



Understanding and supporting women and their organisations

Equality and Human Rights Commission

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Seizing the opportunities of CEDAW

Developing a women's sector strategy for 2011

The Women's Resource Centre and Equality and Human Rights Commission present a capacity-building and strategy conference on the

United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

- Find out more about CEDAW and its Optional Protocol, and other international women's rights instruments
- Learn about the practical ways you can use CEDAW in your lobbying work and for holding the government and public bodies to account
- Strategise with women's organisations from across the UK to ensure the women's sector has a strong presence at the UK government's next examination by the CEDAW Committee (2011)

When? Tuesday 24 March, 9.30am - 4.00pm

Where? Human Rights Action Centre
17-25 New Inn Yard
London EC2A 3EA

This form is available in other formats. Contact WRC on 020 7324 3040 or info@wrc.org.uk

Seizing the Opportunities of CEDAW: Programme

- 9.30am** **Registration**
- 10am** **Joint welcome from Women's Resource Centre and Equality and Human Rights Commission**
- 10.10am** **Keynote address:**
Dubravka Siminovic, member and former Chair (2007-09) of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
- 10.30am** **Joint presentation on the experiences of attending the UK CEDAW examination (2008) in New York by UK women's sector representatives:**
Ann Marie Gray, Northern Ireland Women's European Platform
Hannana Siddiqui, Southall Black Sisters
Lee Eggleston, South Essex Rape and Incest Crisis Centre and Rape Crisis (England and Wales)
Liz Kelly, End Violence Against Women Coalition
Sheila Coates, SERICC and Rape Crisis (England and Wales)
- 11.30am** **Break**
- 11.45am** **Presentation on the role of national human rights institutions in CEDAW:**
Equalities and Human Rights Commission
- 12.30pm** **Workshops (see back page for further detail)**
- 1.45pm** **Lunch**
- 2.15pm** **Small group work on developing a women's sector 'CEDAW 2011' strategy**
- 3.15pm** **Break**
- 3.30pm** **Presentation on the UK government's post-CEDAW examination plan, followed by Q&A session:**
Helene Reardon-Bond, Head of Gender Equality, Government Equalities Office
- 4.00pm** **Closing remarks**
- 4:30pm** **Close**

This conference is **FREE** but **booking is essential** and **places are strictly limited**.

Booking and Bursary Application forms are included with this flier, and are available from www.wrc.org.uk, admin@wrc.org.uk or **020 7324 3030**.

Why should I attend?

CEDAW is often referred to as the 'International Bill of Rights for Women', and 2009 marks the 30th anniversary of CEDAW. In July 2008, the UK government was assessed by the CEDAW Committee - a panel of international women's equality experts who monitor governments' compliance with CEDAW. The Committee found the UK government's efforts to address women's equality wanting in many critical areas, and made strong recommendations, including the provision of sustainable funding for women's organisations.

Now is a critical time for the women's voluntary and community sector - 1 in 5 women's organisations in the UK have become inactive in the last three years. The added pressures of the recession mean women's organisations face complex challenges.

Come along to this conference to learn about CEDAW and other international women's rights instruments, and how you can use them to strengthen your organisation and lobbying voice. As a sector, we must strategise together to make the most of the Committee's concluding observations and recommendations and ensure we have a significant presence at the UK government's next examination in 2011.

Who should attend?

You should attend if you work:

- for a women's organisation, project, campaign or network,
- in the third or public sectors and have an interest in progressing women's equality,
- to progress women's equality in other ways (e.g. through journalism, activism, academia etc).

How much does it cost?

The conference is **FREE**. However, we require a **returnable deposit** of £15 (cheques only) to confirm your place. Your deposit will not be returned if you do not attend the conference and do not cancel your registration before Tuesday 17th March, 5pm. Substitutions are allowed.

Bursaries

It is vital that women from across the UK attend the conference. Therefore, we are offering bursaries to contribute to travel costs and one night of accommodation in London. We can reimburse a maximum of £75 towards accommodation and £75 towards travel per approved applicant. Lunch and refreshments will be provided at the conference, and most accommodation packages include breakfast.

Once approved, individuals will need to book their own accommodation and transport and send us receipts, which we will reimburse. If you will have a problem paying for costs up-front, please contact us. Applications will be assessed on a rolling basis until the fund is exhausted - so don't hesitate to submit your bursary application ASAP!

Carers

If you are very interested in attending the conference, but have care responsibilities that might prevent you from doing so, please talk to us as we may be able to assist.

Accommodation in London

We can recommend the Travelodge Euston for your accommodation. Currently, there is a special deal available through the Travelodge website (£55 per person per night)

1-11 Grafton Place, London NW1 1DJ

Tel: 0871 984 6332

www.travelodge.co.uk

Not able to attend the conference?

Send an email with your contact details to kara@wrc.org.uk and we will keep you updated about CEDAW developments.

Workshops

When you complete your Booking Form, you will need to select your workshop preference. Please note that workshops will run at the same time, so you will only be able to attend one of them. We will try to ensure you can attend the workshop you prefer. Information and notes from each workshop will be disseminated post-event.

CEDAW and the Beijing Platform for Action

Shaki Sanusi, Rights of Women

The Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) is another vitally important international women's rights tool. The BPfA was adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995. BPfA upholds CEDAW and calls upon Governments, the international community, civil society (including NGOs) and the private sector to take strategic action in identified critical areas of concern for the advancement of women's rights. Come to this workshop to gain an overview of the Beijing Platform for Action, and importantly, its relationship to CEDAW.

CEDAW and the Optional Protocol

Jacqui Hunt, Equality Now

The Optional Protocol to CEDAW gives individuals and groups the right to submit complaints of violations of CEDAW directly to the CEDAW Committee. Come to this workshop to understand more about the Optional Protocol, what the process is for submitting complaints, and what sort of remedies can be expected. If there is time and interest, the workshop could also discuss actual UK cases which could be lodged under the Optional Protocol so please bring along any potential cases you would like to talk through.

Global South / North Exchange: CEDAW and women internationally

Ceri Hayes, WOMANKIND Worldwide

Women around the world are using CEDAW as a powerful lobbying tool to hold governments to account at local and regional levels - at times, with very inspiring outcomes. Come to this workshop to hear about how women's organisations in the 'Global South' such as Ghana, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Peru and Bolivia, have incorporated CEDAW into their campaigning work and what the challenges and successes have been.

Making the European connections

National Alliance of Women's Organisations

The European Union has led on many international milestones for women (e.g. women in politics), and has a powerful voice on the international stage. NAWO is the coordinating body for the European Women's Lobby in England. Come to this workshop to find out about current efforts to mainstream gender equality in Europe, how to monitor the UK government on its implementation of EU directives on women's equality, and how to lobby MEPs on women's rights issues.

Mobilising NI: The experiences of women in Northern Ireland in the lead-up to CEDAW 2008

Ann Marie Gray, Northern Ireland Women's European Platform

The women's sector in Northern Ireland mobilised very effectively in the lead-up to the UK's CEDAW examination in July 2008. Amongst other things, they organised a CEDAW Committee member to attend sector meetings, produced seven shadow reports, sent a representative to the examination, and ensured key issues (e.g. reproductive rights and women in prison) remained on the agenda. Come to this workshop to hear about this inspiring journey, and what the challenges and lessons were.

Women's rights as human rights: The relevance of human rights to women's lives in the UK

Liz McKean, Amnesty International

At the 1995 Fourth World Conference in Beijing, China, Hilary Clinton famously coined the phrase "women's rights are human rights". Many of the CEDAW Concluding Observations point to human rights violations. This workshop explores some of the issues that continue to threaten women's access to safety, dignity, and freedom from violence in the UK, and reminds us why we must pay attention to the human rights agenda.