

## **Draft notes from the 7<sup>th</sup> “Discussion Meeting on the Elimination of Violence against Women in Afghanistan”**

Hosted by UNIFEM, Wednesday July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2004

*Please see attached sheet for the list of participants.*

### **1. Background**

Violence against women is not an issue which women have been facing during the 23 years of war, but it has been the issue in the history of Afghanistan. Therefore, UNIFEM has taken the initiative to invite the people from different Governmental and Civil Society organs to find out the causes of violence against women and solutions for these problems so that violence against women is ended in Afghanistan. In the previous meetings the research on VAW by different Organizations was discussed as well as some of the problems faced by women in the justice system and solutions were suggested. To continue the discussion on the other fields in which women face violence, the 7<sup>th</sup> meeting was held moderated by Marzia Basel from UNIFEM. There were two items on the agenda; Continuation of discussion on VAW and Education and finding solutions for the specified issues; establishment of the VAW and Education and VAW and Justice sub-committees;

### **2. VAW and Education /VAW and Justices:**

#### **Issues:**

##### *Education VAW in the faculty level:*

This issue was raised by AWN representative that there is no mutual respect in faculty among male and female students and even between male students and female lecturers.

##### *Teachers' behavior with the students:*

Violence still exists in our schools and Universities. The teachers do not have good behavior and relation with their students. E.g; Girls are still insulted for the reason that the dresses they wear are said to be against the culture, custom and Islam. Another cause of Violence is the ethnicity which needs to be vanished.

##### *Harassment of women:*

There is a problem which women mostly face and that is the harassment by men. In the penal law of our country it is mentioned that the ones who insult the women and hares them should be given the sentence of six months imprisonment. This seems that there is no problem with Law but it is not implemented.

#### **Solutions:**

##### *Regulation on Harassment of women:*

Humans right commission representative suggested for making a regulation under the penal law to end the VAW in the implementation of this law.

##### *SOCIAL BEHIVOR committees/ classes:*

There have been six committees established in Jilalabad's Girls schools by AWN. In each school there are two leaders who handle the department and they have already a subject in the name of Social Behavior which they teach to the students.

The Ministry of Education also reported that in 36 schools of Kabul this subject is taught. It was suggested that the program for making Social behavior committees should be expanded to all the provinces so that the awareness of more people is raised. Thus it should not only be centered to Kabul. It was also suggested that the timing for the classes of Social Behavior should be made longer.

There should also be trainings that encourage students and teachers to go and choose the better way of contact and communication with each other.

***Participation of University Union or Committee in VAW meetings:***

As it is true that the students are the members of the society and they follow what they have learnt in University. Therefore, the students should be involved in the issues relating to violence against women. If there is a union or committee in the university we should asked them to come to attend our meeting regularly. This way the society is affected by the students and will be a violence free society..

***Police and Complain boxes in schools:***

In past, the schools had one police officer to safeguard students. There is a need of the presence of police in all schools to protect the girls. There should also be a complain box in each school that students can put their complains to be considered.

***3. Establishment of Education & VAW and Justice and VAW Sub-Committees:***

A sub-group for Education and VAW was established. the members of the Sub-committee are from the following organs:

- The organization dealing with Violence against women issues
- Schools
- Government Organs i.e., Ministry of Higher Education, Ministry of Justice, Legislation department (letters to be sent), Ministry of Women Affairs office (Education department).
- NGO's (Medical Mondaile
- Students associations (Palwasha Jan & Sediqa Jan will contact them).
- Youth Groups, AWN will contact
- Teachers group AWN will contact
- People at decision making organs (2 People from each organ)
- Security department
- Religious groups as more people rely on religious issues

When the group members sit together they will draft a ToR for the group. Ministry of Education will serve as the secretary of the group. It was suggested that the chair for the meetings of this sub-committee should be from the government people.

*Note:* No discussion took place on establishment of the sub-committee for Justice & VAW. The discussion on this topic will take place in the next meeting.

***4. Other discussion points:***

***Journalists involvement:***

It was also mentioned that the journalists should attend the meetings of VAW, but at the end of the meeting it was decided that journalists will be invited at the end of the discussions when the results are gotten from the research coordination sub-committee. At that time it will be nice if it is telecasted in TV.

**5. Next Meeting**

***Wednesday August 11<sup>th</sup>, 2004, 1:30 - 4pm at UNDP conference room.***

*Proposed Agenda:*

1. Health and violence against women. (If all the NOG's who has health activities invited that would be wonderful).
2. The sub committee discussion out comes will be presented.
3. Discussion on establishment of a sub-committee for Justice and VAW

Other noted agenda topics identified for future meetings -

- Social Protection Service for women.

***Note:*** The meeting of sub-committee will be held on 5<sup>th</sup> August at 10:00 in AWN office

**Meeting adjournment: 04:00**

Minutes by: Laila Ahmadzai