chair of WPF Alice Oppen OAM, Awardee **Sara Shishehgar**. Photo courtesy of National Council of Women

The National Council of Women established its scholarship Awards program to encourage women in education. Many fine young women have received this boost of money and morale in final year of graduate study and have gone on to be leaders, the case of WPF in nursing and family planning. Awards were presented at this year's Celebrate Being Australian Luncheon at Parliament House on January 23rd.

This year's WPF Awardee is **Sara Shishehgar**. Sara qualified as a midwife in Iran, and worked in highly demanding health care situations with Afghan immigrants and Iranian families of low socio-economic status. Both groups were deprived of health and education literacy, and cultural barriers preventing talking about sex.

"Over my years of employment, I facilitated several programs for women to promote their knowledge about their feminine body function, reproductive

Continued p2.

From The Overpopulation Project:

Over the past two centuries Earth's human population has doubled, and doubled again, and nearly doubled yet again, increasing from 1 billion to over 7.6 billion people. This huge increase is at the root of grave global environmental problems, from climate change to mass species extinction. With help from a generous grant from the **Global Challenges Foundation**, The Overpopulation Project studies the environmental impacts of overpopulation and explores humane policies to end population growth around the world.

The Observership Program

The Observership Program matches a person who wishes to become a director with a suitable board for a year. WPF has participated and benefitted from the skills, talent and enthusiasm of young people in recent years. We hope that last year's Observer, Georgina Roukis, will continue to be interested in our challenges.

This calendar year we welcome **Anastasia Symons**. Marianne Christmann, Deputy Chair, describes her as having *"exceptional communications and marketing experience in the for-purpose sector.*



She has excellent skills in developing digital strategies and working with volunteers. She is highly values-aligned with the Women's Plans Foundation and her experience is highly relevant to our Board."

The WPF National Council of Women Award Cont'd

health, and methods of family planning. I received grants from several organisations, including the Ministry of Health, the Social Security Organisation, and local hospitals. Besides, communities, such as religious communities, invited me as guest speaker to improve women's health literacy in reproductive ages. Consequently, the rate of unplanned pregnancies dropped significantly according to the reports by the Ministry of Health and the local hospitals. Besides, the women were more aware about their rights to select and use an effective contraceptive method to protect their body from further hurt of unplanned or short space pregnancies."

After coming to Australia, Sara conducted PhD research in asylum seeker women's health at the University of Technology, Sydney. The women attributed their current physical and mental health issues to lack of health literacy. Lack of adequate knowledge about family planning methods in Australia resulted in unwanted pregnancies/miscarriages. Sara was nominated for the UTS Human Right award in 2016.

In 2020 Sara will complete a Master of Nursing degree at the University of Sydney's School of Nursing. We wish her well, and will follow her progress with great hope.

Family Planning 2020 (FP2020)

Began in 2012 to ensure that every woman and girl has the ability to control when and whether she wants to get pregnant and jumpstart progress toward expanding access to high-quality, rights-based contraceptive methods. FP2020's unique role in encouraging and facilitating country commitments to family planning has increased the number of modern contraceptive users by 69 million since 2012.

From Johns Hopkins CCP [Center for Communications Programs]

How WPF is contributing to better family planning in the Asia Pacific region



By Sue Funnell

WPF funds some projects that directly deliver contraception and other projects that lay the groundwork by increasing the demand for contraception and improving the quality and accessibility of family planning services.

Here is some of what was achieved in 2018-19 with the help of WPF funds.

WPF funds projects that increase demand for modern family planning by

- improving family planning knowledge and understanding of girls, women and the broader community and
- lessening cultural barriers to take-up of family planning.

Australian Doctors International in New Ireland Province, PNG

- To overcome myths and misconceptions that have been contributing to slow uptake of modern family planning methods, The Family Planning Officer seconded to ADI from the Provincial Health Authority has developed and trialled a curriculum and materials for training key community leaders as peer educators to better inform their communities.
- Outreach patrols also include Australian Doctors International's Gender Equity Officer. Reproductive rights, teenage pregnancy and gender based violence are amongst the topics that she addresses.

CARE in Timor Leste

- WPF funded CARE in Timor Leste for 2 years until June 2019. By December 2018, thanks to the support of Women's Plans Foundation, CARE had conducted monthly health education sessions, reaching 1,704 people – on track to achieving its target of 2,136 people by the end of the project. Cont'd.

How WPF is contributing to better family planning in the Asia Pacific region

CARE in Timor Leste

- The Safe Motherhood project has made progress in improving gender relations in the community and at the family level using Social Analysis and Social reflection methods to support communities to identify harmful social norms such as unequal power relations and gender based violence, and to find ways to overcome these.
- CARE also conducted leadership training with 76 participants to encourage more women to become leaders in their community, with further plans to increase women's engagement through ongoing advocacy work. The feedback and education of women, boys and girls is vital in building a diverse cross section of leaders in the community.

ChildFund in PNG

- Service providers involved in the provision of sexual and reproductive health and gender based violence prevention and response services visited schools and the two target communities involved in the peer education program for out-of-school youth. The visits by service providers have encouraged students to seek these services, evident in the number of calls coming to the helpline.
- Development, trial and revision of the Sexual Health Rights and Respectful Relationships Education module in the school curriculum has continued with adaptation for out of school youth and peer educators. Teachers who were trained in year 1 of the project delivered the module to year 9-11 students in 7 schools, reaching 3327 boys and 2972 girls.

“Results from the Grade Ten (10) National Exams showed that schools who participated from our program did very well to those school who have not participated. Feedback from the students in

- A four day training program to support student wellbeing was undertaken with 9 National Department of Education staff, 3 members of the school board of management, 4 members of the school representative council, and 3 members from a local partner organisation. Positive feedback was received.

Marie Stopes International in Cambodia

- Some 135 young people participated the “open house” events in five Marie Stopes Clinics. Following on from this, 51 adolescents took up a method of contraception.
- A total of 6,719 young people and garment factory workers were reached with comprehensive information and education on Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) including contraception. The “Let’s Talk about it” campaign is reaching adolescents through mobile chat box, group discussions, open house events, FaceBook and contact centres.
- Some 14 community mobilisers from five provinces were recruited and trained to provide information about Marie Stopes services, contraception and SRH, and contact centres.



Save the Children in Lao

- Introduced adolescent friendly services, and improved the quality of adolescent services, including family planning and access to counselling.

How WPF is contributing to better family planning in the Asia Pacific region

WPF funds projects that improve supply and delivery of modern family planning services by:

- making modern family planning services more available to and accessible by those who want them and
- ensuring that local health care workers have the skills and understandings needed to deliver modern family planning services

Australian Doctors International (ADI) in New Ireland Province, PNG

- ADI contributed to 928 Couple Years Protection (CYPs) across New Ireland Province in the financial year 2018-19 by delivering, via its patrols, modern contraceptive methods in a remote part of PNG. These CYPs would not have occurred in this remote area without ADI's input and the financial support of family planning donors such as WPF.
- Another 12 health care workers successfully completed a two-week intensive nationally recognised training program, presented by Marie Stopes PNG (with ADI participation)
- A family planning officer joined 4 out of 6 of ADI's outreach patrols over this period.
- An additional family planning-focused pilot patrol was also conducted, visiting 13 health facilities in the Namatanai district to provide training on family planning activities, as well as follow up and further support to healthcare workers (HCWs) who had previously participated in in-service training
- ADI has now developed a new, comprehensive

Marie Stopes International in Cambodia

- From 2017 to 2018, 1,052 adolescents accessed their choice of high quality FP and SRH services and information through the Marie Stopes clinics in the five provinces to which WPF was contributing funding. This was an increase of around 20% from the previous period.

ADI CASE STUDY

Arbel, a businessman and landowner from Karu village is one of the participants who attended the workshop in Kimadan. He was nominated as a participant as he is known by his community as someone who cares for their health.



He built a health centre for the village on his own land. It is important to have men involved in the conversation about family planning, as it has an impact on the whole community.

"My name is Arbel. I am from Karu village. I am happy to be in this workshop. It has helped me so now I can go back and help other people in my village. I have gained knowledge and coming to this workshop is a really big thing for me. I will pledge to go back to my community and share this knowledge with everyone, especially the youths and the parents. Thank you."



Community Educators training participant Arbel attending the Kimadan workshop



How WPF is contributing to better family planning in the Asia Pacific region

Marie Stopes International in Cambodia

- From 2017 to 2018, 1,052 adolescents accessed their choice of high quality FP and SRH services and information through the Marie Stopes clinics in the five provinces to which WPF was contributing funding. This was an increase of around 20% from the previous period.
- A total of 58 pharmacists and private clinics were selected as part of the youth referral network. These health care providers referred 73 clients to five Marie Stopes clinics for a range of FP and SRH services, including contraception, STI and gynaecological consultations.

Save the Children in Lao

- Delivered an integrated package of maternal and child health services including family planning at health facilities and during mobile clinic outreach services to remote villages. During August 2018 to January 2019, 10,389 family planning services were provided.
- Delivered skills building including family planning skills to health care providers by expanding a mentoring program to cover all 20 centres in the 3 districts (24 midwives and 15 district mentees) and providing opportunities for midwives to work at the district hospitals for a two to four week intensive internship.
- Improved community practices for reproductive, maternal, newborn, child health care and family planning by providing training and other opportunities to rural ethnic women to build their skills as village volunteers. These skills will enable them to conduct counselling during home visits and to facilitate peer support groups. Positive feedback has been received about this approach to improving community practices.

TRUE LEADERSHIP IS HAPPENING AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

CLOSING KEYNOTE: Damon Gameau

From the Australian Council for International Development [ACFID] Conference in Sydney



It's happening in businesses, in communities, at schools, it's happening with the elderly, and it's happening with millions of children around the world that aren't going to stop. They're on a mission. And that's what gives me the most hope.

Damon Gameau closed off Day One of the Conference with a strong message of hope. The 2040 writer and director explained that the project was born when he was attempting to explain climate change to his young daughter. Rather than speak about the terrifying rate at which this is happening, he sought instead to see what solutions are already underway.

Damon Gameau is an Australian actor and director. His new film, 2040, is an innovative feature documentary that explores what the future would look like by the year 2040 if we embraced the best solutions already available to us to improve our planet. The best solution, he quoted from his book, is the combination of education for girls and contraception.

WATCH THE FILM youtu.be/dfzqXFrEX9M



INVITATION

BRIDGE & MAHJONG 2020

Supporting contraception and reproductive planning as an integral part of overseas aid in the Asia Pacific region

THURSDAY, 2ND APRIL 2020, 10.30 AM FOR 11 AM — 3 PM

12A CRESCENT STREET, HUNTERS HILL, NSW; STREET PARKING

Bring friends to make or join a table for social bridge or mahjong. Enjoy welcome coffee and delicious light lunch with wine. Please bring your own cards, scorers and pencils. Limited number of tables available.

REGISTRATION PROCESS:

Book table - WomensPlansFoundation@bigpond.com; 0428 866 491—Alice Oppen; or 0424274 765—Natalie Brandon

Payment: \$60 per person. Payment on-line at www.WomensPlans.org or to 3 Madeline St Hunters Hill NSW 2110

NAME E:

POSTAL ADDRESS:

OTHERS ON TABLE

NO. PLAYERS @ \$60 TOTAL \$..... DONATION \$..... TOTAL

A tax deductible receipt will be sent for all donations.

VISA MASTERCARD CARD NO. EXP. DATE

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Thank you for your generous support.

Womens Plans Foundation makes grants to Australian registered NGOs for contraception and reproductive planning in the Asia Pacific region. Contraception is the most effective tool in fighting poverty; empowering women; improving health and education of children; giving girls the opportunity for education and careers; and addressing global population and environmental sustainability.

EVENTS

Carols in the Garden

WPF Ambassador Hester Fraser sang some of her most popular songs as a prelude to our Christmas Carols afternoon. Due to poor air quality at the beginning of the fire season, the music was enjoyed indoors, though feasting drifted outside.

The children delighted in singing, ably led by Hester's sister, Hannah Fraser, an opera singer and teacher home from Italy with Alessio, pianist and composer, who also performed.



Hannah Fraser with Hester on piano



The children had their turn to perform for the audience



Feasting in the garden



Hester Fraser



You can now follow up on Instagram. Join today!

Thank you to Trish Procter

Trish Procter has been a lovely member of the Events Committee with, as she says, “for more than 15 years activity, with such lovely friendships and fun along the way”. As she will be travelling for much of the year, with offspring in Copenhagen, she is resigning from the Events Committee, though she promises her support in future. Trish, we thank you for your wonderful service and gift of grace.

BOOKINGS & DONATION FORM

BRIDGE & MAHJONG DAY <https://www.trybooking.com/book/event?eid=602279&> OR CHEQUE/CARD

ATTENDING

& GUESTS... ..

BOOKINGS @ \$60 \$..... TOTAL \$.....

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DIRECT DEBIT: BSB 313 140 ACT 1217 1137 A tax deductible receipt will be sent for all donations.

WPF’s **new Direct Debit** details are: BSB 313 140, Bank Australia, Account 12171137.

Ambassadors: Prof Jill White AM and Hester Fraser

Directors: Carolyn Blanden, Marianne Christmann, Sam Durland, Joanne Epp PhD, Pauline Markwell, Anya Poukchanski, Alice Oppen OAM, Dr. Lina Safro

Observer: Anastasia Symons, **Administration:** Natalie Brandon

Events Committee: Emma Challen, Ros Espie, Jenny Hall, Jeannette Kalek, Margaret Milne, Anni Macdougall, Jane Malcolmson, Pauline Markwell, Leon Muller, Alice Oppen OAM

Development: Pauline Markwell, **Evaluation:** Sue Funnell

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