



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2024

CELEBRATIONS IN THE CAMP



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2024

By Sophie Borchard (Intern)

Theme: **Invest In Women: Accelerate Progress**

COUNT HER IN!

Gender Equality through Economic Empowerment

8th MARCH 2024

@ KARENNI SITE 1

WEAVE X KNWO



When women aren't present, we must ask: "If not, why not?"

When women are discriminated against, we must call out poor practice.

When the treatment of women is not equitable, we must take action.

And we must do this each time, every time.

Report

On March 8th, 2024, we commemorated International Women's Day with the goal of presenting a thoughtfully curated program, guided by two hosts, in alignment with this year's theme: **"Count her in – Accelerating Gender Equality through Economic Empowerment"**. The official proceedings commenced around 9:00 and concluded with a lunch for all attendees.

A Day of Empowerment in Karenni Site 1

We departed early for Mae Hong Son to convene at the designated event venue, which featured a stage in Section 9. The WSP girls had prepared the stage, decorating it with balloons, flowers, and a prominent banner. The audience began to gather beneath a large tent erected in front of the stage. We attended to the final logistical arrangements, including sound checks, documentation, and welcoming the audience.

The program kicked off with an introduction highlighting the theme of International Women's Day 2024: **"Let's Inspire Inclusion"**. Emphasizing the importance of women feeling included, the organizers encouraged everyone to strike a pose and create a hand-heart gesture to *#InspireInclusion*.

Following this, welcoming remarks were delivered by Moe Bue, Mitos, and Says Meh, with KNWO providing insights into the significance and history of International Women's Day. To foster engagement, several WSP girls took the stage, inviting the audience to participate in the community empowerment dance, *'One Billion Rising'*. This dance, known around the whole world, fostered empowerment and unity through collective participation in dancing as we all moved to the rhythm of the song in front of the stage.

The next activity included four impact stories. Four women shared their life stories and discussed the impact Fair Trade had on their lives. Each woman spoke in a different tone and length (Burmese), yet even for those unfamiliar with the language, it was evident that most speeches called for action and change. Following the impact stories, six Karenni women, dressed in traditional attire, delivered a traditional musical performance on wooden instruments.

Their presentation underscored their revered status and the significance of Karenni culture.

Next, the Fashion Show commenced, featuring 15 WSP girls showcasing their self-made outfits amidst matching music. Each girl took the stage, raising banners with messages read out by the hosts. Their performance captivated the audience, blending modern and traditional clothing styles. It was truly impressive to see the girls on the stage, with creative outfits and political messages in their hands.

Subsequently, a call for commitment was made, with the WSP girls unveiling a white cloth bearing a central message. Attendees were encouraged to imprint their hands on the cloth as a symbol of dedication to women's empowerment and gender equality. The event concluded with gratitude expressed to the audience and facilitators, followed by a repeat of the One Billion Rising dance and a group photo. Attendees then enjoyed lunch, and the stage and decorations were dismantled later in the day.

International Women's Day holds significance in recognizing and celebrating women, their endeavours, challenges, and triumphs. All efforts and preparations made for IWD 2024 aimed to spotlight these core elements, successfully encompassing them in the event while engaging women from the community along with the girls and women involved in WEAVE's work. Central to the occasion was the opportunity for both creative and political expression. At the end of the day, we were happy about the attendance of many individuals, including women and men from diverse generations.



The last preparations: Rebecca (left) & Say Meh (right)



Decorated stage with hosts on the right



The Fashion Show begins with this year's sign: the hand heart gesture <3





Girls running the catwalk holding banners with messages calling for economic, political & social equality







Traditional Kayah outfits





Colorful hands to commit to gender equality & women's rights

