



# GLOBAL JUSTICE CENTER

## ANNUAL REPORT 2006





# LETTER FROM JANET BENSHOOF, PRESIDENT

## STRATEGIC LAWYERING

### *for critical people at critical times in critical places*

Dear Friends,

The Global Justice Center's first year has been a tremendously exciting journey. We began 2006 as a vision, an idea, and ended the year as reality—a growing voice within the international human rights community. Over the course of my 30 plus years as a lawyer, I have rarely, if ever, experienced this kind of energy and momentum across cultures, countries and generations. We have you to thank, you—our friends, supporters, volunteers and staff—who are the Global Justice Center.

In its first year in operation, the Global Justice Center has already demonstrated that enforcing international legal rights to equality and justice can have a powerful effect not only on the global rights framework but on the foreign policy priorities of countries including the United States. Women's right to equality is essential to increased global security and development, yet the kinds of projects that the GJC implements are noticeably absent from other organizations' agendas. GJC programs—even with such low budgets—have generated projects in Burma, Thailand, and Iraq that have been met with enthusiastic responses from leaders such as Nobel Peace Prize Winner Aung San Sui Kyi, UN Appointed Expert on gender and conflict (and former Defense Minister of Finland) Elisabeth Rehn, and Iraqi Ambassador to the US, Samir Al-Sumaidie. The content of every program, along with the materials, is now widely distributed and have spawned translations, discussions, letters, law articles, and petitions to government groups and leaders.

Women leaders in transitional democracies or conflict areas are asking the global community to help them learn how to use international legal tools to enforce their rights to political power and justice. They also want to know how other women have managed to get these political rights. The GJC is pioneering models that women across cultures can use to guarantee their right to self-determination and control over the policies that affect their lives. This right is a universal human right that is not specific to geographic location, or religious or cultural background, and the value of this endeavor is immeasurable.

For me, the Global Justice Center is the culmination of a vision I have had for years, a vision whose strength still prevails when tribalism, nationalism, sectarianism, fundamentalism and, yes, sexism, appear to gain the upper hand. Life is too short not to have a long term vision. For me—and I hope for you too—the Global Justice Center is that vision.

Best Wishes,



Janet Benshoof  
President and Founder

# OUR MISSION AND VISION

## OUR VISION

The Global Justice Center envisions a world where women are active makers and enforcers of public policy and law, especially during times of democratic transition and consolidation, and their human rights are protected and ensured.

## OUR MISSION

The Global Justice Center equips leaders in developing democracies with the legal tools to enforce women's rights to equality in political representation and transitional justice and in doing so, redefines democracy for the twenty-first century. The Global Justice Center works to:

- Target the entrenched political and cultural norms that perpetuate male dominated decision-making bodies and constrain women;
- Use human rights and international law as tools to restructure societies in ways that enable women to take their rightful place in national and transitional justice processes;
- Identify activists, leaders, judges, and policy-makers and train them in the affirmative use of women's human rights and international law as tools for constructing new democracies, governments, and transitional bodies;
- Transform the operational definition of democracy to one that is truly representative.

## GLOBAL JUSTICE NOW

The need for the Global Justice Center is immediate. The unstable situations and conflicts that imperil our world security at the same time provide the openings to radically restructure government institutions. In the last 15 years, over 30 new countries were formed, and as we speak, new constitutions are being drafted, new governments are being established, and new laws are being passed. If these new structures and policies were truly based on the principle of equality of women, how might the world be changed? How would the decisions of peace-makers and peacebuilders be different? Would the world be more secure if women were decision-makers, rather than victims of others' decisions? We must reach out to the key players in transitional and emerging democracies, specifically women, and make sure that they are well equipped to advocate for progressive reform.

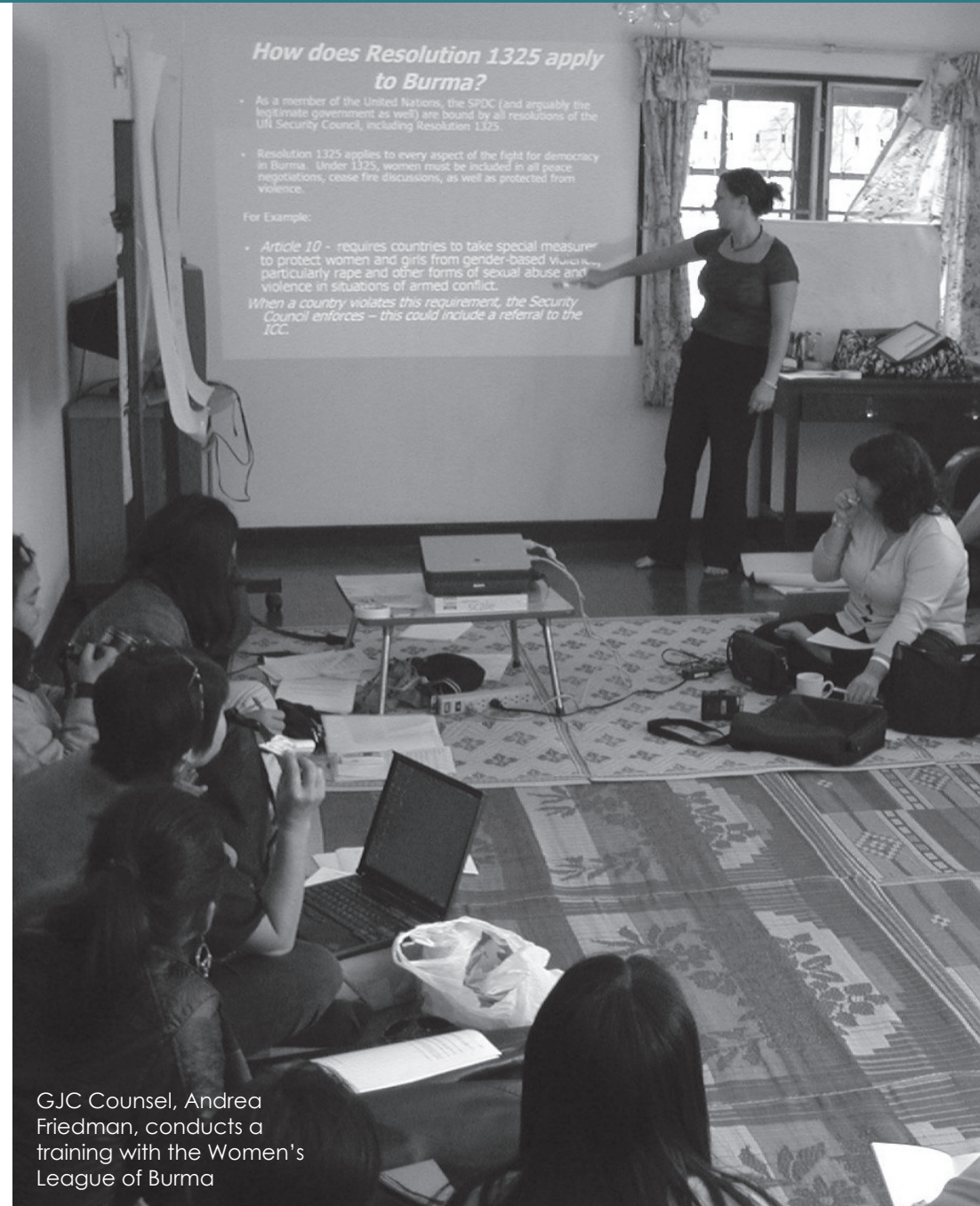
# OUR PROGRAM: INVESTING IN WOMEN

## INVESTING IN WOMEN LEADERS DURING TIMES OF TRANSITION

This is a time of great transformation and opportunity in the realm of women's rights. The development of international law over the past 30 years has laid the groundwork for a sea change for women, while the simultaneous growth of transnational feminism and grassroots women's groups has given new momentum to the global women's movement. The Global Justice Center's programmatic work centers around finding strategic ways to bridge the gap between high-level law reform and the energy and knowledge of women's groups on the ground, so that the laws that exist on paper are translated into concrete change for women that can be felt in their everyday lives.

The development of new democracies in transitional contexts provides small but significant windows of opportunity for women to lobby for representational quotas, law reform, and other lasting protections. While other NGO's may focus on reporting human rights abuses, or using a single strategy toward law reform, our model integrates the disparate fields of transitional justice, human rights law and gender equality by using a unique toolbox of treaties, UN resolutions and tribunal case law.

Based on a model of strategic training, advocacy and litigation on behalf of women worldwide, the GJC program is designed to go beyond what would be a laudable program in itself—shaping stronger and more effective female leadership. Rather, the GJC reverses the traditional model of studying the effects of public policies on women to one of leveraging women to be the active makers and enforcers of public policy and law.



GJC Counselor, Andrea Friedman, conducts a training with the Women's League of Burma

# OUR TOOLS: INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS

The use of international law to advance women's rights can strengthen the law itself. Each time a court case is informed by international laws and equality standards, new precedents are set for women activists and other courts to reference in future cases. By promoting the citation of such documents in all of its work, the GJC makes the law a more powerful tool overall. The Global Justice Center focuses on using and developing these key legal tools, including:

## **CEDAW**

The Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination Against Women is considered the international bill of rights for women and has been ratified by 185 countries since it came into force in 1979. Although this is the most widely ratified of all human rights treaties, it is also the most encumbered by reservations (nations can "opt out" of certain provisions of the treaty) and historically has lacked strong enforcement mechanisms; however, this is changing. CEDAW has been cited in over 400 domestic cases worldwide, and is increasingly being used by women to identify discriminatory cultural practices and traditions. Additionally, the treaty demands that signatory governments remove barriers to gender equality and actively monitor the situation of women and girls in their respective countries.

## **SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1325**

Passed unanimously by the United Nations Security Council in 2000, SCR 1325 mandates that there be a gender perspective in conflict prevention, conflict resolution, and all peacemaking and peace-building processes within the UN system and among all member states. SCR 1325 emphasizes the need to push for women representatives in new and emerging governments and is considered binding international law on all UN member states. SCR 1325 and the provisions it lays out has the potential to dramatically change the government structures of countries in transition in favor of women, provided that there are people in the international community who are equipped to ensure that it is taken monitored and enforced.

## **WAR CRIMES TRIBUNALS**

War Crimes Tribunals have offered a new opportunity to examine crimes against women in both international and internal conflicts. Specifically, crimes related to rape and other forms of sexual violence have come under new scrutiny from the international community over the past twenty years. Tribunal case law has drastically expanded the definitions, scope and punishment for such crimes, and has also enabled issues such as rape, which can be culturally difficult to talk about and to address by individual complainants, to be brought into a public space where it can be examined in the larger context of conflict.

## **THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT**

The Global Justice Center, in accordance with the rest of the international women's rights community, sees ICC ratification as a key strategy for the advancement of domestic legal reform worldwide in favor of women, and actively promotes this strategy in all of our work. Nations emerging from conflict have an interest in signing the ICC in order to assure that war criminals can be tried in an international court. However, by signing this document, the new states and new governments that emerge from conflict must also adopt domestic laws that reflect strict human rights standards, including women's rights. This is referred to in legal circles as the principle of complementarity, and can be used as a powerful tool to ensure that domestic laws in new and emerging nations are in line with international standards.



# IRAQ

Since the beginning of 2006, the GJC's efforts with Iraqi women have focused on the transitional justice process in Iraq, and raising awareness about the need to affirmatively reach out to women in that process.

## TRAINING THE IRAQ HIGH TRIBUNAL

The most significant component of this work has been our ongoing partnership with the Women's Alliance for a Democratic Iraq (WAFDI), and the Iraqi High Tribunal (IHT). Together with WAFDI, the GJC organized a three-day conference on women's rights and international law November 13th -15th at the Dead Sea, Jordan. The conference brought together 20 Judges and Prosecutors of the IHT with 15 members of government and civil society, mostly women, to discuss fundamentals of international law and gender crimes, as well as the practical challenges of addressing sexual violence in a repressive environment. Five experts on different aspects of international law and gender crimes joined WAFDI and the GJC in conducting the conference, and training topics included the women's participation in transitional justice processes as well as the jurisprudence on trying crimes against women in a war crimes tribunal setting.

## LEGAL REFORM: A CLOSER LOOK

The Iraq High Tribunal is deciding cases using the most progressive international statutory definitions of gender crimes in the world, almost identical to those of the Rome Treaty of the International Criminal Court, and is positioned to build on the nascent legal precedents that had been established by other war crimes tribunals, specifically those in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia. These tribunal statutes and decisions together were the bases for advancements in international gender law, and we see the Iraq Tribunal as part of this progression. Because this body of international law on gender crimes is very new, it is necessary to view the Iraq Tribunal as another forum for the advancement of a progressive vision for women's rights, not only in the Mideast region, but globally.

Hanaa Edwar of the Women's Alliance for a Democratic Iraq (WAFDI) speaks to the Iraqi Community Meeting in London



# BURMA

## BRINGING WOMEN'S VOICES TO PEACE NEGOTIATIONS AND DEMOCRACY BUILDING

The Global Justice Center's work in Burma exemplifies how international legal norms and mechanisms must be applied during conflict. In order to ensure that the processes themselves are truly democratic, and that women are prepared and positioned to access decision-making and leadership roles within a new government, the GJC has advised women leaders on how to use international law to require women's participation in constitution drafting, as well as developed strategies for lobbying the Security Council for action on Burma, and then worked with women leaders in New York to implement those strategies.

During a three-day seminar for members of the Women's League of Burma (WLB) in Chiang Mai, Thailand, the Global Justice Center helped women's groups from Burma to develop a model constitution for Burma that is inclusive of gender equality. This model constitution served as a tool for the WLB, who used it to successfully advocate for a 30% quota for women in all branches of government in the draft constitution of the exiled democratic government of Burma.

## LEGAL REMEDIES FOR WAR CRIMES

Responding to concerns raised at the first constitution-drafting seminar, the GJC put together a follow-up training module on how to address crimes of sexual violence against women in Burma. The GJC explored options such as the International Criminal Court and lobbying the UN Security Council. This training led to an ongoing strategy discussion on how to address crimes of sexual violence, and resulted in the WLB refocusing its strategy before the UN Security Council this past October. The WLB and the GJC were rewarded for this effort when the Security Council recognized war crimes against women in its most recent resolution on Burma earlier this year.

Members of the  
Women's League of  
Burma





# PUBLIC EDUCATION

## MEDIA OUTREACH

The Global Justice Center periodically distributes press releases, writes op-eds and engages in other forms of media outreach. Through diverse media outlets, we seek to reach beyond our own constituency to influence public discourse and debate on women's rights advocacy and the meaning of global justice.

## CEDAW CASEBANK

Throughout 2006 the Global Justice Center was working to complete a CEDAW Casebank which brings together, in one place, over 100 domestic cases that have used CEDAW in their opinions. The Casebank is now accessible on our website and can be used by women leaders and other women's rights organizations who are looking for examples of the ways in which CEDAW has been used strategically in domestic law.

## WEBSITE & E-COMMUNICATIONS

The Global Justice Center is committed to public advocacy and outreach. In addition to launching a new website in October of 2006, we have also used other eCommunications technologies to send out several e-News bulletins to our email-list subscribers. These bulletins consist of Global Justice Center-related news as well as summaries of women's human rights news from around the world. Our website serves as a resource to human rights groups, women leaders and other advocates to be able to access our training materials and fact-sheets, link to related organizations and articles, and learn more about the Global Justice Center's unique programs and partner organizations.

## PILOT TRAINING MATERIALS

The GJC developed a unique body of research in preparation for our legal trainings. These materials, many of which have been translated into Arabic and some into Burmese, have been requested by women's groups worldwide who have expressed a need for such comprehensive studies and factsheets on comparative law, the ICC, war crimes tribunal precedents, and 1325 and CEDAW. In addition to sending out materials upon request by women's groups and other partners in the field, we have also posted our materials on our website so they can be accessed by advocates everywhere. Our materials have sparked new requests for training which have led to some of the projects we will develop in 2007.



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## ACHIEVING GLOBAL JUSTICE

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## Worldwide Statistics

Women continue to be vastly underrepresented in national parliaments in most regions. In only 14 countries do they hold 30% or more of the seats, in Northern Africa, Southern and Western Asia and Oceania, they hold less than 10%.



# ADVOCACY

Janet Benshoof speaks  
at the Women's Bar  
Association of  
Massachusetts



## **REACHING OUT TO THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMUNITY**

The Global Justice Center is making an active effort to reach out to other human rights organizations in the field. As part of the work with the Iraqi High Tribunal (IHT), the GJC is spearheading a collaborative effort to submit an Amicus Curiae (friend of the court) brief to the IHT. The GJC has gathered a team of distinguished authors to work on the brief and has collaborated extensively on a related amicus campaign with International Coordination for Gender Justice in Iraq (ICGJI), an international advocacy network seated in the UK Iraqi community. With members of this network, the GJC was invited to speak at the UK Parliament on two occasions to raise awareness about justice for Iraqi women. Through these alliances and projects, the Global Justice Center is fast becoming an agenda-setting voice within the international human rights community.

## **ADVOCACY ON RESOLUTION 1325**

During October 2006, the Global Justice Center was very involved in the United Nations October Advocacy Week on UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. This Resolution, which should be considered binding international law, outlines the guidelines for ensuring gender equality in post-conflict situations, and advocates for the full participation of women in post-conflict democratization efforts. During this week, the GJC organized a panel discussion entitled "Legal Enforcement of SCR 1325," which featured GJC clients Basma Fakri of WAFDI and Thin Thin Aung of the WLB. (October 23, 2006). Also as part of the week, the Global Justice Center's Burma consultant set up meetings with U.N. missions and Security Council members, prepared materials and press releases, and arranged speaking events for GJC clients.

## **PRESENTATIONS AT LAWYERS' EVENTS AND BAR ASSOCIATIONS**

Presentations at lawyers' events and bar associations

Global justice necessitates that the legal community here in the United States is informed about the issues that are going on around the world, and especially the ways in which US policies affect women overseas. Throughout 2006, Global Justice Center President Janet Benshoof has been asked to speak at a number of bar association meetings, including at the City Bar Association of NY, the Massachusetts Bar Association, the Women's Bar Association and the International Law Association about her experience doing women's rights work both domestically and abroad. The Global Justice Center views these invitations as critical opportunities to spread our vision of global justice to the legal community here at home.

# OUR FUTURE

2007 promises to be yet another groundbreaking year for the GJC. We are already working on a number of exciting projects in new regions, and we continue to learn and grow from our partners across the world. Below is an introduction to where our work is headed in our third year:

## **GENDER JUSTICE AT THE ICC: THE CASE OF DARFUR**

Any sustainable and lasting peace process necessitates upholding and protecting the equal rights of women and increasing their access to justice. With the referral of Sudan to the International Criminal Court by the UN Security Council, a window of opportunity has been created to ensure that international human rights standards and legal accountability for all forms of gender violence are guaranteed to women victims of the Darfur conflict. The GJC is putting together a body of research on local laws, a team of expert trainers, and a coalition of partner organizations to organize and implement a training on war crimes for women leaders in Darfur.

## **IMPLEMENTING INTERNATIONAL LAW: CENTRAL ASIA**

The consolidation of new democracies can be a long process that requires continual monitoring and support. As a member of the UN NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, the Global Justice Center has been asked to apply its legal expertise and experience in developing trainings on the national implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 in order to promote women's involvement in governance, peace and security processes, for governments and NGO leaders in the Central Asia region.

## **NATIONAL JUSTICE AND PEACE: COLOMBIA**

The Justice and Peace Law (JPL) is the statute that creates the legal framework for demobilizing and prosecuting the paramilitaries in Colombia. Colombia, as a State Party to CEDAW and the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence Against Women "Convention of Belém do Pará," has a duty under international law to take positive measures to prohibit and prevent gender-based violence. The GJC will use these international instruments to provide women with legal arguments and advocacy techniques to ensure that the Justice Peace Law Tribunal uses the highest standards of international criminal law.



Dr. Kajan of WAFDI  
at the GJC/WAFDI  
Training at the Dead  
Sea, Jordan



# OUR PARTNERS

## **NGO WORKING GROUP ON WOMEN, PEACE, AND SECURITY (NGOWG):**

The NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security was formed in May 2000 to advocate for a United Nations Security Council resolution on women, peace and security. Following the unanimous adoption of SCR 1325 in October 2000, the group began the work of pressing for its full implementation.

## **WOMEN'S ALLIANCE FOR A DEMOCRATIC IRAQ (WAFDI):**

The Women's Alliance for a Democratic Iraq is an international non-partisan and non-profit women's rights organization dedicated to a free and democratic Iraq. WAFDI's vision of equality is grounded in the values of the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, among other human rights statutes.

## **WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF BURMA (WLB):**

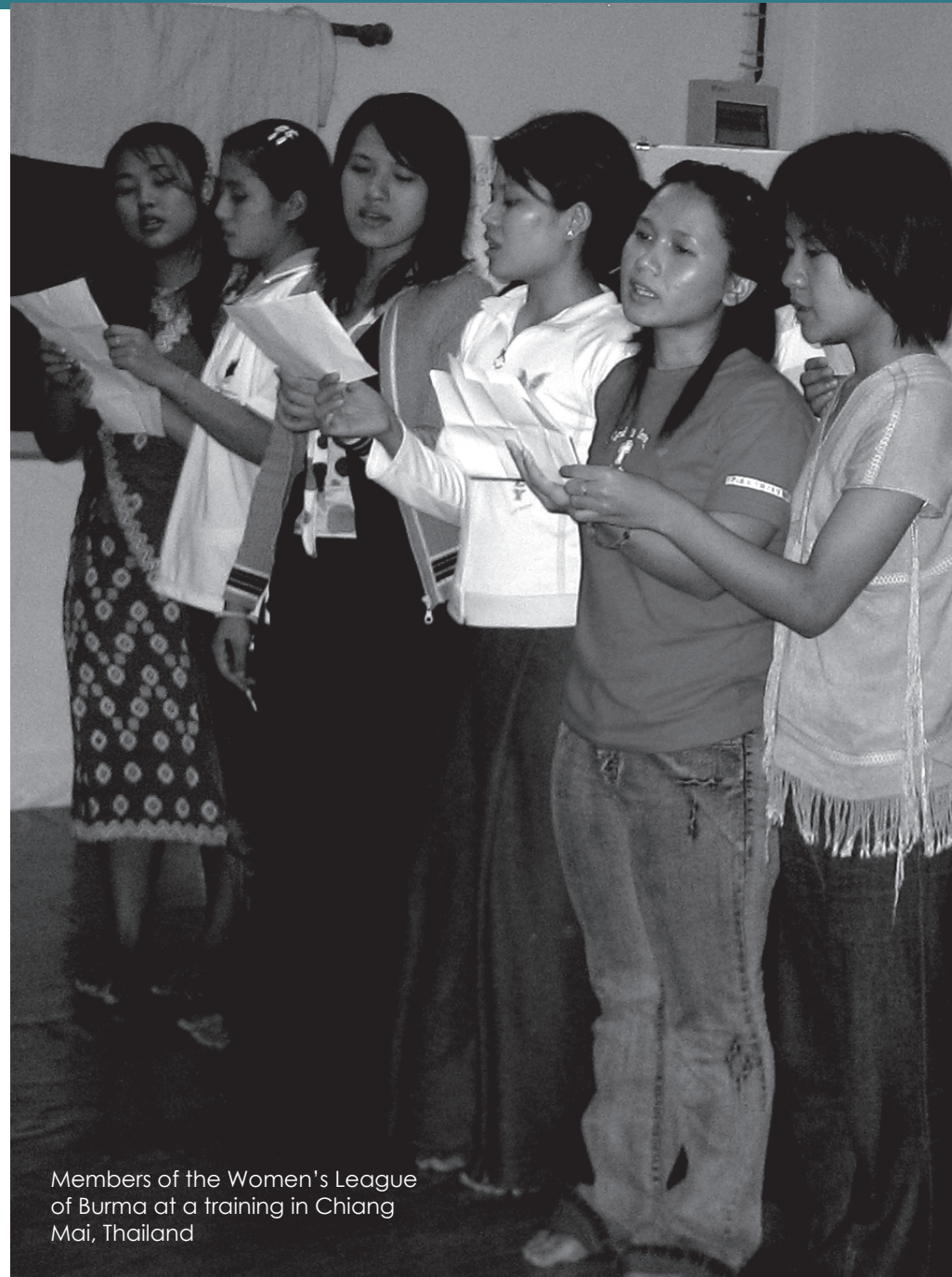
The Women's League of Burma is an umbrella organization comprised of twelve women's rights groups in exile from Burma that are dedicated to women's empowerment, human rights and democracy. Their aim is to enable women's participation in all spheres of life and in particular, to facilitate women's involvement in the national movement for peace, democracy and reconciliation.

## **WOMEN'S LINK WORLDWIDE:**

Women's Link Worldwide is an international organization promoting gender equality through legal avenues. It works to advance women's rights through the implementation of international human rights law, and the use of tribunals and strategic litigation.

## **INTERNATIONAL COORDINATION FOR GENDER JUSTICE IN IRAQ (ICGJI):**

International Coordination for Gender Justice in Iraq (ICGJI) is a new organization being created to parallel the efforts of GJC work with the Women's Alliance for a Democratic Iraq and the Iraqi High Tribunal Judges and Prosecutors. Based in London, the ICGJI works with Iraqi and non-Iraqi organizations committed to promoting gender justice in Iraq through international advocacy and public education.



Members of the Women's League of Burma at a training in Chiang Mai, Thailand

# OUR TEAM: 2006

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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The Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation

The Nathan Cummings Foundation

The British Commonwealth Office

Anonymous



# FINANCIALS

## INCOME

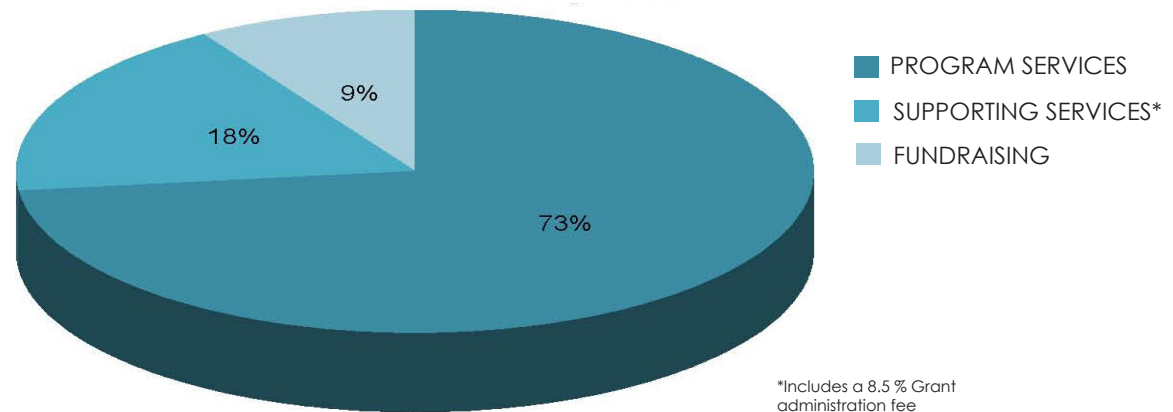
2005 & 2006 Total

Individual Contributions	\$621,300.00
Foundation Grants	\$204,000.00
Interest	\$ 727.88
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$826,027.88</b>

## EXPENSES

Program Services	\$520,192.82
Supporting Services*	\$128,266.72
Fundraising	\$ 64,133.36
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$712,592.90</b>
Change in Net Assets	\$113,434.98
Fixed Assets	\$ (36,141.30)
Security Deposit*	\$ (13,437.00)
<b>Net Assets, End of 2006</b>	<b>\$ 63,856.68</b>

## GJC EXPENSES





**Global  
Justice Center**

Human Rights Through the Rule of Law

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