

Negotiation Kit for Beijing + 10

The Girl - Child

49th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women · New York City · February 28 - March 11, 2005

OVERARCHING CONCERN

60 million women and girls in the region are “missing,” victims of varied forms of violence. The violence of armed conflict, domestic violence including honor killings, dowry deaths, female infanticide and sex selective abortion. The girl-child has received insufficient national and international attention. Violence being inflicted on the girl-child persists due to the exploited and vulnerable position of women and children. UN “diplomatic” language within the BPFA and other international documents reveal that the multiple concerns of different groups of the girl-child have yet to be met.

GAINS

- Recognition and protective action by some governments have been made in response to the special needs of the girl-child, especially in the area of violence.

GAPS

- The BPFA does not recognize that girls and young women fall into distinct age groupings, each with their own set of needs. Diversity in demographic characteristics has yet to be recognized, including differences in sexual orientation, race, marital status, indigenous identities, cultural and linguistic backgrounds, disability, refugee status, rural communities, and migrants. Distinction has also to be made of internally displaced people and the impact of their socioeconomic status.
- No specific reference to young women has been made and only a limited recognition has been given to the particular needs of girls; this reinforces the exploited and vulnerable position of young women and girls.
- There is a lack of access to information, education and services as well as a lack of meaningful participation in the community at various levels of the decision making process. This situation reinforces the exploited and vulnerable position of the girl child.

EMERGING ISSUES

- Global economic trends and policies in the Asia Pacific region have negatively impacted on girl children, as reflected in the increase in child prostitution and trafficking, child labor, child homelessness, and culturally sanctioned child marriages and sexual exploitation.

RECOMMENDED LANGUAGE

No specific reference in BPFA

By Governments, the UN system, and Civil Society

- Ensure that the concerns of the girl child are adequately addressed in national and international mechanisms.
- Accelerate the implementation of the BPFA strategic objectives.
- Ensure that strategies are developed to address the needs of girl children according to groupings based on age and other demographic characteristics.
- Ensure that national budgetary allocations for programs serving girl children are proportionate to the population that they represent.
- Ensure the collection of gender and age disaggregated data to inform policy and program development for girl children from all demographic groups.
- Provide accessible holistic health care services and reproductive health care for all girls and young women, especially those from vulnerable groups.

By the UN system

- Adopt the language of girls and young women in declarations and conventions, with particular emphasis on the realisation of human rights as women's rights, young women's rights, and children's rights. Adopt a language that includes women's sexual and reproductive health and rights, their access to health care, information and services as well as access for all children and youth to all levels of education: early childhood, primary, secondary, tertiary, vocational and informal.
- The Committee on the Rights of the Child should consider issuing a General Comment elaborating on the relationship of the girl child to the rights contained in the Convention on the Rights of the Child

Violence Against Girl-Children BPFA Strategic Objective L.6

By Governments

- Develop, fund and implement strategies and programs that address issues of violence against girls and young women in both public and private spheres; address issues of exploitation linked to trafficking, unsafe abortion, disability, informal and child labour, pornography, infanticide and prenatal sex selection, sexual violence, prostitution, forced migration, incest, and honour killings.
- Enforce appropriate laws, policies and decrees that actualise the rights of girls and young women and severely penalise all violations of girls and young women's rights.
- Ensure the effective implementation of legislation to prevent child prostitution, child trafficking, child labour, and child marriages
- Provide effective programs to respond to the needs of children who are victims of sexual and economic exploitation

By Governments, the UN system, and donor agencies

- Provide funding to programs aimed at the elimination of sexual and economic exploitation of the girl child.

Thematic Focal Point for The Girl - Child
Asia Pacific Women's Watch Secretariat