

“Gender and Diversity in the Economy: Role of Women Entrepreneurs in Korea”

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The 10th APEC WLN 2005, in Daegu, hosted by the Korean Women Entrepreneurs Association (KEWA) was successfully carried out with the participation of 500 women in business, NGOs, academia, and gender related policy makers including 150 participants from abroad. In addition to the 4 sub-themes, such as Microcredit program to support women owned small business, Youth and Women’s Business Incubating Center, Access to ICT, Networking for trade promotion, the program was enriched by the following meetings and events: APEC DEW at Sookmyung Women’s University and Korea-Australia Women Entrepreneurs Meeting prior to the Opening of the APEC WLN, CWBC meeting, Seminar in commemoration of the 10th Anniversary of WLN. Among Recommendations were: 1) Secretariat for WLN 2) Promote gender sensitive policies implementation and recognition within the APEC economies 3) Use of sex segregated data and gender sensitive analysis for Project development and assessment in APEC.

Three years after the APEC WLN 2005, the 1st AWEC was organized in Seoul by the KEWA with successful participation of 400 women entrepreneurs including 150 from 20 countries and economies abroad. In 2009 the 2nd AWEC held in Seoul again, organized by KEWA, enjoyed the expanded participation to 30 countries and economies including among dignitaries Vice-Prime Minister of Vietnam and President Françoise Foning of Federation des Conseils des femmes Entrepreneurs Mondiale (FCEM). Asian Women Entrepreneurs Secretariat is demanded to be established by the President of FCEM. The networking and sisterhood linkage were encouraged among participating organizations under the partnership program with APWIN. After 2005 and in particular after AWEC in 2008 and 2009, by the request of Women entrepreneurs and with the support of the governmental budget, KEWA, accomplished many training and educational programs: MBA study and training for women CEOs, Nationwide management training, Education to foster Young Women CEOs, Administrating Women Business Mentoring Service. Other priorities were the participation of KEWA members to APEC WLN meetings, as well as to FCEM, support of e-biz trading through the Internet Shopping Malls owned by women entrepreneurs, on-Line matching between buyers and women entrepreneurs, overseas marketing support to secure trade lines and export consulting channels were also implemented. And finally electronic Catalogue publishing and electronic promotion of women owned enterprises were accomplished.