



NGO-Koordination post Beijing Schweiz · ONG-Coordination après Pekin Suisse
ONG-coordinazione post Beijing Svizzera · ONG coordinaziun suentar Beijing Svizra

2009 June 16 – Tour-de-Suisse-féministe – Lucerne

Work of the non-governmental organisations for gender equality

I'm pleased to speak to you as representative of the NGO-Coordination post Beijing Switzerland. I'm going to give you an overview about the beginning of that NGO, its work and functioning.

The formation of the NGO-Coordination post Beijing Switzerland

1995 the fourth world conference on women took place in Beijing. In Switzerland different groups were interested to attend the NGO forum and to put in claims. There were NGOs active in gender equality and others, such as UNICEF and Tibetans. Together we prepared the participation at the world conference on women and the forum of the NGOs and formulated postulations. But highly important were the contacts linked between the different organisations.

The 189 countries that participated in Beijing adopted the so-called platform for action. This was an extensive document, where the areas in which women still were discriminated were listed point by point. The platform for action contained primarily an extensive catalog of measures. It has no binding effect. Nevertheless, it is of great moral and political value.

After the world conference on women the involved groups in Switzerland decided the various contacts between the women and organisations should not get lost, as it happened after the last conference. so they wouldn't have to be restored troublesome the next time again. That was one of the reasons why the organisation NGO-Coordination post Beijing Switzerland was founded.

Since its founding in late 1996, we were always slightly more than 20 organisations of big variety of all political and social spectra. The following 25 organisations are members at the moment (OHT).

Duties of the NGO-Coordination

The NGO-Coordination deals with the implementation of international targets on women's rights at the national level, especially the platform for action from Beijing and CEDAW. CEDAW is the abbreviation of the UN convention for women's rights „Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women“. The NGO-Coordination could conclude a performance contract with the federal government. The NGO-Coordination especially made the commitment, to process and spread information about the implementation of the platform for action from the fourth world conference on women from Beijing and CEDAW in Switzerland. The NGO-Coordination also works as a contact and coordination center between NGOs and the federal administration in those subjects. Once or twice a year we publish a newsletter on a current topic to spread information. Every year we organise a symposium to sensitize but also for a professional exchange and networking between NGOs and the federal administration. Subject of the symposiums are always topics of equality work. We hold workshops, invite experts to hold a lecture or professional women to hold hearings with the responsible, to ask them how equality precedes.

Reports of the NGO-Coordination

In Switzerland, in 1999 an action plan was written. In this the federal government formulated measures at the national and international level and defined who should implement them. The member organisations of the NGO-Coordination post Beijing Switzerland expressed themselves in a consultation. Each organisation first formulated its concerns which were then sent together to the government. Since not all demands found their way into the Swiss action plan, the NGO-Coordination wrote a separate report from the various inputs of the organisations in 1999.

Since the publication of the NGO-report, the NGO-Coordination has been discussing a couple of times, whether the various inputs of organisations should be presented in a collective report or not. Each time we decided for a single report, even though that always meant a big deal of work. This also had the effect that once in a while we had to point out contradictions in the document, because the different organisations represented different viewpoints.

The NGO-Coordination has drafted the following reports:

2002 an alternative report to the federal report „Evaluation of the implementation of the action plan for gender equality“ and the shadow report of the NGO-Coordination post Beijing Switzerland and Human Rights Switzerland MERS to the first and second periodic report of Switzerland

on the implementation of CEDAW. That shadow report was based on the contributions written for the evaluation report.

In 2004 the alternative report Beijing+10 was written. It recorded if and how the situation of gender equality had developed since the fourth world conference on women.

April 26 2008 we presented the shadow report of the NGO-Coordination post Beijing Switzerland and Amnesty International Swiss Section to the third periodic report of Switzerland on the implementation of CEDAW to the public. Last December we presented it for the first time at the pre-session of the CEDAW-commission in Geneva. On July 20 2009 four of us are going to present our shadow report to chamber B of the CEDAW-commission in New York. We have ten minutes to put in our claims. On July 24 a briefing lunch with the members of the commission is scheduled. Once more we will have the possibility to point out the most important issues of the shadow report. That gives the CEDAW-commission the opportunity to ask the official Swiss delegation critical questions to the third periodic report on July 27. We have prepared recommendations. We hope the CEDAW-commission picks them up and formulates them as demands towards the Swiss government. This would be an important pressure.

The current shadow report was produced in a different way as the former reports. One woman asked expert women and organisations to write something to specific topics and coordinated the inputs. That was a big deal of work. We ended up with 430 hours of unpaid work in 2007 and 2008 for the shadow report. That's one of the reasons why we are that proud of the result and hope to be successful in New York.

Functioning of the NGO-Coordination

In connection with the fourth world conference on women the federal government financed the salary for a coordinator. The mandate ended shortly after the conference. In the following time representatives of member organisations (so called delegates) operated unpaid as coordinators. Jessica Kehl-Lauff, the former president of svf-adf and board member of IAW-AIF, who is here today, was one of them. Our coordinators were especially responsible to collect and distribute information and invite to the meetings. The delegates were busy with contents and organising conferences. The workload grew steadily. Especially the work with the mentioned reports absorbed a lot of time. After a while we decided to install a paid part time position for a coordinator. She largely has the job of a managing director and operates tightly with the members of the executive board. The pensum of the coordinator could be raised from 15 % to 20 %. Like most of the delegates the coordinator works a lot unpaid too. Depending on their organisation there are

delegates with paid working hours (seldom) and compensation expense up to others doing completely unpaid work without reimbursement of expenses.

Since we had to become more professional, we recently had our website redesigned. The most important information or at least links where to find them should be found on our websites now.

Changes of member organisations or delegates always launched fascinating discussions and often resulted in changes of the main focus and targets. Nowadays it is about being heard as a collective in gender questions, to achieve progress and to inform one another in matters of gender equality. The jointly organised events with reports and monitoring of government offices are very important.

Unfortunately, the political environment is getting more difficult. Disappearing offices and commissions for gender equality or that they are put together with other areas show that clearly. As you've heard, the gender equality office of Lucerne was united with other socio-political offices. Therefore the commission for gender equality was nullified and my mandate there ended. In this surrounding field our work is getting more difficult but even more essential.

NGO active in Lucerne
www.frauenluzern.ch

There is an interesting woman-related organisation in the region of Lucerne. I will present it to you shortly, although I don't know it from personal experience.

www.frauenluzern.ch is an association of about 30 non-profit-organisations active in gender equality and institutions from the fields of education, politics, culture, church and advice. Since 1999 representatives of political parties, churches, institutions of education and cultural providers meet twice a year. They exchange information and plan joint actions. The centre for questions of society, division equality of women and men at the Canton of Lucerne as well as the gender equality delegate of the universities of Lucerne are members.

www.frauenluzern.ch offers comprehensive and current information about activities, events and educational opportunities that are especially interesting for women. There is a women's-specific calendar of events, but also books and services by and for women.

www.frauenluzern.ch networks, strengthens and promotes organisations from Lucerne, institutions and service providers that are active in subjects of women and gender equality.

Vivian Fankhauser-Feitknecht
Board member of the NGO-Koordination post Beijing Switzerland
Delegate of the Swiss Guide and Scout Movement



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Goals of the NGO-Coordination post Beijing Schweiz:

- We inform the public, politics und administration about the international instruments to women's rights and their importance for Switzerland.
- We convince politics and administration to use the international instruments and to implement women's rights in Switzerland.
- We network organisations that campaign for the implementation of women's rights in Switzerland.
- We offer background information about international instruments to our members and other persons interested and show their usefulness in daily business of politics.

To achieve our aim, we publish one or two newsletters and organise one meeting every year.

Since 2007 we we define a topic each year that picks up a matter of concern of the platform for action, CEDAW or a general topic on gender equality.

You find further information on our website:

www.postbeijing.ch



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Members NGO-Coordination post Beijing Switzerland

alliance F - Bund Schweizerischer Frauenorganisationen / Swiss Council of Women
cfd Die feministische Friedensorganisation / Christian Peace Service
Cevi Schweiz / Swiss Organisation from YWCA and YMCA
Coordination romande Suivi de Pékin
Demokratische JuristInnen Schweiz DJS / Democratic Jurists Switzerland
Evangelische Frauen Schweiz EFS / Evangelic Women Switzerland
FIZ Fachstelle Frauenhandel und Frauenmigration / Women's Information Center
Frauen für den Frieden / Women for Peace
Frauenrat für Aussenpolitik / Women's Council for Political Affairs
Gender + Entwicklung / Gender and Development
Jungwacht Blauring Schweiz / Youth Organisation
Juristinnen Schweiz / Jurists Switzerland
Pfadibewegung Schweiz PBS / Swiss Guide and Scout Movement
Schweizerisches Arbeiterhilfswerk SAH / Swiss Relief Organisation for Laborers
Schweizerische Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Jugendverbände SAJV / Swiss Council of Youth Organisations
Schweiz. Bäuerinnen und Landfrauenverband SBLV / Swiss Association of Farm Women
Schweizer Frauen Synode
Schweizerischer Katholischer Frauenbund SKF / Swiss Catholic Women's League
Schweiz. Verband alleinerziehender Mütter + Väter SVAMV / Swiss Association Single Parents
Schweizerischer Verband für Frauenrechte adf-svf / Swiss Association for Women's Rights
SP Frauen Schweiz / Women of the Socialistic Party
Verband Wirtschaftsfrauen Schweiz / Economic organisation
Verein Feministische Wissenschaft Schweiz FemWiss / Science organisation
Zentrum für Geschlechterforschung der Uni Bern IZFG / Interdisciplinary Centre for gender studies University of Berne, ICFG

English names of organisations are not official titles. They are intended to inform the English readers on the areas of work of those NGOs.



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Reports of the NGO-Coordination post Beijing Switzerland

1999 NGO-report to the action plan

2002 Report of Evaluation of the NGO-Coordination (alternativ report to the federal report „Evaluation der Umsetzung des Aktionsplans zur Gleichstellung von Frau und Mann“ / „Evaluation of the implementation of the action plan for gender equality“)

2002 Shadow report of the NGO-Coordination post Beijing Switzerland and the organisation Human Rights Switzerland MERS to the first and second periodic report of Switzerland on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women CEDAW

2004 Alternative report Beijing+10

2008 Shadow report of the NGO-Coordination post Beijing Switzerland and Amnesty International Swiss Section to the third periodic report of Switzerland on the implementation of CEDAW