



OUR VOICE

DEMANDING WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION IN LOCAL LEVEL LEADERSHIP!

THE ISSUE:

Our Voice is a campaign focussed on increasing the representation and effective participation of women, with a commitment to gender equality, across local level decision making in Asia and the Pacific.

Often when we talk about women's leadership, we focus on women's representation at the national level, such as in Parliament. While this representation is important, it's also vital for women to have a voice at the local and community levels.

Decisions made at the local level have a crucial impact on the everyday lives of women and girls.

Every day, women are playing crucial leadership roles in their communities to create change – in community organisations, church groups, saving clubs, schools and workplaces - as well as coming together to build peace at the community level during times of conflict.

Yet, too often, these roles are unrecognised and are under-valued.

At the same time, women are frequently excluded from formal decision making spaces, such as governance structures at the village, municipal and provincial levels.

This needs to change.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHANGE:

As part of the Our Voice campaign, we have come together, as women's rights organisations, to demand our Governments:

- 1 Take action to increase the representation of women at the local level, including the use of temporary special measures such as quotas and targets.
- 2 Recognise the importance of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular Sustainable Development Goal 5, and the importance of women's full and effective participation at all levels of decision making.
- 3 Resource national awareness raising campaigns in support of women's leadership to increase community understanding of gender equality and women's right to participate in decision making.
- 4 Collect data on the proportion of seats held by women in local governments.

HIGH LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM (HLPF) ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Under Target 5.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Governments have committed to ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision making in political, economic and public life. This target is supported by two indicators including the proportion of seats held by women in local governments (5.5.1).

At the 2019 HLPF, Goal 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions will be under review. It is critical that the link is made between Goal 16 and Goal 5 on gender equality.

Targets under Goal 16, including responsive and inclusive decision making (Target 16.7), effective and accountable institutions (Target 16.6) and strengthening relevant national institutions to prevent violence (16.a) all necessitate women's full and effective participation in decision making, including at the local level.

The leadership of women is crucial to building peace, to ensuring the needs and priorities of women are being represented in policy decisions and to creating institutions and systems which work for everyone.

Women must also be equally represented in national, regional and international mechanisms to implement the SDGs. This must be more than consultation; women must be recognised and promoted as leaders on the 2030 agenda.



**INCLUSIVE
AND
EFFECTIVE
GOVERNANCE**

JOIN US!

Our Voice is stronger when we work together for change.

If you are interested in finding out more about the campaign please visit:

<https://iwda.org.au/wave/our-voice/>



Banteay Srei, Cambodia, 16 Days of Activism event 'Violence Against Women Is Never Ok'