

CEDAW Consultation (8 March 2018) Minutes

Jackie opened the meeting, wishing everyone a happy International Women's Day and made some opening remarks to recognise the day. She outlined the purpose of the day – to hear about issues affecting women to feed into the Commission's CEDAW submission.

Rebekah provided an outline of how the session will run.

Anneliese made a presentation about how the CEDAW reporting process works and how people can contribute their own reports.

People then split into groups to discuss the top issues facing women – human trafficking, employment, healthcare, data, and violence and abuse

Human Trafficking

Human trafficking in the context of sex trafficking. Conflation between sex work and sex trafficking in NZ. No evidence that sex work has increased or that sex trafficking is going on under legislation – but migrant sex workers do not meet the requirements under the Act, so this creates conditions for exploitation – fear of being deported.

Research that has been done is more focused on domestic rather than transnational, focused on family violence.

Recommendations:

- Review and removal of s. 19 of PRA which would remove conditions for exploitation
- Create a viable buffer between police and immigration so that migrant sex workers would feel comfortable reporting assaults and not being deported. Would like this legislated instead of up to discretion.
- Run a national campaign around definition of sex trafficking and how it happens and updating of Action Plan.
- Change the stigma around sex trafficking through a multi stakeholder group made up of a range of organisations, including the Prostitutes Collective and HRC.

Employment

Employment central to all other issues. Paid and unpaid. Many of us are unpaid but are not unemployed. Expectation that women will fill the gap/not being willing to pay for certain jobs that need to be done e.g. caregiving.

Find it frustrating that people assume women don't have ambition to be successful, 'just want to be happy'. Workplace hasn't adjusted for changing gender roles – women aren't always paid to progress to senior leadership roles because of taking time off to have children etc.

This requires major change, particularly with robotics and advancing tech, working-class and middle-class jobs could potentially disappear. Big business has a lot more power than govt. Requires a revolution in thinking e.g. UBI, having jobs as productivity related rather than productivity based.

60% of work done in NZ not paid – volunteer jobs not recorded in the census. Unpaid work needs paying – major culture shift from value = increasing GDP to valuing unpaid work.

Leadership of women often increased, but this doesn't make difference 'on the ground' until we have a culture shift. No pay transparency anymore.

Solutions:

- UBI
- Revolution of culture and change
- Pay equity - issue seems to be not one of regulation, but of compliance. A firm shouldn't get a contract unless it can demonstrate it is demonstrating EEO. Someone gave an example of a law firm – and how work is sometimes driven by clients, rather than govt., so clients also have a role to play in creating pay equity.
- Introduction of a living wage
- One rate for each job, so that women don't have to negotiate salaries so much – differentials in pay need to be questioned.

Healthcare

Issues around access to healthcare around mental health particularly in era of Me Too movement - Abortion law reform – it is happening and need to talk about what we want at the end (the outcomes of the process) and the importance of making sure our legal framework talks about abortion as a healthcare issue and women can provide informed consent.

Endometriosis is a particular healthcare issue affecting women which needs more attention.

Dementia – women more likely to experience dementia, lack of attention and resources, women do most of the informal caring and most of the formal caring.

Women in rural communities and difficulties in accessing healthcare. Teen pregnancies; lack of employment for young women and girls, no places to spend early years and socialise with one another; lack of access to sexual reproductive health services and suicide support.

Recommendations:

- Services need to be available to people who share their “Me too” stories.
- More focus needed on rural women
- There needs to be a more gendered analysis of healthcare

Data

“If only we had data!”

Questions to the previous CEDAW report – a lot of them touched on the issue of data collection, analysis, and response, so could see some of the issues of data collection coming through in NZ.

There weren't many questions on the census about many of the issues we are talking about.

Recommendations:

- Noting the work that has been done in NZ and overseas – adopt previous recommendations and advice from UN, civil society
- Widen consultation when developing surveys and census questions on where data is inadequate and implement measures to improve collection and analysis (wellbeing, gender paygap, gendered analysis on issues e.g reports in schools)
- adopt international standards on data collection so we can be benchmarked, learn from best practice from other countries
- Consider issues relating to transparency and privacy -noting challenges of Maori and Pasifika and how data is currently collected.

Violence and abuse

Issues:

- There are different forms of violence. The 'It's not okay' campaign has raised awareness of physical violence and abuse but the spotlight needs also to go on psychological abuse, which is insidious and pervasive. An example is "I didn't get hit so I didn't realise it was abuse".
- In private life, people don't know how or when to intervene, what help to give or suggest, where to get advice or who to tell apart from CYFs. People don't want to get someone in trouble or become a victim of bystander blame or victim blame. It needs courageous conversations
- The gendered nature of violence needs to be called out. It's acknowledged that men get hit too but it is so overwhelmingly involves women that it's essential that it is a gendered discussion and resolution. Can acknowledge men as a preface but it must be about women
- Acknowledged that there's an unmet need where the male has been a victim of childhood sexual abuse
- There's unconscious bias and it needs to be called out every time. The language used about violence and abuse needs to change – stop being apologetic
- Women are susceptible to violence because they are more economically vulnerable – the link is back to pay equity
- Media portrayal of domestic violence could be
- Note of caution – specialist advice is necessary but watch the use of restorative justice by non-trained. If its not done by restorative justice specialists, its damaging
- The Court system for sexual violence needs to stay with the Ministry for Justice, supported by specialists. It should not go to NGOs because that sector is not supported. Sexual violence and abuse needs to stay within the system.

Recommendations:

- Training is needed, start with the Courts and legal system. Judges, court staff – tackle the unconscious bias through training so Judges can realise when their bias is showing. Time to call it out – a campaign? Media bias too
- Disaggregated data needs to be available, by gender and nature of relationship. (there could have been a census question, for example). The Ministry of Justice used to collect by gender and nature of relationship but they have stopped, and it is recommended it is collected again. The Police don't collect relationship information. It is easier to hide stats, where and who is involved without it. With full information, solutions can be better targeted
- Funding sustainability for NGOs working in the field. Funding is year to year which makes long term planning very hard. There's also a lag between applying for funding and receipt of the money. Pay rates in the field are also low, they are paid a lot less than govt contracted agencies
- Include all family violence incidents, not just protection orders or convictions, when considering Family Court etc judgements.
- Consent education from the age of 9 for all children, before children become 'sexualised'. A broader education in human rights and consent needs to occur
- Domestic violence leave for workplaces

How can we address cultural change through recommendations?

Media have a huge role to play; we are not holding them accountable enough for the language they use. People need to drive media to change their behaviour. A lot of culture is driven by what they say or do – so need to call-out language.

National Council of Women (NCW) – developing first of four dashboards that will gather data on a number of issues that affect women. Also scoping for a series of gender taskforces – the first is on media (TVNZ, commentators etc). Last year, only 18% of articles focused on women. If girls can see it, they can do it; but right now, they are invisible. NCW – has put in an alternate report to the Govt report; on the NCW website.

Data – regulations aren't bad, but what's happening with compliance? We don't seem to have watchdog bodies to ensure compliance, match up data for inconsistencies. This applies to employment as well e.g. how firms are implementing EEO policies.

Women's Empowerment Principles, UN Women – 7th principle is measuring. At the moment, this is voluntary. Need to get it mandatory. We have no idea how many people are rural people, nevermind rural women. Data collection/measuring needs to be better. Lecturer at Vic measures number of women in media for one day/year -just need govt. to do more.

Trans health – revolution that is really important. Needs to remember the rights of trans women at work and in other settings.

Consent – the use of porn, specifically by young boys. At least 60% of 16 year old boys are using porn every week (overseas). About 90% involves degradation and violence towards women. Influencing how men are acting towards women, perceptions of men towards women, contributes to trafficking, violence and abuse. Some data being done by the World Economic Forum on porn downloads – NZ very high.

Media complaints cost and process very high – data should be collected and promoted by Press Council and press commissions. Campaigns like He for She need to be promoted more – to create cultural shift and change.

CTU – has put in a submission – focus is on employment and in low pay. For low paid workers, we have to strengthen collective bargaining. This was weakened by the last government, changes by this government may not be enough. For low paid women, collectively bargaining together makes a huge difference – strong recommendation to send to CEDAW.

One thing is working is when victims of sexual violence are going through court system, specialist sexual violence services are attached to each case/individual. This needs to be maintained and needs to stay within the courts – not to the NGO sector where there is not the specialist expertise.

Recognise that CEDAW has an ageing population, older women are really invisible. Shown in data collection – 65+ only – covers such a variety of people. Most invisible are people in resthomes. There is a framework for dementia care that needs to be implemented.

Other Recommendations:

- Stop using restorative justice as a fallback for family violence cases, unless it is within a specialist environment as it currently is in sexual violence cases. Research shows the trauma this can cause.
- Need for Action Plan for Women – this has been raised in other UN processes as a recommendation. Could put this forward for NZ. A participant made the comment that they

believe this was a recommendation last time that was not picked up by the govt., would be useful to make it again.

- Recognise that CEDAW has an ageing population and implement framework for dementia care
- Maintain individual specialist sexual violence services within the Justice Sector
- Emphasise the difference collective bargaining can make to low-paid workers (CTU).
- Data about media complaints should be collected and promoted by Press Council and press commissions
- Promote campaigns like He For She more