

# NTS-Asia



## Gender & Security

*A Special Edition on the Initiatives of WISCOMP, Foundation for Universal Responsibility of His Holiness the Dalai Lama – A network member of NTS-Asia*

### Foreword

Women in Security, Conflict Management and Peace (WISCOMP), Foundation for Universal Responsibility of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, based in New Delhi, locates its work at the interface of gender, security and peacebuilding. Consequently ‘engendering security’ has been integral to the programs of WISCOMP. **From the outset WISCOMP has sought to contribute to an inclusive, people oriented discourse on issues of security, which respects diversity and foregrounds the perspectives of women and the hitherto marginalized.** Engendering the security discourse is important because it enables us to see gender as explanatory in understanding conflict within the

security discourse. It brings in that half of the population whose voices are marginalized in the mega narratives of inter and intra state conflicts. Most importantly since men and women experience conflict differently, it taps new perspectives located in women’s experience of providing day-to-day security and their more comprehensive and integrated perspectives on what constitutes security.

**While all its programs reflect this overall commitment, in 2003 a special research initiative was launched to examine the linkages between gender and security across South Asia.** Titled *Gender and Non-traditional Formulations of Security* this initiative sought to contribute to a corpus of knowledge, both empirical and theoretical, focused around the manner in which gender and non-traditional variables of security intersect in sites of intra-state civic conflicts across South Asia. While acknowledging that attempts had been made to analyze conflicts across a multiplicity of non-traditional security sectors, WISCOMP felt that a gender analysis across these sectors had not been attempted in a systematic manner. This was the gap that the research project sought to fulfill.

As part of this project, a number of studies, focusing on different aspects of Non Traditional Security in distinct regional settings, were commissioned. The style of collaborative research originally envisaged, enabled researchers at different levels of seniority to engage in a non-hierarchical space to co-write monographs, engage in peer reviews, and interact with other experts in the field who provided inputs and feedback as the studies began to take shape. The outcome has been the creation of engaged communities of scholars who began to revisit security issues through a lens that was “non-traditional”. An

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insight that emerged was that looking through the gender lens was per se a “non-traditional” approach that brought to the table innovative insights, and opened up new thinking spaces on the way security could be re-conceptualized. Given the diversity of the studies that were commissioned as part of the series titled “En-gendering security”, the original plan of action had not imposed a common methodology. Researchers were encouraged to come up with a **range of methodologies** in the course of their writings, fieldwork and explorations depending on the subject at hand. The use of ethnography, narratives, oral histories through songs and ballads formed part of the repertoire that was used to tap women’s lived experiences in sites of overt as well as congealed conflict.

**WISCOMP made a conscious effort to involve scholars, policy makers and practitioners in this exercise and, in the course of the project, was able to sensitize a number of younger scholars and university students on the emerging vocabulary of what we hope is a discourse in the making.** The roundtable meetings, the review conferences and the regional meetings played a significant role in this attempt to create new epistemic communities engaged in rethinking security in a manner that is gender sensitive, inclusive and holistic.

The explorations on gender and security have however not been restricted to the space provided by this special research initiative. **In fact the percolation of ideas generated as a result of this project into our other programs is a measure of success and a testimony to the power of these new ideas on security.** Two such programs are the action research project that WISCOMP facilitates in Jammu and Kashmir and the WISCOMP Scholar of Peace program.

**The action research project titled *Women Building Constituencies of Peace* maps and documents the everyday insecurities of women as they traverse militarized spaces even while it simultaneously captures the agentive moments in the lives of these same women as they negotiate these everyday insecurities to expand constituencies of peace.** They do this through a range of activities such as active listening, trauma counseling, educational and media initiatives, and other projects that facilitate democratic participation and the quest for a “just”

peace. Called *Athwaas* (a Kashmiri word that means a handshake) this project seeks to understand how women’s initiatives can emerge as agencies for personal and social change even in the midst of a range of insecurities associated with violence and forced displacement. This process has been documented under the WISCOMP series titled *Stakeholders in Dialogue*.

Another program where the outcome of these new ideas on security has made its presence felt is the **WISCOMP Scholar of Peace program. In many ways this can be seen as a significant research spin off that has specifically taken the form of new scholarship on non-traditional security issues.**

Some of the WISCOMP scholar of peace publications that have been generated around issues of gender and non-traditional security formulations following the initiation of the project on Engendering Security include the following:

Sudha Ramachandran, Sonia Jabbar, *The Shades of Violence: Women and Kashmir*, WISCOMP Perspectives 1 (2003)

Bhabananda Takhellambum, *Women’s Uprising in Manipur: A Legacy Continued*, WISCOMP Perspectives 2, (2003)

Shruba Mukherjee, *Women Cadres of the PWG: Conflict Mongers or Managers*, WISCOMP Discussion Paper 2 (2003)

Minakshi Das, *Taliban’s War on Women: Afghan Refugees in Delhi*, WISCOMP Discussion Paper 5 (2004)

Dolly Kikon, *Experiences of Naga Women in Armed Conflict: Narratives from a Militarized Society*, WISCOMP Perspectives 11 (2004)

Bina Srinivasan, *The Taming of a River: Gender Displacement and Resistance in Anti-Dam Movements*, WISCOMP Perspectives 7 (2004)

Mangalika De Silva, *Violence and Sexuality in the Iconography of the Nation*, WISCOMP Perspectives 9 (2004)

Ammara Durrani, *Troubled Waters of Karachi*, WISCOMP Discussion Paper 7 (2005)

Eranpeni Ezung, *Women in Exile: Tibetan Women's Experience as a Refugee and their Role in Tibet's Protracted Nonviolent Struggle for Survival and Freedom*, WISCOMP Perspectives 13 (2005)

Seema Hussain, *Multi-track Peace Initiatives in India's Northeast*, WISCOMP Perspectives 14 (2005)

Wasbir Hussain, *Home-Makers without the Men: Women-Headed Households in Violence Wracked Assam*, WISCOMP Discussion Paper 8 (2006)

Kamini Karlekar, *Victims and Agents: Refugee Women of the Afghan and Burmese Community in Delhi*, WISCOMP Perspectives 19 (2006)

Shireen Saleem, *Impact of Religious Extremism on Women in Pakistan*, WISCOMP Discussion Paper 11 (2006)

Nirekha De Silva, *Transitional Justice for Women Ex-Combatants in Sri Lanka*, WISCOMP Perspectives 20 (2006)

Kavita Suri, *Impact of Violence on Women's Education in Kashmir*, WISCOMP Discussion Paper 12 (2007)

Oishik Sircar, *Engendering Persecution: Refugee Women, Gender-based Violence and State Responsibility in South Asia*, WISCOMP Discussion Paper 13 (2007)

The Scholar of Peace program has been integral to the academic enrichment component of WISCOMP's work. WISCOMP has consciously tried, through this program, to bridge the gap between policy and practice, the world of academia and the NGO sector, and senior and younger professionals. The major areas in which WISCOMP fellows have done substantial work that have a bearing on understandings of non-traditional formulations of security include:

- ❑ Militarization and armed conflict
- ❑ Justice and reconciliation
- ❑ Law, governance, and conflict resolution

- ❑ Forced migration including conflict-induced and development-induced displacement
- ❑ Identity and politics
- ❑ Human rights

The fellowships have been awarded to a wide cross-section of individuals across **India**; and over the years, a body of work on armed conflict has been generated that has originated from zones of active conflict, particularly the North-east of India and Kashmir. These studies turn the searchlights on “freedom from want” and “freedom from fear” the twin pillars around which alternative understandings of security have been generated.

Geographically the canvas has also extended to cover different parts of South Asia — **Sri Lanka**, from where considerable scholarship has emerged on issues related to justice, dialogue and reconciliation; **Bangladesh**, from where there has been a study related to stateless people and issues of identity; **Pakistan**, where studies have focused on diverse themes such as religious extremism, the role of peace journalism and water security; and **Nepal** where studies on women and armed conflict are currently in progress.

The Scholar of Peace fellowships have contributed to creating new approaches, foregrounded new voices and initiated fresh perspectives by seeking out women with the talent and potential to create and sustain alternative discourses on security and conflict resolution.

**This newsletter examines the studies published under our Scholar of Peace program that have a resonance for understandings on security.** Taken along with the research project on gender and non-traditional formulations of security and the action research on Jammu and Kashmir, they represent a growing body of work that is expected to inspire young scholars and activists to make fresh explorations within this field and provide nuanced inputs to the emerging discourses on new formulations of security.

*The NTS-Asia Secretariat would like to thank the WISCOMP NTS Research Team, in New Delhi for their efforts and contributions in the production of this newsletter.*







## Synergizing Projects related to Non Traditional Security

### **WISCOMP Scholars of Peace (2006)**

Dr. A. Bimol Akoijam (extreme right) leading the discussion on the study on 'The Centrality of Gender in Securing Peace: The Case of Sri Lanka.' Dr. Akoijam is currently working on his fellowship project titled 'Predicaments and Challenges of the Buffer Zone: Women in Conflict-Ridden Manipur'. Seated to his left is Dr. Swarna Rajagopalan, co-editor of the 'Engendering Security Series', which is an outcome of WISCOMP's NTS project.



### **WISCOMP Scholar of Peace (2001)**

Ms. Bina Srinivasan (extreme left) flagging certain crucial points for deliberation on the NTS study on 'Migration and Circles of Insecurity'. Ms. Srinivasan's WISCOMP fellowship project was on 'The Taming of a River: Gender Displacement and Resistance in Anti-Dam Movements'. Also seated at the panel are co-authors of the NTS study Dr. Ranabir Samaddar and Dr. Paula Banerjee, (also a WISCOMP Scholar of Peace - 2000).

**WISCOMP Scholar of Peace (2001)**  
Ms. Chitra Balakrishnan (center) participates in the discussions at the meeting on Gender and Non-Traditional Formulations of Security in South Asia. Ms. Balakrishnan is a lawyer and has worked on a project on 'Research to Evolve Gender-Sensitive and Culture-Specific Models of Alternative Dispute Resolution.' Seated to her left is Dr. Hameeda Hossain, co-author of the study on '*Freedom from Fear, Freedom from Want? Re-thinking Security in Bangladesh.*'



### **WISCOMP Scholar of Peace (2001)**

Ms. Manimala (extreme right) raises crucial issues of concern on the NTS study on 'Gender and Armed Conflict in Kashmir.' Seated to her right is Dr. Sudha Ramachandran, WISCOMP Scholar of Peace (2000), and co-author of the NTS study

## WISCOMP's Scholar of Peace Program

### Shades of Violence: Women and Kashmir

*Sudha Ramachandran and Sonia Jabbar*

*WISCOMP Perspective 1*

This monograph is a collection of articles written in 2000-2001 that **explores the fractured reality of the conflict in Kashmir, and brings forth the multiple, multi-layered complexities of life at a time when the armed conflict had raged for over a decade, leaving in its wake a fierce trail of death and destruction.** By using the gender lens to highlight how life survives in the midst of exploding violence associated with insurgency and counter-insurgency, the collection of articles throws light on the various forms of insecurities that characterize life in a zone of active conflict.

Sudha Ramachandran's articles capture the various forms of violence that widows, mothers and orphans are subjected to and how this violence threatens two dimensions of their security — economic security and physical security. The manner in which the conflict impinges on the security of women is brought out, tellingly, by focusing on a variety of issues ranging from how women define democracy, *azadi* (freedom), peace and how they deal with militant diktats and human rights abuses by Security Forces. The pieces capture the multi-faceted and complex dimensions of the conflict as reflected in the increasing disillusionment with both the guest militants and the Security Forces, the loss of the spirit of *Kashmiriyat*, the aftermath of killings, the breakdown of trust between neighbours and families and the infiltration of religious extremism in a part of the subcontinent where this was essentially unknown.

Sonia Jabbar's special project enabled her, as a freelance journalist to live in Kashmir for six months, molding her insights into the pain and fear experienced by the Kashmiri people. Intended more as a travelogue, what emerged from this project was a series of experiential articles published in national and other journals that explored and interrogated the rhetoric of war, heroism and masculinity and highlighted the manner in which these had marginalized alternative voices. Sonia Jabbar writes with passionate intensity about human rights violations by the security forces and militants, the insecurities and agonies of women caught between two sets of guns, haunted by a specter of unending

violence, and the agony of a community of displaced Hindu Pandits who had lost home, hearth and indeed their universe.

Sonia Jabbar and Sudha Ramachandran speak neither for the militants nor the government of India but for the people of Kashmir, particularly the women. By turning the searchlights on individuals as the unit of analysis the collection explores the notion of "freedom from fear" within a paradigm of security that places people and their concern as the focal point of enquiry.

*Sudha Ramachandran is an independent analyst currently based in Bangalore who has traveled in and written extensively on zones of conflict in South Asia and other parts of the world.*



*Sonia Jabbar is a filmmaker and has traveled extensively in the Kashmir valley researching and writing. She has also been involved in creating two photo installations. She has also made a film on women's narratives from Kashmir titled Autumn's Final Country.*



### Soldiers, Princes and Prostitutes: Violence and Sexuality in the Iconography of the Nation

*Mangalika de Silva*  
*WISCOMP Perspectives 9*

This study is based in a militarized space in Sri Lanka. The ethnographic field within which the study is located is Anuradhapura, situated in the north-central province of Sri Lanka. Once Sri Lanka's ancient capital, Anuradhapura was declared a sacred city in 1949, thereby marking it out as a Buddhist Sinhala space in the post-colonial history of the country. Following the civil war Anuradhapura acquired a strategic significance — on one hand it became the first point of transit for Tamil detainees from the north and the east and on the other a center for Sinhala sex workers housed in brothels and safe houses who provided sexual service for military personnel during their breaks from duty. Consequently in the ongoing civil war Anuradhapura has become a prison-brothel-industrial complex representing a living space where violence and sexuality intersect. It has emerged as a site where every violence mediated through the bodies of ...

*Continued on page 6*





**Experiences of Naga Women in Armed  
conflict: Narratives from a Militarized  
Society**

**Dolly Kikon**

**WISCOMP Perspectives 11**

This study draws on a series of narratives from Wokha, Kohima and Dimapur districts of Nagaland, Northeast India, to highlight women’s deep but understated participation in the struggles of the Naga people and the memories and pain that such struggles have entailed. A unique feature of this study is the manner in which the stories of the resistance and struggle as represented through songs and poems are woven through the text of the narratives. These songs speak of loss and pain, suffering and resilience, in the face of adversity and capture the trials and tribulations of women in the midst of armed active conflict. They also describe at length, the rural landscape, which becomes the physical and psychological site of Naga national consciousness because it is in this living space that life’s battles are fought and lived. Photographs are another important resource that has been used in this study – interspersed through the text they serve to complement the themes of the songs and the poems.

What emerges from these first hand testimonies is the complex interplay of victimhood and agency in the lives of Naga women as they play out their myriad roles in the midst of armed conflict as mothers, daughters, widows and activists. What are their insights and how do they see the road ahead even as some participate in armed insurrection against the Indian state, organize community lives in the absence of men, others engage in negotiating with the Indian government in negotiating for an end to violence, yet others lose their children to armed opposition or fratricidal warfare and suffer sexual and other forms of abuse at the hands of the security forces? What are the cultural challenges they face within their own community as they assume new roles that are not necessarily sanctified by Naga society?

*Continued from page 5*

prisoners and prostitutes routinely plays itself out almost as a replay of a larger rite of violence that has, according to the author, become a part of the contemporary project of state building in Sri Lanka.

The study seeks to break new ground by producing an epistemology of violence that moves beyond its macro representation. It does this by shifting the focus away from state, community, and collective violence to the everyday violence within micro level politics. **This is an effort to enable a different understanding of violence, the nature of modern power and the body as an object, target and product of such power.** “Freedom from fear” is increasingly being cognized as one of the pillars of non-traditional formulations of security. **Mangalika de Silva’s study on everyday violence in a militarized space in the backdrop of the civil war is significant on this count. The foregrounding of gender within this new epistemology of violence represents yet another step in carrying the project of feminist scholarship forward.**



*Mangalika de Silva has worked with women survivors of political violence and published extensively on issues of gender and nationalism*

**This study uses feminist methodologies, to understand how militarism and militarization play themselves out in a theater of violent conflict and in the process cast light on new taxonomies of violence and insecurities.**



*Dolly Kikon has been involved in the Naga Peoples Movement for Human Rights and is currently pursuing a doctoral degree in the United States*



*Women's Uprising in Manipur: A Legacy*  
*Continued*

*Bhabananda Takhellambam*  
*WISCOMP Perspectives 2*

**This monograph traces the role of the women's Meira Paibi movement in Northeast Indian state of Manipur in the context of the rise of the separatist movement and the imposition of the Armed Forces Special Powers Act of 1958.** Relying on first hand primary data based on interviews with women activists and backed by the author's personal insights, the work offers a glimpse into Manipuri society, its complex past and its current problems.

*Meira Paibi* literally means 'torch bearers.' A *meira* is a conventional torch that women carry at night as they patrol neighborhoods and keep a vigil on sheds or huts. The movement started in the mid-1970s as the Nisha Bandhi Movement which worked towards combating social evils of alcohol and intoxicating drugs by enforcing a ban on the sale and use of intoxicants. The members raided liquor vends, burnt alcohol supplies, caught drunkards and paraded them in the neighborhoods. The transformation into the *Meira Paibi* came in response to the changing socio-political and economic situation of the state. The catalyst, according to the author, was the atrocities committed by the Central Reserve Police Force in April 1980 in town of Langjing.

By documenting the activities and profile of the movement, Bhabananda Takhellambam provides a glimpse of the challenges that women's movements face in areas of conflict, and how women can work against odds to contribute to the cause of peace. The *Meira Paibi* demonstrated against the excesses of the counter-insurgency forces, and patrolled the streets at night to guard their neighborhoods against surprise operations by security forces.

The work analyzes the interface between gender and security, and looks at an often-neglected aspect of peacebuilding: individuals' particularly women's initiatives to secure security for their communities.



*Bhabananda Takhellambam is a Lecturer at the Department of History, University of Manipur, and is deeply committed to the cause of bringing about peace in the strife-torn region of Manipur.*

*Home-Makers without the Men: Women-Headed Households in Violence-Wracked Assam*

*Wasbir Hussain*  
*WISCOMP Discussion Paper 8*

Comprising of a set of articles, published in *The Sentinel*, an Assam-based English daily, **this monograph documents the stories of survival and sustenance of women in a conflict-torn region; negotiating security concerns — of food, safety, and livelihood — in the absence of their men. It examines the consequences of militancy in Assam, and particularly how it has affected the lives of women and children in the region.**

The monograph explores the deeper issue of the changing profile of victims of armed conflict and militarism, and the extent to which civilian non-combatants often become the greatest sufferers, especially so in intra-state conflicts. Wasbir Hussain also traces the development of militancy in Assam since 1979 beginning with the growth of the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA), and the rise of other armed organizations in the region such as the Bodo Liberation Tigers (BLT), National Democratic Front of Boroland (NDFB) etc.

Through the articles, Wasbir Hussain has highlighted the stories of twelve women who because of circumstances created by the violence in the region have been compelled to assume roles in the public sphere; beyond that of being home-makers. The women represent different ethnic backgrounds and families with different political lineage. It traces the challenges and complexities faced by these women in undertaking roles of leadership and socio-political positions, which they had hitherto been marginalized from. The women need to wage a constant struggle to ensure the health, education, and other basic needs for their children, while at the same time striving to negotiate the stringent notions of gender-based division of labour and patriarchal restrictions on their roles. Their stories speak of their journeys of transforming themselves from victims to survivors. This study also reflects the responses, societal and national, to these women. **It looks at the deep-rooted affects of militarism, and the structural and human damage it causes.**



*Wasbir Hussain is a member of the National Security Advisory Board, constituted by the Government of India. He is also the Consulting Editor of The Sentinel, an Assam-based English daily.*





**Impact of Religious Extremism on Women  
in Pakistan**  
**Shireen Saleem**

*WISCOMP Discussion Paper 11*

Taking a historical/analytical approach, this monograph explores the underlying causes of religious extremism and the potency of religious parties in the context of the impact on the rights and livelihoods of women in Pakistan. **Curtailement of right to education, access to employment, legal rights and entitlements and independent decision-making, impinge on the women’s “freedom from want” and “freedom from fear.”**

The study highlights the process of Islamization in Pakistan especially in the North West Frontier Province, and investigates how religion is used as a tool to reinforce patriarchal structures. **Tracing the trajectory of development of religious extremism during various periods in Pakistani history, Shireen Saleem focuses specifically on the policy of Islamization pursued by President Zia-ul-Haq.** Through the use of quantitative methodology, the study traces the gradual growth of legal oppression, misuse of Shariat provisions and the codification of laws such as the Hudood Ordinance, the Shariat Bill and the Hisba Act — legal instruments which are detrimental to the rights of women.

**Victims and Agents: Refugee Women of the  
Afghan and Burmese Community in Delhi**

**Kamini Karlekar**  
*WISCOMP Perspectives 19*

This research study is focused on a select group of women refugees from the Burmese and Afghan community in Delhi. Using qualitative analysis and theoretical discourses **it examines a range of concerns looking at refugeehood and its interplay with gender.** In this monograph, Kamini Karlekar seeks to construct a framework within which both the sense of loss as well as the sense of regeneration of refugee woman can be empathetically understood.

Women’s voices have largely remained marginalized in the meta narrative of displacement and refugeehood. Men and women experience forced migration and displacement differently. Through the

The study highlights the differences in the status of women in the rural and urban areas of Pakistan. While women in rural areas are denied basic fundamental rights, urban women are better educated and have access to better job opportunities. Urban women are therefore no longer willing to accept a submissive role under the traditional patriarchal system. Notably, Shireen Saleem brings to the fore the development of women’s movements in Pakistan. Initiated in the wake of discriminatory legislations, the women’s movement has gradually strengthened, and brings forth the concerns of both rural and urban women.

Shireen Saleem asks the question: how can women curtail forces of religious extremism? She calls for de-associating patriarchal norms from religion, increasing awareness of rights amongst women, and strengthening women’s groups by establishing solidarity with women’s groups all over South Asia.



*Shireen Saleem holds a Master’s degree in International Relations from Karachi University and a postgraduate degree in Development Economics. She is currently based in Dubai.*

personal interviews, Kamini Karlekar examines the shifting identities of the women as a result of the displacement — exploring the reasons and affects of leaving their own countries and rebuilding their lives in a completely new environment.

Kamini Karlekar’s study attempts to deconstruct notions of victimhood and agency in the context of refugeehood. Moving away from stereotypical notions that portray and define women refugees as victims, through each personal narrative the study explores the different dimensions of the victimhood-agency debate. Victimhood and agency are usually seen as two binaries. Where victimhood signifies a certain passivity and surrender to conditions, agency defines the ability of people to transform their particular situation and being able to exercise power to improve their own lives. The heterogeneity of their experiences and the involvement of women in the survival plan and negotiation of life in a new country,



according to Kamini Karlekar, indicate that the victimhood-agency relationship is riddled with complexities and militates against a simple binary construction.

The monograph also seeks to look beyond the perpetuated stereotypical images of women refugees — dominated by narratives of fright, helplessness and sorrow. These women negotiate and renegotiate security on a daily basis. The study highlights that contrary to the popular perception that women are helpless victims, they have exercised agency in significant ways and have sought to move beyond victimhood.

The stories of resilience, struggle and survival of these women refugees feeds into the larger ambit of theoretical literature of migration that is now recognized as an important part of non-traditional approaches to security.



***Kamini Karlekar**, till recently, was a Consultant with UNHCR in Liberia. She specializes in forced migration and refugee issues.*

**The Taming of a River: Gender Displacement and Resistance in Anti-Dam Movements**

**Bina Srinivasan**  
**WISCOMP Perspectives 7**

**The study examines the impact of displacement on women as well as women's participation in anti dam movements.** The study juxtaposes elements of the theoretical discourse with the lived experiences of women directly affected by mega-developmental projects. It is primarily based on the movement against the construction of three dams in the central Indian state of Madhya Pradesh — the Bargi dam, the Maheswar Dam and the Sardar Sarovar Dam.

The monograph, focusing largely on the anti dam struggle led by the Narmada Bachao Andolan, looks at the role of social movements and their ability to challenge and change certain predominant and patriarchal developmental paradigms. It looks at how developmental projects affect the basic security concerns of the people of the region in terms of livelihood, habitat and environment. It also examines the nature of women's political activism and explores whether they assert their own needs and rights within the ambit of the larger movement.

The study explores the relationship between the women's movement and the anti-dam struggle, particularly focusing on the gender relations in the context of displacement. It examines the reconstitution of patriarchy and its adaptation into newer forms due to the dynamics of displacement. Even though displacement affords opportunities for the reconstitution of the conventional patterns of sexual divisions of labour, whether it truly allows space for the empowerment of women is debatable. Bina Srinivasan highlights that patriarchy does not just fade away as a result of displacement — it simply re-fashions itself.

Bina Srinivasan's study is significant in terms of the insights it provides on concerns that are seen to be outside the realm of the traditional approach to security. It raises crucial questions in the context of displacement and resistance, viewed through the lens of gender.



***Bina Srinivasan** is a scholar and activist based in Baroda, Gujarat. She is the founder member and coordinator of Swashraya, a women's group that organizes slum women for basic rights.*





## **Troubled Waters of Karachi**

***Ammara Durrani***

***WISCOMP Discussion Paper 7***

This monograph is the outcome of a media project. **The writings examine how the water crisis in Pakistan has emerged as a non-traditional security issue particularly in a setting like Karachi with its ethnically volatile faultlines.** The hypothesis is that given Karachi's backdrop, the city's water problem may aggravate its law and order situation on two counts. First the water crisis may be manipulated by contending political forces. Second since access to water directly affects a large part of the city's population, the scope of the conflict may exacerbate traditional rivalries.

Non-traditional variables of security are now seen as impacting both inter and intra-state security beyond what the Cold War discourse cognized or envisaged. The politics of water – its availability, distribution and the resource allocations associated with it – has emerged as a significant concern in the new mappings of security. Ammara Durani's work highlights its

importance as a security issue within the national boundaries of the Pakistani state. The themes chosen for the project stories include the political dimensions of the inter-provincial conflict between the Punjab and the Sindh provinces on sharing of the Indus waters, the governmental and experts' responses and initiatives to address the conflict, the impact of the water crisis in the poorest urban communities of Sindh, living on the coast of Karachi, and the most water starved and politically sensitive localities of Karachi.

**The project also investigates the gender dimension of the water crisis** and attempts to reach out to pockets and constituencies of stakeholders who are actually setting the direction and pace of the conflict.



*Ammara Durrani is currently Development Outreach Communications Specialist, USAID, in Islamabad Pakistan. She has worked for the daily The News International as Assistant Editor and Senior Correspondent (2001-2006).*

### **List of other related publications – Exploring Non-Traditional Formulations of Security**

Shruba Mukherjee, ***Women Cadres of the PWG: Conflict Mangers or Managers***, WISCOMP Discussion Paper 2 (2003)

Minakshi Das, ***Taliban's War on Women: Afghan Refugees in Delhi***, WISCOMP Discussion Paper 5 (2004)

Eranpeni Ezung, ***Women in Exile: Tibetan Women's Experience as a Refugee and their Role in Tibet's Protracted Nonviolent Struggle for Survival and Freedom***, WISCOMP Perspectives 13 (2005)

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***Gender and Security: Perspectives from South Asia***, Indian Journal of Gender Studies, Sage, Volume 11, No. 1, February 2004

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[www.rsis-ntsasia.org](http://www.rsis-ntsasia.org)  
[webmaster@rsis-ntsasia.org](mailto:webmaster@rsis-ntsasia.org)

