



POWER, VOICE and RIGHTS

A Turning Point for Gender Equality in Asia and the Pacific

Embargoed until 8th March 2010, 10:30 am (New Delhi time)

KEY RECCOMENDATIONS

The Asia-Pacific Human Development Report 2010 identifies three key areas where policy interventions will produce results for gender equality: (1) building economic power, (2) promoting political voice and (3) advancing legal rights. In order to make advances in these three areas, the Report puts forward eight points for a new action agenda that can make a huge difference in the lives of women and men. These are:

1. **Make international commitments a reality**, using international conventions that promote human rights, respect for diversity and equality for all. An overwhelming majority of countries have committed to CEDAW. Connect respect for diversity to equality of opportunity, integrating both protective and empowering measures by pressuring the principal agents to act – whether they are the legislature and judiciary, as public servants or as private actors. Pay particular attention to removing the region's high number of reservations to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Consider new regional and international agreements to ensure women's safe migration and ease legal barriers to it.
2. **Craft economic policies to support gender equality**, targeting poverty interventions to provide equal opportunities for women and men. Ensure that fiscal and monetary policies help unleash women's leadership and entrepreneurship, through directed lending to poor women for productive purposes, graduation of more women from microfinance to mainstream financial institutions, and gender-based budgeting. Make safe and low-cost money transfer facilities available within countries and across borders; other supportive infrastructure may include safe transportation networks.
3. **Make the content of education and access to it more gender-equal**, developing awareness through teacher training and questioning materials that directly or indirectly enforce stereotypes of girls. Provide safe environments with appropriate amenities such as girls' toilets. Promote female leadership and active decision-making.
4. **Boost political participation**, through special actions such as quotas with legal compliance mechanisms, civil service and political party reform. Review campaign financing to ensure equitable access for women candidates. Cultivate women's knowledge, capacity and interest in public positions through high-quality mentoring programmes or other opportunities to build their skills. Advocate the value of women's political participation to both women and men by supporting civil society organizations that educate voters, lobby for the passage of laws, create networks and channel information about gender equality issues into the political system.

5. **Pursue gender-equitable laws**, reforming ones that discriminate on the basis of gender and making new ones where needed, including to resolve discrepancies. Clarify marriage, divorce and maintenance laws to defend fairness and equal treatment of women and men. Ensure gender-friendly employment standards and support women's work through targeted services and benefits, including equal pay for equal work and accessible complaint systems, particularly for sexual harassment. Engage faith-based organizations as important agents for change. Adopt and implement laws to address gender-based violence. Review legal systems for overall gender equality, including for CEDAW compliance. Place special emphasis on women owning and controlling land.

6. **Address legal discrimination and close gaps between laws and legal practices**, ensuring that legal practices are consistent with laws on the books and that access to justice is broadly available. Provide professional training for lawyers, judges and police, including an orientation around the needs of marginalized groups such as women.

7. **Collect better data, strengthen capacity for gender analysis** in areas such as tracking the prevalence of gender-based violence and male-female gaps in asset ownership. Measure women's unpaid work and better understand patterns of female migration by improving data collection and sharing between origin and destination countries and sub-national regions.

8. **Foster new attitudes to remove disempowering gender stereotypes**, enlisting civil society, the media, academic institutions, religious organizations, business and others in influencing attitudes to support gender equality. Develop advocacy tools around international conventions, national laws, principles of religious faiths or customs, and mechanisms for gender analysis such as gender budgeting. Include the needs of men and boys in the definition of gender equality and steps to achieve it, recognizing their transformative role.

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For more information and to access the 2010 Asia-Pacific Human Development Report and the complete press kit please visit: <http://www2.undprcc.lk/ext/pvr/>

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