

INTERVENTION

ARTI VERMA/ CENTRE FOR SOCIAL EQUITY AND INCLUSION

INDIA

AGENDA ITEM # 3: Minority Women and Girls and the Right to Education

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak.

My name is Arti Verma. I am from the Centre for Social Equity and Inclusion, an NGO based in New Delhi, India.

I want to speak on the issue of education for Muslim girls in India and want to highlight the importance of disaggregated data related to Muslim girls both enrolled and out of schools in India and I would like to raise two important connecting recommendations from the General Recommendations:

In relation to Draft Recommendation no. 17 and 39:

Recommendation no. 17:- Accurate data disaggregated by ethnicity, gender and religion allows for a greater understanding of the issues affecting minority women and their circumstances, including their socio-economic situations, and enable the creation of targeted interventions. A crucial prerequisite for this data collection is the recognition by Governments of the very existence of minorities on their territory. Governments should undertake data-gathering exercises that are designed and implemented in full consultation with minorities and minority women. Data collection should be conducted in an ethnically sensitive manner and on a voluntary basis, with full respect for the privacy and anonymity of the individuals concerned, in accordance with international standards of personal data protection. The reason for data collection, the process and the way in which the data will be used should be fully transparent. Using equal opportunity and non-discrimination indicators is essential to develop, monitor and regularly review effective and targeted programmes to improve the situation of minority women and tackle discrimination against them.

Recommendation no.39:- Development agencies should work with minority women and minority non-governmental organizations to ensure that, wherever appropriate, their interventions address the specific issues faced by minority women, including by systematically collecting and disseminating disaggregated data to inform policy direction in all their fields of work.

We agree to the tenor of the Draft Recommendation, and we further urge additions under the "Minority Women and Girls Right to Education" section, that governments, should conduct research studies and consultations to collect the disaggregated data of school going minority girls and boys from primary level to higher education as well as the disaggregated data of out of school children from Muslim community.

This is in relation to the lack of disaggregated data of school going and out of school Muslim girls and boys in India, therefore we urge Government of India should conduct research studies for collecting region wise disaggregated data of Muslim girls and Boys in and out of school from Primary level to higher education.

We also urge, in relation to the recommendation no. 39, that the Government of India and development agencies i.e UN agencies should work with Muslim women human rights defenders and organizations to highlight and mainstream the issues of religion-based discrimination into problem analysis, policy design and monitoring of development programmes in the area of education of Muslim girls. The available data must be collected and interpreted along with voices and experiences of Muslim women, girls and community and these focused studies must be used to influence all policy strategy.

We therefore urge the Forum to adopt Draft Recommendation no. 17 and 39 with these additions on Recommendations for Minority women and Girls' Right to Education section.

We would like to thank you again for giving us this opportunity to share our views.

Thank You!!