**UN WOMEN “Improving Women’s Human Rights in Southeast Asia”**

**In Focus**

**International Women’s Day**
- 8th March 2014

**Commission on the Status of Women**
- 58th session
- 10-21 March 2014

**UN WOMEN PERSPECTIVES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA**

**News (January-April 2014)**

- CSW 58th National Consultation in Cambodia
- Capacity Building in Myanmar
- Advocacy workshop in Indonesia
- Expert Meeting in the Philippines
- Midterm Report Preparation in Indonesia
- Regional Training Workshop (RBM)
- Regional Research on Women’s Access to Justice
- ACW Regional Workshop in Cambodia

**Publications**

- Access to Justice for Women in Plural Legal Systems of South East Asia
- Gender Assessment of National Law Making Mechanisms and Processes in Selected Southeast Asian Countries: a CEDAW Perspective
- Southeast Asia Regional Judicial Colloquium on Gender Equality Jurisprudence and the Role of the Judiciary in Promoting Women’s Access to Justice
- Applying Due Diligence Standards to Legislative Approaches on Violence Against Women
- Assessment of NGO Monitoring on CEDAW Implementation in Southeast Asia
- Women’s Rights to Equality: The promise of CEDAW

**Media Coverage**

**UN Women Asia Pacific Flickr.com**

**Timor-Leste’s Land Law**
Many Achievements for 2013 and among them:

To increase knowledge and skills of the judiciary actors
In Indonesia, a working group on CEDAW advocacy led to the repeal of the regulation authorising female genital mutilation.

About the monitoring and accountability of implementation of CEDAW commitments
In Timor Leste, UN Women provided technical assistance for data collection from sectoral ministries and validation workshops for the submission to the councils of ministers.

To increase awareness of the justice system
In Thailand, senior judges from 8 countries agreed to establish a regional network of judges to promote continuous knowledge sharing on practices in their countries. Moreover, the One Stop Crisis Centers (OSCC) was launched nationwide.
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY 2014

Inspiring Change

International Women’s Day is a day to recommit ourselves to working harder for gender equality, together as women, men, youth, and leaders of nations, communities, religion and commerce.

Together we must make sure that:

SHE is Safe and Secure from gender-based violence.

SHE has Human rights that are respected, including reproductive rights.

SHE is Empowered economically and in every way through Education, Equal opportunity, participation and leadership.

This is the SHE imperative that I call on you to commit to. Let us all cross the line and stand on the right side of history.

Today and every day UN Women will stand strong for women’s rights, women's empowerment and gender equality.

Equality for women is progress for all.

(Extracts of the Message for International Women’s Day 2014, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women)

Read more

58th Commission on The Status of Women

A universal and transformative post-2015 agenda

Building on lessons learnt from the MDGs and the need to accelerate progress, a number of states are calling for a transformative stand-alone goal on gender equality, women’s empowerment and women’s rights, as well as a comprehensive integration of gender equality concerns and indicators across all goals. Issues such as violence against women, sexual reproductive health and rights, and unpaid care work were more specifically highlighted for inclusion in the post-2015 framework.

Read more

➢ Agreed Conclusions

UN Women Asia Pacific Flickr.com
Regional: A Regional Training-Workshop on Result-Based Management (RBM) and Effective Reporting Engagement Report were organized in Thailand by UN Women Regional under CEDAW SEAP Programme. The goal of the training-workshop was to enhance programme management skills of UN Women’s government and civil society partners implementing activities and increased capacity of UN Women’s national partners in results-based planning and management. Topics like RBM, logic model, monitoring and evaluation, and reporting were seen to be most useful. At least three participants had clear intentions of taking steps to apply or echo their learnings back in their workplace.

Indonesia: The CEDAW Concluding Observation highlights two issues namely about female circumcision, and equality in marriage and family relations that need to be prioritized by the Indonesian Government. MOWE with the support of UN Women organizes a series of consultation meetings to prepare for the CEDAW midterm periodic report. The 1st meeting was in Indonesia, results from the key line ministries and technical inputs will feed into the substantive content of the report.

Cambodia: UN Women CCO’s governance programme hosted CSW 58th national consultation in Phnom Penh. The consultation intended to strengthen understanding of the CSW process; raise awareness of existing commitments and priorities in regard to the 2014 themes; foster dialogue and facilitate the engagement of Cambodians from both government and civil society organizations in this important global mechanism.

Philippines: Expert Meeting to decide on strategic gender provisions to advocate for inclusion in Bangsamoro Basic Law was organized in February by the Women’s Peace Table with the support of UN Women Philippines.

- A Brief Report
- Proposals for Gender Provisions in the Draft Bangsamoro Basic Law
**Regional**: Third Regional Research on Women’s Access to Justice in Plural Legal System in Southeast Asia was held in Chiang Mai with the support of UN Women under CEDAW SEAP Programme. While the first two workshops focused on capacity-building in FPAR theory and methodologies, introducing and discussing conceptual issues around access to justice for women in plural legal systems, and discussing related issues such as research ethics, this third workshop provided a space for the researchers to present and discuss their emerging findings, reflects on the research process.

**Myanmar**: Capacity Building on Reporting to the Committee to Eliminate Discrimination against Women was held in collaboration with UNFPA and UNDP in Nay Pyi Taw. The training built a better understanding of CEDAW reporting processes and challenges in gender equality as highlighted from the previous periodic report. The activities resulted in identification of data gaps from the government and also an understanding that as this is a progress report, they would be expected to report on some crucial issues such as state violence etc. The government has expressed appreciation for this support.

**Indonesia**: A workshop for consolidating inputs from the women's movement towards joint advocacy, organised by CWGI, was attended by 53 NGOs, which were not only CWGI members, but also some women's organization. The results of the workshop were the: 1) Reflection of the position of women’s movement regarding the ‘politics of location’ in the global, regional, national, and local, 2) Advocacy strategy to fulfil the rights of women particularly on Gender Equality Law and Judicial Review of Marriage Law that had been identified, 3) Mapping the challenges to advocate GEL has been acknowledged.
Women as a Part of History: National Consultation Brings New Light to Timor-Leste’s Land Law

DILI, December 17 - “Women have never had a voice in the past, women were not even allowed freedom of assembly. The fact that we can all come together today to discuss the Land Law and make suggestions is a success for the women of Timor-Leste,” said Aurora Ximenes, a new Member of Parliament and the former head of the National Women’s Machinery (NWM). “Land for women is about ensuring their lives and security, the lives and security of their children. Historically and traditionally, women have had no rights over land. They suffer because of that; are more likely to live in poverty.”

Land law in Timor-Leste has always been a complex issue, but has been further complicated by the small country’s history. First colonized by the Portuguese and later occupied by Indonesia, land rights have taken on a new meaning. There were those who owned land during the Portuguese period and still own the titles, though others have perhaps lived on the land since the Indonesian occupation and have what is called “customary rights” to the land. In 2012, the Ministry of justice has revised the three draft laws and it has announced a consultation will take place until 15 February 2013 to reduce strife within communities, and to ensure that the next version of the law will stick.

Land law has obvious implications for women’s economic empowerment, as well as women’s rights set out in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), signed by Timor-Leste in 2003, stating that all laws should give equal rights to women and men, and the same rights should be given to both spouses in respect of the ownership, acquisition, management, administration, enjoyment and disposition of property. Women’s right to own land is also upheld in Article 54 of the Constitution. Unfortunately, customary marriage practices not recognized by the current legal system leave women out of jointly owning land with their husbands, and also cause complications with land inheritance.

In response to this, UN Women supported ten organizations to compile a series of recommendations to adjust the land law not only for CEDAW compliance, but also to ensure that discrimination would no longer play a role in women’s ability to access and own land. (The participants and the facilitator recommended that a clause be added equal to Timor-Leste’s obligations under article 16 of CEDAW which guarantees, “the same rights for both spouses in respect of the ownership, acquisition, management, administration, enjoyment and disposition of property.”) The latest draft of the Land Law is currently awaiting a date for debate from Parliament.
UN Women Philippines held two CEDAW-based legal review workshops in collaboration with PCICC. The first workshop (January 2014), the second workshop was with CSOs (March 2014), and it included a field trip to the House of Representatives where CSO participants observed sessions of the Congress.

To Watch the Video
Click here

Following the government restructure in Lao PDR, two women were promoted to higher ranks at the Government Office:

- Deputy Minister of Industry and Commerce, Ms Khemmany Pholsena has been appointed to a ministerial post
- Director General of the Public Works and Transport Institute, Ms Vilaykham Phosalath has been appointed as the new Deputy Minister of Public Works and Transport

The Capacity Building on Reporting to the Committee to Eliminate Discrimination against Women held in collaboration with UNFPA and UNDP during 24th – 25th January in Myanmar received positive media coverage.

"Workshop on writing country reports on the convention on elimination of all forms of discrimination against women kicks off", The New Light of Myanmar, Saturday 25 January 2014.

The Ministry of Justice (MOJ) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) held a dialogue in Hanoi (Viet Nam) on 19 March to review the draft Law on Civil Status from a human rights perspective.

(Nhan Dan Online, Read more)
RECENT PUBLICATIONS

“Women’s Rights to Equality: The promise of CEDAW”
Publishing soon

“Access to Justice for Women in Plural Legal Systems of South East Asia”
This publication is intended to share an analytical framework for investigating plural legal systems from the gender perspective. It focuses on the broad spectrum of the legal orders, including those that are informal, not formally recognized, or not State sanctioned covering customary, indigenous, traditional and religious orders.

This research aims to provide suggestions for practical interventions for the short term as well as recommendations to overlap the gap, for long term cooperation to improve access to legal aid and policy changes to advance the situation of women in the justice system.

“Gender Assessment of National Law Making Mechanisms and Processes in Selected Southeast Asian Countries: a CEDAW Perspective”
The study looks at gender mainstreaming in existing global practices and legislations; reviews the legislative structures and processes of the seven CEDAW SEAP countries.

These are aimed at increasing skills and knowledge of government officials and civil society gender experts on CEDAW compliance in the development and monitoring of the new and revised legislative framework.

“Southeast Asia Regional Judicial Colloquium on Gender Equality Jurisprudence and the Role of the Judiciary in Promoting Women’s Access to Justice”
This judicial colloquium brought together senior judges from 8 Southeast Asia programme countries in which the judges agreed to encourage the establishment of a gender equality committee within judiciaries; and encourage the formation of a regional network of judges to promote continuing dialogue, knowledge and information sharing.

Concluding Recommendations were drafted by the participants to enhance and provide specific guidelines on the applicability of CEDAW and its principles to domestic judicial decision-making law, and as a source of definition in particular on concepts of equality and discrimination.

“Applying Due Diligence Standards to Legislative Approaches on Violence Against Women”
Ending violence against women is one of the thematic priorities of the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. In South East Asia it has been pursued through the Regional Programme on Improving Women’s Human Rights in South East Asia.

This publication is intended to be used to guide policy makers to effectively address violence against women and the adaptation of a zero tolerance policy towards VAW.

“Assessment of NGO Monitoring on CEDAW Implementation in Southeast Asia”
This assessment provides a reflection of some of the activities and advocacy that have been carried out by NGOs in the region. Some of these activities were conducted with resources from Phase I of the CEDAW SEAP programme. Many of the NGOs have incorporated CEDAW into their activism and advocacy, but this work could be solidified and expanded with stable operational and supportive programme funding. (Internal Publication)

“Women’s Rights to Equality: The promise of CEDAW”
Publishing soon
**EVENTS**

**May**

- **5-7 May**: CEDAW Regional Retreat
- **8 May**: National workshop on CEDAW implementation and good practice in Cambodia
- **7-9 May**: 3–Day Training Workshop on CEDAW and other HR treaties for policies and lawmakers, lecturers of training centers of MOJ and officers of court, procurators
- **7-9 May**: Policy Forum on CEDAW implementation and National Consultation on the reviewing of Beijing +20
- **May (TBC)**: Regional Consultation with National Women’s Machineries
- **18-20 May (TBC)**: National Consultation Workshop on Gender Equality, BCV/VAW for Women’s Caucus of Parliamentarians
- **2nd week of May (TBC)**: Pilot-Training on WHR for Legal Training Centre
- **19-20 May**: Local Forum
- **20-21 May**: Local Forum
- **20-22 May**: National Consultation Workshop on Gender Equality, GBV/VAW for Women Caucus of Parliamentarians

**June**

- **1-30 June**: Online survey on the perspective of young people
- **5-6 June**: Consultation Workshop on harmonization of CEDAW monitoring tool
- **9 June**: Community Feedback Meeting (Women’s Access to Justice in Plural Legal System)
- **25-26 June**: National Validation Workshop and Presentation of Findings, Access to Justice in Plural Legal Systems, Philippines
- **26 June**: Dissemination of Research Report
- **30 June**: CEDAW Programme Management Team Meeting

**CONTACT**

**Ms. Pimvadee Keaokiriya**
Programme Officer, CEDAW Southeast Asia Programme
Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
5/F UN Building Rajdamnern Nok Avenue,
Bangkok 10200, Thailand
Tel: +66 2 288 1684 Fax: +66 2 280 6030
E-mail: pimvadee.keaokiriya@unwomen.org

Or **Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific – CEDAW SEAP** / Email: cedaw.seap@unwomen.org