**Skills for interfaith community organizing –**

**Panel at RIC – ReImaging Interfaith Congress, Washington D.C. USA, 2018**

IALRW Literacy Project in Ladakh

The International Association of Liberal Religious Women (IALRW) is an interfaith women's group that focuses on the education and wellbeing of women and children based on the values of various religious traditions. Since 1910 IALRW have promoted economic and social justice, and equality for women.

Among the several activities and programs for community organizing, IALRW has brought people together to address problematic social conditions and to effectively improve the quality of life where needed. IALRW has organized projects to work together locally to support woman and children in tsunami and earthquake affected areas in Fukushima located in the northeastern part of Japan.

Gender justice remains a distant dream for the many millions of women who account for two-thirds of the world’s illiterate adults. They do sixty per cent of the world’s work but earn only ten per cent of the world’s income. Ladakh is situated on a high-altitude area located in the north of India, a part of Jammu and Kashmir State surrounded by the Himalayas. Many women in Ladakh was a part of the world’s illiteracy population. As part of IALRW social initiatives, IALRW funds a literacy project for women in India, namely the Mahabodi Society in Leh, Ladakh, offering training in literacy and vocational skills to enable women to become self-sufficient.

We also concentrate on building solidarity locally by collaborating and working together with activities lead by Rev. Kawamura (Christian Pastor) who actively supports mothers with young children of the tsunami affected area where the Nuclear Power Plant No. 1 had a meltdown (particularly health problems and protection from radiation); and internationally such as working with ICA, the Institute of Cultural Affairs to plant trees in Kenya, Africa as prevention of drought etc.

As religious leaders, IALRW respects the humanitarian principles of various religious traditions that we practice. We will also share the skills we have used to practice interfaith community organizing.

Kathy Matsui