CHAPTER 11: Cities for CEDAW Campaign

CHALLENGE

To achieve gender equality, a set of agreed-upon standards is important to ensure shared goals and outcomes for all women and girls.

CEDAW, or the U.N. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, which is often referred to as an international “Bill of Rights” for women, is a set of universal standards that form a framework for eliminating gender discrimination. It calls on countries to ensure gender equality in the civil, political, economic, social and cultural arenas. To date, 189 countries have ratified CEDAW. Although President Carter signed CEDAW in 1980, it has never been ratified by the Senate, making the U.S. the only industrialized country in the world that has failed to do so.

CEDAW can help cities to address critical issues of accountability, budget limitations and inclusion while advancing gender equity. It provides a framework for cities to find out who exactly is being served by local government, and to answer the questions:

• Given limited funding, are there equal opportunities for all residents, regardless of gender, race or ethnicity, age, physical/mental ability, etc?
• Are public resources being distributed equitably?
• Can we identify and rectify any practices and policies that discriminate against women and girls?
Cities for CEDAW is a national campaign in the U.S. that encourages cities to pass local ordinances that use CEDAW principles as a tool to advance women’s rights and gender equity. The campaign allows local women’s and human rights groups and elected officials to organize around a shared agenda and to take action on issues such as increasing girls’ participation in STEM, improving women’s economic opportunities, combatting human trafficking and other issues specific to community needs. CEDAW is a cornerstone for achieving women’s equality.

In 1998, San Francisco became the first city in the world to enact a local ordinance reflecting the principles of CEDAW. Since then, the ordinance has been effectively implemented, leading to policies and practices that better meet the needs of women and girls in the city. In 2014, San Francisco Mayor Edwin Lee kicked off the Cities for CEDAW campaign when he challenged other mayors to prioritize gender equity and the elimination of discrimination against women and girls. Several other cities have already begun adopting local ordinances and passing resolutions reflecting CEDAW principles.
Enact a local measure reflecting the principles of CEDAW in order to demonstrate a public commitment to gender equity in your city.

Create and fund a gender equity task force comprised of city officials and community-based advocates and staffed by a city agency.

- Empower the task force to evaluate and recommend improvements to city policies and work practices that may disadvantage women or act as barriers to gender equality such as:
  - pay inequity due to job classifications
  - other issues raised in the preceding chapters of this guide

Create an agency or name a designated office to oversee and coordinate progress on gender equity, such as a Women’s Commission, a Department on the Status of Women, a Human Rights Commission with a special office for Women and Families, or an Office of Gender Equity. Empower and fully fund that agency, office or designated staff to:

- Review and analyze local policies, programs, and budgets to ensure they adequately and fairly account for gender, race or ethnicity, age, physical/mental ability, sexual identity, age and other characteristics.
- Identify existing policies that may lead to or perpetuate inequity for women and girls and recommend changes.

Fund a report on the Status of Women and Girls in your city.

- Publicize data on gender equity conditions in your city to demonstrate where policies are working and areas that remain to be tackled.
- Consider holding a public forum and inviting feedback on the analysis and findings.

Prioritize gender equality in all areas of government and develop a public education campaign:

- Publicize issues of gender equality across public platforms, such as newsletters, speeches, opinion editorials and on social media.
- Foster community dialogues about the status of women and girls that can:
  - Generate key elements of a platform to advance gender equality.
  - Include themes such as responding to domestic violence, intimate partner violence, providing accommodations for the specific workplace needs of pregnant and lactating women and raising awareness about human trafficking, to name just a few.
Map existing municipal agencies and departments to assess opportunities to collaborate and form strategic partnerships to advance gender equity.

- Explore partnerships with those at other branches or levels of government, like school districts, judicial divisions and state and federal agencies (e.g., U.S. Department of Labor Women’s Bureau).
- Assess the specific mandates and work plans of partners to build collaborative opportunities, create efficiencies, provide mutual support, and offer forums to share best practices.
- Develop and strengthen strategic public-private partnerships (e.g., business community, universities and schools) not only to leverage additional resources for advancing gender equity but also to broaden the public message about progress on gender equity.

Encourage other mayors to focus on gender equality and human rights:

- Share this Mayors Guide: Accelerating Gender Equality with other Mayors in your region, state or personal sphere of influence.
- Host state and regional webcalls and conferences with other mayors to discuss best practices that align with CEDAW principles.
- Encourage them to adopt a local CEDAW measure.
- Propose and support the creation of a gender equity task force at the U.S. Conference of Mayors to assist mayors in promoting gender equity.

CEDAW can help cities to address critical issues of accountability, budget limitations and inclusion while advancing gender equity, providing a framework for cities to find out who exactly is being served by local government.
**MODELS AND IMPACT**

- **San Francisco** is a leader in the U.S. on advancing women’s rights at the local level. The Commission on the Status of Women was established in 1975; a permanent Department on the Status of Women was designated by a public vote in 1994; and a local CEDAW Ordinance was enacted in 1998. San Francisco has maintained a focus on women’s human rights and achieved results by conducting “gender analysis,” comprehensive audits of gender equality in the employment, services and budgets of city agencies. The Department on the Status of Women was designated to provide monitoring and general oversight of the effort that included not only the audits, but trainings of city officials to better identify and address discrimination against women and girls, and public Commission meetings to educate the general public about progress in this area.

  In 1988, **SAN FRANCISCO became the first city in the world to enact a local ordinance reflecting the principles of CEDAW.**

  Efforts were then extended to the private sector. A unique public-private partnership was formed with Calvert Investments, one of the largest families of socially responsible mutual funds, and Verite, a global human rights monitoring nonprofit, to develop the award-winning Gender Equality Principles Initiative to identify, model and promote best practices in the private sector. This initiative included corporate roundtables that facilitated peer-to-peer exchanges of successful practices demonstrated by companies such as Symantec, Deloitte. It also established a Gender Equality Challenge conference that showcased gender equitable practices by companies such as Charles Schwab, The Gap and Twitter, as well as local law firms and real estate companies.

- **Beyond San Francisco:** Advancing equality through a CEDAW framework requires an understanding of how a women’s and human rights agenda can add value to local governance.

  For example, in 2011, the City of Eugene, Oregon launched the “Human Rights City Project” and designated a reorganized Human Rights Commission to oversee the adoption of the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights into local policies, beginning with housing and homelessness. Eugene developed an assessment tool called the “Triple Bottom Line” to ensure that city policies and budgeting decisions advanced human rights goals. This approach has distinguished Eugene as a leading city in the sustainability movement, not just from an environmental perspective, but also from a social justice lens. Based on this work and the work of other cities, the U.S.
Conference of Mayors adopted a **2013 resolution** urging the connection between local policies and human rights.

As of December 2015, implementing CEDAW principles has led to changes in local governance through ordinances, resolutions and new approaches to policy.

- **Los Angeles, California:** Originally enacted in 2005, an ordinance was recently reinvigorated, and Mayor Eric Garcetti (in partnership with Mount St. Mary’s College) has published a comprehensive series of studies about women and girls in LA. A next step is the creation of government action plans that the mayor has required from every city agency.

- **Berkeley, California:** With the leadership of the UN Association of the East Bay, UC Berkeley faculty and other advocates, a CEDAW ordinance was passed in 2012.

- **Louisville, Kentucky:** Through the leadership of a broad coalition including faith-based organizations and human rights groups, the consolidated city and county passed a resolution in 2014 and is working toward enacting an ordinance.

- **Daly City, California:** Passed a CEDAW resolution in 2014.

- **Santa Monica, California:** Passed a CEDAW resolution in 2015.

- **Minneapolis, Minnesota:** Passed a CEDAW resolution in 2015.

- **Kansas City, Missouri:** Passed a CEDAW resolution in 2015.

- **Cincinnati, Ohio:** Passed a resolution in 2015 and is working toward passing an ordinance.

- **Washington, D.C.:** An amendment to the city’s human rights law was introduced in March 2015 with the support of all city council members. Hearings are scheduled for early 2016.

- **New York City:** There is advocacy for a CEDAW-based law and the mayor recently announced a city commission on gender equity (following the June 2015 meeting of the U.S. Conference of Mayors).

- **Boston, Massachusetts:** In 2014, Mayor Marty Walsh established the Mayor’s Office of Women’s Advancement and revitalized the Boston Women’s Commission to promote equal rights and equal opportunities for all women and girls throughout Boston.

- **Seattle, Washington:** In partnership with the Seattle Women’s Commission and the Seattle City Council, Mayor Ed Murray announced a Gender Equity Resolution, mandating a review of city and private sector operations for pay and other workplace inequities which was adopted in 2014.
RESOURCES

Articles, Books, Organizations, Videos

- **San Francisco CEDAW** - Text of the first local ordinance to embody the principles of CEDAW with resources on the Cities for CEDAW Campaign designed for mayors and city staff.
- **Friends of the Commission on the Status of Women** - A private, nonprofit organization that raises awareness of and funding for the San Francisco Commission and Department on the Status of Women.
- **Making Rights Real** - A handbook on how to organize a campaign for a local CEDAW measure.
- **“Respect, Protect, Fulfill”** - Article on CEDAW’s impact in San Francisco from Women’s Institute for Leadership Development for Human Rights.
- **Human Rights Institute at Columbia University’s report** on how state and local government can use human rights to advance local policy.
- **Voices of Humanity** - An online community that aims to crowd-source voices to find our common humanity across all national, religious and cultural boundaries.
- **Leadership California** - A leadership training program for a cohort of women dedicated to increasing the representation and influence of diverse women leaders across the state and inspire them to act on their knowledge of issues and cutting-edge trends facing California, the nation and the world.
- The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights **CEDAW task force**
- A **list of organizations** in support of CEDAW
- Resolutions adopted by the U.S. Conference of Mayors
  - 2013 on Human Rights
  - 2014 on the Cities for CEDAW Campaign
  - 2015 on Accelerating Women’s Economic Empowerment

City Staff and Expert Contact Info

- **Emily Murase**, Executive Director, San Francisco Department on the Status of Women: Emily.Murase@sfgov.org, (415) 252-2570, www.sfgov.org/dosw
- **Deb Liebowitz**, Drew University: dliebowi@drew.edu, (973) 408-3139
- **Dr. Radhika Balakrishnan**, Faculty Director, Center for Women’s Global Leadership, Rutgers University: rbalakra@rci.rutgers.edu, (848) 932-8330
- **Krishanti Dharmaraj**, Executive Director: kdharmaraj@cwgl.rutgers.edu
• **June Zeitlin**, Director of Human Rights Policy, Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights: 1629 K Street NW, 10th Floor, Washington, DC 20006; [zeitlin@civilrights.org](mailto:zeitlin@civilrights.org), (202) 466-3311, [www.civilrights.org](http://www.civilrights.org)

• **Carrie Bettinger Lopez**, White House Advisor on Violence Against Women: [clopez@law.miami.edu](mailto:clopez@law.miami.edu), (305) 284-5923

• **JoAnn Kamuf Ward**, Associate Director, Human Rights in the US Project, Columbia Law School Human Rights Institute: [jward@law.columbia.edu](mailto:jward@law.columbia.edu), (212) 854-0009

• **Marilyn Fowler**, Cities for CEDAW Campaign Co-Peer Leader/CEO of the Women’s Intercultural Network: [win@winaction.org](mailto:win@winaction.org), [www.winaction.org](http://www.winaction.org).
<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Pass an ordinance reflecting the principles of CEDAW.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Create and fund a task force to conduct a comprehensive citywide audit to identify and correct work practices that may block women’s equality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Prioritize gender equity in all areas of government.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Analyze, identify and change existing policies that discriminate against women and girls.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Fund a report on the Status of Women and Girls in your city. Publicize data on gender equity to identify areas that need improvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Develop a public education campaign on the status of women and girls.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Map existing public resources and form strategic partnerships with other branches or levels of government to advance women’s equality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Create strategic public-private partnerships for additional resources and to broaden the message.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Form a task force on women’s equality at the U.S. Conference of Mayors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Designate an oversight body to oversee and coordinate progress on gender equity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Using CEDAW, San Francisco has developed tools to address the questions that are critical to every effective government: (1) Who are we serving? (2) Are public resources being distributed equitably, and (3) Do all groups enjoy equal opportunities?

Mayors can learn from, and build on, San Francisco’s example. Comprehensive background information, including data collection strategies, gender analyses of city departments and of appointments to Commissions and Boards, as well as a 10-year report on CEDAW implementation are available at the department website: www.sfgov.org.
Positive Outcomes from San Francisco

The 1998 CEDAW Ordinance designated the Commission on the Status of Women to oversee CEDAW implementation, including through funding, supporting service providers offering training and other initiatives conducted by its Department, staffed by 6 full-time professionals. Impacts and outcomes of this work follow.

Preventing Violence Against Women

Freedom from violence is a fundamental human right and much of the work in San Francisco has been dedicated to reducing and eliminating violence against women.

1. Justice and Courage Project for Domestic Violence Policy Reform promoted a victim-centered response by law enforcement agencies, expanded the cultural competence of first responders and service providers to immigrant victims and advocated a systems approach to domestic violence response, including the use of new technologies. As a result of this work, San Francisco eliminated all domestic violence homicides for a record 44 months (2010-2013) where, a decade ago, there were roughly 10 such homicides annually.

2. The Family Violence Council addresses family violence across the lifespan by bringing together advocates working against child abuse, domestic violence and elder abuse on a quarterly basis. The Family Violence Council documents the rates of family violence and proposes policy reforms to improve criminal justice and social service responses.

3. San Francisco Collaborative Against Human Trafficking (SFCAHT) brings together community-based organizations and government agencies to raise awareness about modern-day slavery. The Mayor’s Task Force on Human Trafficking seeks a comprehensive city response from law enforcement, public health, child welfare, the school district and community-based organizations to address human trafficking.

EXAMPLE: Gender-responsive Budgeting

When San Francisco faced a severe budget crisis spanning several years, the Department on the Status of Women trained the Mayor’s Budget Office to determine the impact of budgeting decisions on employment and services by gender, race and
ethnicity and other characteristics. This allowed the city to anticipate potentially discriminatory impacts before they took place and develop policies to mitigate them.

EXAMPLE: Promoting Gender Equality in the Private Sector

After 10 years of focus on government entities, the Department launched an initiative to build more productive workplaces for both women and men in the private sector. Based on seven principles ranging from compensation to supply chain practices, the award-winning Gender Equality Principles Initiative provides companies with practical standards, resources and tools to improve gender equality from the factory floor to the boardroom.

Cities for CEDAW Campaign

Local implementation of CEDAW needs to be relevant and appropriate to the local context. The Cities for CEDAW Campaign offers a template so that cities do not have to reinvent the wheel. To be counted as a CEDAW city, a local measure should reflect CEDAW’s broad understanding of discrimination.

Three Requirements of a Local CEDAW Measure

- **Gender Analysis** – Start with a gender analysis to identify inequities and then monitor annually. To integrate gender considerations into operations, regular analysis of the city workforce, services and budget should occur and should include other demographic characteristics linked to gender such as race and ethnicity, age, sexual identity, physical/mental ability, etc. The goal is to employ a gender lens in the daily operations of local agencies. An effective gender analysis will desegregate data that every jurisdiction already collects and document how women and girls are affected or served differently from men and boys.

- **Oversight Body** – Crucial to the implementation of programming and policies is having a body, such as a permanent Commission or Department on the Status of Women, Human Rights Commission, or Office of Women’s Policy, to monitor and oversee action plans and ongoing efforts to eliminate discrimination against women and girls.
- **Funding** – Adequate funding is critical to demonstrate a city’s ability to ensure that women are being treated and served fairly. As a guide, it is recommended that municipalities allocate at minimum $.10-$0.25 per woman and girl in the community to implement program and policy reforms as outlined by CEDAW. This does not need to be new money. For example, municipalities can count existing funding for domestic violence shelters or maternal health programs towards this goal, but must be able to demonstrate equitable allocations for homeless women and men, girls’ and boys’ recreation, and women and men in city apprenticeship programs.