

# Annual Report



**HUAIROU COMMISSION**  
*Women, Homes & Community*

# Annual Report 2011



**HUIROU COMMISSION**  
*Women, Homes & Community*

Copyright © 2013 Huirou Commission: Women, Homes & Community

Reproduction of this publication for educational or other non-commercial purpose is authorized without prior written permission from the copyright holder provided the source is fully acknowledged.

Reproduction of this publication for resale or other commercial purposes is prohibited without prior written permission of the copyright holder.

Citation: Huirou Commission. 2013. Annual Report 2011.  
New York, USA: The Huirou Commission.

Compiled & Edited by: Andrea Garcia, Katie Gillett, Cathy Holt Toledo

Design & Layout by: Katie Gillett and Sam Richardson

Contributions from: Katia Araujo, Becca Asaki, Dahlia Goldenberg, Suranjana Gupta, Kim-Jenna Jurriaans, Jan Peterson, Carolina Pinheiro, Sandy Schilen, Birte Scholz and Sarah Silliman

Cover photos (clockwise from top): Community mapping with GROOTS Peru; Slum Women's Initiative for Development (SWID) celebrates International Rural Women's Day; grassroots women leaders Violet Shivutse and Marling Haydée Rodriguez speak to Michelle Bachelet; Emily Tjale of the South Africa Home-Based Care Alliance.

Available from: **Huirou Commission: Women, Homes & Community**  
[www.huirou.org](http://www.huirou.org)

# Introductory Statement From our Chair

Dear Friends and Partners,

**2011**, more than any year in recent history, showcased the transformative power of collective organizing in affecting community-driven change across the world. This power is largely driven by organized groups of women living and working in poor communities: grassroots women. In 2011, grassroots women addressed local needs and crises- emanating from climate change, structural inequality, corruption and disease- with concrete, innovative solutions. The effectiveness of these solutions, and the ability of other groups to learn from them, is rooted in building active, informed networks that communicate with each other across barriers and borders. Their progress is not merely brought about through protest, but by building partnerships, and insisting on seats at the negotiating table where decisions that affect their communities are made.



**“Development means women have access to resources and political space and the capacity to influence both, rather than being treated as recipients of aid.”**

The Huairou Commission has supported such grassroots women-led organizing efforts since its establishment during the World Women’s Conference in Beijing in 1995. At that time, the Huairou Commission had a vision for a global stage for grassroots women; 2011 was a culmination of the years of work that have made this vision a tangible reality. We have evolved from a political environment in which people accept the presence of grassroots women at global conferences, to one in which grassroots women host their own events, are invited to participate on high-level panels, and function as partners with established global development agencies.

Grassroots women have proven that they are experts in their own right. They know best how development is working and not working, and what their communities need. As we have advocated since the beginning, true inclusion can only happen through empowerment. Development means women have access to resources and political space and the capacity to influence both, rather than being treated as recipients of aid.

In 2011, we gained incredible momentum in our collaboration with the Gender Equality Action Reform (GEAR), as the only grassroots group participating in the coalition to advise in the creation of UN Women, the agency focusing on gender equality and women’s empowerment. Because women in poor and marginalized areas are directly affected by the work of UN Women, it was important for our network to have a voice in shaping the future of the agency’s operation. This collaboration set a new precedent for inclusion, as grassroots women have since been invited into other United Nations and institutional spaces. For instance, the Grassroots Speak Out we hosted during 2011’s Commission on the Status of Women paved the way for the appointment of grassroots women leaders to the UN Women Global Civil Society Advisory Group in 2012, where they have a say in global policymaking.

Before, grassroots women were treated as subjects who had little choice but to passively accept development plans imposed upon them from foreign organizations. There is still much work to be done, but recognition of the direct impact of women’s organizing on the ground and their inclusion in planning and implementation of development programs is a vital step forward in ensuring that their agendas are prioritized on the global stage.

Thank you for your continued support!

Jan Peterson  
Chair, Huairou Commission



# Mission

The Huairou Commission develops strategic partnerships and linkages among grassroots women's organizations, advancing their capacity to collectively influence political spaces on behalf of their communities and enhance their sustainable, resilient community development practices.

# Where We Work

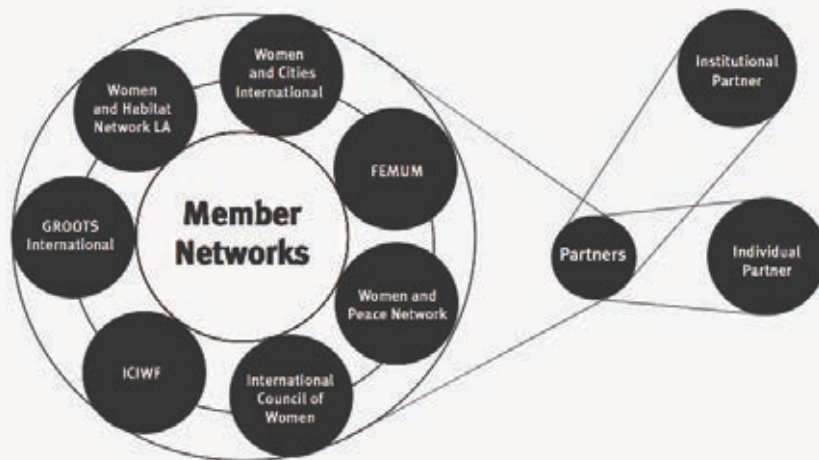
The Huairou Commission supports and partners with women's organizations in the following countries:



- |             |                |           |                  |              |          |
|-------------|----------------|-----------|------------------|--------------|----------|
| Afghanistan | Canada         | Ghana     | Netherlands      | Russia       | Uganda   |
| Argentina   | Chile          | Guatemala | Mexico           | Rwanda       | USA      |
| Bangladesh  | Colombia       | Honduras  | Nicaragua        | Slovakia     | Zambia   |
| Benin       | Costa Rica     | India     | Nigeria          | South Africa | Zimbabwe |
| Bolivia     | Czech Republic | Indonesia | Pakistan         | South Korea  |          |
| Brazil      | Ecuador        | Jamaica   | Papua New Guinea | Sri Lanka    |          |
| Burundi     | El Salvador    | Kenya     | Paraguay         | Tanzania     |          |
| Cambodia    | Ethiopia       | Malawi    | Peru             | Thailand     |          |
| Cameroon    | Germany        | Nepal     | Philippines      | Turkey       |          |

# structure & campaigns

Our institutional and individual partners share our political vision and commit to ongoing work with the Huairou Commission. We focus on establishing and modeling transformative partnerships between grassroots women and professionals. The Huairou Commission holds consultative status with the United Nations and actively participates in UN conferences and deliberations.



We organize through our campaigns: **AIDS, Governance, Community Resilience and Land & Housing.**

These Campaigns have risen from the most pressing priorities of grassroots women's organizations working to improve their communities, and have come out of work nurtured by our Member Networks. Campaign members are grassroots groups and NGOs who work directly in local communities. While continuing to work holistically on diverse issues in their communities, grassroots women's organizations and partners use thematic Campaigns as collective organizing spaces to pilot and exchange practices within and across borders and undertake advocacy on key issues for policy change.

# Financial Report 2011

Condensed Statement of Activities for the Year January 1 to December 31, 2011

All figures are presented in U.S. Dollars (\$USD)

## OPERATING REVENUES

### Public Support & Revenue

Grants & Contracts <sup>1</sup>	\$1,982,284
Individual Contributions	25,037
Total Public Support	2,007,321
Interest & Dividends	1,028

**TOTAL Operating Revenues \$2,008,349**

## OPERATING EXPENSES

### Program Services

Program Coordination	474,058
Field Organizing & Demonstration Projects	448,753
Travel, Documentation & Other Activities	314,943
Policy Advocacy & Alliance Building	186,133
Peer Learning	82,128

**Total Program Services \$1,506,015**

### Supporting Services

Management & General	219,618
Fundraising <sup>2</sup>	175,695

**Total Supporting Services 395,313**

**TOTAL Operating Expenses \$1,901,328**

Change in Net Assets <sup>3</sup> 107,021

**Net Assets Beginning of Year 456,448**

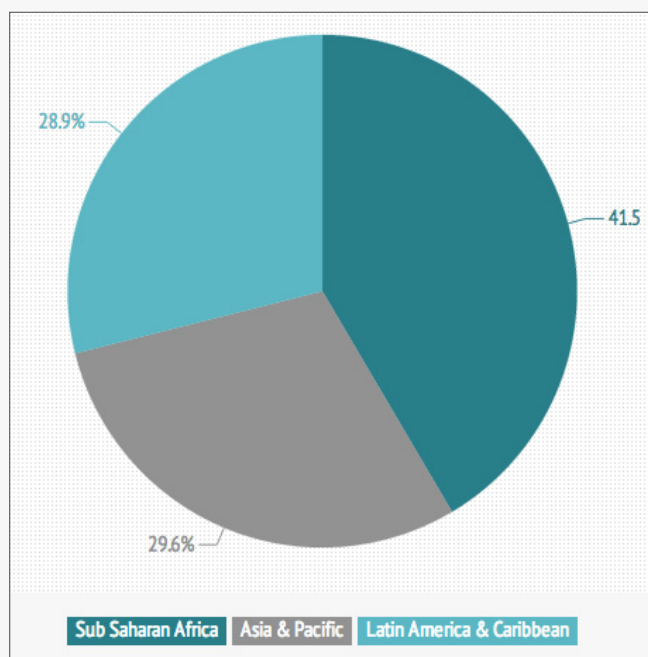
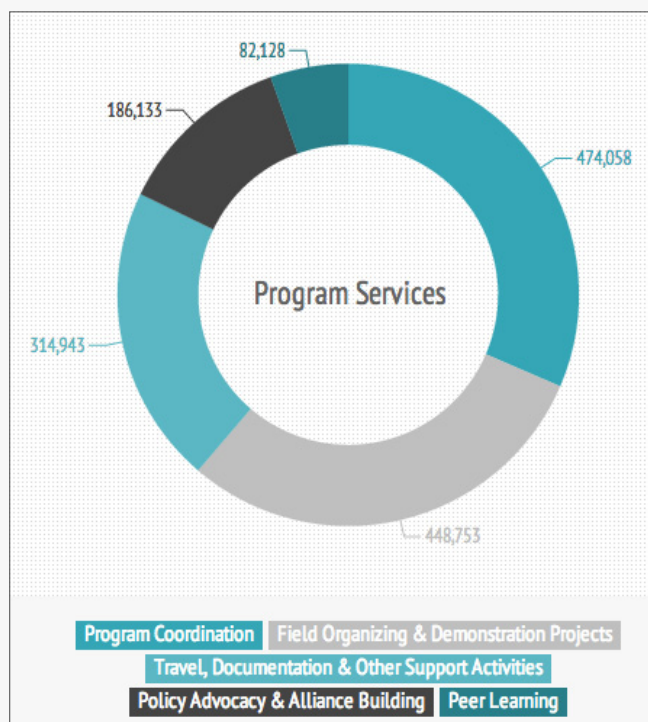
**Net Assets End of Year <sup>4</sup> \$563,469**

<sup>1</sup> 2011 donor support in order of highest contributor: Norwegian Agency for Development Corporation (NORAD); Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs MDG3 Fund; Anonymous Donor; Cordaid; United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat); Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs; United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Relief (UNISDR) and others.

<sup>2</sup> Over 85% of this cost category is derived from the agency assigning a portion of senior staff and consultant time devoted to proposal writing, initiating and maintaining donor and institutional relationships and convening small private fundraisers to this category. Staff and member travel to initiate and maintain donor relationships (national-global) as well as communication/production/dissemination costs related to preparing and circulating donor briefs, grant proposals and soliciting donations are also included here.

<sup>3</sup> Includes \$3,521 of unrestricted assets.

<sup>4</sup> Year end 2011 assets of \$563,469 USD include temporary restricted funds of \$150,000 (earmarked for 2012) and grant receivables of \$99,941 USD, or 44% of the total fund balance. Additionally, over 25% of Huairou's total public grants and contracts were received in the last two months of 2011, accounting for the rise in cash on hand.



Complete financial statements, audited by Vargas & Ghigliotti, are available on [www.huairou.org](http://www.huairou.org)



**ASIA-PACIFIC REGION**

LOCAL ACTION	PARTNER
1. WOMEN RECOGNIZED AS POLITICAL ACTORS • SUPPORT ♀ LEADERS PERSONALLY + ORGANIZATIONALLY • BUILD PARTNERSHIPS B/W ♀ INSIDE + OUTSIDE FORMAL POL. SPACES.	• LOCAL + NATIONAL GOVT • POLITICAL PARTIES • CHURCH/REL. LEADERS
2. GRASSROOTS ♀ TRAIN, TEACH, ORIENT THEIR PEERS + GOVT OFFICIALS	LOCAL NGOs / CAPWIP LOCAL GOVT UNIVERSITIES, NATIONAL COMMISSION ON WOMEN, RELEVANT MINISTRY (GENDER/WOMEN)
3. ESTABLISH POLITICAL SUPPORT FROM NATIONAL GOVT. [THRU GLOBAL CONFERENCE: GLOBAL MINISTERS' CAUCUS]	GLOBAL: UN WOMEN UN Habitat / UNISDR UN Democracy Fund ? SACLC
4. PARTNER W/ PVT. SECTOR	? SACLC

**BASIC AGREEMENTS**

- EQUAL TIME
- CAREFUL LISTENING
- I STATEMENTS (speak from your own experience)
- NO PUTDOWNS (self or others)
- TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF
- NO COMPLAINING
- RECOMMENDATIONS
- KEEP TO THE POINT



**At the Global Summit on Grassroots Women’s Leadership and Governance, fifty women representing organized groups from 22 countries from Latin America, Africa, Asia and Europe came together to share lessons, outcomes and challenges from their work empowering women over the past two and a half years.**



# Local Activities for Women's Leadership & Governance



Empowered women act as informed participants in development processes instead of recipients of government services. They articulate their work from a position of strength and are recognized by their community and government authorities as social actors.

Over the past three years, the Huairou Commission's Governance Campaign has invested over \$1 million in grassroots women's organizing and empowerment across five continents.

Below are highlights of women's local solutions to challenges they encounter and efforts to influence governance processes.

## GROOTS Kenya: Bridging the Gap between Grassroots and Elected Women

**Challenge:** Quotas for female representation, including the 2010 reform to Kenyan constitution mandating at least one third of political positions must be occupied by women, have an overall positive effect on women's participation in formal decision making structures. Still, a lack of structural change and a major gap in power relations meant grassroots women still lacked access to information and tools to analyze power structures, and still faced discrimination in running for elections.

**Grassroots solution:** Using the MDG 3 Initiative to seed their work, GROOTS Kenya developed the "Champions for Transformative Leadership" project which:

- Strengthened the capacity of organized groups of women to prepare them for the 2012 general elections in Kenya.
- Educated women on their new constitutional rights and bridged the gap between women in positions of formal leadership and grassroots women leaders.

Grassroots women provide feedback and consult for priority areas with larger groups of women and their own peers in leadership, significantly increasing the quality of decision-making. Consequently, they have been given larger responsibilities inside the committees they are serving.

## Grassroots Sisterhood Foundation (GSF), Ghana: Creating Political Space for Women

**Challenge:** Expanding on their 2010 work in 2011, Grassroots Sisterhood Foundation addressed the issue of low levels of representation of traditional women leaders.

**Grassroots solution:** In 2011, they created 'Women for Parliament in 2012' campaign, in which they advocated for Gender Desk Officers and introduced a dialogue on the women's need to secure land. These actions were championed by the Chief of Gundogu and were complemented with a platform that was established to advocate for women's inclusion in land-related talks. These collaborations set a new local precedent for creating spaces for women in decision-making, especially with the House of Chiefs, essentially transcending deeply embedded cultural gender barriers.

## Swayam Shikshan Prayog (SSP), India: Self Education for Empowerment

**Challenge:** increase the quality and access to services in their communities, particularly health care, using their self-education for empowerment approach.

**Grassroots Solution:** SSP trained 300 Community Health Workers to monitor local health providers, and hold them accountable for delivering high-quality services to traditionally underserved constituencies. In addition, SSP promoted the formation of Health Governance Groups, composed of women advocating for improved community health in connection with access to clean water and sanitation. SSP also generated awareness about HIV/AIDS and trained women to spread this knowledge, along with family planning, prevention of vertical transmission, and family support services.



# Global Summit on Grassroots Women's Leadership & Governance



Haydee Rodriguez (Union of Coops Las Brumas, Nicaragua), Carmen Sanchez (GROOTS Peru), Nereide Segala (Redes Pintadas, Brazil), and Relinda Sosa (GROOTS Peru) exchange strategies for engaging their governments during the Global Summit, March 3, 2011.



Esupat Ngulupa (MWEDO, Tanzania) speaks at the Global Summit on Grassroots Women's Leadership, New York.

The Global Summit on Grassroots Women's Leadership and Governance strengthened grassroots women's advocacy with each other, with international policy makers and with the Huairou Commission in its efforts to empower women to be recognized as change agents in development processes. Representatives from international agencies, governments and academia learned about grassroots women's problems and strategies, and brainstormed approaches to support their leadership and empowerment work. As a result Huairou Commission secured a partnership with UNDP to conduct action research on women and corruption.

The Summit was co-sponsored by UNDP and the Dutch Foreign Ministry MDG3 Fund.

## Emerging Trends, Challenges & Opportunities Impacting Women's Role in Governance

### Affirmative action for women

Quotas are still the best way to foster women's political participation but do not necessarily change structures of power. Collective organizing and transformative leadership building are the core strategies to increase, sustain and improve women's leadership.

### Decentralization

Decentralization opens participatory opportunities, while at the same time it creates a complex set of policies, instances and laws. Improving participation in decentralized governance structures requires capacity building for grassroots women to understand and analyze the possibilities of real participation.

### Increasing global recognition of grassroots women as key partners in poverty reduction & women's empowerment

Recognizing that investing in grassroots women is key to fostering sustainable development is not enough. Government authorities, researchers and international agencies must engage grassroots women's expertise in mapping problems and designing solutions in a new model of partnership.

### Sustainable development strategies require accountability to grassroots women

Funding mechanisms that sustain grassroots women's organizing, leadership and development initiatives are necessary for grassroots women to hold governments accountable and improve national frameworks according to international agendas.



# Grassroots Speakout on UN Women: The Time for Inclusion is Now



Violet Shivutse, Haydee Rodriguez, Michelle Bachelet at the Grassroots Speakout

**“I know women are strong - really strong and powerful. But many times, they are invisible and we need to help women to become visible.”**

-Michelle Bachelet, Grassroots Speakout, March 2011

On March 2, grassroots women leaders from around the world voiced their key recommendations and experiences to Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women, Dr. Michelle Bachelet, and other representatives of UN Women and governments.

A supportive audience of leaders of the global women's movement and gender advocates filled the room beyond capacity. Grassroots women leaders, each representing constituencies of hundreds, thousands or tens of thousands of organized women, presented recommendations to UN Women based on their local experience in implementing development work.

The women demonstrated that they are highly organized on a large scale locally and nationally, and that they are linked up globally through the Huairou Commission, the Feminist Task Force, the Association of Women's Rights in Development (AWID) and the Gender Equality Architecture Reform (GEAR) Campaign.

Different from feminist organizations and NGOs, these grassroots women comprised community leaders from grassroots organizations who are working to solve day to day problems related to human settlements, land rights, livelihoods, resilience to disasters and climate change, food security, safer cities, and informal care work, women's health and HIV/AIDS, among other issues, in their own communities. Among them are leaders of the movement of popular kitchens in Peru, leaders of federations of self-help savings and credit cooperatives in India and women fighting for land rights at the community level across Africa. Their work on economic security and human settlements are issues not yet being fully addressed in UN Women's agenda or vision.

For too long, grassroots women have been excluded from agenda-setting, planning and consultations in the UN's gender architecture, from the national offices to the UN headquarters. The Grassroots Women's Speakout delivered an explicit message: the time for inclusion is now.

## Introduction by Violet Shivutse, GROOTS Kenya

“There is something happening in the lives of women in the UN. A new UN Women has been formed, which is really important for us as women at this moment in our lives. Today the organizations came together that have organized so that grassroots women will have an opportunity to speak to this new UN when it's still forming and still looking for strategies and ideas, suggestions on how best it will serve women.”



**Josephine Castillo, Organizer, DAMPA Federation, Philippines**

"We work on land and housing, building resilience, health, getting women into governance processes, and organizing savings and credit cooperatives. Grassroots women in my network mobilize and manage savings which helps in terms of resilience, to secure livelihoods, to take care of health needs, education and housing. But many women are still not economically stable. Microfinance is not the answer either, because it carries high interest rates and often puts an added burden on women."



**Recommendation:** UN Women should start a grassroots women's fund to support our grassroots women's housing alternatives initiatives and livelihood projects.



**Haydee Rodriguez, Farmer and President of Union of Cooperatives, Las Brumas, Nicaragua**

"We, the women producers, hold up the economies of our countries, and we have trained our local governments on the Hyogo Framework for Action. Why? Because we are women experts. In the Central American team, we have an agreement with the National Secretary of Food Security in Guatemala to train 133 municipalities on resiliency and food security...We need UN Women to help with the adoption of these practices and their replication in other countries."

**Recommendation:** HC members and partners and UN Women should work together, to hold preparatory expert meeting of rural women producers (farmers), prior to next year's Commission on the Status of Women on rural women.

**Summary of Michelle Bachelet's Responses:**

- Grassroots women should be represented on the UN Women advisory boards.
- There is a need on the part of UN Women to reach grassroots women in rural and urban areas
- It's a great idea for women living and working in rural areas to come share with us before the UN CSW next year. UN Women can organize and try to find funding for the pre-meeting. We have to think on how it would be best to do this regionally so that we get the issues relevant in each region.
- Ms. Bachelet to speak with Dr. Clos, Executive Director of UN Habitat to discuss how to get funds to the grassroots, [regarding housing issues]
- Grassroots women should speak directly to country offices and organize their approach so as to have representation to these country offices.
- Through the support and representation of Ms. Christine Arab, UN Women's officer in charge of the Strategic Plan, recommendations from the Speakour and subsequent input by women's organizations to inform the Strategic Plan can be forwarded to Ms. Bachelet's office.



**"My main objective is to empower women. We will never have equal rights for women if they are not empowered. We need to empower them politically, so that grassroots leadership is heard."**



# Making Cities Safer with and for Women and Girls

The Huairou Commission joined lead partner UN-Habitat in the **Safer Cities program: Designing Safe Cities with Women and Girls**. This program aims to create safer neighborhoods for women and children, with an overall goal of improving their quality of life over five years in five different cities: Cairo, Kigali, New Delhi, Quito and Port Moresby. Setting a new precedent, grassroots girls and women were included in all stages of the safe cities programming, implementation and ongoing dialogues with national and global partners. Their experiences encompassed a spectrum of community-based approaches for addressing violence against women and girls – specifically, collaborating with local authorities for a National Action Plan, establishing women's desks at local police stations, involvement in safe home construction in disaster-prone areas, and community Watchdog Groups that focus on evictions of women and property-grabbing.



Jhocas Castillo, Becca Asaki, Erica Reid and Carmen Griffiths on the **Safer Cities Program: Designing Safe Cities with Women and Girls** Panel





**“We are experts. We are organized. Everybody talks about us. We need much more recognition. We need to sit there at the decision-making tables. Because whatever everybody is discussing is about us. But we need to be there because anything about us without us is not for us.”**

**- Maxensia Nakibuuka at the  
UNGASS Civil Society Hearing on AIDS**



Maxensia Nakibuuka from the Lungujja Community Health Caring Organization in Uganda at the UNGASS Civil Society Hearing on AIDS at the UN, NYC.



# Giving Voice to those Infected & Affected: UN General Assembly Hearing on AIDS



Ingrid Gamboa from Guatemala participated UNGASS Civil Society Hearings on AIDS at the UN, New York City

in poor communities of sub-Saharan Africa and spoke on behalf of her own constituency and community.

Overall, the hearings did not address accountability for the billions of dollars already spent on HIV/AIDS work that have not impacted those who need it most, and failed to seriously consider the gender question, excluding women altogether from the first panel. Ms. Nakibuuka's panel, however, did succeed in echoing the need to follow a community-based response plan to fight the pandemic, and most importantly, raise awareness about the organized poor women who live with AIDS and are already working to care for others out of a critical need.

The Informal Interactive Civil Society Hearings were convened by the UN General Assembly in preparation for the High Level Meeting on AIDS held in June.

Maxensia Nakibuuka from the Lungujja Community Health Caring Organization in Uganda, and the Uganda Home-Based Care Alliance represented grassroots interests through the Huairou Commission at the UNGASS Civil Society Hearings. Of the twenty-eight invited panelists, Ms. Nakibuuka was one of only four speakers who gave a voice to the vast majority of people living with and affected by HIV and AIDS. She represented women

Violet Shivutse of GROOTS Kenya was nominated by the Global Coalition of Women and AIDS (GCWA) to represent the Huairou Commission on GCWA's Steering Committee. The Global Coalition on Women and AIDS is a worldwide alliance of civil society groups, networks of women living with HIV, women's organizations, AIDS service organizations, and the United Nations system committed to strengthening AIDS programming for women and girls.

The nomination of Violet, the first and only grassroots home based caregiver to sit on the GCWA Steering Committee, is a significant step in recognizing the importance of grassroots caregivers in the global AIDS response. It marks a great opportunity for grassroots women to directly influence the women's movement and increases access to global policy spaces.





## Expanding the Home Based Care Alliance

The Home-Based Care Alliance (HBCA) formed when home-based caregivers from independent and local self help groups recognized the need to combine their efforts, resources and expertise into a broader transnational movement. They created the HBCA to gain recognition and self representation in AIDS decision making and policy processes and to coordinate the AIDS response in their communities to ensure that development aid gets to those most in need.

Member groups in Uganda and Kenya had previously held funds for organizing and leadership development through GROOTS International, and used some of these resources to develop a step-

by-step guide for organizing a Home-Based Care Alliance. In 2011, this direct focus on organizing was expanded to Alliances in Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi, South Africa, Nigeria, Cameroon, and Ghana.

With this year's expansion of the Home Based Care Alliance (HBCA) networks in Sub-Saharan Africa, meeting financial needs became a top priority for country groups, especially since many caregivers use their own funds to care for their families, neighbors and communities. Below are some examples of innovative financing mechanisms groups have created to sustain their activities and offset the financial drain of caregiving.



Grandmothers who are members of a savings group meet in Kendu Bay, Kenya. Caregivers learned about innovative savings and credit models through an exchange between GROOTS Kenya and Huairou Commission member group in India, Swayam Shikshan Prayog (SSP).



# Localized Funding Initiatives for the Home Based Care Alliance

## Zimbabwe Home Based Care Alliance Expands Businesses through Loans

Rotational loans for income generating activities were seeded by the Huairou Commission in 2011 to expand the caregivers' businesses. Rotational loans were provided to an additional five groups participating in poultry and pig farming, gardening and grocers. A monitoring visit by GROOTS Zimbabwe leadership determined that 97% of the caregivers in these groups returned the loans in full. This repayment rate was attributed to the Group Business Model that the Alliance has utilized in which caregivers hold each other accountable for proper management of funds. Caregivers also initiated a program of making additional financial contributions to increase the capital base for loans for additional groups. These funds contribute to the ongoing work of the 1,311 registered members of the Alliance.

## GROOTS Kenya Extends Rotational Savings Scheme

In 2011, four caregiver groups continued to build on the gains from the seed grants provided by the Huairou Commission to increase capital to loan to each other. These caregivers' community grants provide a means for caregivers to easily access loans for small businesses. They learned about savings and credit models through an exchange with HC member group Swayam Shikshan Prayog (SSP) in India. The Alliance in Gatundu had so much success from their savings scheme that they have accrued significant dividends. Because of this success, GROOTS Kenya has extended this loan scheme to two more groups in Kendu Bay and Nairobi.

## HBCA Expands in Malawi

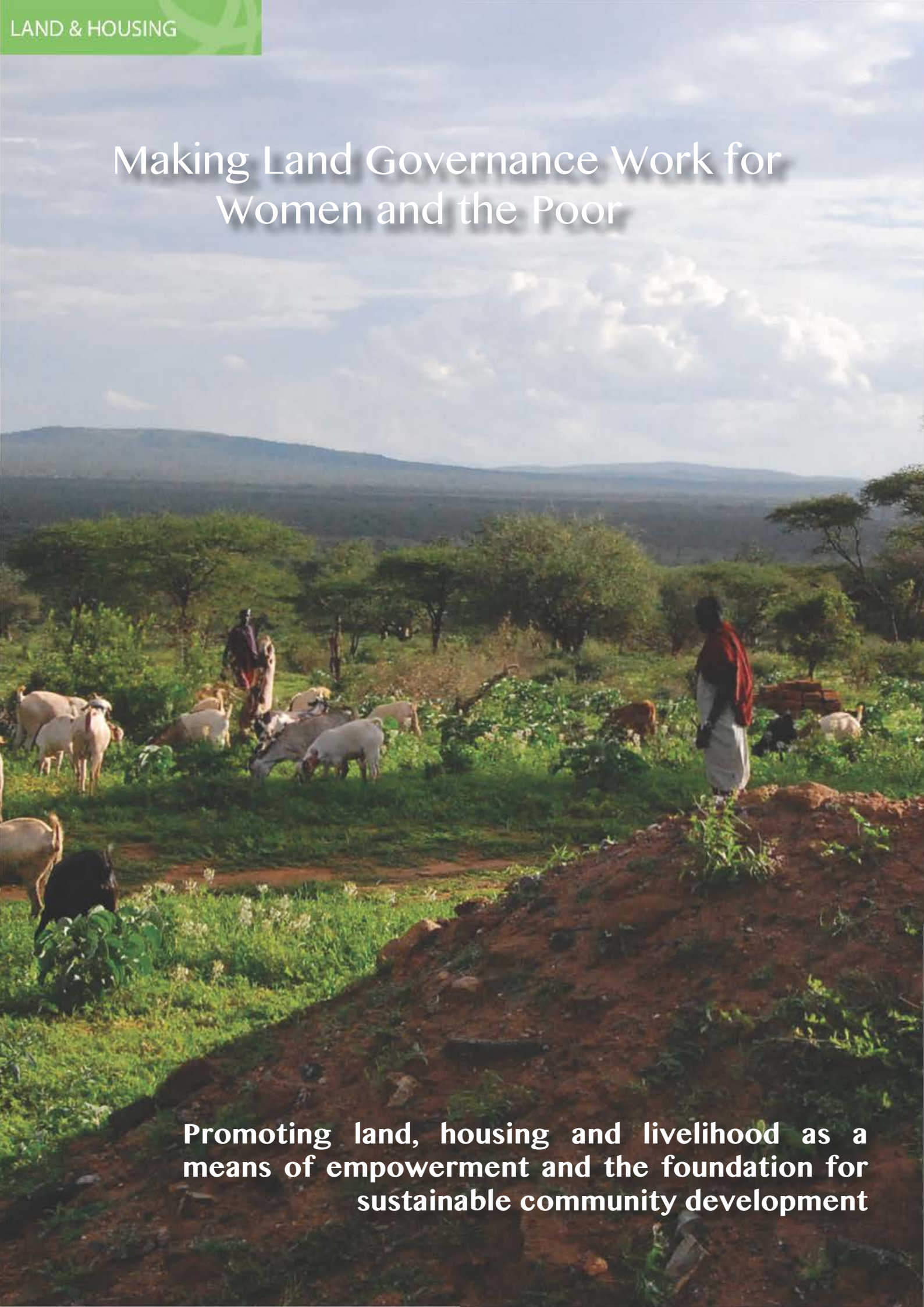
The network of home-based caregivers in Sub-Saharan Africa expanded in 2011 through efforts of the Huairou Commission with significant support from Cordaid. Through peer visits and shared experiences GROOTS Kenya and Zambian networks supported efforts of the Home Based Care Alliance of Malawi to strengthen its base and devise a national action plan for the coming year.



### Gains by the HBCA Malawi in 2011:

- **87 caregivers** led mapping and mobilization in 3 districts, using a tool of their own design, resulting in registration of 1,230 caregivers nationwide
- **10 district leaders** were selected as representatives to the national HBCA committee
- **30 caregivers** attended the HBCA National Meeting in April to elaborate an action plan, and discuss partnerships to enhance their organizing capacity
- **A database** of caregivers was established in the Malawi Alliance
- **A peer exchange** with members of the HBCA from Zambia and GROOTS Kenya strengthened the leadership of the Malawi network

# Making Land Governance Work for Women and the Poor



**Promoting land, housing and livelihood as a means of empowerment and the foundation for sustainable community development**



# Empowerment through Process: Land Regularization with Gender Equality

## Recife, Pernambuco, Brazil

In northeast Brazil, for nearly five decades now, local residents of a low-income settlement of 10,000 families in the city of Recife called Ponte do Maduro have been struggling for their housing settlement to be regularized.

**“[Tenure insecurity] hung over them like a sword.”**

**- Espaço Feminista**

Women need land tenure. Secure tenure:

- Allows women to invest in improvements to their homes and property without fear of losing them
- Enables access to credit
- Improves their social and economic standing in the community
- Empowers them to be able to make decisions in their households and the wider community

On paper, housing became a right for Brazilian citizens through a constitutional amendment passed in 2000. In reality, a severe lack of affordable housing means that many urban residents live in favelas (informal settlements) built on government-owned land in vulnerable

areas and do not have secure land tenure.

Through a law passed in 2001, municipalities are allowed to regularize such informal settlements, as long as the plan is made through a participatory process that includes residents and community associations.

In 2009, HC member group **Espaço Feminista**, a non-governmental organization that aims to contribute to the empowerment of marginalized women, coordinated a pilot project to evaluate whether their city's master plan for regularization was gender-responsive, based on a series of criteria called **Gender Evaluation Criteria** developed by UN-Habitat's Global Land Tools Network (GLTN), of which Huairou Commission is a founding partner. In other words, did this plan respond to women's unique needs?

GLTN supported this pilot project because of its understanding that in order for land policies to address the real needs and priorities of poor communities, the communities must be actively involved in the process. Grassroots communities provide essential information on their communities, mobilize resources, and the success of a policy intervention depends on their involvement.



For the women of Ponte do Maduro, being able to evaluate the government's plan was no simple task. They had to understand how the plan worked and how it applied to them, as well as how to dialogue with and lobby government officials and policymakers. Their approach included:



**ACTIVITIES**

- Capacity building workshops
- Seminars and roundtables for women
- Refining Gender Evaluation Criteria

**OUTCOMES**

- Women can more clearly articulate their needs and priorities
- Women able to get information from officials and experts, as well as to express their concerns and priorities
- Women able to identify points of intervention in gender inequality in planning processes

**OVERALL RESULT**

Grassroots women build relationships with local officials and are recognized as experts of their own community

Espaço Feminista's proactive role in the Gender Evaluation Criteria pilot process led to dialogues and relationship building with local government. It was through this process of dialogues with officials that the State of Pernambuco (where Recife is located) recognized the need to give women a central role in the regularization process. At the World Urban Forum in 2010, the state government of Pernambuco announced that it would cease plans to evict the approximately 55,000 residents of the community in favor of regularizing the settlement. It also called on GLTN and its partners, including the Huairou Commission, Espaço Feminista, and Joaquim Nabuco Research Foundation (FUDAJ) to provide technical assistance to administering a participatory process with women at the heart, including both young and elderly women. This joint initiative was titled "Ponte do Maduro: Land Regularization with Gender Equality." The regularization process began in October 2011.

**A Model for Global Partnership**

In Kenya at the GLTN Partners' Meeting in Nairobi (see following page), Espaço Feminista, represented by Patricia Chaves, presented a case study on their pilot project to the group of 70 participants, who had gathered to take stock of GLTN's 6-year process to improve land governance globally. The pilot was one of a series of pilots carried out and supported by GLTN, with others in Ghana, Tanzania,

**"There is a space and need for grassroots participation in the design and implementation of all tools that GLTN works on."**

**- GLTN, Handling Land: Innovative Tools for Land Governance and Secure Tenure**

Nepal and Peru in addition to Brazil. Since 2004, the member partners of GLTN have worked collectively to initiate land reform, improve tenure security, and make legal mechanisms responsive to women and the poor. The strategy of GLTN is celebrated as a pioneering effort due to the manner in which it has opened up space for grassroots engagement at all levels and promotes gendered land tools throughout its work. GLTN has responded to calls from grassroots organizations and partners to push for a specific strategy of participation. For instance, as a concrete example, on its International Advisory Board, GLTN has allocated one seat to a grassroots representative, a post currently held by Esupat Ngulupa from the Maasai Women's Development Organisation (MWEDO), Tanzania. This is a partnership strategy to be modeled and replicated throughout the UN system.



## Partnership Focus: Global Land Tools Network



HC participants included: Solome Mukisa, Lucy Mejia, Fati Alhassan, Ndinini Kimesera (tanzania), Haydee Rodriguez, Patricia Chaves, Becca Asaki, and Esupat Ngulupa

The Huairou Commission participated in the 4th Global Partners` Meeting of UN Habitat`s Global Land Tools Network (GLTN), with 70 participants representing the organization`s partners. Participants evaluated GLTN`s six-year process to improve global land governance, initiate land reform, improve tenure security, and make existing legal mechanisms responsive to women and the poor. Partners included rural and urban international organizations, international training and research institutes, international professional bodies, grassroots, bilateral, and multilateral organizations, private companies and UN-Habitat staff.

The Partners Meeting was followed by a two-day Learning Exchange among GLTN partners on specific approaches, insights, practical experiences and knowledge on land tools.

The Huairou Commission and its member organizations have worked with the GLTN to promote expanded spaces for grassroots engagement and use of gendered land tools throughout GLTN work. This inclusive process resulted in the allocation of a seat for a grassroots representative on GLTN`s International Advisory Board. At this year`s meeting, Esupat Ngulupa, from Maasai Women Development Organization (MWEDO) in Tanzania, was nominated for a second term as the grassroots representative to the board.

The Huairou Commission and its international peer organizations, such as Slum Dwellers International, ILC and their local member organizations continue to work together to concretely demonstrate how grassroots participation enhances legitimacy to the GLTN`s work with the poor.

Highlights of the Partners Meeting included partnership opportunities that have emerged through the GLTN`s direct investment in local pilot programs. The Huairou Commission is a key partner of the GLTN and is particularly active in two areas - the Gender Evaluation Criteria and the Grassroots Mechanism. Through a set of pilot projects in Brazil, Ghana, Nepal, Peru and Tanzania, the Huairou Commission and its member organizations have been collaborating with the GLTN to optimize opportunities for communities to effectively build alliances, and work with local governments and participate in decision-making processes.



Members of Ntankah Village Women Common Initiative Group, Cameroon



# Women's Struggle for Land and Housing Tenure:

## Women's Land Link Africa Land Academy in Arusha, Tanzania

At the Land Academy held in Arusha, Tanzania, Fifty participants, mostly grassroots women's groups, NGOs and strategic partners from twenty-two groups in seventeen countries analyzed their common strategies, successes and challenges in the struggle toward land and housing tenure.

Community resilience examines the deeper implications for land value and ownership in relation to climate change and natural disasters. It specifically pertains to women's use and production that often focuses on survival.

Participants affirmed the vision of the Huairou Commission Land and Housing Campaign of a world where women can claim, gain and maintain land, housing and livelihood as a means of empowerment and the foundation for sustainable community development. They also agreed to work within the Huairou Commission's Resilience Campaign to strengthen the intersections between access to land and disaster resilience and the ability of women to reduce the impacts of climate change.



The Academy served as a space for grassroots women to review UN-Habitat Global Land Tools Network's Gender Criteria for developing and up-scaling land tools, discuss best practice indicators and identify gaps on the global scale in land and housing tenure.



The Academy was sponsored, in part, by the Huairou Commission and hosted by the Maasai Women's Development Organization (MWEDO).



**“Women have decided to be at the forefront of decision-making, to be sure each village has land plans, and that each plan indicates where the land is for farming, livestock and homesteads. They are part of meetings that make these decisions.”**

**-Ndinindi Kisimera, Director of MWEDO**

During the Academy, the Community Resilience concept was introduced to the network, linking global issues to grassroots solutions. The Academy addressed how to evaluate and identify national and sub-regional plans for exchanges, mapping for new institutional partners, and advocacy. A planned site visit to the MWEDO group in the Longido district analyzed local and national advocacy strategies, and identified financing mechanisms and gender evaluation tools women used to access and own land and property.



Fati Al Hassan, Joyce Nangobi and Emily Tjale at the WLLA Land Academy, Arusha, Tanzania



HC Chair Jan Peterson with Esupat Ngulupa and a local constituent in Arusha, Tanzania

Overall, the four-day Academy succeeded in increasing the visibility of the work of all member groups in the WLLA network. Perhaps most importantly, the Academy gave grassroots women a space to present themselves to public officials as community experts who have successfully mobilized constituencies and have accurate knowledge of their local needs.

### Levels of Political Representation present at the WLLA Land Academy

**REGIONAL :** East African Community Secretary General, Juma Mwapachu

**NATIONAL:** Tanzanian Minister of Land and Housing, Dr. Anna Tibaijuka

**MUNICIPAL:** Arusha Regional Commissioner, Isadori Shirima

Following the WLLA Land Academy, these actors established partnerships with the Maasai Women`s Development Organization (MWEDO).

## GLTN Pilot Project: Mitigating Disaster by Establishing Risk Management Committees

Groots Peru combined raising awareness with practical training to empower communities in Lima, through the creation of Risk Management Committees. They implemented their grassroots approach for risk management with a pilot program in two communities in Lima: Vista Alegre, with 250 families, and Paraiso, with 19 families, living with the risk of landslides on a rocky slope, and with the risk of flooding on a flood plain, respectively.

### STRATEGIES:

- Complete participatory risk assessment
- Develop community risk prevention plan for use in negotiation
- Use plan to guide collective community action
- Follow advocacy strategy, using Local-to-Local dialogues

### RESULTS:

- Created of local risk management committees for representation in negotiation
- Conducted Trainings on natural hazards and links to eviction
- Plan for a flood prevention wall in Paraiso to the Municipal Assembly, which implements a participatory budgeting process to allocate funds for community development
- Ensured budget allocation for community plans through participatory engagement





# Resilient Development through Locally-Led Initiatives and Awareness

Resilience is the capacity of a community to organize itself to reduce the impact of disasters by protecting lives, livelihoods, homes, assets, basic services and infrastructure. Resilience includes the capacities of communities to advance development processes, social networks and institutional partnerships that strengthen the ability of the community to cope with and recover from disasters.

**This year** the Huairou Commission promoted grassroots women's participation in resilient development through an expanded approach to resilience with network members in Africa and Latin America.





# Grassroots Women Organize Regionally through Grassroots Academies



Recent disasters, from earthquakes in Chile to the floods in Rio de Janeiro, have created an impetus for a multistakeholder process that protects the development assets of the poor and reconfigures traditional, top down disaster management programming.

Toward that end, the Huairou Commission and GROOTS International have been investing in building the capacity of member groups in Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru to map hazards and resources in their risk prone communities, strengthen their community development work to reduce vulnerability, and build relationships with local and national authorities to scale up and mainstream this approach.

## ANDEAN ACADEMY ON COMMUNITY RESILIENCE February 4-6, Lima, Peru

Bringing together our members from across the region, the Huairou Commission and GROOTS held an Andean Resilience Academy in Lima, Peru from February 3-7 to focus on scaling up the participation of grassroots women's groups in planning, programming, and monitoring processes that reduce poor communities' vulnerability to the devastating losses produced from disasters and climate change.

The Andean Academy on Community Resilience convened more than fifty participants from women's grassroots groups in Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador, Columbia, Nicaragua, Chile and Brazil. The Academy provided participants opportunities to dialogue with institutional representatives from the Mexican Civil Protection, CAPRADE/INDESI, the UN Habitat regional office in Rio de Janeiro and a range of local and national authorities in Peru.





## Stories of Resilience shared during the Andean Academy:

### ECUADOR:

**“It’s of no use to have a house if we have an avalanche of destructive droughts. We have to think much more of the future generations.”** - Diocelinda Iza, National Movement of Women from Popular Sectors “Luna Creciente”

**GRASSROOTS APPROACH:** Luna Creciente has organized over 6,000 women from smaller networks spanning the Andean highlands, the Amazon region and the coast. Groups work to reduce their vulnerability to floods, droughts, wind, snow damage and erosion with reforestation of native plants, and collective management of paramos, “hilly grasslands that naturally preserve and gather water and serve as grazing areas for alpacas. In recognition of their work to protect the watershed, one local group within Luna Creciente has been exempted from water taxes by their local authority.

### BRAZIL:

**“My community is one that learned to believe in itself.”** - Julita Trindade of Redes Pintadas in Bahia, Brazil, discussing their experiences following drought and water shortage.

**GRASSROOTS APPROACH:** Redes Pintadas built water tanks, cisterns and artificial lagoons. They gather rain water from roofs and store water underground. They also pioneered successful projects with international alliances, gained international recognition, and then were able to convince the regional and federal government to replicate them.

### PERU:

**“I lived through the disaster and desperation in my own flesh . . . It was terrible . . . houses fell like little cookies. But when you organize, it is different. We organized and fed 500 people, 3 times a day, working from 5 am to 8pm. Sometimes, I wanted to quit, but ...there were so many opportunities to learn... We worked at the community level, with civil defense, and with local government.”** -Dionicia Gonzales of Ollas Comunitarias in Chinchá, discussing how her organization addressed the aftermath of the earthquake that devastated Peru and Chile in 2010

**GRASSROOTS APPROACH:** As a result of their organizing and risk mapping, Ollas Comunitarias entered into the land formalization process and became the youngest one to secure land titles for its residents. The group is now focusing on a dangerous gas pipeline that passes through the community.

The Andean Academy on Community Resilience was organized and hosted by Servicios Educativos el Agustino (SEA), Huairou Commission and GROOTS International. It was supported by donor funds committed to the Community Resilience and Governance Campaigns of the Huairou Commission and GROOTS International from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Dutch Foreign Ministry MDG3 Fund, Cordaid, UNISDR and an anonymous donor.



## SWID: New Partnerships for Resilience with Local Authorities in Jinja, Uganda

After months of research on disasters and climate change supported by the Huairou Commission in collaboration with GROOTS International, Slum Women's Initiative for Development (SWID) in Jinja, Uganda signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Jinja Municipality in Uganda to build a resilient city by reducing disasters and effects of climate change.

A risk mapping exercise identified local vulnerabilities and the capacities of grassroots groups to adapt to climate change and disaster

impacts. Using the Hyogo Framework for Action as a guide, SWID enlisted the collaboration of the municipality to complete a checklist of 10 points for action identified as essential to making the city of Jinja more resilient.

Additionally, SWID convened a Community Practitioner's Platform meeting in September, where participants exchanged perspectives to advance community resilience that laid the foundations of future partnerships with local authorities and developed an action plan.



In honor of International Rural Women's Day, SWID in Jinja, Uganda held a workshop on strategies to overcome barriers that prevent women's equal participation in leadership and decision making, with a focus on women's roles in disaster risk reduction

### 10 objectives of the partnership between SWID and Jinja municipality:

1. Include citizen participation in building awareness of disaster risk and preparation.
2. Assign a disaster budget and provide incentives for citizens to invest in reduction measures.
3. Collect and maintain data on hazards and risks, apply this to urban planning decisions, and keep this information available to the public.
4. Invest in infrastructure to cope with climate change
5. Assess safety of schools and health facilities, and upgrade as needed
6. Apply regulations and land-use planning principles that reflect risk assessments, and identify safe locations for residents.
7. Provide education programs on disaster risk reduction in schools and communities.
8. Protect ecosystems and natural buffers to mitigate flooding, storm surges and other hazards. Adapt to climate change with good risk reduction practices.
9. Install early warning systems and hold regular public preparedness drills.
10. Following disasters, ensure that the needs of survivors are at the center of response actions.



# Changing Climate, Changing Leadership

Grassroots women leaders shared their local innovations to confront climate change in their communities in an event at the United Nations, where they spoke alongside partners from the Norwegian and Guatemalan governments as well as the World Bank.

On February 23rd, the Permanent Mission of Norway, the UNDP Gender Team and the Huairou Commission organized an interactive discussion at the 55th session of the UN Commission on Status of Women (CSW), for grassroots women's groups to share their firsthand experiences and solutions. Overall, three strategies were named as effective ways of building community resilience: delivering resources to grassroots organizations and local institutions, providing women's networks with resources and information, and engaging grassroots organizations in carrying out participatory appraisals.

Ingrid Fiskaa, Deputy Ministry of Foreign Affairs from Norway, described the interface between climate change and gender and stated Norway's commitment to addressing women's priorities. Margaret Arnold, Senior Social Development Specialist at the World Bank, emphasized the urban dimension of climate change impact by explaining how weak tenure rights limit the urban poor's ability to access basic services such as water supply, sanitation and garbage collection. Professor Vinod Menon, former Member of the National Disaster Management

**“We don't just want to be talked about as best practices; we want to be face to face with decision makers so we can partner with them to bring about change.”**

- Ana Lucy Bengochea

Authority of the Government of India, discussed the need to leverage the transformative leadership of grassroots women's organizations. Randi Davis, Deputy Director of the UNDP Gender Team, called on other multilateral organizations and UN agencies to “step up their game...We [UN agencies] need to do far more than we are doing.” At a rural women's panel, Lily Caravantes, Presidential Secretary for Food Security and Nutrition from Guatemala who is partnering with grassroots women to build food security in Central America, reiterated the need to invest in grassroots women's leadership and to bring women into public policy with ‘voice and vote.’

These champions spoke alongside grassroots leaders Haydee Rodriguez of Las Brumas Union of Women Farmer Cooperatives in Nicaragua, Godavari Dange of Sakhi Women's Federation in India, Josephine Castillo of DAMPA people's federation in the Philippines, Joyce Nangobi of Slum Women's Initiative for Development (SWID), and Relinda Sosa of GROOTS Peru.

## World Bank GFDRR Civil Society Forum

The Huairou Commission seized the opportunity to advocate for recognition of and consultation with community practitioners facing climate and disaster threats in the Global South at The World Bank Civil Society Forum. Grassroots women were presented as key stakeholders in the new civil society program of the World Bank's Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR).

Representatives of the Huairou Commission's Community Practitioners Platform moderated a

panel with experts from Indonesia, India, Nepal and the Philippines, in which they pressed for diversity in the GFDRR's Advisory Group.

By the end of 2011, the Huairou Commission had planted the seeds for internal organizational changes that included grassroots women's participation in partnership strategizing and development, institutionalizing bottom-up approaches on the global governance scale.

# Bringing Local Partnerships Global: UNISDR Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction

**“Community must be engaged and local leadership is key to building resilience.”**

-Ban Ki-Moon  
UN Secretary General  
Opening the 3rd Session of the UNISDR  
Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction

Members of the Huairou Commission brought their Community Resilience approach to the global stage during the UNISDR Global Platform for Disaster Reduction, which convened over 3,000 stakeholders from civil society, governments and multilateral and bilateral institutions.

At the opening to the session, Prema Gopalan, Director of Swayam Shikshan Prayog, and senior adviser to the Huairou Commission and GROOTS International's Campaign on Community Resilience, brought the audience's focus to the local level when she spoke as a panelist on the high level plenary alongside UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon.

Gopalan affirmed the focus on partnerships as instrumental to building resilient communities, giving the example of CEPREDENAC (the Central American regional disaster management agency). Through advocacy from grassroots members of the Community Resilience campaign, CEPREDENAC has developed policy mandates which invest in grassroots women's capacity, look at grassroots leaders as key stakeholders, and facilitate linkages for grassroots women to their national ministries. She also provided the example of the Community Resilience Fund as a decentralized mechanism that works across sectors (health and sanitation, livelihoods, infrastructure) to provide flexible funding to community based groups to take action to reduce their vulnerabilities in partnership with government agencies.

Unfortunately, the partnership model advocated for by the grassroots is an exception to the norm. Resources rarely trickle down to the local level and when they do, government authorities rarely channel money to community-based groups. The dominant discourse around disaster risk reduction fails to recognize unequal power relationships amongst different partners, focuses on early warning and reconstruction rather than addressing longer term issues of building resilience and protecting assets, does not recognize disaster risk reduction as a development issue, and works in silos instead of taking a holistic approach.

By advocating at the global level, organized grassroots groups are working to change this paradigm and prove that when grassroots groups are given the platform to produce and receive information, they become owners and drivers of action with their government.



**“Where others see the problem, communities see the solution.”**

-Prema Gopalan  
SSP India  
on Panel with Ban Ki-Moon at 3rd Session of  
Global Platform on DRR



# Banner Year for The Huairou Commission



Through support and advocacy of the Huairou Commission, grassroots women and their networks have experienced incredible advances locally, regionally and globally during 2011.

By focusing on grassroots women as experts on community needs rather than recipients of aid, the Huairou Commission has assisted in opening spaces for them to participate in the creation of development programs with bottom-up implementation for a long-term and sustainable impact.

As we enter 2012, we will continue our efforts to ensure a bottom-up development process involving grassroots women with greater investment in grassroots organizing, network expansion, and peer learning. To strengthen grassroots groups, institutional support of project-based investments will be needed in the changing funding climate.

The Huairou Commission will continue its commitment to create spaces locally, regionally, and globally to organize, educate, and empower grassroots women to build inclusive societies and create resilient communities.

