

1979 – 2009: 30 years of UN Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women



Coalition of NGOs
“From equality de-jure to equality de-facto”



Press-release

Women’s Human Rights – What is achieved in 16 years after adoption of CEDAW by Tajikistan

UNIFEM in partnership with the Coalition of NGOs holds consultations to discuss positive and negative sides of CEDAW implementation in Tajikistan



On 26 June 2009 at the UN House UNIFEM organized a consultative meeting with the national gender experts and partners to discuss preparations for 30-years anniversary of CEDAW by making contributions to the global campaign to collect stories on CEDAW implementation¹. The campaign is aimed to share positive experience across the regions and on a worldwide scale by soliciting responses to these questions: **What has CEDAW done for women’s rights? And how can we use CEDAW to achieve greater justice for women?**

Among positive experience in terms of actions and initiatives implemented as a response and contribution to actual enforcement of the CEDAW in Tajikistan, participants of the meeting identified the following results:

- Creation in May 2008 the Coalition of NGOs “From equality de-jure to equality de-facto” to monitor implementation of concluding recommendations by the CEDAW Committee for Tajikistan;
- Introduction of a statement “*Women and Men are equal*” into the National Constitution as a result of lobbying by women’s NGOs and women-parliamentarians;
- Introduction of special annual quota for rural girls from remote districts to study at universities (presidential quota) in 1997 as well as presidential scholarships for students, including post-graduate ones;
- development of a marriage contract and introduction of a statement about the marriage contract into the Family Code;

¹ Tajikistan ratified CEDAW in 1993. The first report on implementation of the Convention was passed in January 2007.

- control established by local authorities in Kurgan-Tyube to proceed with religious marriage only after civic registration of marriage;
- establishment of a dormitory for girls-orphans under the Committee for women and family affairs to continue their education after completion of secondary schools;
- equal responsibilities of parents on bringing up their children are introduced into the Family Code; etc.



Lack of efficient enforcement of the national gender equality policy and legislation remains one of the serious constraints in implementing internationally agreed commitments on gender equality and women's human rights. As a result of discussions, members of the Coalition agreed to prepare stories on CEDAW implementation to share them further through the global campaign and use this as a background material for the preparation of the next shadow report.



At the meeting Mrs. Marifat Shokirova, head of the Gender department of the Committee for women and family affairs informed participants about **decision by the President of Tajikistan to increase a minimal marriage age from 17 to 18 years**. This measure initiated by the Committee for women and family affairs is a direct result of the recommendation made by CEDAW Committee in February 2008 on results of the first country reporting on CEDAW implementation. The decision will be passed to

the Parliament to introduce necessary changes into the national legislation.

The ongoing consultations on a progress of the CEDAW implementation in Tajikistan, which is part of the implementation of the UNIFEM Strategic Plan for 2008-2011, specifically identified improving capacity of gender equality experts, advocates and their organizations and networks to efficiently demand the implementation of gender equality dimensions through national laws, policies and strategies as a main objective. By this meeting UNIFEM continues a dialogue in partnership with the Gender Theme Group on improving accountability on practical implementation of gender equality commitments by the Government. Report on findings of the meeting is available in Russian and could be found at www.untj.org/gender (*Section Activities*). More information could be provided by Nargis Azizova, UNIFEM Adviser for Tajikistan (nargis.azizova@unifem.org) and Tatiana Bozrikova, head of the Coalition of NGOs (of_panorama@mail.ru).