

Regional Workshop on Promoting the Rights of ASEAN Women and Children through Effective Implementation of the Common Issues in CEDAW and CRC Concluding Observations with Focus on Girl Child

20 – 22 August 2013, Da Nang, Viet Nam

Recommendations

The Regional Workshop on Promoting the Rights of ASEAN Women and Children through Effective Implementation of the Common Issues in CEDAW and CRC Concluding Observations with Focus on Girl Child was held jointly by ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC), Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA) of Viet Nam, and United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) from 20 – 22 August 2013 in Da Nang, Viet Nam.

The Workshop identified priority issues, and areas of concern related to the implementation of CEDAW and CRC in ASEAN, particularly concerning the rights of girl child, such as victims of domestic violence, physical abuse and bullying, women and children who are sexually exploited, cyber pornography and cyber prostitution, early marriages, adolescent pregnancies, sexual and reproductive health and rights, harmful practices, juvenile justice, access to and attainment of education, migrant workers, women and children with disabilities, women and children in disasters, victims of trafficking and child labour, women and children living with and affected by HIV, women and children affected by conflict and in peace processes and post-conflict, refugee women and children in both camps and urban settings, and their access to education, stateless women and children, women and children belonging to ethnic and/or indigenous groups, and discrimination against women and children based on their sexual orientation and gender identity;

The Workshop was well aware that while ASEAN Member States continue to take constructive efforts to eliminate all forms of discrimination, in particular violence, against women and children, challenges remain in the region particularly in ensuring non-discrimination and compliance of national laws, policies and strategies concerning the rights of women and children with international standards, particularly CEDAW and CRC; ensuring non-stereotyping of the roles of women and children in cultural and social norms and practices; consistency in the enforcement of customary and civil laws towards gender equality and for the best interests of children; awareness and capacity of legal enforcement officials on substantive recognition of the rights of women and children, particularly girl child; and raising public awareness and involvement in preventing and eliminating violence and discrimination against women and children.

Therefore, the Workshop recommended the following actions to promote and protect the rights of women and children in ASEAN Member States through effective

implementation of CEDAW and CRC with focus on girl child with support from UN Women, UNICEF, UNHCR and other UN Agencies:

National

1. Facilitate studies, sharing of experiences, and good practices on emerging issues and key challenges in addressing intersectional and multiple forms of discrimination and violence against marginalised and vulnerable groups of women and children;
2. Promote the conduct of regular national consultations between the relevant line agencies, existing national human rights institutions (NHRIs), stakeholders, and ACWC, inter-agency/sectoral dialogues, cooperation and coordination in each ASEAN Member State, as well as participation of civil society organisations, to promote coherent and holistic approach in promoting and protecting the rights of women and children, with focus on girl child, in accordance with the principles in CEDAW, CRC and other international human rights instruments that ASEAN Member States are parties to;
3. Develop, strengthen and, where necessary, amend national legislations, policies and strategies, and strengthen enforcement of the laws and policies to prevent and protect women and children, including girl child, from and enable them to respond to all forms of discrimination and violence against women and children in public and private spheres;
4. Promote the right of women and children to access to justice, that is not limited to legal assistance, and speedy resolution of cases with gender and child sensitive legal procedures including in the plural legal system;
5. Develop or strengthen special/specific services, including the establishment of one stop crisis centres, to improve protection and services for victims/survivors of violence against women and violence against children and trafficking, including counseling and psycho-social services, legal and medical assistance, and access to other support services through referral systems;
6. Promote public awareness of the rights of women and children, particularly girl child through, among others, gender sensitization campaigns, wider translation of CEDAW, CRC, and relevant national laws and policies into languages understood by women and children from various indigeneous and/or ethnic groups, working with media to promote positive images of women and girls, and promotion of the involvement of schools, communities, religious and community/village leaders;
7. Establish and/or strengthen an inter-ministerial coordination approach to ensure coherent and holistic implementation, monitoring the compliance and reporting of human rights treaty obligations;

8. Adopt a comprehensive framework for the implementation of CEDAW, CRC and respective Concluding Observations that ensures linkages to other relevant international human rights treaties that ASEAN Member States are parties to, recommendations of UPR and UN Special Procedures, and international commitments that address the rights of women and children, focusing on girl child, such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action (ICPD-POA), Beijing Platform for Actions (BPFA), among others.
9. Promote consultations with women and children in preparing the state reports to CEDAW and CRC Committees, respectively.

Regional

10. Strengthen partnerships of ACWC and other relevant ASEAN bodies with UN Women, UNICEF, UNHCR, ILO, other UN Agencies, and other stakeholders, including national gender machineries, existing NHRIs, parliamentarians, civil society organisations, academic institutions, private/ business sector and professional networks, as well as religious and community/village leaders, on the following:
 - a. Assist, upon request, ASEAN Member States in the implementation of CEDAW and CRC Concluding Observations and preparation of state reports for CEDAW and CRC;
 - b. Undertake joint initiatives to enhance the capacity of ASEAN Member States on fulfilling state obligations under CEDAW and CRC, through provision of technical assistance, training, workshops, studies, and the use of existing training tools on CEDAW and CRC, and in other areas of cooperation to contribute to the realisation of the rights of women and children in the region;
 - c. Assist ASEAN Member States in strengthening the capacity in surveys and collection of disaggregated data on victims/survivors of violence against women and violence against children, and in promoting gender sensitive and child friendly approaches to law enforcement, judicial, and local government officials;
 - d. Undertake research and initiate regional dialogues on emerging and traditional harmful practices that impinge upon the rights of women and children;
11. Promote ACWC's constructive engagement with the CEDAW and CRC Committees including the designation of focal points of ACWC and the two Committees for their engagement.
12. Review the existing benchmarks and indicators on the implementation of CEDAW and CRC aiming at assessing their relevance to ASEAN Member States in

addressing issues specific to women and girl child without neglecting the concerns of boy child, and consider the possibility of harmonising these indicators in the region;

13. Support the adoption by ASEAN Member States of actions towards the prevention of child cyber pornography, cyber prostitution and other forms of violence against women and violence against children using ICT as a platform, including those recommended by the Second ASEAN Conference on Working towards a Cyber Pornography and Cyber Prostitution-Free Southeast Asia held on 22-26 April 2013 in Bohol, the Philippines.

These recommendations are submitted to ASEAN Member States and ACWC for consideration and deliberation on specific plans to implement relevant recommended actions.

The Workshop recommend other relevant ASEAN bodies, such as ASEAN Inter-Governmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR), Senior Officials Meeting on Social Welfare and Development (SOMSWD), ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW), Senior Officials Meeting on Rural Development and Poverty Eradication (SOMRDPE), Senior Officials Meeting on Health and Development (SOMHD), ASEAN Committee on the Implementation of ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers (ACMW), Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC), and ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA), to consider their involvement in the implementation of these recommendations.
