ACWC

ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children

Sunee/ APWLD
Understanding ACWC

- Inter-governmental and Consultative body
- 2 representatives from each ASEAN country (1 each for Women and Children’s issues, with each term for 3 yrs)
- Inaugurated on 7 Apr 2010 in accordance with measure 1.1.4.7 of the Vientiane Action Program (VAP 2004-2010)

Key Documents:
1. Terms of Reference
2. Rules of Procedure
3. Work Plan (2012-2016)
Terms of Reference (TOR)

- Key Sections:
  - Purposes (Article 2) and Principles (Article 3)
  - Mandates and Functions (Article 5)
  - Composition ((Article 6)
  - Modalities (Article 7), Work Plan and Funding ((Article 8) and relationship with ASEAN SG and Secretariat (Article 9)
Highlights of ToR:

Principles & Purposes:

• Specific towards uphold, promote, respect and fulfil human rights and fundamental freedoms of women and children (as per CEDAW, CRC, BPFA, and other international standards that ASEAN member states are parties to)

• Collaborative and consultative approach with ASEAN member state, academia and civil society...
**Highlights of ToR: Mandates & Functions:**

16 articles (Article 5.1 to 5.16) that can be generally categorized into:

- **Complementing role to ASEAN Member States:**
  - Promote implementation of international (CEDAW, CRC) & ASEAN instruments; and other treaty bodies
  - Encourage AMS to accede/ratify international HR instruments
  - Assist AMS (upon request) in reporting (CEDAW, CRC, UPR & others)
  - Encourage in undertaking period reviews of national legislations, policies, practices..
  - Encourage AMS on collection & analysis of disaggregated data

- **Advocacy Role:**
  - On behalf of women & children, esp. most vulnerable & marginalized

- **Strengthening, Empowerment & engagement:**
  - develop policies, programs, innovative strategies
  - Building capacities of stakeholders
  - Promote public awareness & education (re: rights of Women & Children)
  - Promote studies & research (re: situation & well-being of Women & Children)
  - **Participation of women & children in dialogue, consultation processes**
Rules of Procedures
- Guidelines for communication, meetings, agendas, decision making, etc.

Work Plan – (2012-2016 )-Priority themes:
- Elimination of violence against women and children, Trafficking. Women and children living with and affected by HIV and AIDs, with disabilities
- Social impact of climate change on women and children.
- ASEAN and other instruments related to the rights of women and children.
- Governance and democracy
- Consultation -national and regional (including for policies, strategies for migrant workers)

Women Specific:
- Women participation in politics and decision-making.; Women’s right to land and property
- Strengthening economic rights of women with regards to feminisation of poverty.

Children Specific:
- Child protection system: social protection, right to quality education, including Early Childhood Care, right of children to participate in all affairs that affects them.
- Promoting implementation of international, gender equality in education (textbook, curriculum, and equal access).
Challenges & limitations:

- Only 16% of projects of Work Plan completed, and 29% undergoing
- Lack of funding
- Lack of Independency
- Need of Consensus
- No protection mandate
- Lack of CSO engagement mechanisms (*cannot compel certain representatives to be more open to civil societies*)
- Lack of implementation of current mandates
Opportunities:

- Stronger Mandate to engage with national, regional & international Civil Society (re: Article 5.14; 7.8 of ToR and Article 18 of RoP)

2015 specifics:

- ToR being reviewed by 2015
- 2 Regional Plans of Action-WIP – for elimination of VAW & VAC (1st consultation-April 2/BKK)
- New Work Plan from 2016 – 2020
- Network of Social Service Agencies (NOSA) in all 10 member countries—list of social service agencies in the front lines, that are dealing with violence against women and children.
demands for changes within ACWC

1. Stronger Mandates in new ToR
2. Right Representatives (experts, independency, elected..)
   ◦ In addition, consider demanding Special Rapporteur, an independent person (eg- SR on Migrant workers)
3. Right Processes:
   ◦ Protection Mechanism
   ◦ Institutionalization of CSO engagement
   ◦ Participation of representatives in the consultations
ACWC & Labour & Migration

- women’s labour participation is increasing, so is exploitation, labour rights abuses and multiple forms of discrimination.
- migrant workers’ rights as an important issue not yet been addressed in ASEAN

With ASEAN integration, it is URGENT that ACWC draws attention and have agendas on pressing Labour Migration issues, trafficking, forced migration, domestic workers, etc.
ACWC & Labour & Migration

‘an opportunity to right the wrongs of "migration gone bad" and assist some of the regions' most marginalized and exploited workers ... migrant domestic workers..’ (modified words from Glenda Labadie-Jackson)

Hence, following could be demanded:

- effective multilateral efforts on trans-border issues such as migration, children on the move, statelessness, and trafficking, VAW, refugees...
- Access to justice to most marginalized segment of women - poor, migrant workers, & survivors of trafficking, & of VAW
- Encourage AMS to adopt & implement ‘Decent work and Living Wage’
- Urge the AMS to address VAW with ‘Due Diligence’
- Urge the governments in implementation of Extraterritorial obligations (ETOs)
Engagement Tips:

- Tapping formal and informal channels to dialogue for knowledge exchange and information sharing (e.g. arranging **activities and events** such as meetings and workshops with invitation to ACWC Representatives)

- contacting ACWC Representatives in their country to **make enquiries** on their work, important dates and activities

- Seek to **engage in ACWC’s studies, provide support in ASEAN progress report** on women’s advancement and gender equality..etc

- **submission of documents** such as statements, recommendations, proposals and reports
Thank you