

January 02, 2019

Second Issue of the WAMA Newsletter

by Women in Action on Mining in Asia



Wishing the entire WAMA family a very happy new year. As we get motivated to renew and strengthen our work and movement in 2019, let us also relive some moments from the action- packed year that has been 2018. And so, we present to you the second issue of our newsletter, which summarises the events from the last three months, i.e October- December 2018.

LOCAL UPDATES

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1. Food not Mines: Food (UN) Fair in Philippines (October 2018)



On 12th October 2018, a food fair was organised at the LILAK office in which women from mining affected communities brought and prepared food products that are directly affected by mining. Once everyone tasted the food they made, these women also led a discussion on how mining impacts their food security, with crops becoming scarce, having a further impact on the livelihoods of women food producers.

2. National Skill Share Workshop on 'Women, Natural Resources and Livelihoods' in Nandurbar, Maharashtra (October 2018)



On 27th-28th October, a two-day workshop was held in Nandurbar, Maharashtra for the purpose of follow up and strategy sharing amongst women groups working in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra. On the first day, each group gave an overview of the situation of mining in their area, the impacts on the communities, and the work they have been involved in. A field visit was conducted to the banks of the Tapti river, where the participants got to see and understand the process of sand mining. On the second day, the participants shared their observations on the field visit. After which, a final session was held on deciding possible interventions and strategies on a local level. Strengthening of local campaigns and developing alternative livelihood options for women were some of the key outputs of the workshop and a planning was done for follow up local interventions and future events.

3. Workshop on 'Forest Rights and Economic Empowerment of Women' in Raipur, Chhattisgarh (November 2018)



As a follow up to the regional strategy meeting in Indonesia, a day long workshop was organised by Adivasi Samata Manch on 1st November 2018 in Raipur, Chhattisgarh. The focus of the workshop was to link the issues of women's rights to the context of mining, national parks and infrastructure related violations, specifically with regards to the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG), 'Baiga' community. Discussions were also held on networking on women's leadership building in the context of adivasi women and natural resource rights.



As a follow up to the national workshop in Nandurbar , a short scoping study was conducted with the women mine workers and silicosis affected widows, living and working in and around the sandstone mines near Jodhpur, many of which are illegal. The workers in the mines here are paid a vey less amount and working in harsh conditions without any protective gear. Most of the workers here have contracted silicosis, an incurable lung disease caused due to inhalation of silica dust that is often found in stone mines. This has led to women either suffering from silicosis or women becoming widows due to losing their husbands to silicosis, and thus managing the entire family on their own. There is no escape from the silicosis trap in the area, as women here have no other livelihood activity except for mining. Thus the women there expressed interest for alternative livelihoods, so that no woman in their village has to go back to mining, and so that they could also earn a stable income to support their family.

5. Martsang Mamayan par sa Karaptang Pantao: United People's March for Human Rights (December 2018)



On the 70th Anniversary of UDHR Lilak and the occasion of World Human Rights Day, Lilak and other groups of indigenous women participated in this march against the assault on human rights and democracy in Philippines and globally. The march saw a large gathering of human rights defenders, workers, advocates, activists and community-sectoral partners on the streets, making their demands heard loud and clear.

6. Sa Pusodng Dusa: Women Bear the Impacts of Mining (December 2018)



This was a conference organised by the SOS Yamang Bayan Network in Quezon City, Philippines on December 14th 2018, to discuss the Alternative Minerals Management Bill (AMMB), being pushed by communities as a better alternative to the Philippines Mining Bill, with regards to regulation of the mining industry and addressing issues of women in mining affected communities. The panelists for this discussion were Malou Verano, Teresa De la Cruz and Senator Risa Hontiveroes.

Malou, a community leader from Aroroy, discussed how the impact of mining on their rivers and seas, affects the health, livelihoods and food of the communities, and specially women, who are the food providers and the ones taking care of the families. She also talked about how mining is destroying family units in the area, as women are forced to leave their communities to look for work in order to provide food and other needs of their children.

Teresa, an indigenous woman from the Aeta Tribe in Zambales shared how mining has destroyed their natural refrigerator and pharmacies by killing their forests, all in the name of profit. She added that women carry most of the burden when food is scarce in the community.

Adding to the narratives of the community leaders, Senator Risa Hontiveroes, one of the authors of the AMMB and a staunch women's advocate, made a call to urge the President Duterte to pass the bill as she stated that " it gives the communities the right to refuse large scale mining in their areas when it threatens their sources of income and food".

7. District Level Consultation on Children in Mining Area, Illegal Mining, District Mineral Fund (DMF) , Karnataka, India (December 2018)



Source: The Hindu

A district level consultation was conducted in Bellary district of Karnataka by Samata and Mines, Minerals and People (mm&P) on 16th December 2018, as a part of a national campaign being organised by mm&P towards creating awareness among

communities, with funds collected from royalties paid by mining companies. Already a lot of money has been collected in the DMF in Karnataka, highest amount of which is in Bellary, a region that has been plundered by illegal mining. However, while the money has been sanctioned for development projects, there has been no on ground implementation or participation by community in planning and decision making of these projects. In light of this, Ashok Shrimali, secretary of mm&P stated that " Planning process should start from the grass-roots level, after mapping the issues covering various aspects that would be for the benefit of the posterity."

8. District Level Consultation on Children in Mining Area, Illegal Mining and District Mineral Fund (DMF), Goa, India (December 2018)



Source: Counterview

Samata and Mines, Minerals and People (mm&P) organised a District Level Consultation on Children in Mining Area, Illegal Mining, District Mineral Fund (DMF) in collaboration with SETU at Sattari district, Goa on 22nd December 2018. Around 62 people were in attendance, including local government representatives, community members from surrounding villages, Civil Society Organisations, Women's Groups and Self-Help Groups (SHGs). Discussions were held on overview of mining throughout the country, stages of mining, illegal mining, Samaata Judgement, situation of children in mining areas, and consequences on their health and education. The community people of Sonshi village shared how around 70 children in their village are unable to go to school as after the shutdown of mining operations in the area, as the companies stopped providing transport to the children and the roads are also inaccessible now, due to mining dumps placed near villages. Ashok Shrimali, secretary of mm&P, stated that there has not only been under-utilisation of funds in Goa, but the amount spent has also not benefitted mining

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

1. Thematic Social Forum on Mining & The Extractive Economy (November 2018)



Source: <https://www.thematicsocialforum.org/gallery/>

Over 200 participants from more than 50 countries, gathered for the first Thematic Social Forum, organised by Trust for Community Outreach and Education (TCOE) and Womin, in Johannesburg, South Africa from the 12th-15th November 2018. The participants included men and women from mining-affected communities, trade unions, people's organisations, the women's movement, LGBTI people, faith-based groups, indigenous peoples, workers, small scale farmers, fisher folk, youth, support groups and academics who came together to "exchange experiences and ideas, consolidate a broad movement of resistance, to build common struggles for solidarity, to guarantee the integrity of nature and to ensure a better world for present and future generations."

The four day long conference was divided into plenary sessions, thematic reflection groups and self-organised activities by the participants. LILAK,NTFP-EP Asia, Rural Women Assembly & JATAM co-organised a session on 'Extractivism, Women, Land, Food and Water in East Kalimantan', in which Dewi Sartika, a community leader from East Kalimantan and member of the Farmer's Working group, spoke on experiences of coal extractivism there.

The focus of the discussions was on the impact of mining on local communities, especially women, and the groups taking inspiration from the women's movement

headquarters of AngloGold Ashanti, a mining firm infamous for human rights violations, especially in the Democratic Republic of Congo. At the end of the conference, a [Declaration](#) was adopted, as well as an [Action Plan](#), proposing a common strategy of struggle.

2. United Nations Business and Human Rights Forum, Geneva (November 2018)



This year, members of WAMA participated and conducted sessions at the 7th edition of the UN Forum on Business and Human Rights, which witnessed the coming together of numerous civil society representatives, activists, human rights defenders, global corporations and government to explore and discuss initiatives concerning the role of business towards addressing human rights violations. The focus of this year's forum was on "diligence" within Pillar II of the [UNGP](#), which addresses the need for states and business to embrace the corporate responsibility to respect human rights by conducting human rights due diligence.

Sadhana Meena, woman human rights defender from Rajasthan, India was one of the panelists in the opening session 'Voices from the Ground, where she spoke on the environmental violations by Vedanta in zinc mines of Zawar in Udaipur, and its subsequent impact on the women of the community. She also later raised a very important question in another session, to Nicholas Cotts, Vice President of Sustainability and External Relations at Newmont Mining Corporation. She asked him that "if indigenous women say no to mining, are you willing to turn around and leave?".

Bhanumathi Kalluri from Dhaatri Trust, conducted a session on 'Gender, corporate

the need to follow due diligence measures, not only after the closure of a mining project, but also before mining begins, and while it is ongoing.

Cheryl Polutan from LILAK, asked a question to Indonesian deputy minister of energy, in a session on 'Trends and Challenges in promoting business respect for human rights in Asia', about the status of the cases regarding the complaints filed by mothers on children's deaths in the coal mine pits of East Kalimantan, and the planned action by the government on this issue.

Gender was a key focus of the discussions held, with gender cafes organised to discuss specific gender-related issues in the context of corporate impunity and human rights violations; after which the members present were requested send submissions on gender issues they are working on to the UN Working Group.

[Report of the Gender Roundtable on Trade and Investment](#)

3. GAGGA Meeting, Amsterdam



Members of WAMA participated in the mid-term review meeting of the Global Alliance for Green and Gender Action at Amsterdam from December 10th to 13th, 2018.

CASE STUDIES

1. [Polluted Water, Parched Lives: Indigenous Women and the Right to Water at Zawar Mines, Udaipur](#)
2. [Double Brunt of Violence: Women in the Sandstone Mines of Jodhpur](#)

LATEST NEWS AND RESEARCH

1. Trapped Mine Labourers in Meghalaya's Coal Mines
2. Interview of Agnes Kharsiing, the Woman Meghalaya's Coal Mafia Tried to Silence
3. Mine closures and the Issue of Livelihood
4. Government of India set to bypass tribal rights to fast-track mining projects
5. National Green Tribunal orders for re-opening of Vedanta's copper plant in Tamil Nadu, India
6. Mining activists in Philippines being targeted for defending human rights
7. People's Response to Mining Plunder in Philippines
8. Deadly Coal Series: Extractive Oligarchy and the Declining Quality of People's Life (Report by JATAM)
9. Indonesia: Hearing Women's voices in Managing Natural Resources
10. Government should protect activists of JATAM
11. Coal casts a shadow over COP 24 climate conference in Poland
12. Mercury exposure faced by women in small island states