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What's new in KARAT ?

CEDAW and women's access to justice

Members' News

Gender Project for Bulgaria: "Getting to Know!". Development Education in Bulgarian Curricula

Legal Center For Women's Initiatives "Sana Sezim" (Kazakhstan): Trainings on prevention of human trafficking

World

European Women's Lobby: Join the call for a European Year to end violence against women!

European Women's Lobby: Intergenerational Solidarity Needed

Hungary: The New Anti-Choice Constitution Has Been Adopted

Russia: Duma Drafts Bill to Limit Abortions

UN Women: Summary of Strategic Plan Consultations

Events

Women PeaceMakers Program: Call for Applications

Resources

AidWatch report: Challenging self-interest: Getting EU aid fit for the fight against poverty

International Domestic Workers' Network: Myths and Realities About Domestic Workers

International Labour Organization: Global Report on Equality at Work 2011

International Organization for Migration: Report Examining "Re-Trafficking"

Minority Rights Group: Human Rights Based Approach in Development Cooperation. The Policy Paper

OSCE: Unprotected Work, Invisible Exploitation: Trafficking for Purpose of Domestic Servitude

What's new in KARAT ?

CEDAW and women's access to justice

The meeting regarding the impact of women's access to justice at national level on the application of the Optional Protocol to CEDAW was held on 18-21 May in Warsaw, Poland.

The event, organized by KARAT Coalition in cooperation with IWRAP Asia Pacific, was addressed to women's rights advocates from Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Poland, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. It aimed at developing the strategy for exploring and assessing the reality of women's access to justice in these countries for the selected critical types of human rights violations. The four-day agenda provided the space for women's rights advocates to share knowledge about the specific socio-cultural barriers that prevent women from using the national law systems to protect their rights. The types of the human rights violations that will be the focus of further actions undertaken within the initiative were identified. All of them were found extremely difficult for women to address because of the strong influence of traditions, customs or religion. These violations include: bride kidnapping, trafficking in women, domestic violence and denial of legal abortion.

The outcomes of the research will be presented to the CEDAW Committee which have just started to work on the General Recommendation on women's access to justice.

For more information, please contact Aleksandra at: aleksandra.solik@karat.org.pl.

Members' News

Gender Project for Bulgaria: "Getting to Know!". Development Education in Bulgarian Curricula

"Getting to Know!" is a three-year joint initiative of six of the founders of the Bulgarian platform for international development - Centre for Inclusive Education, Global Initiative on Psychiatry - Sofia, Caritas Bulgaria, BlueLink Information Network, Gender Project for Bulgaria (KARAT member) and Cooperation for Voluntary Service. "Getting to Know!" is the first truly Bulgarian development education project, funded by the European Commission. It aims to contribute to the development assistance by creating a mechanism for integrating a global development dimension in the curriculum of the education system in Bulgaria. Children and young people will be exploring global links, participating in activities and classes organized in schools and universities.

For more information, please contact Stanimira Hadjimitova at: gender@fastbg.net.

Legal Center For Women's Initiatives "Sana Sezim" (Kazakhstan): Trainings on prevention of human trafficking



In May 2011 two trainings for young people (men and women) were organized in schools in Shymkent as a part of the project "Combating Trafficking in Central Asia, the agency USAID". The purpose of the workshops was to draw attention to the problem of human trafficking in Kazakhstan and other countries of Central Asia, to build good practices based on respect for young women and rejection of violence.

For more information please contact Vera Zakutnyaya at: ngosanasezim@rambler.ru.

European Women's Lobby: Join the call for a European Year to end violence against women!



The European Women's Lobby (EWL) has initiated an European advocacy movement, gathering NGOs and decision-makers, lobbying for an EU comprehensive action on violence against women and for a European Year on combating and preventing violence against women.

You can sign the petition [here](#).

European Women's Lobby: Intergenerational Solidarity Needed

The European Women's Lobby (EWL) is calling for more attention to be paid to gender equality in European policies designed to address the challenges of an ageing population across Europe.

In many cases, inequalities between women and men are accentuated with age. For example, women's employment rates decrease rapidly as they age. In EU, only 45% of women between 55 and 64 is employed as compared to 63% of men in this age category. Moreover, a gender pay gap and long periods spent outside the labor market because of caring responsibilities contribute to the phenomena that women have much lower pensions and savings than their male counterparts. Certain groups, such as those belonging to ethnic minorities or women with disabilities, are particularly vulnerable. For example, EUROSTAT figures show that only 25% of women with disabilities are employed as compared to 44% of disabled men.

"Promoting active ageing and solidarity between generations is a worthy and necessary enterprise for the EU", said Brigitte Triems, EWL President. "We look forward to seeing the development of a fair and sustainable social model which takes into account the rights and needs of all generations and, crucially, of women and men alike, in order to make this vision a reality".

[More information](#)

Hungary: The New Anti-Choice Constitution Has Been Adopted

The new Hungarian constitution, adopted by the Parliament, has been signed by the president Pal Schmitt. It will come to the force at the beginning of 2012. The new constitution refers to Hungary's Christian roots and past greatness. The new provisions concerning protection of foetus from the moment of conception and the definition of family are really alarming. The new constitution establishes the base for restricting abortion as it states: "Human dignity is inviolable. Everyone has the right to life and human dignity. The life of a foetus will be protected from conception." One of the articles of the constitution says that "Hungary protects the institution of marriage between man and woman, a matrimonial relationship voluntarily established, as well as the family as the basis for the survival of the nation".

Source: ASTRA Bulletin

Russia: Duma Drafts Bill to Limit Abortions

In his recent speech Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin has promised to raise the nation's birthrate by up to 30% in three years only. Because of a rapidly falling fertility, Russia has experienced a striking population decline, going from 148.5 million people in 1995 to 143 million today. The lower house of the Russian parliament is now working on legislation that aims at limiting the number of abortions taking place in this country. According to the draft, abortion

would no longer be qualified as a medical service under the national health system and physicians will be allowed to not to perform it.

Source: *ASTRA Bulletin*

UN Women: Summary of Strategic Plan Consultations

Over the last six months, UN Women has been preparing for its first Strategic Plan in cooperation with a variety of partners including governments, civil society, academia and the UN system. The report below highlights key themes, strategies, ideas for partnerships and other useful feedback for the development of UN Women's strategic plan.

You can read the summary [here](#).

Events

Women PeaceMakers Program: Call for Applications

The Women PeaceMakers Program documents the stories and best practices of women leaders who are involved in human rights and peacemaking efforts in their home countries. Women on the frontlines of efforts to end violence and secure a peace and justice seldom record their experiences and activities as generally there is no time, or, perhaps, no formal education that would help women to do it. The Women PeaceMakers Program offers an opportunity for women leaders who want to document, share and build upon their unique peacemaking stories.

Four peacemakers are selected each year to participate in an eight-week program at the residency at the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice (IPJ), located on the University of San Diego campus in San Diego, California. The program pairs each peacemaker with a writer and a documentary film team to document her story.

[More information](#)

Resources

AidWatch report: Challenging self-interest: Getting EU aid fit for the fight against poverty

AidWatch is an European network of NGOs which monitors and advocates on the quality and the quantity of aid provided by the European Union. This year's AidWatch report confirms that EU member states are unfortunately off-track to meet their aid quantity and aid effectiveness commitments. They are rather prioritizing self-interested aid policies that are reflecting their own security, migration and commercial interests.

Moreover, in spite of the fact that the EU is the world's biggest aid donor, in 2010 only nine countries met their aid targets. As for the New Members States, no single country (except for Cyprus) has managed to reach its interim target of 0.17% of gross national income (GNI). The worst performers in 2010 include Latvia (fulfilling only 35% of its 2010 obligations), Romania (41%), Poland (49%), Slovak Republic (50%) and finally Bulgaria and Hungary (both fulfilling merely 53% of their 2010 obligations).

Gender issues are also one of the AidWatch fields of interest. According to the report's authors, girls and women must be at the centre of any serious effort to fight injustice and global poverty. Women represent more than 70% of the world's poor, but their voices frequently go unheard. Women contribute to the production of about two-thirds of all food in developing countries, but they own less than 1% of the land.

The report is available [here](#).

International Domestic Workers' Network: Myths and Realities About Domestic Workers

Preparing for the upcoming 2011 International Labour Conference, International Domestic Workers' Network (IDWN) elaborated a document gathering arguments why passing the ILO Convention enabling rights and protections for domestic workers is important.

You can download "Myths and Realities About Domestic Workers" [here](#).

International Labour Organization: Global Report on Equality at Work 2011

In the new Global Report on Equality at Work 2011, the International Labour Organization (ILO) notes that in spite of continuous positive advances in anti-discrimination legislation, the global economic and social crisis has led to a higher risk of discrimination against certain groups such as migrant labour.

The report, entitled "Equality at work: The continuing challenge", cites equality bodies which receive increased numbers of complaints, showing that workplace discrimination has become more diverse, and discrimination on multiple grounds is becoming the rule rather than the exception. It also warns against a tendency during economic recession to give lower priority to anti-discrimination policies and workers' rights in practice.

You can read the report [here](#).

International Organization for Migration: Report Examining "Re-Trafficking"

A report examining the incidence, causes, and consequences of re-trafficking was released by the International Organization for Migration (IOM). "Re-trafficking" means that a previously trafficked person, who had exited or escaped that human trafficking situation, re-enters a trafficking situation. According to IOM, by now this problem has not been thoroughly studied.

To access the report, please click [here](#).

Minority Rights Group: Human Rights Based Approach in Development Cooperation. The Policy Paper

The Minority Rights Group launched a policy paper on the integration of Human Rights Based Approach to development policy in the New EU Member States. The mainstreaming of human rights in development cooperation is a legal and political obligation for all Member States of the European Union, including the New Member States. This policy paper shows that, rather than being an additional burden, human rights mainstreaming offers practical solutions for the New Member States to overcome some of the specific challenges they face as relatively new donors of Official Development Assistance (ODA), such as limited human and financial resources and limited public awareness on aid.

See the full the [policy paper](#).

OSCE: Unprotected Work, Invisible Exploitation: Trafficking for Purpose of Domestic Servitude

This Paper created by Organization for Security & Co-Operation in Europe (OSCE) aims at providing a policy tool for decision makers and practitioners dealing with trafficking in human beings. It is based on desk research, field work, case study analyses and expertise of NGOs in order to show the most invisible forms of modern-day slavery. The gender dimension is clearly visible in the report.

You can find the report [here](#).

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS

KARAT Secretariat would like to sincerely thank the following for their contributions to the News (forwarding information and providing us with 'original' information): Gender Project for Bulgaria, Legal Center For Women's Initiatives "Sana Sezim" (Kazakhstan), ASTRA, CONCORD, EWL, TRIALOG, OSCE, WUNRN.

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