

Working Together for Equality :
Beijing +15

CARAVAN INFORMATION PACKAGE

For further information contact Carole Shaw on

info@jerainternational.org

This document is in 3 parts:

Part 1 : Caravan Information

Part 2 : Report feedback forms

Part 3 : Participants Kit

For further information please contact:

Mail: Carole Shaw
JERA International
PO Box 289, Kangaroo Ground, Vic 3097

Fax: 03 9481 7553

Email: Carole Shaw - info@jerainternational.org

Or online at www.jerainternational.org

Would you like to organize a Beijing + 15 Caravan in your State or Territory?

It is simple, all you will need to organize a Caravan is contained right here in this Information Package.....

This package has information on:

- Ⓢ What is Beijing + 15?
- Ⓢ What is a Caravan?
- Ⓢ Why are we organizing these caravans?
- Ⓢ What needs to be done to prepare for a Caravan?
- Ⓢ Who you should invite.
- Ⓢ How big is a Caravan?
- Ⓢ What happens in a Caravan?
- Ⓢ What needs to be done after the Caravan?
- Ⓢ What will be achieved by having a Caravan?
- Ⓢ Who you should contact for more information?

Now see over the page for what is included in the Caravan Kit.

The Caravan Kit

To make it easier for you we have also prepared a 'Caravan Kit' which contains all the information anyone who comes to a Caravan will need to understand what it is all about. **The Caravan Kit can be found at the end of this Information pack.**

Caravan Kits can be given to anyone and everyone who comes to your Caravan.

The Caravan Kit has in it:

- 🌀 **A Registration Form**
- 🌀 **Information on what are Beijing +15? CEDAW? Sex Discrimination Act?**
- 🌀 **More information on what Australian events are being organized for Beijing + 15**
- 🌀 **Reading and Website suggestions, and**
- 🌀 **An Evaluation Form**

And like any show bag, it has flyers for:

- 🌀 Beijing + 15 Australian events
- 🌀 Beijing + 15 Caravans
- 🌀 Beijing + 15 Asia Pacific NGO Forums

All you have to do it photocopy the Caravan Kit for everyone who comes to your Caravan 😊

What is Beijing + 15?

Beijing + 15 is the fifteen year review of the Beijing Platform for Action.

In 1995, the United Nations held the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China. At that conference, all the governments of the world agreed to the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA).

The Beijing Platform for Action was a landmark agreement. It identified a range of **actions governments, the United Nations and civil society groups should take to make women's human rights a reality.** This included actions on poverty, education, health, women being politically active, government institutions, young girls, the economy, violence, women's rights, media, the environment and armed conflict.

Women's groups had a strong presence and influence at these meetings, and so the Platform was very strong in recognizing women's human rights.

In 2000, the Governments and the UN reviewed how many of these actions had been put in place in five years.

In 2005, Governments and the UN further reviewed how governments were tracking with their commitments to the BPFA after 10 years.

In 2010, Governments and the UN will review how many of these actions have been put in place in 15 years, and what are the new and emerging areas of concern.

To help you, we have prepared a sheet with more information about Beijing + 15 which can be found in the Caravan Kit.

What is a Caravan?

A caravan is another name for a State and Territory based consultation.

The idea of a caravan comes from Africa and Asia, where women have used the idea of a travelling group of women going to different parts of their country to raise awareness about women's issues.

So rather than just calling it a consultation, we thought it would be more interesting to use the idea of a caravan to give the sense that the Beijing + 15 meetings will be travelling around Australia, to raise awareness about women's issues in Australia.

A Caravan can take many different forms. It can be as simple as a regular meeting of friends, a community group, or a meeting of several community groups. It can also be as large as a State-wide meeting.

Why are we organizing these caravans?

We are organizing these caravans so that Australian women can have their say on what issues they are currently facing in their lives and what they think should be done to improve their lives.

It is also a chance for women to say how effective they think the Beijing Platform for Action has been over the last ten years.

Women's views from all the States and Territories will be collected and analyzed. The analysis will be shared with the Australian Minister for Women in time for the High Level ESCAP Meeting in Bangkok. The information will also be taken to the Asia Pacific NGO Forum in Manila, Philippines to become part of the Asia Pacific Political Declaration to the Commission on the Status of Women 54th Meeting in New York.

What needs to be done to prepare for a Caravan?

To make sure the Caravan is well organized, you will need to:

- Find a **place** where everyone can meet.

It should be somewhere people feel comfortable coming to, is easy to get to, and has everything you need (i.e. chairs, black/whiteboard, big sheets of paper, toilet etc.)

- Set a **date** when everyone can come.

- Make sure you have a **budget** and raise any funds you may need

- Make sure **tea/coffee and some snacks** are provided.... Or tell people they need to bring their own food and drink.

- Send **invitations** to everyone who you think would be interested to come.

Make sure you also invite women who normally may not get a chance to have their say – indigenous women, women with disabilities, young women, older women, lesbian women, refugee and migrant women, single women, etc.

- Advertise** the caravan

You may need to promote the event through email, radio, media, newspapers, flyers other local events and meetings, by word of mouth etc.

A **sample flyer** you can use is included at the back of this information package.

Let JERA International (info@jerainternational.org) know what you are planning so we can also help you advertise.

- ☑ Consult with women who may need **special arrangements** made for them (i.e. indigenous women, women with disabilities, young women, older women, refugee and migrant women, women with children etc.)

For example, they may need child care, translation, physical access, access to materials, support persons etc.

- ☑ **Select 1 – 3 people who will run the Caravan.** This will require them to explain what the Caravan is about (they can use the information in this package to help them) and manage the Caravan so everyone has a chance to have their say.

Select someone to be a documenter. As documenter they will need to write down all the main points that people raise during the Caravan and help prepare the Caravan Report.

- ☑ And lastly, don't forget to **photocopy** the Caravan Kit for everyone who comes.

It may seem like a lot needs to be done, but if you work with a group of people who can help with the different tasks it will be much easier.

Who should you invite?

It is important to **invite people from all different parts of the community** such as business women, women from the Churches, community organizations, State Department of Women, local councils, schools, universities, unions, etc. This is an opportunity to make new friends....

It is especially important to invite women who are normally not able to come to such events so that they also have a chance to have their say:

+ Indigenous women

+ Young women

+ Women with Disabilities

+ Older women

+ Refugee women

+ Migrant women

+ Single mothers

+ Women living in remote communities

+ Single women

+ Business women

+ Women from any other groups.....

How big is a Caravan?

A Caravan can be as big or as little as you want. There can be several Caravans in one State/Territory or just one Caravan. This will depend on the kind of Caravan it is.

- Ⓢ If it's a regular meeting of a community group, it may only be 1 – 2 hours.
- Ⓢ If it's several community organizations and women from different communities meeting together, it may be half a day.
- Ⓢ If it's a State wide meeting, it may be 1 – 2 days.

It will also depend on how long women want to talk for!!!

The **number of women** coming to a caravan will depend on :

- Ⓢ How many people you invite
- Ⓢ How many people your meeting place will hold

The size of your **budget** and how many resources you have will also determine how big your Caravan will be.

What is important to remember is the Caravan should give as many women as possible the chance to have their say about the issues affecting them.

What happens in a Caravan?

Below are 4 easy steps for you to follow on what to do in a Caravan.....

.... but remember if you have other creative and imaginative ways of running a Caravan please do them!

STEP 1 Register everyone who comes

- 🕒 Give everyone who comes a copy of the Caravan Kit (found at the end of this document)
- 🕒 Ask everyone who comes to fill in the registration form (found in the Caravan Kit). Collect all the forms to create a contact list for people.
- 🕒 Remember to send the information to JERA International (email : info@jerainternational.org or cshaw@jerainternational.org)

STEP 2 Once everyone is seated start with an introduction

- 🕒 Introduce the organizers, and any speakers there might be. If it is not too big a group you can also have the participants introduce themselves.
- 🕒 Speak briefly about what is Beijing +15, and why this Caravan is being held.

You can use the information in this package to speak about this, as well as the sheet in the Caravan Kit.

If you are not sure what to say, contact Carole or Judith at JERA International and we can help you.

- 🗨️ Take some time to also explain what is CEDAW and how it links with the Beijing + 15.

Once again, there is a flyer in the Caravan Kit on CEDAW which you can use to speak about this.

STEP 3 Now that everyone has a better idea of what the Caravan is about and why they are attending one, you can start the discussions.

- 🗨️ If it is a small group of people you might want to have the discussion as one group. If there are more than 15 people, you may want to divide into groups of 8 – 10 people.
- 🗨️ Each group can **talk about one of the twelve areas of the Beijing Platform for Action**. Or if they have a new issue they want to talk about it can be a **‘new or emerging issue’**.

You may need to give some **instructions to the groups**, such as:

- 🗨️ Ask each group to select one person from the group to facilitate the discussion and one other person to take notes of the discussion.
- 🗨️ Ask each group to first decide what issue they want to talk about.
- 🗨️ Then each group should spend some time talking about what the problems are for that issue and what changes they want made to fix it.
- 🗨️ Lastly, ask each group to write down the main points they discussed on the forms provided. Information can also be given and recorded as pictures, stories, case studies, posters, audio material, video, etc.

To help you, we have developed **forms** the group can use to write down their points. They are at the back of this information package.

STEP 4 Once the groups have finished their discussions, bring them all back together into one big group.

- Ⓢ Have each group **share the main points** they discussed (they should be as brief as possible)
- Ⓢ Any **issues or recommendations** the group want highlighted in the document should be noted.
- Ⓢ Everyone should also **select who their representatives are** going to be if they are going to attend the Asia Pacific Meeting in Manila, Philippines.
- Ⓢ You may also need to spend some time **planning** how to support your representatives to go to these other meetings.
- Ⓢ Finally, get everyone to complete their **evaluation form** in the Caravan Kit.

You may want to **finish by thanking everyone for coming and letting them know when you will be in contact with them next.**

Remember to send all the group reports, the recommendations and the evaluation comments to JERA International by 31st August, 2009.

Group reports, recommendations and evaluation comments can be sent by:

Mail: Carole Shaw
 Jera International
 PO Box 289, Kangaroo Ground, Vic 3097

Fax: 03 9481 7553

Email: Carole Shaw - info@jerainternational.org

Or online at www.jerainternational.org

What needs to be done after the Caravan?

After the Caravan you will need to:

- Put all the group discussion reports and the final recommendations together to create your Caravan report.
- Distribute copies of the Caravan report to all participants.
- Share the Caravan report with State and local governments.
- Send a copy of the Caravan report to JERA International by 31st August, 2009.
- Complete the Evaluation Form and return it (along with participants completed evaluation forms) to JERA International by 31st August, 2009. The Evaluation Form is contained in the Caravan Kit.
- Find funds and make arrangements for your representatives to go to the Beijing + 15 Regional and International Meetings.

***Once again working with a group of people to share these tasks
will help make the job easier!***

What will we achieve by having a Caravan?

As a result of the caravans women will have had **a chance to speak** about a range of issues affecting women across Australia.

Women will also have had a chance to say whether they think the **Sex Discrimination Act and the Beijing Platform for Action has been effective or not** over the last fifteen years.

Finally, from women having their say in the Caravans about **what needs to be done to improve things**, we will have a strong set of recommendations to take forward to the fifteen year review of the Beijing Platform for Action.

The information that comes out of the Caravans will then be taken to the regional and international meetings for the fifteen year review of the Beijing Platform for Action.

This will mean that women will not only have their say but they will also be able to take that forward to the national, regional and international level, so that what they have to say is heard!

Who should you contact for more information?

For more information on

..... how to participate in your State or Territory Caravan

..... or information about Beijing +15

..... please contact

Carole Shaw

JERA International

(Justice, Equality, Rights, Access)

cshaw@jerainternational.org

or visit the website at

www.jerainternational.org

Sample Flyer to Advertise your Caravan (2 pages)

This event is organized by [insert name of organizers] and supported by [insert name of any funders] as part of the Beijing + 15 Project by JERA International and ANCORW.



Working Together for Equality

Have your say on Women's Rights!

Come to [insert name of State / Territory]'s BEIJING + 15 CARAVAN!!

[Insert Time]

[Insert Date]

[Insert Venue]

What is Beijing + 15?

Beijing + 15 is the ten year review of the Beijing Platform for Action. In 1995 the Australian government, along with all other governments, agreed to promote women's rights by implementing the actions identified in the Beijing Platform for Action. The fifteen year review is a chance to look at how well the Governments have put these actions into place.

What is a Caravan?

A Caravan is another name for a 'consultation'. Caravans are being organized in each State and Territory around Australia.

The Caravans give women throughout Australia a chance to have their say on what issues they are currently facing in their lives and what they think should be done to improve their lives.

Beijing + 15 Caravans

Women can talk about poverty, violence, work, the environment, media, girl children, education, health, being involved in decision-making, refugees, war, human rights, housing, whether the government departments are providing services that are needed, the cost of living – anything they think is an issue for them. It is a chance for women to say how effective they think the Beijing Platform for Action has been over the last fifteen years.

What happens at a Caravan?

At a Caravan you can:

- @ Learn about the Beijing Platform for Action and other International human rights instrument such as CEDAW.
- @ Discuss what are the issues women are facing and what they think needs to be done to improve women's rights.
- @ Select representatives to take [insert name of State/Territory] Caravan Report forward to national, regional and international meetings.

What will we achieve by having a Caravan?

By being a part of a Caravan, women will have their say about what issues are important to them and how effective the Beijing Platform for Action and the *Sex Discrimination Act* has been for them.

They will also be able to take what they think forward to the national, regional and international level, so that what they have to say is heard!

The Caravans are just the beginning ...

After the Caravans women will have the opportunity to take their ideas forward to:

The Australian Government – in the recommendations report













Asia Pacific NGO Forum on Beijing + 15 Manila, Philippines – women from all over the Asia Pacific will share their issues and prepare recommendations for Beijing + 15.

Beijing + 15 Review, Commission on Status of Women in New York, March 2010 – This will be where governments finally meet to review their efforts to put the Beijing Platform for Action into Action.

For more information about participating in Australia's preparations for Beijing + 15 please email Carole Shaw at cshaw@jerainternational.org

Reporting on Discussions at your Caravan

The Beijing Platform for Action concentrates on twelve critical areas. These are:

- | | |
|---|---|
|  Poverty |  Women Decision Makers |
|  Education and Training |  Government Institutions |
|  Health |  Women's Rights |
|  Violence |  Media |
|  Armed Conflict / Refugees |  Environment |
|  Economy |  Young Girls |

We have prepared one form for groups to fill in on each critical area. Each form explains what kinds of issues are relevant to each area.

We have also prepared a form called “new and emerging issues”. This form can be used to note down the main points on any issues that are discussed, but that does not fall within the Beijing Platform for Action’s 12 critical areas.

We have also prepared a form with a **BONUS QUESTION** on the ***Sex Discrimination Act***. Please encourage groups to also discuss this.

If all the information doesn’t fit on the form, attach some more pages.

In your Caravan you do not have to discuss issues for every critical area. You should focus on those issues that are most important to women in your Caravan.

For further information please contact:

Mail: Carole Shaw
JERA International
PO Box 289, Kangaroo Ground, Vic 3097

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Or online at www.jerainternational.org

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Beijing + 15



Caravan Report Back Forms

Report Back Form : ECONOMY

Is unemployment, social security, not being able to afford electricity, phone, good housing, a problem for you? Can you get child care so you can go to work? Do men get equal pay and conditions as men? Do you have maternity pay and leave? Are you able to own your land/house? Have you faced discrimination in the workplace, including as a result of caring responsibilities? Do you feel you have adequate workplace rights? What's happening for you? Why? Have your say

What do you think should be done about it?

Report Back Form : NEW & EMERGING ISSUES

What issue do you want to raise?

Why is it happening?

What do you think should be done about it?

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Email: Carole Shaw - info@jerainternational.org

Or online at www.jerainternational.org

Working Together for Equality

Beijing + 15



Participants Kit

What is in this Kit?

This kit has all the information you will need to be a part of a Beijing + 15 Caravan.

It has:

- 📄 A Registration Form
- 📄 A photo permission form
- 📄 Information on what are Beijing + 15, CEDAW, Sex Discrimination Act.
- 📄 More information on what Australian events are being organized for Beijing + 15
- 📄 Reading and website suggestions
- 📄 An Evaluation Form

Registration Form

It is important for the organizers to have your name and contact details so they can keep in touch with you after the Caravan.

The information will not be used to identify anyone individually. It is used so we can build a statistical picture of the participants attending Caravans across Australia.

All information will be held by JERA International and will not be publically distributed.

.....

NAME:

ORGANISATION (IF ANY):

ADDRESS:

POSTCODE:

PHONE:

FAX:

EMAIL:

SEX: FEMALE

MALE

AGE:

Please tick where appropriate:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal / Torres Strait Islander | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-English Speaking Background Language _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Urban resident | <input type="checkbox"/> Rural/Regional Town Resident |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Live in remote community | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: (single mum, lesbian, bisexual, have a disability etc) |

Photo permission form

During the Caravans photographs may be taken. These photographs are for use in reports, promotion of the B+15 events and educational purposes. I agree that my photograph can be taken and used for these purposes by the organizers of this event, and by JERA international (the Beijing + 15 coordinating agency).

NAME:

ORGANISATION (IF ANY):

ADDRESS:

POSTCODE:

PHONE:

FAX:

EMAIL:

What is Beijing + 15?

Beijing + 15 is the fifteen year review of the Beijing Platform for Action.

What is the Beijing Platform for Action?

In 1995, the United Nations organized the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China. At the conference governments met and committed themselves to the **Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA)**.

The Beijing Platform for Action was a landmark agreement. It identified a range of **actions governments, the United Nations and civil society groups should take to increase women's equality, remove barriers to women's development and advance women's human rights**. This was the first time a UN world conference had identified such practical and measurable actions (rather than just policy statements) and had governments commit to doing them.

The BPFA included actions for **12 critical areas** for women:

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| A. Poverty | G. Women decision-makers |
| B. Education | H. Government Institutions |
| C. Health | I. Women's Rights |
| D. Violence | J. Media |
| E. Armed Conflict | K. Environment |
| F. Economy | L. Young Girls |
| | M. |

Women's groups had a strong presence and influence at the Fourth World Conference on Women. At the World Conference, there were two parallel meetings, a formal meeting of global government leaders and an NGO Forum. Women attended the NGO Forums and lobbied at the government meetings. The result was a strong recognition of women's issues, women's rights and women's language in the BPFA document. It showed that women's groups, working strongly together, could influence such government meetings.

What happened after 1995?

Governments and women's groups returned to their countries to put in place the actions identified under the Beijing Platform for Action.

In 2000, Kofi Anan, the Secretary General of the United Nations at the time, organized a special sitting for governments to review what they had achieved on the BPFA in five years. The meeting was called **Beijing +5**. It was held at a Special Session of the General Assembly at the United Nations in New York in **June 2000**.

The document that was produced from that meeting is called **Beijing + 5 Outcomes Document**. It found that overall many of the commitments governments had made under the BPFA had not been put into place. In addition, new and emerging issues such as recognizing rape in armed conflict as a war crime were added to the platform.

Once again women's groups participated in Beijing + 5, by lobbying in their countries, attending the NGO Parallel Forum and lobbying in the corridors of the government meeting.

In 2005 The United Nations called Governments to come to the 49th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) meeting in New York to review how much of the Beijing Platform for Action and BPFA+5 Outcomes Document has been completed. The meeting was called **Beijing +10**. The outcomes document from CSW 49th (Beijing + 10) affirmed the commitments made in the Beijing Platform for Action and the Beijing + 5 and noted that despite considerable gains in some areas, especially in the area of the elimination of violence against women, gaps and challenges still existed in the implementation of the BPFA. Global climate change and the growth of HIV/AIDS affecting poor, young and marginalized women were also highlighted.

Now it is 2009 and next year in **March, 2010** the United Nations has once again called Governments to come to the Commission on the Status of Women meeting in New York to review the Beijing Platform for Action and BPFA +5 Outcomes Documents, and the outcomes document from BPFA + 10.

Is the Beijing + 15 something women should be involved in?

Several women's groups both in Australia and in other parts of the world have been worried that many of the conservative governments currently in power may use the Beijing +15 to change the language and commitments made in the Beijing Platform for Action and the BPFA +5 Outcomes Document in a way that will reduce the standards already set. In particular there is concern that some governments will try to lower the standards set on women's sexual and reproductive rights. For these reasons some groups have chosen not to participate in the Beijing + 15 review, to show they would not support such outcomes.

However, the majority of women's groups who have historically worked on the BPFA in the Asia Pacific region met and agreed to participate in the Beijing +15 review. Their aim is to make sure that a strong women's presence and participation will stem any major changes to the standards already identified in the BPFA.

Asia Pacific Women's Watch (APWW) is a regional network of women's groups working on the BPFA. It will be taking the lead on preparations for Beijing + 15 in the Asia Pacific.

What is CEDAW?

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) is an international human rights law treaty.

CEDAW aims to remove discrimination against women in all areas of life. This includes treating women equally and creating laws, policies and government and community structures to remove any discrimination.

The **CEDAW Committee** was created to monitor how governments are working to put CEDAW into place. The Committee is made up of international experts. Countries are required to report to the Committee every four years.

CEDAW defines discrimination as ***anything which prevents women, regardless of their marital status, from having their full rights and freedoms on an equal basis with men in politics, economics, social, cultural, civil or any other field*** (paraphrased).

Under the CEDAW approach non-discrimination applies to both direct and indirect discrimination. **Direct discrimination** is where men and women in the same situation are treated differently because of their sex. (Example : men and women are paid differently for the same work.) **Indirect discrimination** is where men and women in the same situation are treated the same, but the effect or result of that is women are disadvantaged. (Example: men and women are given the same holidays from work, but pregnant women workers are not given maternity leave). There is also **intersectional discrimination**, where women experience discrimination because of a combination of factors such as age, disability, caste, ethnicity, poverty, sex etc. (Article 1).

CEDAW tries to enforce a **substantive equality approach**, which requires that as well as there being formal equality (e.g. laws, policies, rules for equality), women should also be equal in fact (there need to be special programmes in place to ensure that women's equality is a reality). (Articles 2 and 3).

CEDAW also recognizes that sometimes governments may place **special measures** to give women a chance to overcome the historical effect of discrimination against

women. For example, some governments have set quotas for the number of women politicians, to encourage more women to become politicians (Article 4).

In CEDAW there are 10 key articles on different women's issues and rights, which include:

Trafficking and prostitution	Employment
Participation in political and public life	Finance
Nationality	Cultural / social life
Education	Rural development
Law	Marriage and family

In addition the CEDAW Committee also produced a general comment (NO 19), in which they stated that **violence against women** was a form of discrimination against women.

States that have signed CEDAW are bound under international law to protect these rights of women.

Australia has been obligated under CEDAW since 1984.

There are only two areas for which Australia made reservations, so did not commit itself to. These are paid maternity leave and women in direct armed combat. In 2008, Australia reviewed the reservation on paid maternity leave and in May 2009 an 18 week paid maternity leave system for low and middle income earners begins in 2011.

Australia presented its report to the CEDAW Committee in 2005 and is due to submit a report in 2009.

When the CEDAW Committee reviews a country report, governments may not always include all relevant information. So women's groups often prepare **shadow reports** and present them to the CEDAW Committee. Shadow reports are a way for women's groups to bring other women's issues to the attention of the CEDAW committee. The YWCA has just coordinated the CEDAW Shadow Report for the 2009 CEDAW Committee Meeting.

Is there any connection between CEDAW and Beijing + 15?

CEDAW and the Beijing Platform for Action are similar in that they are both international agreements made by governments about women's human rights.

However, CEDAW is more like a **policy** document or a law, which clearly sets out what women's human rights are. It is legally binding under international law.

The BPFA on the other hand sets out in more detail, what sorts of **actions** governments have to take to put into practice the human rights identified in CEDAW. It is more an action document. It is not legally binding – governments have a strong moral obligation rather than a legal obligation to act on the BPFA.

The strongest position women's groups have is to work on both processes so that governments put into place both the **policy** and the **actions** for achieving women's human rights.

What is the Sex Discrimination Act?

The Sex Discrimination Act, is a law passed by the Australian Parliament in 1984.

This law was created to make CEDAW part of Australian national law.

The objectives of the Sex Discrimination Act are to ensure equality for women and to eradicate sex discrimination in Australia.

If a woman has been sexually discriminated against, or not treated equally, she can use this Act, to make a claim in Court.

Women who feel they have been unfairly treated because they are women, can seek advice from either the **Human Rights Commission**, or the **Women's Legal Service** in their State or territory.

2010 is the **25th anniversary** of the Sex Discrimination Act. The Australian Human Rights Commission is using this as a chance to raise awareness about the law. To find out more visit their website at www.hreoc.gov.au.

What Australian Events are being organized for Beijing + 15?

Beijing + 15 : 'Working towards equality'

Just as with the Beijing + 5 and the Beijing +10 year review, this is a critical time for stocktaking and determining the way ahead towards the goal of gender equality and women's empowerment.

JERA International is organising two ways for women in Australia to prepare for Beijing + 15, from the local to the global.

Beijing + 15 Caravans

A caravan is another name for a 'consultation'. The caravans give women throughout Australia a chance to have their say on what issues they are currently facing in their lives and what they think should be done to improve their lives.

These are being organised in each State and Territory around Australia in June and July 2009.

Check the website for local events as they occur or better still...

contact Carole Shaw at info@jerainternational.org

if you would like to organise a workshop for your group



*Working together for
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And there's more

Australian women will also be participating in Asia Pacific and International events

Women's groups in the Asia Pacific are going to the **Asia-Pacific Regional NGO Forum from 22-24 October, 2009** in Manila, Philippines



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At this meeting women from all over the Asia Pacific will share their issues and their views on new economic, environmental, political, social and security issues in terms of their impact on women's needs and interests. These might include the economic recession, climate change, spread of HIV/AIDS and armed conflicts.

The next step ... will be for women from the Asia Pacific to go to the **High Level Intergovernmental Meeting at ESCAP**, Bangkok in late October, 2009 to lobby regional governments.



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At the parallel forum women's groups will prepare to lobby governments at the Asia Pacific inter-governmental meeting being held at the same time.

Finally women will go to New York!!



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In February/March, 2010 governments will meet at the annual **UN Commission on Status of Women session** to discuss the fifteen year review of the Beijing Platform for Action. Women's groups will also be there to lobby governments.

To find out how to participate in these events, check the JERA International website at www.jerainternational.org or email Carole Shaw at info@jerainternational.org

What will the governments be doing in the meantime?

Governments have been asked by the UN Division of the Advancement of Women (CAW) to complete a **Questionnaire**. The questionnaire asks governments to report on what progress they have made on the Beijing Platform for Action.

Governments from the Asia Pacific will also be meeting at the **High Level Intergovernmental Meeting in connection with Beijing + 15**. This will be on 27 – 29 October, 2009 in Bangkok, Thailand. In this meeting regional governments will assess their progress on the Beijing Platform for Action.

The agreements from this regional meeting will go into the final government meeting in March 2010.

In **March, 2010** all governments will meet at the **UN Commission on the Status of Women** for the Review and Appraisal of the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the Outcome Document.

After all this is finished, women will take the Beijing + 15 report back to their countries and work with governments on how to continue to put the Beijing Platform for Action into place.

Have your say! Share your views! Be involved!

Start with the Caravan and keep going to the Beijing + 15 Review.

Want to know more about Beijing + 15?

Here are some suggestions of things to read

- 📧 Beijing Platform for Action (www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform)
- 📧 United Nations Report of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (The Final Outcomes Document, June 2000) (www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/follolwup/as231) rev1.pdf
- 📧 Women Taking Action Locally and Globally (Australian Beijing + 10 Report) “Using the United Nations to Advance the Rights of Women” for CD copy, please contact info@jerainternational.org

Web Addresses:

- 📧 Information about Australian and Regional preparations for Beijing + 15 visit www.jerainternational.org
- 📧 Information about Asia Pacific preparations for Beijing + 15 and Asia Pacific NGO Forum <http://apww.isiswomen.org/>
- 📧 Information about CEDAW : www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw and www.iwraw-ap.org
- 📧 Information on the *Sex Discrimination Act* www.hreoc.gov.au

Watch out for web forum discussions on www.jerainternational.org

Evaluation Form

This evaluation is a chance for you to tell us what you liked of didn't like about the Caravan.

Please write your responses in the spaces provided.

- 1. Was the information in the Caravan Kit easy to understand and helpful?**

- 2. Did you feel the Caravans gave you a proper chance to talk about your issues and what improvements you want made?**

- 3. What changes would you make if this Caravan was to be run again?**

- 4. Would you like to keep getting information about future Beijing + 15 events and information?**

*All evaluation forms should be returned to JERA International at:
PO Box 289, Kangaroo Ground, Vic 3097
or email to Carole at info@jerainternational.org*