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KARAT & Members' News

Czech Republic: How to bring girls to science and technology

On the occasion of the International Day of the Girl the non-government organization "Gender Studies" organized a visit of 30 primary school's children to the headquarters of two big companies – Avast and Telefonica O2. The aim of the visit was to stimulate the interest of girls in non-traditional, in particular technical fields. The children got familiarized with the fields that are still perceived as a domain of men – programming, telecommunications and network management. They could see the working environment of the companies, learned the specific job descriptions and why working in a technical field might be interesting for girls as well. In Telefonica O2 for instance, pupils had a chance to see the monitoring center that controls mobile and fixed network, as well as the unique facility of atomic clock. They learned how the mobile and internet networks work and what knowledge is needed for a work in telecommunications.

According to the Gender Studies the division into the "male" and "feminine" professions is still rooted into people's minds in Czech Republic. That means that nearly half of the population is often discouraged or simply ignored when talking about technical subjects, just because of the traditional roles and persistent social stereotypes. The girls miss the opportunity to excel and make use of their talents in the increasingly important technical fields. In the year 2011/2012 for example, only 6 % of girls studied engineering sciences at vocational secondary schools in the country. The 11th of October was declared as the International Day of Girl Child by the United Nations to remind the girls' rights and specific challenges they are facing in the

world today. This year's theme is "Innovating for Girls' Education," which includes also activities that could encourage the girls to get involved in the natural and technical sciences.

For more information please contact Jitka Hausenblasova at: jitka.hausenblasova@genderstudies.cz

Kazakhstan: Trafficking in women - from a criminal to victim.

The NGO Legal Center for Women's Initiatives "Sana Sezim" asked people on the streets if they know that women are forced to work in sex industry. Many of the respondents just shrugged their shoulders and smiled without a word. The survey was a part of a project "Prevention of Human Trafficking" focused on reaching with information about the trafficking in women to young people. On 23rd – 24th of October, 2013 "Sana Sezim" organized a training for students in "Miras" College. The feedback from the participants was very positive. They talked about changing their views on sex workers. Before the training most of the participants perceived the sex workers as the immoral women and criminals but the training provided them with a broader perspective on this issue and the criminals became the victims of the illegal and cruel practice in the participant's eyes. "Sana Sezim" is sure that the more young people know about the problem the less will be the victims of trafficking in human.

For more information please contact NGO Sana Sezim at: ngosanasezim@rambler.ru

Kyrgyzstan: The International Day of Rural Women



On October 19, 2013 the rural women from Osh region of Kyrgyzstan celebrated the International Day of Rural Women. The event was organized for the second time on the initiative of the Public Fund "DIA". This year's event focused on the theme "Women in Action and Solidarity against Poverty in the Kyrgyz Republic" and gathered as many as 500 people including the representatives of women entrepreneurs, women members of local councils and representatives of government institutions. The participants discussed on how to improve well-being and economic empowerment of rural women for equal access to resources. The unforgettable moment of the celebration was a peaceful march of the participants who walked through the main street of Kara-Suu town with banners and slogans calling for unity, solidarity and labor. Another highlight of the day was a fair organized by a group of women entrepreneurs who showed the fruits of women's labor. The event ended with a show of regional clothes and the gala concert. The outcome of the event was the adoption of the resolution which calls for the development and adoption of a special State program to support rural women entrepreneurs.

For more information please contact Chinara Kartanbaeva at: ckartanbaeva@gmail.com

Poland: LPP joins Bangladesh Accord

After 6 months of being under a constant pressure from the Clean Clothes Polska (CCP) and its supporters, the LPP, the biggest garment company in Poland which produced in collapsed Rana Plaza factory, decided to sign the [Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh](#). The Accord is a five-year legally binding agreement between international labor organizations, non-governmental organizations, and retailers engaged in the textile industry to maintain minimum safety standards in the Bangladesh textile industry. The members of CCP, including KARAT, are very glad that the LPP signed the agreement taking the responsibility for the working conditions in which its clothes are produced. The transparency is one of the main rules of the corporate social responsibility (CCR) and the Accord, and the CCP hopes that the Polish company will inform a public opinion on the actions taken to fulfill the Accord as well as publish its Code of Conduct.

The 24th October marks six months since the deadliest disaster hit the garment industry, when Rana Plaza collapsed. With over 1,100 people killed and thousands more injured the battle for full and fair compensation continues.

Learn about the Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh at: <http://www.cleanclothes.org/issues/faq-safety-accord>

For more information please contact: Joanna Szabunko at: info@cleanclothes.pl

Tajikistan: Creating a positive image of woman politician

In October 2013 the organization “Nasl” from Tajikistan organized 2 talk shows titled “Today leader – Tomorrow a Member of Parliament” which focused on the women’s leadership. The talk shows were shown in local TV and aimed at creating a positive image of a woman politician. The experts invited to the TV studio were the women prominent politicians – the MPs of the Upper and Lower House of Parliament and the women activists of political parties who have the significant achievements in politics. The talk shows were preceded by a poll conducted in urban and rural areas where people were asked if there is any difference between the women leaders and the men leaders. Most of the respondents felt that there is no difference since the qualifications and skills of a leader are important, not a gender. The experts commented on the poll’s results and the audience had an opportunity to express their opinions and ask questions about this issue. The events took part in a framework of a project “Woman leader benefits the country”.

For more information please contact Orzu Ganieva at: orzu-77@mail.ru

Ukraine: Experts discuss on problems of gender equality

On October 16, 2013 special discussions on gender equality took place at the Verkhovna Rada (the Parliament of Ukraine). The topic was how to find a recovery on female’s equal rights and possibilities. Members of the Ukrainian parliament and governors, as well as the representatives of the NGOs and independent experts, took part in the discussions. More than 40 specialists gave information and visions on problems of the gender equality in Ukraine. According to the statistics, Ukraine is far from achieving the gender equality standards. For example, there is still much less women in leadership positions in business and politics than men. Among the participants of the discussion there was the President of the League of Professional Women (LPW), independent Ukrainian non-governmental organization, Olena Lazorenko who stressed that the experience of economically developed democratic countries confirms that economic empowerment is needed for implementation of true gender equality. The LPW issued the recommendations calling on the government to develop an effective strategy to expand economic opportunities for women, including a policy that will support the women’s small and medium entrepreneurs, support the cooperation between the government, business and civil society to stimulate a development of women’s entrepreneurship, and develop a gender-sensitive system of non-formal adult education.

For more information please contact Olena Lazorenko at: lpw@voliacable.com

European Union

WIDE+: Strong voice against the global neo-liberal transformation

Around 40 feminists from across Europe gathered in Madrid, Spain on July 4, 2013 to work on the process of setting up the WIDE+ and reflect on the new strategies, spaces and challenges that feminists face. Five key note speeches and an open floor session gave room to an inspiring and sharp debate where the key question was what kind of strategies and action feminist and other human rights advocates should take in this changing global order. The feminists agreed that the cause for the crises is a systemic model found in political, economic and cultural areas that aims to privatize the common goods, and deprives most of the population of their well-being, for the benefit of a privileged elite, which is often white and male. In this privatized and exploitative neo-liberal offensive territories that are essential to ensure human dignity for all, such as environmental resources and women’s bodies, become battlefields. Women need to occupy, resist and defend areas and spaces in dispute because much is at stake.

Additionally to the discussions on the women’s human rights paradigm in the current neo-liberal context the meeting became a significant step forward to finish the process of setting up the WIDE+. There were two key decisions taken during the Madrid meeting. Firstly, members came to agree in global terms on the WIDE+ vision and mission. Secondly, a working group was established in order to work out 2 – 3 options for a formalized WIDE+, including membership criteria and options to establish a legal identity in a specific country or not. The mission of WIDE+ focuses on transforming policies and practices so that they reflect development and economic paradigms that are in line with fundamental human rights. This process of advocacy,

awareness raising, etc. includes a strong focus on creating and widening spaces and networks that multiply the impact of feminist activists. The WIDE+ members worked out the network's mission and vision after a thorough analysis of the current situation in Europe in terms of the economical and political crisis and their serious impact on women's social and economic status. They expressed their commitment to strengthen women's rights, as part of a larger struggle for social justice and the human rights of all, combat all forms of discrimination and stand for sexual and reproductive health and rights. They called for *"a world where the rights of people and the planet are put before profit and where the economy is transformed accordingly at all levels"* expressing their strong opposition to the global neo-liberal transformation".

The new network shares with the previous WIDE a similar focus and similar strategies, but is also clearly different. So far noticeable is a strong focus on movements-building and cooperation with women's and human rights movements struggling for the same vision across the world.

Source: WIDE+ Newsletter http://wideplusnetwork.files.wordpress.com/2012/10/widespecial_oct2013.pdf

For more information on the Madrid's meeting and development of WIDE+ please contact Kinga Lohmann at: kinga.lohmann@karat.org.pl

Poland becomes member of the OECD DAC

On October 22, 2013 Poland has become the 28th member of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC), the leading international forum for bilateral providers of development co-operation. Poland's bilateral ODA is concentrated in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine (the Eastern Partnership countries), as well as some developing countries in Central Asia and Africa. It provides bilateral development co-operation in the areas of fostering democratisation, human rights and political transformation, education, environment, development of small and medium size enterprises and professionalization of public administration. Grupa Zagranica, the Polish platform of organizations involved in international development cooperation, democracy support, humanitarian aid and global education expressed some critical views on the Polish official development aid system. The main points of criticism circled around the fuzziness of Polish aid strategy and inadequate evaluation of aid. In fact, although Poland indicated priority countries to receive aid, there are still no Country Strategy Papers to deliver the aid in a systematic way. Similarly, the aid disbursed is not subjected to a meaningful evaluation, which could reveal in how far it contributes to the goals set out in the Act on Development Cooperation. Not to mention, that the CSOs strongly advocate for reformulating these goals to emphasize poverty reduction and explicitly refer to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and aid effectiveness principles. Nonetheless, Grupa Zagranica appreciated the advances which Polish authorities made towards more structured aid, aligned with international good practices. Joining DAC OECD was called for by Polish CSOs since quite some time. Organizations gathered in Grupa Zagranica, including KARAT, believe this can be a vital impulse for more effort towards improving system of development aid in Poland.

Source: [TRIALOG](#), [OECD](#)

World

56th session of CEDAW Committee

On October 18, 2013 the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) adopted its 30th General Recommendation on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations. General recommendations are authoritative statements on the meaning and scope of the provisions in the CEDAW Convention with respect to the rights of women and the obligations of the State. It clarifies the application of CEDAW to emerging and priority situations affecting women. The Committee also discussed the draft General Recommendation on gender related dimensions of refugee status, asylum and statelessness, and made progress on the draft General Recommendation with the Committee on the Rights of the Child. The Committee also held a half-day general discussion on rural women, which would form a solid basis for embarking on the preparation of a draft General Recommendation on the topic. During the same session the Committee adopted its concluding observations and recommendations on the reports of the Republic of Moldova, Tajikistan, Colombia, Benin, Andorra, Cambodia and Seychelles on how these countries implement the provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Detailed information on the 56th session of CEDAW Committee are available at:
http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/SessionDetails1.aspx?SessionID=812&Lang=en

UN groundbreaking resolution for girls and women

On October 21, 2013 the United Nations Security Council passed a groundbreaking resolution supporting abortion services for girls and women raped in armed conflict. Although the Security Council did not use the term “abortion” in Resolution 2122, its language makes clear that Member States and the UN must ensure that all options are given women impregnated by war rape. This provision directly responds to United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon’s September 2013 recommendation to the Council that girls and women raped in armed conflict be ensured access to “services for safe termination of pregnancies resulting from rape, without discrimination and in accordance with international human rights and humanitarian law.” The Resolution 2122 also considerably strengthens the Security Council’s earlier resolutions on Women, Peace and Security by calling for stronger measures regarding women’s participation in conflict and post-conflict processes such as peace talks, gender expertise in peacekeeping missions, improved information about the impact of armed conflict on women, and more direct briefing to the Council on progress in these areas.

Source: [AWID](#)

Coming events:

European Development Days

On November 26-27, 2013 the European Development Days (EDD) will take place in Brussels. The 2013 edition of EDD is titled “A decent Life for all by 2030 - Building a consensus for a new development agenda” and will focus on the post-2015 debate and the need to build a consensus for a strong European position advocating a common approach to addressing global poverty and sustainable development.

More information at: <http://eudevdays.eu/>

Resources

Oxfam: A Cautionary Tale: The true cost of austerity and inequality in Europe

European austerity programmes have dismantled the mechanisms that reduce inequality and enable equitable growth. With inequality and poverty on the rise, Europe is facing a lost decade. An additional 15 to 25 million people across Europe could face the prospect of living in poverty by 2025 if austerity measures continue. In its publication Oxfam calls on the governments of Europe to turn away from austerity measures and instead choose a path of inclusive growth that delivers better outcomes for people, communities, and the environment.

You can find the publication under: <http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/a-cautionary-tale-the-true-cost-of-austerity-and-inequality-in-europe-301384>

EC: Midterm review of the Gender Equality Strategy

In September 2010, the European Commission adopted a Strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015 as the Commission’s coordinated framework for promoting gender equality in all policies of the Union and as an expression of the Commission’s resolve to step up its activities in this field. The Strategy represents the work programme of the Commission on gender equality. In line with the European Pact for Gender Equality³, it reaffirms the dual approach of specific actions and gender mainstreaming in five priority areas and one area addressing cross-cutting issues. In October 2013 the European Commission published a mid-term review report of the Strategy for equality between women and men.

You can find the document under: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/document/index_en.htm

EIGE: Study of collected narratives on gender perceptions in the 27 EU Member States

The publication has been commissioned by the European Institute for Gender Equality with the aim of mapping the persistence of stereotypical gender attitudes and perceptions. The study has as its central objective the collection of real-life stories related to gender perceptions in the form of narratives. The specific aim with this study is to map stereotypical gender

attitudes/perceptions through stories and put these in their narrative form and original language in an online database. These narratives have been analysed with a view to identifying how stereotypical gender perceptions influence people's lives, as well as to provide background information on possible obstacles for increased gender equality in various contexts and on how stereotypical gender perceptions can be overcome.

You can find the publication under: <http://bookshop.europa.eu/en/a-study-of-collected-narratives-on-gender-perceptions-in-the-27-eu-member-states-pbMH3112337/>

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS

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