

RECOMMENDATIONS
Emerging from the
South Asia Inter Governmental Peer Learning
on
CEDAW: Reporting and Implementation
26-28 August 2009
Kathmandu, Nepal

WE, Secretaries and Senior Officers of various Ministries of the Governments of the SAARC member states- Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, gathered at Kathmandu, Nepal from the 26-28 August 2009 for the “*South Asia Inter Governmental Peer Learning on CEDAW: Reporting and Implementation*” jointly organized by the Ministry of Women, Child and Social Welfare, Government of Nepal and UNIFEM South Asia Sub-Regional Office.

We recommend the following regional and national level follow up actions.

REGIONAL

1. To continue the process of regional inter-governmental peer learning and sharing workshop initiated by the South Asian governments in partnership with UNIFEM South Asia Office as a mechanism of dialogue for identifying key concerns and requirements for technical support towards fulfillment of state obligation on gender equality and women’s empowerment in the region.

That the peer learning process be more focused on gaps in capacity and new areas of learning and challenges in implementation. Undertake a more comprehensive learning on substantive equality and indirect discrimination.

We further propose that each member state in turn organize peer learning programme with support from UNIFEM and others.

2. Invest in continuous capacity development to strengthen institutional capacities on CEDAW awareness in government through appropriate institutions of excellence in countries of the region. Address the need to retain institutional capacity and memory in CEDAW mainstreaming, to ensure sustainability.

3. Technical support in CEDAW report writing processes and CEDAW implementation by UN and its specialised agencies.

4. Share experiences on gender based violence and flagship programmes from a CEDAW perspective.

5. Establish and strengthen linkages between the SAARC Gender Infobase and CEDAW implementation. Collate intersectoral data disaggregated by sex and other status as relevant.

6. Harmonise laws with CEDAW in the context of cultural, religious diversity and the ongoing socio-economic and political transformation in South Asia.

7. Integrate and align Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA) with CEDAW obligations into the national development strategies.

NATIONAL

Afghanistan

- Strengthen the already established Task Force on CEDAW composed of high ranking officials from key ministries and judicial branches of the country to provide support to initial CEDAW report writing process.
- Undertake training programmes on CEDAW implementation for police, prosecutors and judges.
- Increase public awareness on CEDAW and Afghanistan's commitment to CEDAW using mass media, mosques, workshops/seminars with key personnel engaged in the implementation of CEDAW.

Bangladesh

- Set up a Women's Bank.
- Draft a National Action Plan for CEDAW implementation.
- Set up a National Commission for the advancement of women.
- Integrate CEDAW into the curriculum of Civil Service Training Centre.

Bhutan

- Translate the Concluding Observations into local languages and disseminate widely to all the stakeholders.
- Identify issues specific to line ministries and circulate for time bound follow up.
- Use the highlights of the Regional Peer Learning as a model for a National Level Workshop on CEDAW.

India

- Conduct CEDAW orientation and make CEDAW part of the curriculum of training programmes on Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) and foundation and mid career training courses of law and policy makers.
- Identify focal points (by designation) in all Ministries of the Central and State Governments.
- Translate CEDAW, General Recommendations and Concluding Comments into as many languages as feasible for wider dissemination.
- Organise National Consultation with all stakeholders including policy makers, civil society, NGOs, media and private sector for sensitization.

Maldives

- Initiate civil service training on CEDAW.
- Set up a National Commission on women.
- Undertake Gender Responsive Budgeting.

Nepal

- Support the private sector to integrate CEDAW principles by initiating incentive.
- Continue 25% exemption of registration fees for transferring land to women.
- Undertake mid-term review of CEDAW National Plan of Action and Anti-human trafficking National Plan of Action.
- Frame a regulation for effective implementation for Domestic Violence Control and Punishment Act, 2009.
- Prepare operational guidelines on rehabilitation/ safe homes/ service centres addressing violence against women.
- Continue trainings on Gender Responsive Budgeting.

Pakistan

- Impact analysis of flagship initiatives with CEDAW perspectives.
- Sensitization and capacity building of Parliamentarians, law making and law enforcing agencies, federal/provincial bureaucracy on CEDAW Implementation.
- Expand Gender Responsive Budgeting initiatives.
- Public awareness on CEDAW.

Sri Lanka

- Strengthen initiatives related to the prevention of gender based violence by giving special attention to the different sectors
- Increase political participation of women.
- Identify gaps in existing laws in order to harmonise with CEDAW principles and accordingly undertake amendments to relevant law.
- Sensitization and capacity development of Parliamentarians, law making and law enforcing agencies, provincial bureaucracy and public in general on CEDAW Implementation.