

NORWAY AND VIET NAM

FINAL STATEMENT OF WORKING GROUP ON GENDER EQUALITY

(Theme: Gender and Media in 2011, Oslo)

Gender and media

Statement from the discussion

Norway and Vietnam are, in accordance with the UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966, article 19), obliged to ensure freedom of expression for all, both women and men. In addition, CEDAW states the necessity of making all efforts to fight discrimination against women in political and public life (Article 7). The discussions in the working group were related to the aims of The Beijing platform for action (1995) on women and the media.

These were the main topics of concern of the group:

- How to promote a balanced, non-stereotyped representation of women in the media.
- How to break the “culture of silence” that inhibits women from speaking out and making their voices heard.
- How can media empower women, and how can women use media and information technology?

How can media contribute to efficient dissemination of information on gender equality and women’s rights?

We acknowledge that the underrepresentation of women in the media and the use of female and male stereotypes is a hindrance for equal opportunities in both Viet Nam and Norway. We have addressed the rights and duties of the different stakeholders (the government, the media and the civil society) to contribute to changes on these issues:

Our States have the legal frameworks to ensure that no groups of people are hindered in their freedom of expression, rendered invisible or subjected to marginalisation and negative publicity. The laws have to be implemented sufficiently. Control is needed and breaches of the laws are to be followed by sanctions. Laws and regulations are necessary, but not enough.

The Governments should:

- Ensure that both sexes have the same access to education of high quality.
- Increase the capacity to implement laws and policies related to women in the media.
- Provide sufficient and gender sensitive education for journalists.
- Support dialogues, forums and trainings on gender and media.
- Ensure availability of ICT skills and media access including internet, to both women and men.

The media:

Media should have an independent role, but are bound to the general ethical rules and responsibilities in society. They should contribute to social and cultural change towards gender equality by:

- Ensuring that there is a diversity of media channels available.
- Recruiting journalists from different groups in society.
- Giving women and men equal opportunities to advancement in the media organization.
- Being aware of gender bias and take actions against it.
- Avoiding use of gender stereotypes and present women and men in their diverse roles.
- Offering education and training on gender issues to staff.

Civil society:

Organizations especially women's organizations should take the role as watch dogs, mobilizing and empowering women through information, training and awareness rising, media monitoring and critique. The civil society should be encouraged to contribute with human and financial resources and advocate a legal framework that supports their role.

- Build capacity for underrepresented groups.
- Prevent discrimination and enhance equality.

Partnerships arrangements aim at the following:

- Norwegian experts will provide technical assistance to develop gender sensitive training for journalists,/editors of some key media agencies at central level and some selected provinces and universities
- Twinning between a Norwegian and a Viet Nam newspaper on the exchange of experience and good practice.
- Training of women and women's organisations on how to make use of the media for women's empowerment through 'Women Can Do It'
- Exchange experiences on campaigning on a gender equality issue