

WOMEN & POLITICS

Korean Institute for Women & Politics

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KIWP was established in 1989 with the aims of heightening women's political consciousness and expanding political participation. Since that time, KIWP has worked relentlessly to accomplish those objectives, both domestically and in the international arena, through a broad range of programs and undertakings. These have included both academic and more pragmatically oriented workshops and seminars and the publication of materials designed to promote strategies to support women candidates in the electoral process. We pride ourselves on our commitment to these goals and on our resolve to maintain a pro-active stance until such time as genuine equality exists in the political realm.

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● Message from the Chairperson

Green Growth and Women's Power



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Countries of the world, certainly including Korea, are facing a crisis of “resources” and “environmental deterioration.” It would not be an overstatement to contend that the climate change which sparks environmental crisis causes serious distortion of traditional weather patterns, fundamentally shakes the ecological order, and poses what may be the greatest single threat to the sustainable development of the human race.

As there seems to be a global movement toward Low Carbon Green Growth to respond to the serious problem of climate change, Korea is also responding expeditiously and pursuing a green growth strategy through green technology and green industry. Green growth is at the center of a new paradigm of national development. The new orientation toward development reduces environmental pollution of greenhouse gas and in the process creates a new growth engine and expands employment opportunities through the pursuit of green technology and clean energy.

However, the green growth strategy has been pursued within the context of a male-centered social structure focusing on technology development. Women have, unfortunately, remained relatively passive in this regard. Fundamentally, a green growth strategy requires not only technological development but also change in life styles and ways of thinking. In order to pursue green growth suitable for the new paradigm of the 21st Century, it may be necessary for women to assume a central role in seeking social alternatives through ecologically wise thought and transformation to environmentally friendly life styles.

While men led the development strategy that resulted in the destruction of the environment in the 20th Century, women may well become the purveyors of healing the environment in the 21st Century. Women, as a result of their child birthing and rearing experiences have an invaluable expertise in the art of creating and caring for life. With women in charge of environmental education and the use of resources and energy at home, and have

considerable experience in leadership roles in environment issues affecting local societies as well, it seems only reasonable that the sustainable development of society ought to be ushered by women's participation in environment related training and public policy decision making.

In fact, women suffer more adverse impact from climate change than men do. The primary victims of climate change are women who account for the majority of the poor. In the case of the Tsunami in 2005, women accounted for 75% of the deceased and the injured. Death of mothers resulted in infant death, early marriage, human traffic, and sexual violence, causing a vicious cycle where the next generation of women becomes trapped in yet poorer conditions.

In Low Carbon Green Growth, women should be active participants, not only as consumers but also beginning from the planning stage of determining policy strategies up to the stage of detailed implementation of policies. In Korea, women's organizations nationwide gathered together to push for the Low Carbon Green Growth led by women. They passed a resolution on the G-Korea movement. Women who are determined to practice Low Carbon Green Growth in their daily lives are voluntarily carrying out the G -Korea movement under the banner of WE Green.

WE Green Manager operating project is a job creating endeavor and is clearly a project designed to propagate green life culture and give hope to underprivileged women. It creates jobs of WE Green manager, and at the same time, they propagate green life culture and implement the task of seeking out and assisting underprivileged women. WE Green managers help women who want employment in many places in the region to receive vocational training and find employment, and teach them ways to save energy and reduce carbon emission in life, thereby promulgating a green life style. As such, women living in extreme adverse conditions due to economic crisis, violence, handicap, etc., are assisted.

As a part of such a policy, women's organizations in Korea formed WE Green [WE is the combination of Woman and Environment, meaning we lead green growth together) as women implementing G-Korea in order to create the synergy of women and carry out the movement of creating employment, expanding Green Life, and Giving Hope with women as the active participants. G-Korea WE Green that will be supported by the Ministry of Gender Equality will carry out the following activities:

First, it will make great efforts to revive the economy by creating jobs and assisting in the employment of women, starting business, and providing vocational training and information

to expand women's active participation.

Second, it will promote Green Life culture and encourage the practice green consumption culture.

Third, through the Giving Hope movement, it will assume a leadership role in making healthy families and a happy society by practicing what might be called small sharing, or compassion more at an individual and distinct level, with underprivileged women and needy families such as those of North Korean refugee women and elderly women, assisting multicultural families, handicapped women, and supporting women victims of domestic and sexual violence.

WE Green consists of about 10,000 women from about 600 women's organizations and economic organizations under central and local governments. The organization is likely to assume a major role in overcoming today's economic crisis by utilizing women human resources as a part of the Green New Deal Project pursued by the government. In order to effectively manage such a movement, members will be divided into the leader members of 'WE Green Manager' and the active members of 'WE Green Supporters' to carry out activities.

WE Green managers start from short-term community jobs supported by the government as house helpers, historical site guides, and forest keepers, etc., but depending on results, such positions can lead to the development of new occupations for women. These can be "women friendly" occupations where women can develop their potential to the full as they seek out the tasks to be implemented in their daily lives and utilize, as well as energize, the local community. Women whose careers were discontinued due to domestic responsibilities and childrearing should be able to easily access these occupations and build meaningful careers.

It is important to utilize women human resources to invigorate a new growth engine and create new jobs through the green growth currently pursued by the government. It appears as though the role of women is more important in overcoming the economic crisis through green growth than through traditional growth. So far, the role of women in the environmental movement can be characterized mainly as individual activities at the volunteer activities level, and there has been a shortage of professional and political activities such as active monitoring and presentation of recommendations. In order for women to enjoy fair benefit regarding the solution of this problem, women should actively participate in the decision making process.

● KIWP Major Activities of 2010

○ Grand Debate to Commemorate March. 8th : International Women's Day



A Grand Debate was held on March 8, 2010 (Monday) sponsored by the Korean National Council of Women to commemorate "3.8 International Women's Day." The debate took place in the International Conference Room on the 20th Floor of the Press Center in Seoul.

The theme "Women! Beijing + 15," was engaged by some 500 prominent leaders, including the Minister of Gender Equality and Family, Dr. Hee-Young Baek; Dr. Tae-Hyun Kim, president of the Korean Women's Development Institute; and Representative Mong-Joon Chung of the Grand National Party. Participants reviewed achievements in the area of gender equality since the Fourth World Conference of Women held in Beijing in 1995. In addition, they discussed contemporary and future directions for women's policies and the women's movement in general. Likewise, possible solutions to thorny problems relevant to women were examined and discussed.

○ Women's Sorority for the Equal Number of Men and Women in 2010 Local Election



Ahead of the 5th local election, KIWP actively engaged in realizing the gender equality in local politics through leading nationwide women networks as the operating member of committee in the Unification of Women's sorority.

○ Held an official conference on "Evaluation of 6.2 Local Election" (joint project with the Unification of Women's Sorority for the Equal Number of Men and Women in 2010 Local Election)



"Evaluation of Local Election of 2nd June, 2010" was held by "Pan-women League for equal gender representation in the 2010 local elections" at Girl Scouts Korea 10th Floor on June 23, 2010. About 100 leaders from women's organizations participated. In 2nd June local election, there were roughly two times the number of women candidates compared to 2006. The proportion of women elected accounted for 14.8% in broad districts and 21.6% in basic districts, greatly expanding women's political participation.

○ Parallel event with the 54th UNCSW



KIWP sent representatives to the 54th UNCSW held with the theme of "15-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action(1995) and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly(2000)" at the UN Headquarters in New York from February 26 to March 3, 2010. They held an NGO Forum on the theme "Climate Change and the Role of Women." This was conducted on the 10th

Floor of the UN Church Center (777 UN Plaza) on March 2, and resulted in general sentiment that in the future Korea will play a key leadership role in dealing with women's issues in the Asian region.

● **Future Activities in 2011**

○ **Dispatch representatives to the 55th UNCSW and hold a Parallel event**

KIWP plans to send representatives to the 55th UNCSW to be held with the theme of "Access and participation of women and girls in education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women's equal access to full employment and decent work" at the UN Headquarters in New York from February 22 and March 4, 2011.

○ **Participate in the Grand Debate to commemorate the Centennial of International Women's Day**

KIWP plans to participate in the Grand Debate to commemorate the Centennial of International Women's Day at the Grand Auditorium on the second floor of the National Assembly Constitution Memorial Hall on March 8, 2011, which is held by Korean National Council of Women.

○ **Participate in the 4th Girl's Day Event**

In order to commemorate the 4th Girl's Day, the Institute will participate in the Ceremony held at Youido Park Culture Plaza on April 23, 2011. KIWP is the organization which proclaimed Girls' Day, led by the Girl Scouts of Korea. A primary objective of Girls' Day is further the interest of girls, young women, and the population at large in empowering girls and young women.

○ **Participate in the 2011 ICW Executive Committee Meeting**

Chairperson of the KIWP, Jung-Sook Kim, will participate in the '2011 ICW Executive Committee Meeting' held in Barcelona, Spain from May 29 to May 31. The meeting will reconfirm the Plan of Action and goals for 'Progress for Women is Progress for All' which is the 3-year theme adopted at the ICW General Assembly in 2009.

○ **Debates to commemorate the 22th anniversary of KIWP**

KIWP will hold a debate to commemorate its 22th anniversary at the Press Center in October, 2011. Directors, advisors, and members of KIWP as well as general public will

participate. The main theme of debate will be "Elections in Korea and Change in Politics".

○ Call for articles on Women's Policy Development

KIWP will call for research articles on women's agenda and women's policy as a whole by both undergraduate and graduate students nationwide, in order to review women-related issues perceived by students and the general public alike.

○ Publish Korean and English Newsletter in regular basis

Join us!

The Korean Institute for Women & Politics strives to raise women's political consciousness and at the same time provide an environment enabling women's political empowerment. We welcome members who wish to contribute to our efforts to promote women in politics. For more information, please contact us.

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NGO in SPECIAL consultative status with the UN ECOSOC

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