

Conference on “Building Capacities on Gender Responsive Governance in South Asia” (24-26 September, 2012):-

The National Gender Centre-NIAR, LBSNAA, organised a South Asia Regional Meet from 24- 26 September, 2012 at LBSNAA, Mussoorie, supported by UN-Women, New Delhi. The South Asia Regional Meeting was a step towards building capacity on promoting women’s leadership and governance in India and South Asia. The focus of the conference was on specific themes – women’s political participation, women’s economic empowerment, end violence against women, safe migration and trafficking and planning and budgeting for gender equality. The region is still struggling with issues of malnutrition, persistence of high levels of Infant Mortality Rate and Maternal Mortality Ratio, trafficking of women and children, differential access to assets such as land and resources such as education, continued gaps in education especially at secondary and tertiary levels. To compound this is the negative impact of conflict/disaster situations and climate change on women and children, and low levels of women’s political participation.

To this end delegates from eight South Asian countries (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan & Sri Lanka) gathered at Mussoorie, to discuss the strategies and practical steps for regional cooperation on capacity development for gender responsive governance and to engage in meaningful dialogue on what has been achieved and where there is need for more work on issues that affect women.

The delegation from each country was comprised of Minister/Secretary level from ministries on gender equality and governance, apex training institutions and reputed civil society organisations. A total of 40 participants had gathered for this conference. Participants worked in tandem towards a set of do-able action points which was formally put up as “Mussoorie Declaration”.

Ms. Sheila Dikshit, Hon’ble Chief Minister of Delhi, took out time from her busy schedule to be here at the Academy to address the participants. The speakers and participants from all countries shared their rich stories and experiences, making the seminar a creative meeting and learning place.

The deliberations in each of the thematic sessions focussed on current status and prospects across South Asia, ongoing initiatives and good practices as well as imperatives for future action. Each of the thematic discussions have highlighted the imperative of promoting women’s leadership and central role of grassroots politics in improving the status of women in South Asia.

The Academy would be looking towards creating more such for as for regional co-operation in the near future by leveraging its unique position as a centre of excellence in training & capacity building.