



60 (06) 2011. Warsaw, 20/06/2011

## What's new in KARAT ?

**Work/Life Balance in the International Context**

**Job Opportunity - Short-Term Consultancy**

## Members' News

**Federation for Women and Family Planning (Poland): Major Breakthrough for Women's Reproductive Health in Poland**

## Upcoming deadlines

**UN CSW: Deadline For Submitting the Communications**

## World

**AWID: Women's Rights Approach to Development Cooperation**

**ILO: Convention on Domestic Workers Adopted**

## European Union

**EWL, WIDE, CONCORD: Towards a Gender Responsive Post-2013 EU Multi-Annual Financial Framework**

**Priorities for the Polish Presidency of the EU**

**Share of Women in Decision-Making Still Reflects Gender Imbalance**

**Hungarian Government's Anti-Abortion Campaign**

## Resources

**Amnesty International: Annual Report 2010**

**UN CSW: Report of the 55th Session**

**IMOW: Young Women Speaking the Economy**

**La STRADA: Thai Migrant Workers in the Czech Republic**

**WHO and the World Bank: World Report on Disability**

## What's new in KARAT?

### Work/Life Balance in the International Context

KARAT Coalition takes part in a project on the topic of work/life balance (in particular in case of parents of small children and parents returning to the labor market after maternal/parental leave) in the international context. It is implemented by our member, Gender Studies from Czech Republic (as a leader) in cooperation with Aspekt from Slovakia, Dortmund University of Technology and other Czech partners organizations.

As one of the first joint activities, Gender Studies have published "Mini analyses of the work/life balance situation in the four project countries" with the Polish input written by Julia Kubisa, sociologist and feminist activist. In May 2011, all project partners took part in the international workshop entitled "Work-life balance of caregivers from an international perspective" in Prague, Czech Republic.

The materials from the workshop will be soon available on Gender Studies' [website](#). To find out more, please contact Marta at: [marta.gontarska@karat.org.pl](mailto:marta.gontarska@karat.org.pl).

### Job Opportunity - Short-Term Consultancy

One World Action (UK), Gender Studies (Czech Republic) and KARAT Secretariat (Poland) seek a short-term consultant to research the extent to which the EU commitment on women's empowerment and gender equality has influenced Polish and Czech development cooperation policies, programmes and processes. Research findings will support awareness-raising and capacity-building activities in Czech Republic, Poland and at the European and Member States levels.

This research is a part of a joint One World Action and KARAT initiative: [Connect! East/South/West Women for development](#) which aims at supporting Civil Society Organizations in engaging with policy-makers and the public for gender-sensitive development cooperation.

Detailed information are available on KARAT's [website](#); alternatively you can contact Marta at: [marta.gontarska@karat.org.pl](mailto:marta.gontarska@karat.org.pl).

## Members' News

### Federation for Women and Family Planning (Poland): Major Breakthrough for Women's Reproductive Health in Poland

The Polish Federation for Women and Family Planning played an essential role in a recent breakthrough for reproductive rights in Poland.

The European Court of Human Rights in its landmark judgment in the case *R.R. v. Poland* has found that the Polish State violated articles 3 and 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights when a pregnant woman (R.R.) could not exercise her right to the prenatal diagnostic tests. Those tests might have confirmed or denied a previous diagnosis of a presence of severe genetic abnormality of a fetus. For the first time in its history, the Court found that an abortion-related violation constituted an inhumane and degrading treatment. The Court also cited a violation of the woman's right respect for private and family life. It awarded the woman a record-breaking 45 000 EURO compensation.

The R.R. case was conducted by the Federation for Women and Family Planning in cooperation with the Warsaw University Law Clinic, supported by the Center for Reproductive Rights. Monika Gašiorowska and Irmina Kotiuk, who conducted the case at the Court, are members of the Federation's Network of Lawyers.

Source: ASTRA Bulletin

## Upcoming deadlines

### UN CSW: Deadline For Submitting the Communications

August 1<sup>st</sup> is the deadline for submitting the communications to the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) containing information related to alleged violations of human rights that affect the status of women in any country in the world. The communications (complaints/appeals/petitions) may be submitted by any individual, non-governmental organization, group or network. The Commission does not take decisions on the merit of communication and, therefore, does not provide a remedy for the redress of individual grievances. However, it does inform the governments about the complaints and invites them to submit replies. Therefore, applying the procedure might be an useful part of advocacy and lobbying strategy.

More information is available [here](#). For the Russian version please contact Aleksandra at: [aleksandra.solik@karat.org.pl](mailto:aleksandra.solik@karat.org.pl).

## World

### AWID: Women's Rights Approach to Development Cooperation

Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID) has launched the discussion paper entitled "Development Cooperation Beyond the Aid Effectiveness Paradigm: A women's rights perspective".

International cooperation based on states' obligations plays an important role in the survival of poor people, the majority of whom are women, particularly in times of economic crisis. However, the policies promoted through the present development cooperation system do not lead to sustainable development or to the realization of human rights and consequently women's rights and gender equality.

Women's rights advocates aim to change the current development cooperation system, which is strongly dominated by OECD countries, and the development discourse towards a more inclusive, sustainable and just framework. This framework should recognize the value of reproductive and care work and enable all people to fulfill their rights, engage in policy processes and promote their own development vision, based on their local experiences.

AWID suggests that the development cooperation system should not be reformed only by some groups of countries, but rather under the institutional umbrella of the United Nations.

AWID together with other women's networks involved in BetterAid, development organizations platform advocating for true development effectiveness has organized international consultations on Development Cooperation, Women's Rights and Gender Equality: On the road again: Feminist visions and strategies towards Busan and beyond. The event was hosted by WIDE on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> of June 2011 in Brussels. Women's organizations representatives and gender equality advocates from other spaces discussed common strategy towards the fourth High Level Forum on

Aid Effectiveness (HLF-4) in Busan in order to influence that process from gender equality and women's rights perspective. KARAT joined the Consultations and promotes women's organizations involvement in the process in its region of work.

Download the [paper](#) here.

For more information contact Joanna at: [joanna.szabunko@karat.org.pl](mailto:joanna.szabunko@karat.org.pl)

## **ILO: Convention on Domestic Workers Adopted**

The delegates at the 100<sup>th</sup> annual Conference of the International Labor Organization (ILO) on the 16<sup>th</sup> of June 2011 adopted a historic set of international standards aimed at improving the working conditions of tens of millions of domestic workers worldwide.

Conference delegates adopted the Convention on Domestic Workers by a vote of 396 to 16, with 63 abstentions and the accompanying Recommendation by a vote of 434 to 8, with 42 abstentions. The ILO is the only tripartite organization of the UN, and each of its 183 Member States is represented by two government delegates, one employer and one worker delegate (with an independent vote).

The Convention is an international treaty that is binding on Member States that ratify it, while the Recommendation provides more detailed guidance on how to apply the Convention. According to ILO proceedings, the new Convention will come into force after only two countries have ratified it.

The new ILO standards state that domestic workers must have the same basic labor rights as those hired by "traditional" employers: reasonable hours of work, one day of rest each week, a limit on in-kind payment, clear information on terms and conditions of employment, as well as respect for fundamental principles and rights at work including freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining.

Recent ILO estimates based place the number of domestic workers at around 53 million. However, experts say that due to the fact that this kind of work is often unregistered, the total number of domestic workers could be as high as 100 million. Around 83% of these workers are women or girls.

*Source: EWL*

## **European Union**

### **EWL, WIDE, CONCORD: Towards a Gender Responsive Post-2013 EU Multi-Annual Financial Framework**

The European Women's Lobby (EWL), WIDE Network, and the Gender Working Group of CONCORD – the European confederation of Relief and Development NGOs, call on European and national policy-makers to integrate a women's rights and gender equality perspective in the forthcoming decisions about the scope, priorities, and financing of the post-2013 EU multi-annual financial framework (MFF).

The EU budget will be limited but a gender-responsive MFF can help to reach the targets of the Europe 2020 Strategy, to enhance economic growth, and to answer demographic challenges. MFF should take into account the differential impact of budgetary decisions on women and men, allocate sufficient funding for women-specific actions and encourage gender mainstreaming in all EU financing instruments.

Prioritizing gender equality in budgetary decisions requires a political will. Right now the EU funding for gender equality is decreasing, for example the expected budget for gender equality constitutes only 0.37% of EU spending within the 2007-2013 MFF.

The proposals for a gender sensitive post-2013 MFF are available [here](#).

## Priorities for the Polish Presidency of the EU



On the 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2011, the Presidency of the Council of the European Union (EU) will pass from Hungary to Poland.

The European Women's Lobby (EWL), the largest association of women's organizations in the EU, called on the Polish Presidency to be a driving force for women's rights in Europe and, in particular:

- to ensure progress in the adoption of gender-related legislation which is currently on the table,
- to ensure the full integration of a women's rights and gender equality perspective in all European social and economic policies, including the Europe2020 Strategy,
- to make sure that in the context of the negotiations of the new Multi Annual Framework 2014+, adequate and sustainable funding is allocated to activities related to human rights, including women's rights, social inclusion and civil society.

The Polish Council of Ministers adopted the "6-month Programme of the Polish Presidency of the EU Council in the second half of 2011". According to this document, the main task of the Polish Presidency is to "lead the European Union on a path to faster economic growth and an enhanced political community". In order to achieve these targets, the Polish Presidency will concentrate on three basic priorities: "European integration as the source of growth", a "Secure Europe" and a "Europe benefiting from openness".

[More information](#) on the EWL call.

[More information](#) on the Polish priorities.

## Share of Women in Decision-Making Still Reflects Gender Imbalance

The European Commission has updated its database on women and men in decision-making positions across the EU. Unfortunately, the share of women in political decision-making positions at European, national and regional level has hardly changed since 2004 and in some cases has even declined.

The gender imbalance in national parliaments in the EU is the following: 24% women and 76% men. Women account for 26% of senior ministers (those with a seat on the cabinet) in governments across the EU-27 countries, 22% of junior ministers and 24% overall. They also account for 31% of the members of regional assemblies and 32% of regional executives, but they lead only 15% of assemblies and 11% of executives.

[More information](#)

## Hungarian Government's Anti-Abortion Campaign

The Hungarian government started an ad campaign against abortion, aiming to reduce the numbers of legal abortions through persuasion rather than a ban. The campaign, showing a picture of a fetus in a womb with the words: "I understand it if you aren't ready for me, but rather put me up for adoption, let me live!", was supposed to run

for two months. According to the press release of the government, the campaign was financed up to 80% from the European Union's Progress funds. Through the Progress Fund, the EU supports projects promoting gender equality. Some members of the European Parliament asked the European Commission in May whether the Commission was aware that the fund was being used to finance an anti-abortion campaign. In response, Commission's vice-president Viviane Reding urged Hungarian authorities to immediately stop the campaign, saying that in this case the EU funding using was improper.

[More information](#)

## Resources

### **Amnesty International: Annual Report 2010**



According to Amnesty International (AI), which has just published its annual report, the year 2010 may be remembered as a turning point when activists and journalists used new technologies (internet, social networking sites, mobile phones) on large scale to mobilize people to protest against human rights abuses. It is also the year when repressive governments faced the real possibility that their days were numbered.

AI also reminds that reproductive rights are one of the key human rights issues. Women and girls still face discrimination and violence and are denied their right to decide freely when to have children. In some countries, access to abortion is granted in law but denied in practice (for example in Poland, where abortion is legal in some specific cases but the access to this type of health services is obstructed). In others, such as Nicaragua, abortion is illegal, even for survivors of rape.

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

### **CSW (UN): Report of the 55th Session**

The report of the fifty-fifth session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is now available. It includes the agreed conclusions on access and participation of women and girls in education, training and science and technology, including for the promotion of women's equal access to full employment and decent work, the report of the Working Group on Communications (see the information [above](#)) and the resolutions adopted by the Commission.

The report, also in Russian, is available [here](#).

### **IMOW: Young Women Speaking the Economy**

The global economic crisis has affected billions of people around the world, especially the young. As the world faces warnings of a "lost generation" of workers, where are the voices, concerns and ideas of young women in the current economic debate?

The International Museum of Women (IMOW) has prepared the new online exhibition entitled "Young Women Speaking the Economy".

You can access the exhibition [here](#).

## La STRADA: Thai Migrant Workers in the Czech Republic

La STRADA has published its research on working conditions in the Thai massage industry in the Czech Republic. More than 90% of Thai immigrants in Czech Republic are women. The report deals with the issue of human rights of migrants working in this field, their exploitation and abuse. It also offer possible strategies of avoidance of these phenomena.

The document is available [here](#).

## WHO and the World Bank: World Report on Disability

More than a billion people in the world today experience disability. People with disabilities have generally fewer economic opportunities and higher rates of poverty, mainly because of the lack of services available to them and many obstacles that they are facing in everyday lives. The authors of the report describe the best solutions to overcome barriers related to the access to health care, education, employment. The document ends with a concrete set of recommended actions for governments. The gender dimensions are highlighted in the report because not all people with disabilities are equally disadvantaged. Women experience the combined disadvantages associated with disability and gender.

The report is available [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): ASTRA, AWID, EWL, PICUM, WIDE, WUNRN, Polish Presidency.

ul. Rakowiecka 39A/14  
02-521 Warsaw, Poland

[www.karat.org](http://www.karat.org)

phone: +48 22 8491647

fax: +48 22 628 20 03

Subscriptions and news contributions are welcomed at: [ewa.kaminska@karat.org.pl](mailto:ewa.kaminska@karat.org.pl)

To support our work please go to **DONATE NOW**