Experiences with reporting to CEDAW for Kyrgyz Republic

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*Tais Plus, the organization of sex workers from Kyrgyz Republic, with the support of local Labrys NGO and IWRAW, developed and submitted the shadow report focused on human rights of sex workers, to the CEDAW. Tais Plus encourage our colleagues in other developing countries to work on CEDAW shadow reports on the basis of their vision and understanding of specific sex workers’ situation in every country, as well as with holistic approach, including all sides of sex workers’ life.*

Shakhnaz Islamova and I were encouraged to write the shadow report by our partner NGO Labrys (Kyrgyz Republic). This time, Kyrgyz Republic didn’t submit the national shadow report, and we used this opportunity to start our work on the report independently. Our report was prepared on behalf of Tais Plus, the organization of sex workers, which is active on the national level.

We tried to develop the holistic picture of sex workers’ situation, and avoid the medicalization of the problem. We reported the fact of discrimination, persecution and violence (Ar. 1 and 2), lack of guarantees basic human rights and fundamental freedoms (Ar. 3), the fact that the struggle against trafficking is used by police to apologize their raids, and in case if sex workers are complain to real cases of traffic, police is not able to provide them needed support. We emphasized that the existing system of money extortion from women who sell sexual services by the employees of the law enforcement bodies makes them direct exploiters of prostitution (Ar. 6). We reported that sex workers are excluded from political and public life (Ar. 7), have problem with citizenship establishing (Ar. 9), and have no equal access to education (Ar. 10). We reported that sex workers have no opportunity to realize their labor rights (Ar. 11), have no access to the healthcare (Ar. 12) and to economic and social benefits (Ar. 13). Sex workers also cannot realize their right to be equal to other people before the Law.

The report has been sent to the CEDAW Committee and is available on IWRAW website at: [http://www.iwraw-ap.org/resources/pdf/42_shadow_reports/Kyrgyzstan_SR_TaisPlus.pdf](http://www.iwraw-ap.org/resources/pdf/42_shadow_reports/Kyrgyzstan_SR_TaisPlus.pdf)

It will be presented by Shakhnaz Islamova in Geneva soon.

I think this experience could be useful for other colleagues from other countries, especially for organisations of Eastern and Central Europe.

**Important features of the preparation process:**

1. We documented the situation carefully for the five years and had all necessary reports to confirm our conclusions and make basis for recommendations. We involved the best experts who helped us to conduct the short, but high-quality researches.
2. We didn’t try to activate the national process as whole and negotiate with those who don’t want to listen to us. We focused on our own concerns and looked for opportunity to express our point of view.
3. We get the strong support of experienced local activists (Labrys NGO) and IWRAW who provided us all necessary technical assistance and support the trip to the CEDAW meeting by funds.

**What is problematic?**

1. Language barrier. One of us doesn’t speak English. It means that she will be not engaged to all events and sessions of CEDAW meeting meaningfully, and some opportunities to influence the process could be lost.
2. We are a little bit ignorant about follow-up, and it is very problematic for us to participate in out-of-country process.

**What do we need?**

1. To solve language problem – through encourage of non-English speakers to improve they skills in oral presentations and group discussions, the synchronic translation providing, assistance in translation of key documents which should be available for us timely, edition of texts written in (or translated to) English by us.
2. To get assistance from our experienced colleagues in preparation, submitting and follow-up process: we need information about current opportunities, support of the work in the political format, clarification of terms, rules and procedures.

And, last but not least, we also need the moral support and encouraging of our networks.