**Key Partners of the WEMC Consortium**

1. Lead Partner: Southeast Asia Research Centre (SEARC), City University of Hong Kong, China
   <http://www.cityu.edu.hk/searc>

2. Shirkat Gah Women’s Resource Centre (SG), Pakistan
   <http://www.shirkatgah.org>

3. Centre for Environment, Gender and Development (ENGENDER), Hong Kong

4. Department of Community Health Sciences, Aga Khan University (AKU), Pakistan
   <http://www.aku.edu.pk/cks>

5. International Gender Studies Centre (IGS), Queen Elizabeth House, Oxford University, UK
   <http://users.ox.ac.uk/~cccrw>
   <http://users.ox.ac.uk/~qehwemc>

6. Semarak Cerlang Nusa (SCN), Indonesia
   <http://www.semarakcresh.org>

7. Solidaritas Perempuan (SP), Indonesia

8. Woman Living Under Muslim Laws, Regional Coordination Office – Asia (WLUML)/Concordia University, Canada
   <http://www.concordia.ca>

Each WEMC partner works closely with interested individuals, groups and institutions, including universities, research centres and collectives.

For more information, contact the WEMC Secretariat:

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What is WEMC?

WEMC stands for ‘Women’s Empowerment in Muslim Contexts: gender, poverty and democratisation from the inside out’. WEMC is a Research Programme Consortium (RPC) that first came together in 2005, through the partnership of universities, research institutions and non-governmental organisations from several countries.

The WEMC programme of research, capacity building and communication was launched on 1 July 2006, to:

• Make visible the strategies that are indigenous and meaningful to women in asserting their rights
• Support women who resist oppressive systems, including Islamist political agendas and other forces that impoverish and marginalise women
• Promote women’s empowerment as democratisation from the inside out

Why WEMC?

There is a broad consensus on what the priorities are for achieving women’s empowerment, [but] there is little knowledge of how to achieve women’s empowerment. (DFID 2005)

WEMC was formed to address this gap in knowledge and practice – that is, how to achieve women’s empowerment in the face of disempowering forces, old and new.

What does WEMC do?

WEMC:

• Does research on women’s indigenous empowerment strategies, past and present
• Mobilises support from policy and decision-makers for women’s initiatives to change disempowering policies and practices
• Facilitates meso-level linkages and groupings to support women’s empowerment
• Builds the capacity of partners and women at the grassroots to enhance their analyses and articulations of situations, experiences, needs and concerns
• Identifies and promotes good practices in governance and development that support women’s empowerment
• Communicates research findings, new insights and relevant information, through diverse means, to women in communities studied, as well as audiences at different levels

WEMC core concepts

WEMC analyses how women seek to transform disempowering forces in Muslim contexts. WEMC has identified the following as core concepts:

1. Women’s empowerment means an increased capacity to make autonomous decisions that challenge and change unfavorable gendered power relations.
2. ‘Democratisation from the inside out’ happens when women are the agents of their own empowerment, negotiating and transforming the power relations that affect their lives.
3. Formal and informal power structures, operating at micro and meso levels, block national policies and programmes intended to support women.

WEMC research sites

WEMC explores women’s diverse strategies for empowerment in four nodal countries (China, Indonesia, Iran and Pakistan) as well as among two cross-border populations (Afghan refugees and returnees, and Indonesian migrant women workers).

Who benefits?

• Women and girls in local communities
• Women’s groups and other civil society organisations
• Local, regional and international development agencies
• Research institutions and centres for advocacy
• Policy makers, implementers, decision-makers, other agents of change

No to violence! We are the children of Darius who wrote the first bill of human rights, Iran

Indonesian migrant workers in media training, Hong Kong