



ELIMINATING DISCRIMINATORY LAWS: ACHIEVING GENDER EQUALITY ON PAPER AND IN PRACTICE DURING CHALLENGING TIMES

Side Event organized by the International Development Law Organization (IDLO), the World Bank Group, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the Permanent Mission of the Philippines to the United Nations on the occasion of the 65th session of the Commission on the Status of Women

Wednesday, 24 March 2021, 14:00 – 15:30 Rome/ 9:00 – 10:30 New York

[Zoom Webinar](#)

Discrimination in law has severe repercussion to women's lived realities – and more so now as the world is facing the impact of COVID-19. Without the protection of the law, women and girls, especially those facing intersectional discrimination, continue to be left behind in accessing and enjoying their human rights.

Globally, over 2.5 billion women and girls are negatively impacted by discriminatory laws. In many countries, women are still not guaranteed equal legally treatment with men. There are still legal provisions that prevent married women from registering a business or signing a contract in the same manner as their husbands; or from traveling outside the family home. Furthermore, women are still denied the same rights as men in applying for a passport; freely choosing their marital residence; acquiring, retaining, changing or conferring their nationality on their spouses or children; and deciding when and whom to marry. Furthermore, laws continue to lag behind in providing protection to women against all forms of gender-based violence.

Global commitments have underscored the importance of eliminating discriminatory laws and the establishment of strong legal framework on gender equality. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) as well as the Beijing Platform for Action condemn discrimination against women in all its forms and urge legal protection of the rights of women through constitutions, laws, and competent justice institutions.

The IDLO event will highlight the urgent need to eliminate discriminatory laws across women's lives, *with heightened focus on gender-based violence*. The panel discussion will also identify promising approaches to expand political will and support for gender-equal legal reform.

Experts will pay special attention to addressing discriminatory laws in the context of the pandemic, particularly in areas where such laws exacerbated existing inequalities. They will also explore opportunities to secure transformative legal and societal change.

The event builds on IDLO's field work to eliminate discriminatory laws, combat gender-based violence, and strengthen legal frameworks for gender equality.

Agenda

Opening Remarks

Ms. Jan Beagle, Director-General, IDLO

Panelists

- H.E Hosna Jalil, Deputy Minister for Women's Affairs (Policy and Planning), Afghanistan
- Ms. Tea Trumbic, Program Manager, Women, Business and the Law, World Bank
- Ms. Anita E Baleda, Chief Gender and Development Specialist, Policy Development, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Division, Philippine Commission on Women
- Ms. Katherine Meighan, General Counsel, IFAD
- Ms. Melissa Upreti, Vice-Chair, UN Working Group on Discrimination against Women and Girls
- Dr. Lesley Ann Foster, Executive Director, Masimanyane Women's Rights International and Chair, Gender-based Violence Forum, South African Women Lawyers Association (SAWLA)

Moderator

Dr. Ilaria Bottigliero, Director, Policy, Research and Learning, IDLO

Interactive Dialogue

Simultaneous interpretation will be provided in English, French and Spanish.