

WOMEN'S NETWORK FOR UNITY

ABOUT

Women's Network for Unity (WNU) is a sex workers' member-based organisation that works to promote the human rights and civil liberties of sex workers and calls for recognition of their rights as workers to earn a livelihood free from exploitation and oppression. WNU is a member of the United Sisterhood alliance.

SUMMARY

Deep rooted sociocultural stereotypes and expectations about gender, sex, work and entertainment has resulted in extreme violence and discrimination against women and transgender sex workers and entertainment workers.

Sex and entertainment workers face stigma, rejection and exclusion which exposes them to a number of human rights violations such as the denial of essential services, humiliating incarceration, unjust police brutality, forced separation, mandatory pregnancy testing and unlawful death.

WNU RECOMMENDATIONS

- Establish 'one-stop' centres for women in sex work to access non stigmatizing legal, social and medical services.
- Ensure accountability of police personnel and immediate legal action against acts of violence against sex workers.
- Reform punitive laws, polices and law enforcement practices to protect sex workers' rights.

WAVE RECOMMENDATION

The RGC should support collaboration between key stakeholders to create and facilitate spaces and mechanisms for politicians, community leaders and law enforcement to counter stereotypes of women and transgender sex and entertainment workers.

WAVE: JOIN US

Women's Action for Voice and Empowerment (WAVE), funded by the Government of the Netherlands, is a ground-breaking women's leadership program that brings together and supports individual women, organizations, and movements in Asia and the Pacific region to increase the representation of women in diverse leadership positions.

WAVE supports 18 women's rights organisations in 5 countries with the resources, skills and networks they need to amplify their collective voice and create a more enabling environment for women's leadership.

Our Voice is stronger when we work together for change. If you are interested in finding out more about the campaign or WAVE please get in touch.



[Facebook.com/WAVEwomen](https://www.facebook.com/WAVEwomen)

<https://iwda.org.au/what-we-do/wave/>



WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN CAMBODIA!

20%	Of Cambodia's National Parliament are women
19%	Of the Senate are women
17%	Of all Commune Councilors are women
14%	Of Judges are women
74%	Of respondents believe men make better leaders than women ¹
25%	Of respondents believe Commune Council is the highest desirable level for women's leadership ¹
0	Comprehensive anti-discrimination laws

THIS IS A PROBLEM.

WHY?

- Cross-country analysis has found that when at least one quarter of members of parliament are women, laws that discriminate against women are more likely to be repealed.²
- Research shows that there is significant public support for more women in politics in Cambodia.¹

Without women's equal representation and leadership at all levels of decision-making, in political, economic and social life, women in Cambodia will continue to face discrimination and violations of their human rights.

TIME TO CHANGE

This brochure outlines the key findings and recommendations from Women's Action for Voice and Empowerment (WAVE) Cambodia partner shadow reports. We all acknowledge that the key issues women in our communities face can be solved through strong women's leadership and commitment to gender equality. We call on the Committee to hold the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) accountable to its gender equality commitments, particularly General Recommendations 5 and 25 recommending the use of temporary special measures (TSMs).

¹ Norm Sina, Sok Srey and Sabina Lawreniuk, 2019, Public Perceptions of Women's Leadership at Commune Councils in Cambodia

² World Bank 2014, 'Voice and Agency: Empowering Women and Girls for Shared Prosperity,' p. 15

GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT FOR CAMBODIA

ABOUT

Gender and Development for Cambodia (GADC) is a local non-profit that conducts a community of practice and supports emerging women leaders from the government and community sectors to share information and experiences to promote solidarity, and personal and professional sharing.

GADC plays a leading role in the women's rights movement in Cambodia on work focused on supporting women leaders, changing community attitudes towards women's leadership, and engaging in national and regional forums for gender equality. GADC has submitted information regarding women's leadership to the Committee in two separate Shadow Reports.

NGO CEDAW SHADOW REPORT

GADC is a member of the Cambodian NGO Committee on CEDAW which was founded in 1995 for the purpose of monitoring and promoting the implementation of CEDAW in Cambodia. WAVE partners GADC and Banteay Srei contributed to this year's report by providing information on discriminatory gender stereotypes and women's participation in political or public life. Persistent beliefs that women are less capable than men have prevented the full and effective participation of women at all levels of society to address women's concerns around access to justice, education, employment, health, housing that is made more insecure by violence, abuse and climate change.

JOINT REPORT WITH THE CENTRE FOR REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

GADC acting through the Gender and Development Network (GADNet) collaborated with the Centre for Reproductive Rights to submit the issue of surrogacy to the CEDAW Committee. Given surrogacy has not been addressed by CEDAW the RGC has relied on stereotypes and assumptions about gender, decent work, family roles and human trafficking to criminalise surrogacy. This has driven the practice of surrogacy underground leading to greater risks involved for all parties including health risks, discrimination, violence, objectification of women's bodies and limited access to justice.

PERCEPTIONS OF WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP- CAMBODIA¹

- 95%** Of people surveyed support women as political leaders
- 71%** Of respondents agree women are underrepresented on Commune Councils
- 86%** Of respondents agree it would be better for the community if there were more women in government

Women's ability to make autonomous decisions about their lives is at the very core of women's fundamental right to equality and is a precondition for the enjoyment of other rights. Women's leadership is a crucial way to ensure women everywhere can make autonomous decisions regarding their employment, health or any other livelihood circumstances.

GADC RECOMMENDATIONS

- Amend the Law on Political Parties and the laws on specific elections to establish a 50% quota to all public service positions.
- Draft and adopt a legislative provision which defines discrimination against women that is justifiable in domestic courts.
- At a minimum, enforce the 25% target for women Commune Councilors to progress gender balance.
- Regulation and oversight is needed to address abusive or coercive surrogacy practices to ensure women's reproductive rights are protected. However, overly restrictive limitations on surrogacy must be repealed to protect women's rights and freedoms.

WAVE RECOMMENDATION

The RGC should institute temporary special measures across all levels of government and properly resource women's rights and civil society organisations in Cambodia to raise awareness, conduct training and research on the benefits of women's equal leadership and autonomous decision making to educate the public and shift cultural mindsets.

WORKER'S INFORMATION CENTRE

ABOUT

Worker's Information Centre (WIC) is a women's garment workers association.

WIC provides information, support services and community space for garment workers to organise and advocate for their rights. WIC is a member of the United Sisterhood Alliance.

SUMMARY

Women garment workers form 85% of the textile and footwear industry in Cambodia, yet very few women are represented at the highest levels of policy-making within factory management or unions.

Women's workplace concerns like job security and earning a living wage, discrimination like limited social services for migrant workers and labour rights violations including unsafe working conditions, long hours, harassment and underpayment through the production chain have yet to be effectively addressed.

WIC RECOMMENDATIONS

- Regulate and effectively control living costs and commodity prices in order to ensure the minimum wage set is a living wage.
- Enforce minimum building standards to ensure safe, secure and decent living conditions for workers.
- Regulate and inspect sub-contracting factories and sweat shops for compliance with labour laws and standards.
- Implement policy and procedures to protect internal migrant workers from job insecurity and ensure their access to social services.

WAVE RECOMMENDATION

The Department of Labour Inspection at the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training should publically share inspection results with garment workers so women can effectively lead and advocate for their rights in the workplace.