

CSOs and NGOs working for Indigenous Rights & Women's Rights¹

Name of Organisation: Hill Women's Federation

Website of Organisation: http://updfcht.com/?page_id=40

Facebook of Organisation: <https://www.facebook.com/Hill-Womens-Federation-1117363768278807/>

Organisation of DTP Alumni Y/N: Yes

Hill Women's Federation (HWF) is a representative organisation of the Jumma women in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. It was founded on 8 March 1988 by some avan garde female Jumma students of Chittagong University.

At the beginning its activities were confined within the university campus. However, after the fall of the military dictator General Hussain Muhammad Ershad, HWF was able to spread its activities into the CHT. In 1995 it held its first successful central conference in Khagrachari. More than one thousand Jumma women took part in it.

HWF's activities focus on raising consciousness among the Jumma women about their rights and duties as the most repressed section of the Jumma society in the CHT. HWF is highly vocal against military repression on the Jumma women and organises protest demonstrations against every incident of human rights violations against Jumma women. In 1996 HWF came into national and international limelight when its organising secretary Kalpana Chakma was abducted by one Lt. Ferdous from her house at New Lallya Ghona village under Baghaichari Thana in Rangamati district. The HWF along with other Jumma organisations launched a massive campaign against this heinous act of the military and eventually forced the government to form an inquiry committee. The committee was reported to have submitted its report in March 1997, but the government is yet to make it public. So far the government has failed to bring the culprits responsible for her abduction to justice.

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¹ The Diplomacy Training Program (DTP) is an NGO affiliated with the Faculty of Law at UNSW in Sydney. Since 1990, it has provided training to over 2600 human rights defenders and community advocates. These individuals work for a wide range of organisations working to promote shared values of human rights – in different ways. This profile is part of a series developed by DTP (www.dtp.unsw.edu.au) to illustrate the richness and diversity of the organisations working to promote the rights of Indigenous peoples and human rights more broadly.