

# RIGHTS AS WOMEN



## Human Rights

### Some of the fundamental Human Rights include:

- Right to life, liberty and security.
- Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.
- Right not to be discriminated against and equal protection of the law.
- Right to work and to equal pay for equal work.
- Right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of yourself and your family (including rights of women to be free from violence).



Guaranteed under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948, every human being is assured of their right and freedom without discrimination of any form.

### Violence Against Women and Women's Rights

In Malaysia, it is slowly being accepted that women's rights are human rights. Also being recognized is the fact that women's rights are violated daily in specific ways, be it through rape, sexual harassment, domestic violence, infection of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) or murder.

### Violence denies women their Human Rights

Gender discrimination and inequality both a breach of women's rights are reinforced by the socio-cultural belief that women are inferior to men. Some of the ways in which women are discriminated against are: where women serve as subordinates to men, in the community where women still lag behind male leaders and at the state level where women end up being discriminated through gender-based laws.

Women face a host of oppression and experience multiple forms of discrimination be it in the form of age, education, ethnicity, marital status, religion or profession.

market

state

household

## Women's Rights are Human Rights

The human rights of women, i.e. girl child, women living in rural areas, women representing marginalized groups such as sex workers, women with physical or mental disabilities, and aged women, must be assured.

Most women do not know their rights are protected by laws and are living in marginalized urban communities and rural areas.

- Within some laws in Malaysia, discrimination against women exists. For example:
- Penal Code (Rape & Incest)
  - Domestic Violence Act 1994
  - Evidence Act 1950
  - Immigration Act 1959
  - Law Reform (Marriage and Divorce Act) 1976
  - Guardianship of Infants Act 1951
  - Child Act 2001
  - Employment Act 1955

AWAM has been urging and will continue to pressure the Government to address the issue of gender discrimination and amend laws that are gender-based.

Briefly the coverage of the Articles in CEDAW are as follows:

Article 1 Discrimination against women: Any distinction, exclusion or restriction based on sex which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the equal rights and freedoms of women on the basis of sex that men have.	Article 2 to 6 The role and responsibility of States
Article 7 Right to voice participation	Article 8 Right to representation in government
Article 9 Right to nationality	Article 10 Right to education
Article 11 Right to employment	Article 12 Right to health care
Article 13 Right to economic and social life	Article 14 Right to women
Article 15 Right to family	Article 16 Right to marriage, family and child bearing decisions
Article 17 to 20 Right to procedure, administration and responsibility of government in relation to CEDAW	Article 21 to 26 Right to procedure, administration and responsibility of government in relation to CEDAW

### How can WE regain what should have been our entitlement?

- Learn more about gender-based violence and women's human rights by reading and joining groups that bring about awareness.
- Campaign and lobby government for effective laws against Violence Against Women (VAW) and other rights issues that women do not describe. This can help to protect women.
- Join a crisis centre and volunteer your time to help survivors of abuse.

## ALL WOMEN'S ACTION SOCIETY

# AWAM

AWAM is a voluntary, non-profit, non-government women's organization dedicated to building a just and equitable society, free from violence:

- Providing a range of services for women such as crisis helpline, legal clinics, referrals.
- Advocating and lobbying laws and regulations to improve the status of women in Malaysia.
- Conducts public education and training for education institutions, corporations, government and non-governmental organizations.

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