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Call for Participation: Seeking Researchers and Women's Organizations for UN Study

Women's Human Rights Education Institution

The **Women's Human Rights Institute (WHRI)** is undertaking a two-year research and advocacy project to promote participation in data gathering for the upcoming thematic report of the **UN Working Group on Discrimination against Women in Law and Practice (UNWGEDAW)** on "good practices" in addressing discrimination and promoting women's self-empowerment. The project will focus on identifying potential "good laws" and/or important case law that promote women's substantive equality, and developing case studies that delve into the content of the laws, their impact and implementation mechanisms, as well as the complex set of factors and actors involved in their creation and implementation.

We have a particular interest in looking at the participation of women's organizations and civil society in the process of developing laws that promote women's de facto equality. The project seeks to involve women's organizations, researchers and women's human rights experts in identifying case studies and in contributing to a greater understanding of what constitutes a "good practice" in the context of promoting women's enjoyment of their human rights. It also seeks to question and deepen the parameters for understanding how to define "good practices" in the context of women's human rights implementation.

The information below describes the roles and parameters of participation in this important global study. The results of the study will be submitted to the UNWGEDAW to contribute towards their official report on this theme to the Human Rights Council, and will also be disseminated through a range of methods once the study is completed. Individual researcher applicants must have a degree in a related field, research experience, and excellent English writing skills.

All interested candidates should submit a CV, letter of interest, names and contact information of two professional and/or academic references, and a writing sample in English, (all in a single Word or PDF document, please) to: research@learnwhr.org before May 30, 2016. Please indicate clearly which regional team you are looking to join, and whether you are applying to be a researcher or a research team coordinator. The regions and teams are outlined in the parameters below.

We are also seeking the involvement of women's organizations with expertise in these areas to submit case studies based on your work. If your organization would like to get involved in the study, please contact us at research@learnwhr.org with the following information: name and profile of organization; region(s) of work; area of specialization; relevant existing studies to contribute to research project; and contact person for follow-up as

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soon as possible. We will be soliciting information through an online survey as well as directly communicating with organizations that wish to participate.

Women's Human Rights Institute's "Good Practices" Global Study for the UNWGDAW

Terms of Reference for Researchers and Participating Organizations

Background

The Women's Human Rights Institute is an international organization that engages in education, advocacy and research to support transnational women's movements and to promote the use of women's human rights mechanisms for feminist activism. It is based jointly out of the University of Toronto in Canada and the Fundación Justicia y Género in Costa Rica. The WHRI was co-founded in 2004 by Costa Rican feminist jurist and activist Alda Facio, who is currently an Expert Member of the UNWGDAW, an independent expert mechanism created by the Human Rights Council to assist governments in understanding and implementing their women's human rights obligations.

The WHRI is conducting this research project under the guidance of Alda Facio, and is partnering with other organizations, including the Due Diligence Project, the International Women's Rights Project, and JASS (Just Associates), utilizing program alumnae networks and reaching out to engage new partners in order to conduct a series of consultations and data gathering methods to produce submissions for the "good practices" report. Our aim is to support civil society contributions, as well as to set up ongoing communication networks to promote further civil society participation in the work of the UNWGDAW moving forward.

The initial phase of this project, executed in 2016, will involve building a research team to conduct an extensive survey, as well as to call for submissions from women's organizations to develop potential case studies of "good practices" to be considered for inclusion in the report of the UNWGDAW. Researchers will be divided into teams by region, under a regional coordinator. The second phase, executed in 2017, involves further systemization and dissemination of all data gathered during the research phase and producing both popular and formal publications to disseminate the findings widely.

Responsibilities of Researchers

Methods of Work: Case Study Development

The research project will involve multiple data gathering methods in order to identify possible case studies for consideration: extensive literature review using university library databases as well as online research sources; review of survey submissions from organizations; and targeted outreach to civil society organizations.

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From these initial investigations, promising case studies will be selected and identified for more in-depth research that will involve dialoguing with actors on the ground. In the end, we anticipate 5-10 completed case studies per region will be submitted to the WG for consideration for the official report. All case studies will be disseminated by the WHRI in 2017 through a variety of publication methods.

More details on the conceptual framework and evaluative criteria will be provided to participating researchers. By way of summary, the study will have as its starting point a law (including constitutional provisions) or court decision specifically enacted or written to address discrimination against women and to promote women's equality in a particular area, or in regard to a particular group of women. From there we will seek to render visible:

1. the complex set of factors and actors (both state and non-state) that brought it into being (for example, if the law is the result of a new government policy or program or the result of women's rights activism and mobilization or because the State has ratified an international human rights treaty, or is trying to comply with a recommendation by a human rights body, etc.);
2. the effects of the law once passed; and
3. the phases and impacts of its implementation.

In this context, a "good law" for women must be grounded in women's human rights principles. This study will look at both legislation and case law, depending on context.

WHRI's Contribution

To support research, the WHRI will provide researchers with the following:

- Online university library access
- Case study guidance templates with research questions
- Access to central research organizing platform to keep track and communicate throughout project
- Access to WHRI local partners, where possible
- Access to potential informants and stakeholders, to the extent it is possible through WHRI networks
- Continuous advice, guidance and support
- Documentation for researchers verifying their participation in the project in the form of reference letters upon successful project completion

Timeframe

The research component of this project will take place starting June 1st, 2016 until the end of September 2016 for individual researchers, with occasional follow-up until January 2017. Research Team Coordinators will be asked for additional follow-up until January 2017 as well, and will also have the opportunity to participate in Phase 2 if desired. The findings of the research

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project will be incorporated into a report that will be submitted to the Working Group for consideration in January 2017, followed by inclusion in the reporting process of the Working Group to the Human Rights Council later in 2017. The time commitment will vary at differing points of the process; however, **individual researchers** should be prepared to commit **8-12** hours per week, with fallow periods and more intense periods of work around project deadline dates. As stated above, the time commitment for **Research Team Coordinators** will range from **15-20** hours per week, in accordance with project needs. A full project timeline will be made available to selected research project participants.

Terms of Contract

This research project will provide independent information for the WGDAW. It is not a funded project, so researchers will offer their time as volunteers in exchange for the opportunity to participate in an important study that will impact our understanding of what constitutes a “good practice” for promoting women’s rights from a holistic, intersectional human rights framework. Although there is no monetary compensation available, researchers will be fully credited on the website and in publications for their contributions, and the WHRI will provide documentation verifying participation in the project and/or reference letters upon successful completion of the project. Researchers will also be invited to apply for scholarships to participate in future WHRI trainings.

All interested candidates should submit a CV, letter of interest, names of two professional references, and a writing sample in English, (all in a single Word or PDF document, please) to: research@learnwhr.org by May 30, 2016, and should be available on June 3 for an initial online conference call. Please indicate clearly which regional team you are looking to join, what language(s) you speak, and whether you are applying to be a researcher or a research team coordinator.