



74 (11) 2012. Warsaw, 03/12/2012

Members' & Regional News

- Hungary: Gender equality NGOs see the need for coalitions
- Kazakhstan: Increasing in awareness on human trafficking
- Moldova: Young people said NO to violence against women
- Macedonia: Gender equality still faces prejudices
- Montenegro: New initiative to empower the women
- Poland: Exchanging experiences between Poland and Belarus

European Union

- MEPs call for EU to show its support for fight against gender violence
- MEPs for gender balance in European decision making
- A step towards gender equality in business

World

- The world against gender violence

Resources

- SOMO: How to use the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights in company research and advocacy
- TRIALOG: 12 years of TRIALOG. Advocacy successes from EU-12
- AidWatch2012: Making sense of EU development cooperation effectiveness

Calls

- CEDAW Committee: General Discussion on "access to justice" announced
- UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women welcomes applications

Dear KARAT News Readers !

I would like to draw your attention to news concerning the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and the 16 Days Campaign which follows that day. These are celebrated across the world , including KARAT's member countries to stop the gender violence and raise awareness of societies on women's human rights. Besides, please read about an important initiatives launched by EU to achieve gender equality standards in politics and bussiness. Do not miss two important calls from CEDAW Committee and UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women.

Remember that I am always looking forward to receiving your news (also in Russian), so do not hesitate to write to me at: agnieszka.mazurek@karat.org.pl

Have a nice reading !

Agnieszka Walko-Mazurek, KARAT Networking Officer

Members' & Regional News

Hungary: Gender equality NGOs see the need for coalitions

On November 26 – 27, 2012 the representatives of 15 gender equality NGOs from Visegrad and Baltic countries met at a workshop in Budapest, Hungary to share their experiences on coalition building. The workshop “Coalition building and lobby work around women’s issues in East-Central Europe” resulted from the Friedrich Ebert Foundation’s initiative on the gender equality organizations’ needs in this field. The friendly and energetic atmosphere created favourable environment for sharing ideas, reflections and knowledge which was met with particular interest by representatives of Hungarian organizations. The participants talked about the successes and failures related to building national coalitions of women’s organizations as well as human rights’ organisations.

KARAT, represented by Kinga Lohmann shared its experience on building regional coalition among women’s organizations from CEE countries in the late nineties. The vivid discussions, that followed showed similarity of experiences of the countries that was related to the region’s specific social, economic and historic condition, which create a good base for cooperation. The participants stressed the need and importance of such regional meetings where they can reflect together on the current developments in their countries related to gender equality, and assess the impact of the European Union’s agenda and funds on their organizations’ work.

For more information please contact Kinga Lohmann at: kinga.lohmann@karat.org.pl

Kazakhstan: Increasing in awareness on human trafficking

On November 21, 2012 a press conference summing up a three-year project on legal education in the field of counteraction of the trafficking in human beings was held in Shymkent, Kazakhstan. The conference speakers from Legal Center for Women’s Initiatives “Sana Sezim”, a KARAT member, presented the results of the project. Due to this initiative over 3000 victims of human trafficking and their families were provided with legal advice, assistance and psychological counseling. Besides, the project offered the expert trainings for people who work directly with the victims such as lawyers, law enforcement representatives, NGOs’ and media’s representatives. A distribution of pamphlets and booklets describing the problem contributed to an increase in awareness and knowledge on human trafficking among the potential victims, as well as institutions and organizations which encounter this issue in their work. A special educational training sessions were also held among the young people to prevent trafficking among the youth.

For more information please contact Legal Center for Women’s Initiatives “Sana Sezim” at: ngosanasezim@rambler.ru

Moldova: Young people said NO to violence against women

On November 25, 2012 the young people gathered in Chisinau to say NO to violence against women and girls. The event was related to the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. The aim of the event was to raise awareness about violence against women and girls in Moldova. This year Moldova celebrates the 10th anniversary of its involvement in the international campaign against gender violence. According to the National Statistics Office seven out of ten women in rural areas and six out of ten women in urban areas of Moldova experience at least one form of violence from their husbands or partners, and 12 percent of women suffer from multiple forms of violence.

For more information please contact Valentina Bodrug-Lungu at: gendercentru@gmail.com from Gender Centrum, Moldova.

Macedonia: Gender equality still faces prejudices

On November 16, 2012 - the International Day for Tolerance, for the 4th time the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights - Skopje organized a march for tolerance. This year the march focused on the LGBT population calling for tolerance within a broad society. The march's participants also expressed their support for women's rights which have been undermined by recent discriminatory speech given by the Prime Minister. On October 23, 2012 the Prime Minister used inappropriate, discriminative to women terminology while talking about low birth-rate in the country. The speech was condemned by the majority of women's NGOs as well as the members of general public who



opposes to traditional perception of the role of woman within a family. Thus, the march's participants called for the government to respect the Law on Prevention and Protection from Discrimination, implement the law, and include the sexual orientation and gender identity as a basis for prevention and protection from discrimination.

Unfortunately at the beginning of the march two human rights activists were attacked by unknown perpetrators. On the very next day, an NGO "Coalition for Life" held a peaceful march aimed at raising the awareness about protective function of a family as a basic cell of society as a whole. The march's leaders gave support to the family values and the institution of marriage as exclusive union of a man and a woman.

These two events show that Macedonia is still facing several prejudices when it comes to gender equality, the freedom of choice and the right of being different.

For more information please contact Nade Kachakova at: nade_kachakova@hotmail.com from Macedonian Association of Development and Integration - MADI in Skopje.

Montenegro: New initiative to empower the women

The Association of Working Women of Montenegro "Women Today", a KARAT's member, has published a women's magazine "Women Today". The magazine is a part of the organization's involvement in the campaign for a greater participation of women in parliamentary and local elections. The "Women Today" aims at raising awareness in the society of Montenegro about the women's situation and the fact that they should participate in a decision-making processes at all levels of the country's governance. It also focuses on making women realize that they can change their current situation by taking small steps such as looking for a better job.

A great number of women in Montenegro are very well educated, however, as compared to men, women earn less, have more difficulties finding employment, are the first to lose their jobs, and only a small number of them hold managerial or higher positions.

The magazine is distributed free of charged targeting individuals, bodies



and institutions (e.g. the government's institutions, political parties) that can contribute to improving of women's situation in the country.

For more information please contact Nada Kovacevic at: nada.kovacevic22@gmail.com from The Association of Working Women of Montenegro „Women Today“.

Poland: Exchanging experiences between Poland and Belarus

KARAT is pleased to launch its new project titled “Mobilization for the enhanced legal protection of women's rights in Belarus” that will be implemented in partnership with KARAT's member organization WIDM (Women's Independent Democratic Movement). The project focuses on developing draft laws on gender equality as well as prevention and elimination of domestic violence. So far in Belarus such laws do not exist, but their adoption is included in objectives of the National Plan of Action for the years 2011 – 2015. KARAT secretariat together with WIDM plans to organize a strategic workshop in Warsaw for women's rights advocates from Belarus to share Polish experiences related to developing and adopting legislation protecting women's rights. The project is supported by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Warsaw.

For more information please contact Magda Pohec at: magda.pohcec@karat.org.pl

European Union

MEPs call for EU to show its support for fight against gender violence

On the International Day for the Eliminating of Violence against Women on November 25, Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) gathered in Strasbourg to express their support to the EP written declaration calling on the EU to ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Violence Against Women. The MEPs stressed the importance of this ground-breaking international legal document to tackle the most wide-spread human rights abuse within its borders. As soon as the written declaration gets the signatures of half of the MEPs, it will enter into force and be considered a strong political statement from the European Parliament.

The ratification by the EU of the Convention would also serve to ensure the legal commitment of all the Member States, and encourage them to individually sign, ratify and implement the text. To this day, 24 Member States of the Council of Europe have signed the Convention, 16 of them being EU Member States, and only Turkey has ratified it.

According to the recent study conducted by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) a domestic violence against women remains widespread and under-reported, and the victims of violence are not effectively supported by public services. The number of women victims of physical intimate partner violence in the EU Member States ranges between 12 and 35 percentage. Although the EU and its institutions are committed to combat violence against women in several of EU documents, only four EU Member States introduced gender-based definition of domestic violence into their criminal codes and in many Member States the protection orders are not implemented effectively. Moreover, the funding of specialised services is instable and has suffered from the current financial crisis.

The source: [EIGE](#) , [EWL](#)

MEPs for gender balance in European decision making

On November 21, 2012 more than 50 Members of the European Parliament from five political groups and from all over the EU signed the [50/50 Declaration](#), calling on Member States, European political parties and the European Institutions to take action in order to achieve gender balance in European decision making.

The MEPs call on Member States to nominate one female and one male candidate per Member State for the Commissioner's post in 2014 as well as for all top positions in the EU institutions. The European Parliament political groups are called upon, in view of the European elections 2014, to compose national electoral lists in a way that will ensure gender parity in outcome as well as to ensure gender parity in the nomination of chairpersons within the committees, as well as in the composition of their Bureau. The declaration is now open for all other MEPs and Members of National Parliaments to be signed and will be handed over to the European Commission and the national governments at the beginning of next year.

Source: [EWL](#)

A step towards gender equality in business

On November 28, 2012 the European Commission has proposed legislation aiming at achieving at least 40% of women in non-executive board-member positions in publicly listed companies by 2020. The EU proposal says that companies must have clear, gender-neutral criteria for choosing non-executive directors and that if candidates are found to be equally qualified, then preference should be given to women. The proposal applies only to non-executives, so as not to interfere with the freedom to conduct a business.

The proposal is generally considered as an important step towards gender equality in business, however some critics argue that it do not go far enough to ensure the real change for women. Now, the proposal needs approval from the European Parliament and Council of Ministers.

Currently, boards are dominated by one gender: 85% of non-executive board members and 91.1% of executive board members are men, while women make up 15% and 8.9% respectively.

The source: [BBC](#), [Europa](#)

World

The world against gender violence

From November 25 (International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women) to December 10 (International Human Rights Day) people around the world take part in the actions within the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence. The dates were chosen to show a symbolic link between violence against women and human rights, and to emphasize that such violence is a violation of human rights. This year the campaign is conducted under a slogan "From Peace in the Home to Peace in the World: Let's Challenge Militarism and End Violence Against Women!" Therefore, many world-wide actions focus on raising awareness about the gender-based violence committed by state agents, especially the police or military, increasing number of small arms and their role in domestic violence, and problem of sexual violence in and after conflict.

According to the data gathered by the global advocacy initiative "[Say NO – UniTE to End Violence against Women](#)" over 900 NGOs worldwide have declared their support and involvement in the campaign, and over 70

representatives of countries publicly expressed their political will to make ending violence against women a top priority.

This year, UN Women Executive Director Michelle Bachelet has revealed [16 Step Policy Agenda](#) to end the gender violence globally. She focuses on the three critical pillars of prevention, protection and provision of services, she also calls for action, urges world leaders to mobilize political will and investment to ensure that women can live a life without violence.

To follow or join the actions worldwide within the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence click [HERE](#)

The source: [Say NO – UniTE to End Violence against Women](#), [UN Women](#)

Resources

SOMO: How to use the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights in company research and advocacy

The guide aims to provide concrete support, guidance and a uniform reference framework for CSOs in using the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. The guiding principles can be utilised to address the responsibility of business to respect human rights and thereby support local communities, workers and other rights holders to ensure fulfilment of their human rights. The guide provides a method for CSOs to use the Guiding Principles in company research and advocacy, and helps them to hold companies accountable for their corporate responsibility to respect internationally recognised human rights.

Download the publication from [HERE](#)

TRIALOG: The advocacy guide introduces readers to the world of lobbying and advocacy, with inspiring examples from EU12 experience.

The guide is a practical and down to earth– tool which provides suggestions on how to incorporate advocacy into your organisation’s work. A special feature of the guide are successful advocacy examples from new EU member state organisations and NGDO platforms.

Download the publication from [HERE](#)

AidWatch2012: Making sense of EU development cooperation effectiveness

The AidWatch Special Report assesses the process of the Busan Partnership Agreement and the quality of EU aid. The report identifies the key flaws of EU development cooperation and assesses to what extent EU donors have implemented the aid effectiveness commitments made in the Paris Declaration (2005) and the Accra Agenda for Action (2008). The report also deals in detailed thematic chapters with two selected issues of the wide aid and development effectiveness agenda: aid transparency and joint programming. These are the issues currently prioritized by EU governments and the European Commission.

Download the publication from [HERE](#)

Calls

CEDAW Committee: General Discussion on “access to justice” announced

The CEDAW Committee invites non-governmental organisations and individuals interested in access to justice to participate in the general discussion and to contribute with written submissions.

The half-day general discussion commencing the CEDAW Committee’s process of elaborating a “General Recommendation on access to justice” will be held **in Geneva on 18th February 2013** during the 54th session of the Committee. The General Recommendation will provide guidance to States Parties on the measures to be adopted to ensure full compliance their obligations to protect, respect and fulfill women’s human rights to access to justice.

The detailed information on registration procedures and requirements that written contributions and oral statements should meet is available at <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/accesstojustice.htm>

UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women welcomes applications

The UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women is accepting applications for its 17th grant cycle (2012) from government authorities at the national and local levels, civil society organizations and networks - including non-governmental, women's and community-based organizations and coalitions and operational research institutions - and UN Country Teams in partnership with governments and civil society organizations.

The 2012 UN Trust Fund Call invites proposals in the following areas of action: 1) Closing the Gap on the Implementation of National and Local Laws, Policies and Action Plans that Address Violence against Women; 2) Addressing Violence against Adolescent and Young Girls.

Applicants are invited to submit grant proposals for a minimum of US\$100,000 up to a maximum of US\$1 million for a period of two to three years. The complete Call for Proposals detailing criteria, eligibility requirements and application guidelines is available at: <http://grants.unwomen.org/>.

All applications must be submitted online. **The application deadline is 21 January 2013.**

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): Legal Center for Women’s Initiatives “Sana Sezim (Kazakhstan), Gender Centrum (Moldova), Macedonian Association of Development and Integration (Macedonia), The Association of Working Women of Montenegro „Women Today“, EWL, EIGE, UN Women, BBC.

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