

SPRING

newsletter 2009

Creating a World of Difference



WOMANKIND
WORLDWIDE



LAS MUJERES
QUEREMOS VIVIR
LIBRES DE
VIOLENCIA...

20 years of improving women's lives

ACTIVISM

POLICY

EVENTS

REAL LIVES

NEW ISSUES



Welcome to WOMANKIND Worldwide



Women's human rights and development have come a long way. 10 December 2008 marked the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which set out the basic principles at the heart of the human-rights movement and has enabled change for millions.

2009 marks the 30th anniversary of CEDAW – the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women – often referred to as the 'international bill of rights for women', to which most governments have signed up. 1995 saw the Beijing Platform for Action, which identified 10 critical areas of concern about women's rights, following which governments committed themselves to a range of measures to improve women and girls' lives. And in 2009 WOMANKIND marks its 20th anniversary.

But despite all the conventions, treaties and commitments, we still have a long way to go: 70% of the world's poorest people are women and girls, one in three women is beaten, coerced into sex or otherwise abused – and women account for just 17% of all parliamentarians worldwide.

So WOMANKIND will continue to engage in the struggle for women's rights and development – alongside our 34 partner organisations. November saw the annual '16 Days of Activism' for the

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elimination of violence against women. In Bolivia, partners held press conferences and meetings to raise awareness of violence – and campaigned for changes in the law against family or domestic violence. Our partners in Peru encouraged people to wear purple ribbons; and statistics emblazoned across banners highlighted government failings in domestic-violence legislation.

Each edition of this newsletter celebrates WOMANKIND's achievements – made possible with your support and passion over 20 years. Please continue to stand alongside us as we build on the successes of the past.

Partnerships worldwide

Throughout this newsletter you'll read about WOMANKIND's partners. We don't have a one-size-fits-all model of development, but fund and support organisations in their own communities. We support them to advocate for change at all levels – and our policy work is informed by the real challenges women face every day. The organisations vary in size, capacity and context – but we all share a commitment to ending discrimination and a belief that women, when given the opportunity, can be a powerful force for change.

Read all of **WOMANKIND's** latest news, and find out more about our work and our overseas partners on our website www.womankind.org.uk Make sure you receive our regular e-bulletin: ebulletin@womankind.org.uk or call Julia on 0207 549 0360

news and views



Cyclone Nisha

Four years on from the devastating tsunami, last November the Irula people faced another natural disaster — Tamil Nadu state in southern India was being battered by cyclonic storm 'Nisha'. Nearly 2,500 villages and 800,000 people were affected by flooding.

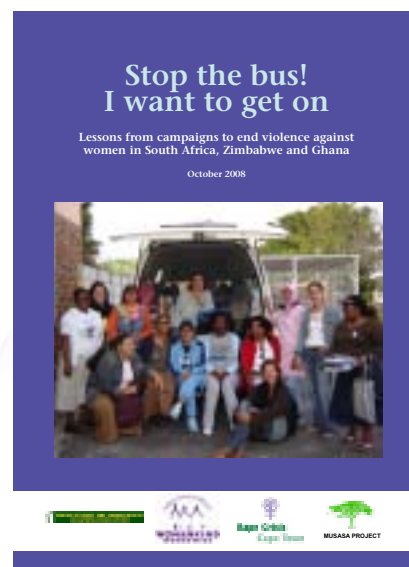
D. Reuben Solomon is the Director of WOMANKIND's partner there: 'We'd already had a major power cut. Then, the whole area was devastated by Cyclone Nisha: many of the Irula people in the 68 villages we work in were unable to get food or find shelter. All the staff of ITWWS, as well as our self-help group leaders, did essential relief work. Because the government hadn't started distributing basic supplies, villagers were very thankful for our help. 'Cyclone Nisha arrived just as we were about to start our '16 Days of Activism' [against gender violence] campaign! We cancelled the first three days, but on 9 December we held a big event to commemorate Human Rights Day.'

● **Breakthrough in Albania** On 20 November 2008, the Albanian Parliament voted in favour of a revised Electoral Code — in future, one in every three political candidates must be a woman. So, the national elections this June will see the number of women MPs increase to 30%, way above the UK figure. Albania currently has the lowest level of women's political participation in Europe. Just 7% of the national parliament is made up of women and, at local level, women take up just 3% of decision-making positions. WOMANKIND has been supporting its partners in Albania in their campaign for better women's representation — and to have a say in policies that affect their lives. Diana Culi, the President of the Independent Forum of Albanian Women, said: 'We won. It was a long battle and we are very grateful to WOMANKIND for its support.'

Stop that bus!

'Much of the success of this campaign is due to the women who worked to make sure our workshops were well-attended and found fertile ground for the seed they planted. Hoping to be there for harvest-time next year!'

A good campaign needs clear messages, careful planning — and allow for effective monitoring. Based on recent successes, WOMANKIND and partners in Ghana, Zimbabwe and South Africa have produced *Stop the Bus! I want to get on* to help activists run campaigns to raise awareness about violence against women. Money is tight, but where enthusiasm is abundant, these guidelines will be invaluable. It's available to download at www.womankind.org.uk





From dispute resolution to counselling HIV-positive women, WOMANKIND's Ghanaian partners are there to help.

bringing law to your doorstep

In October, WOMANKIND and our partners, FIDA-Ghana travelled to the peri-urban town of Dodowa in the Greater Accra Region. Close to the Shai Hills Resource Reserve, Dodowa was the home of the Shai people for centuries until they were turned out by the British colonisers. The region is also known for traditional bead-makers who have been making jewellery for hundreds of years. Today Dodowa is a vibrant, mainly subsistence-farming community. The main crops are mangoes and vegetables which women sell at the local market.

We drove through the mango trees to the Town Council building to meet FIDA-Ghana's paralegal worker, Remner Noah. Remner introduced us to Maku Doe, a woman living with HIV, whom he has been supporting. Because of the stigma associated with HIV and AIDS, she has not disclosed her status to anyone in the community.

Maku's story

'I have four children: two boys and two girls, one of whom is disabled. I'm a petty trader and sell at the local market. 'When my husband died, his family accused me of being a witch and of bringing bad luck on my disabled daughter and late husband. They threw me out of my home and I had to move back to the family home in Dodowa. 'Then my father died. Two men came forward claiming that he had illegally built a house on their land – despite the village chief disputing this. When I told Remner about the dispute, he became involved and is currently seeking support from the paramount chief (more senior than a village chief) to help move the case along.'

Following the death of her husband, Maku was often sick and was eventually referred to a hospital in a nearby town. The medical staff tested her for HIV and she was given a positive diagnosis.



Clockwise from top: Four of the volunteer paralegals, their colleague Remner Noah, a woman stallholder at the market

Affected by HIV and AIDS

One of five WOMANKIND partners in Ghana, the International Federation of Women Lawyers in Ghana (FIDA-GHANA) 'brings law to the doorstep of the people' — usually poor, rural communities with little access to education or legal support — through legal volunteers. Many women in these communities are unable to make legal claims in relation to property — or to maintain themselves and their children. This is often because they have been infected with HIV or are affected by having to care for sick family members. Because of the stigma, HIV-positive women often neglect their reproductive-health needs, fail to access information on HIV and AIDS — and even postpone their treatment, fearing abuse and rejection by their families and communities. Many positive women are dismissed from their jobs and face the loss of their children and property.

HIV and AIDS in Ghana - the statistics

Although Ghana's current national HIV prevalence rate stands at 1.9% (National AIDS Control Programme, 2008), some regions are as high as 8.9%. Women are disproportionately affected; of the 264,481 people currently living with HIV and AIDS, 58% are female (NACP, 2008). The Ghanaian Government and many NGOs have adopted the 'ABC' approach (abstinence, be faithful, condom use) which is widely accepted by HIV and AIDS practitioners as simplistic, as it fails to address issues of gender inequality and women's human rights.

'I still remember the date: May 10th 2004. After they broke the news to me I was so upset that I decided to take some poison and end my life there and then. I never wanted to leave the hospital.' But at about 9pm some nurses persuaded her to go home. Maku believed that the diagnosis was a death sentence and she believed that she would die but, at the same time, she didn't want to leave behind her paralysed daughter. When she got home, Maku couldn't eat or talk much and spent most of her time crying.

Looking to the future

But when Maku returned to the hospital for a check-up, she was referred to Remner — as a FIDA-Ghana paralegal, Renner also provides voluntary counselling and testing (VCT) services in Dodowa. Remner began making home visits to Maku, when he'd talk to her and encourage her to take part in FIDA-Ghana's

programme activities. These included role plays and storytelling in the community to highlight the need for people to get tested for HIV. At the same events, the paralegals also provide VCT services. 'Slowly, I began to meet other women and men who were HIV-positive. I started to become more optimistic about my future.' Because of the stigma associated with HIV and AIDS, Maku didn't want to tell anyone about her status. But she had to tell one friend: in Ghanaian law, in order to receive anti-retroviral treatment (ART or anti-HIV drugs), people living with HIV and AIDS (PLWHAs) have to be accompanied in case they react badly.

Paying for treatment

Maku struggles to pay five Ghanaian cedis (about £3) for her ART every month. Although she is part of Ghana's health-insurance scheme, there is no cover for HIV or AIDS treatment. The drugs are heavily subsidised by the Government (the real cost would be 150 cedis (£83)). The Ghana AIDS Commission provided Maku with a six-month grant to buy drugs but this didn't cover the additional medication she needed. When the grant ended, Remner helped raise funds from the local community to help her pay. Maku says: 'Because of the support FIDA-Ghana's paralegals have given me for the last five years, I am very happy. I nearly harmed myself, but things are different now. I feel sure I'll be able to go on paying for my treatment.'



1992
A buffalo was provided to every woman in three tribal villages in India

1998
WOMANKIND enabled partners to launch Peru's first legal-advice service for survivors of domestic violence



1998
On 25 November, the International Day for the Eradication of Violence Against Women, WOMANKIND launched the first White Ribbon Campaign in the UK

2001
Our Irula partners had land returned by the Forest Department — because of their contribution to environmental conservation in south India

1989
WOMANKIND founded on the ethos that if women can make their voices heard, they will improve their lives, their children's lives, and their communities

1991
Helped buy 'safe house' in Recife, Brazil for street girls vulnerable to drugs, violence and death squads



1995
UN Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing attended by women from 185 countries. Resulting Platform for Action described as an 'agenda for women's empowerment'



20 years of improving women's lives

Between 1989 and 2008 WOMANKIND Worldwide helped around 10 million women and their families in 71 countries

2002

Ethiopian Rural Women's Rights Promotion Campaign reached 102 community leaders and 2,760 students in three junior schools

**2002**

Massive campaign in South Africa about the Domestic Violence Act and women's rights — raised awareness of around one million people

2004

Lobbied successfully for gender-equality clause in the Afghan Constitution

2004

100,000 people from four Ethiopian districts participated in the 'Whole Body Event', including 20,000 girls (including 11-year-old Ement Garedewe, pictured) and 200 new brides who had not undergone female genital mutilation (FGM)

2006

Our Bolivian partner, RED ADA, used local and national media to address 500,000 people on women's political participation, sexual and reproductive rights, and violence against women

**2006**

Counselling, paralegal services and medical referrals provided to over 7000 women in South Africa's Eastern Cape who had experienced violence

2007

After many years of lobbying, WOMANKIND helped secure domestic-violence legislation in Albania, Ghana and Zimbabwe

2008

Albania's Parliament passes the Gender Equality Law — there are now 30% gender quotas for women in the legislative, executive and the judiciary

2009

WOMANKIND celebrates 20 years of improving women's lives

**2008**

Over 6,000 Ethiopians receive counselling and HIV testing — and 44,000 marginalised Fuga people learned about their rights



Zimbabwe healing



In Shona, Musasa means tree — and a temporary place of rest. WOMANKIND's partner the Musasa Project works tirelessly to prevent violence against women and runs Zimbabwe's only shelter. Ednah Bhala, Musasa's Director, talks to Tsitsi Matekaire, our Southern Africa programme manager.

'Aid in Zimbabwe for women's rights work is limited. Most donors are focusing on projects and organisations engaging with the political crisis directly. This is seen as the 'real' human rights work. Human rights are viewed mainly from the political perspective and women's rights are not necessarily viewed as human rights in the Zimbabwe context.

'The need for humanitarian support is great in Zimbabwe and women are the most in need. People need the basics of life — food, clean water, hospitals and education. So women are also focusing on practical needs as opposed to strategic and legal issues. The limited aid being given to women's organisations has had an impact on Musasa. Service provision is not being prioritised and we have fewer resources for the shelter. Companies can no longer donate food and clothing as they are facing economic challenges. As a result we have had to cut down on food to the women and children in the shelter.'

Message for WOMANKIND supporters

'The political violence during and after the elections in March and June 2008 has affected the fabric of life in Zimbabwe. Women were the most affected — they were raped and gang-raped. In the agreement

between the political leaders this is scarcely mentioned and it looks like they are proceeding as if the atrocities were never committed. There is a need for national healing to ensure that communities can move forward.

'The same happened with the Murambatsvina/'Clean up the Filth' Operation in 2005 — atrocities were committed and no healing took place. Zimbabwe is building a strong culture of violence. The impact on women of the violence is long term — the trauma and stigma makes it so difficult for them to integrate back into communities.

'At the peak of the political violence Musasa sheltered 16 women and 22 children. As Musasa we feel we need to be doing more with the women affected by the political violence. We need to follow up on them and find out what specific support they need. We can do this through the churches and other community-based organisations. We have strong networks and we can use our alliances with WOMANKIND and others so that the survivors are not further victimised.'

Musasa's priorities in 2009

'We want to see the effective implementation of the Domestic Violence Act. We are interested in ensuring

'Zimbabwe is building a strong culture of violence. The impact on women is long term'

needs

that it is enforced and that it is not just another document. The government has not put in any money to implement it; it is the UN agencies that have put in resources. Our government should do more and not push its responsibilities to UN agencies.

'At Musasa we have trained police officers in six provinces but this is inadequate given how many need training.

'The Ministry of Gender and Women's Affairs has simplified the Domestic Violence Act so that it is accessible to the public. We now have the resources to translate the Act into Shona and Ndebele.

Breaking new ground

'All HIV projects should look at the impact of HIV and AIDS on women, so we have initiated an "Engendering Change" project in partnership with the Matabeleland Aids Council. We explore how domestic violence and women's gender roles intersect with HIV and AIDS. Interventions are then adjusted to ensure that they take into account women's needs. For example, the Matabeleland AIDS Council is now providing mobile voluntary testing and counselling services so that women do not walk long distances.

'Musasa is breaking new ground by bringing discussions about violence against women into the churches. Churches used to be silent on women's issues and violence against women. We're currently working with the Salvation Army, the Seventh Day Adventists and the Anglican Church.

'We have had to cut down on food to the women and children in the shelter.'

Yes we can?



Jacob Silberger/ Panos Pictures

'Obama has said a lot of good things on women's rights during his campaign — however, we will need to see the policies of the new USA Government on violence against women. We hope Obama's statements on violence against women were not just a strategy to win the support of women voters. The proof of the pudding will be in the eating.

'Zimbabwe is under targeted sanctions and we need to see how the new government will deal with the issue of Zimbabwe and the sanctions.'

Hopes for Zimbabwe?

'If things get back to normal we do have the chance to advance women's rights. But a lot of gains have been eroded — we need to rebuild not only the economy and political frameworks, but also the women's movement. The political crisis has divided and fragmented the women's movement but the foundations are there. 'Zimbabwe needs a new government urgently. We hope that the restrictive laws such as the Public Order and Security Act and the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act will be repealed so that NGOs can operate effectively again.'

supporting

GRAB
POTS
AND
PANS
AND
SPOONS
AND
MAKE
A
NOISE



Over £4,000 was raised in December when copies of a book written exclusively for WOMANKIND by Jackie Kay, Ali Smith and Jeanette Winterson were auctioned.

Grab Pots and Pans and Spoons and Make a Noise was written for our 'Speaking Out' event celebrating International Women's Day last March. Inspired by the words of a South African woman who benefited from WOMANKIND's work, the story – written by each author in 'relay' – has been made into a beautifully bound 36-page book, designed by Sarah Wood. If you missed out on this opportunity to make a bid you're still in with a chance! We are holding another silent auction exclusively for supporters and their friends. Further information, including the Terms and Conditions, can be found on our website.

To make a bid please call 020 7549 0360 or visit www.womankind.org.uk

www.womankind.org.uk

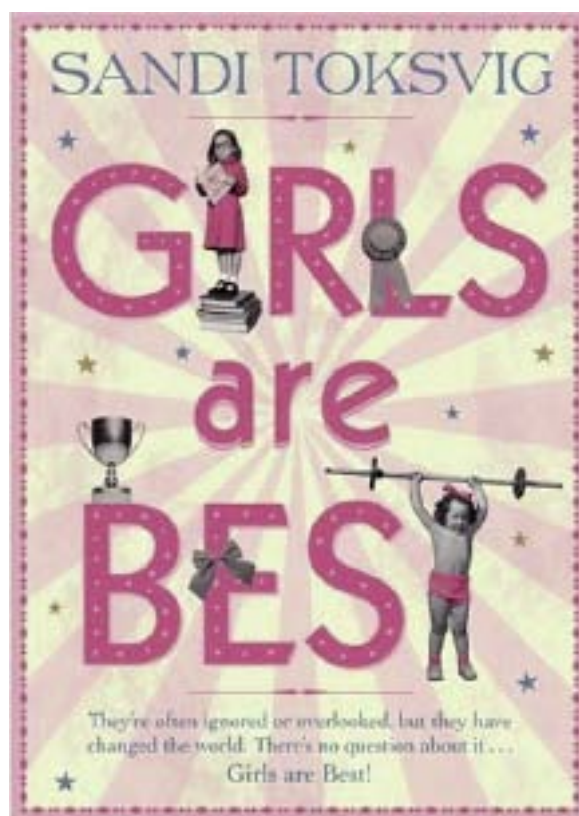
Literary largesse



WOMANKIND patron, Sandi Toksvig, has dedicated her latest book, *Girls are Best*, to WOMANKIND Worldwide.

This children's book looks at women who have achieved great things but have been overlooked or ignored by history. Alongside potted 'herstories', jokes and great illustrations, Sandi gets her readers to really think by including questions with startling answers, such as 'How much of the food on earth is produced by women today?' (Answer: 80 per cent); and 'In how many countries in the world do women earn the same as men?' Answer: None.)

We are delighted that Sandi has dedicated this book to WOMANKIND's work and the women we work with. *Girls are Best*, *Doubleday, Hbk, 224 pp, £ 7.99.*

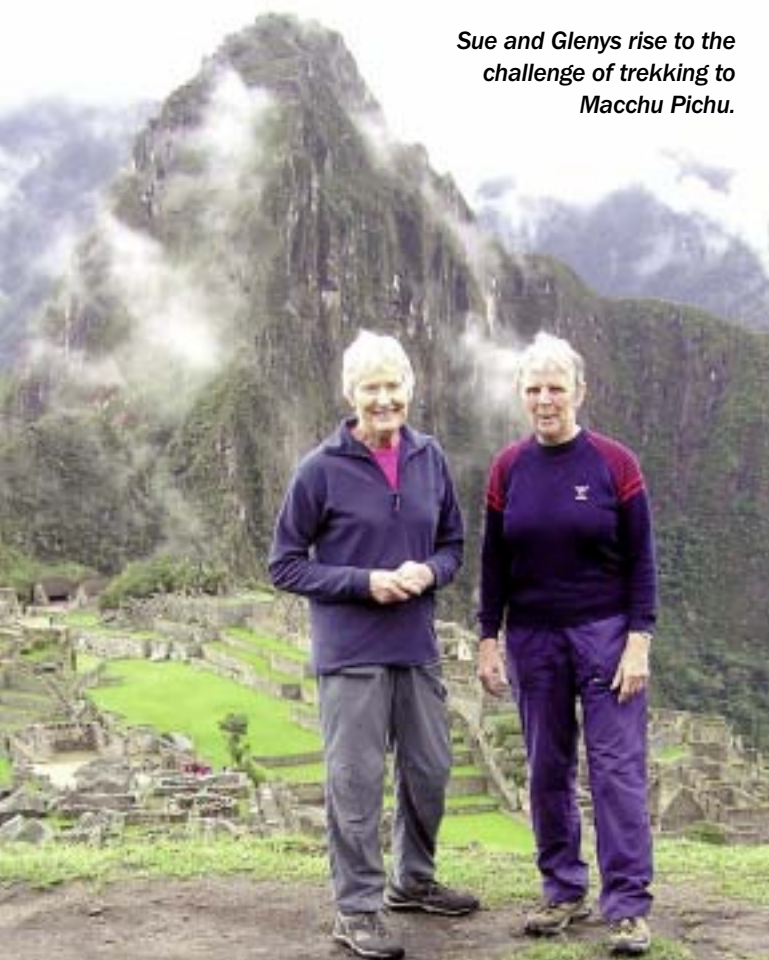


our work...

Walking for WOMANKIND

Congratulations to Sue Davies and Glenys Gunderson for trekking across the mountains of Peru and raising over £4,300 for WOMANKIND Worldwide. Sue and Glenys — both turning 70 this year — even overcame altitude sickness to complete this real fundraising challenge! They then travelled to Bolivia to visit WOMANKIND's partner organisations and see at first hand how women there benefit from your support. 'We went to a radio station aimed at women in far-flung corners. Then we visited several "mothers' centres" which provide a good meeting-place for very active groups of women, who get training in crafts — and learn about their sexual and reproductive rights, and rights in relation to marriage and violence against women.' Throughout the year supporters take on different fundraising challenges. To hear more, contact Julia at julia@womankind.org.uk or call 020 7549 0360.

Sue and Glenys rise to the challenge of trekking to Macchu Pichu.



Speaking out

WOMANKIND has relaunched its Speakers' Network. Our group of volunteer speakers in London and the South East gives talks to community groups, schools, churches and networks. Do you know of a group that would like to hear a talk about our work? Or perhaps you would like to become a speaker? We're looking for people who are willing to stand up and speak out for women around the world — and who are happy to champion WOMANKIND's work in the community. Businesswoman Anita Woodcock joined up six months ago:

'It was a very exciting prospect, and a personal challenge. The Lewisham branch of the United Nations Association asked us to lead a discussion on "Women — the oppressed majority" to mark International Human Rights Day. The audience was welcoming and attentive and, by the end of the session, had committed to put forward a proposal to national conference calling for international funding in conflict areas to be needs-led rather than donor led. I hope this will encourage funding for the work of Afghan women's groups like WOMANKIND's partner AWRC.

'If you would like to join us, I can promise you great training and support to prepare you for the role; a real feeling that you can make a difference — and an opportunity to get to know lovely people at WOMANKIND and in your audiences.'

All you need is enthusiasm and a little time to spare. Please contact Julia at julia@womankind.org.uk or call 020 7549 0360.



COVER STORY

Corcora, Antioquia, 2002. At a rally in the Colombian countryside, this woman holds a placard saying 'We women want to live free of violence.' Photograph: Paul Smith/ Panos Pictures

IF YOU DO NOT ALREADY GIVE VIA STANDING ORDER, PLEASE CONSIDER FILLING IN THIS FORM

This is a simple way to give your support on a regular basis, and will make a world of difference to WOMANKIND. You can give monthly, quarterly or annually. Please send the form back to WOMANKIND, not to your bank. MANY THANKS

STANDING ORDER FORM	
I would like to make a regular gift to WOMANKIND	
To the manager of	<input type="text"/> Bank
Bank address	<input type="text"/>
	Postcode <input type="text"/>
Please pay WOMANKIND Worldwide, a/c 01622473, sort code 30/96/38 at Lloyds TSB plc, 399 Oxford Street, London W1R 2BU: on the <input type="text"/> day of <input type="text"/> 20 <input type="text"/>	
And every succeeding <input type="checkbox"/> month <input type="checkbox"/> quarter <input type="checkbox"/> year <input type="checkbox"/> until further notice the sum of £ <input type="text"/> (enter amount)	
My account no.	<input type="text"/>
Sort code	<input type="text"/>
Name	<input type="text"/>
Address	<input type="text"/>
	Postcode <input type="text"/>
Signature	<input type="text"/>
Date	<input type="text"/>



I would like to give (please tick) £250 £100 £60 £35 £20

Other amount £

I wish to pay by Visa / Mastercard / Maestro / Charitycard

My card number

Start date/Issue Expiry date Security no.

Cardholder's signature

Name

E-mail address

Address

We'd like to let you know from time to time what we're achieving with your money, and other aspects of our work. You can always tell us, at any point, if you'd like to stop, or only get in touch at certain times. Please tick this box only if you do NOT wish to hear from us all.

Please tick if you DO NOT wish your gift to be acknowledged.

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Let us reclaim the tax on your donations. Your gift will be worth 28% more to us at no extra cost to you – imagine what an extra 28p in every pound you give us could do!

Simply tick the box and fill in your name and address below

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Signature

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To qualify for Gift Aid, what you pay in income tax or capital gains must at least equal the amount we will claim in the year.

N0109

Can we help you?

If your interests and priorities touch ours, why not call us for a chat to talk about how you might like to support us, or to see if we could work together.

Please contact Julia Czastka on 020 7549 0360 or at julia@womankind.org.uk

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