Comittee:UN WOMEN

Country:Finland

Agenda Item:Elimination of the Raising Domestic Violence During Covid-19 Pandemic

Domestic violence, also called intimate partner violence, is any form of behavior that intends to gain or maintain power and control over an intimate partner. It contains all physical, psychological, sexual, emotional actions or threats of actions that impact another person. It is a worldwide problem that happens in all societies and communities regardless of gender, age, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, or religion. The Covid-19 process has significantly increased gender-based domestic violations all around the world. In the pandemic process, financial difficulties caused by insufficient social support and financial collapse can trigger domestic violence. This is consistent with the literature that high-stress levels among couples increase the rate of violence 3.5 times more than among those with low-stress levels. The pushback on women and girls’ rights, gender inequality, changes in responsibilities, increased interactions, and socio-economic/external stressors increase the chances of domestic violence occurring.

As Section 7 of the Constitution amended in 2012 indicates,(Everyone has the right to life, personal liberty, integrity, and security. No one shall be sentenced to death, tortured, or otherwise treated in a manner violating human dignity.)Finland has built the society by including everyone, and by placing human rights, fundamental freedoms, and equality at the very center. Finland ranked 8th in the worldwide gender inequality index ranking while ranking 2nd in the global gender gap index ranking.

Moves towards the equality of women and men were taken in Finland long before the country became independent. It took much strenuous work before women in Finland became the first in the world to obtain full political rights, in 1906. The first 19 women members of parliament in the world started work the following year. In 1917 women and men obtain universal suffrage in local government elections. Finland’s first woman minister was Miina Sillanpää, who became Second Minister of Social Affairs in 1926. The same year a law was passed on the eligibility of women to hold public office.

The 1970s saw the beginnings of gender equality institutions, including in 1972 the creation of the Council for Gender Equality. In 1980 first Government Action Plan in Finland for Gender Equality was established. In 1994 rape within marriage was criminalized. In the new millennium, the country had its first woman president, with the election of Tarja Halonen in 2000. Three years later, Anneli Jäätteenmäki became the country’s first woman prime minister.

In general, the development of the Finnish welfare state, which included, among other things, the creation of social security and the pension system, benefited women tremendously and improved overall gender equality in society.

Despite Finland's advanced policy in the concept of Human Rights, violence against women is a notable gender equality problem in Finland. Aside from human suffering, the cost of violence to society as a whole is significant. In Finland, the number of victims of domestic abuse has risen steadily over the last decade. In 2020, 10,793 domestic violence and intimate partner violence offenses were reported to the authorities, with a slight decrease from the previous year. In 2019, roughly 4% of Finns stated in a survey that they had feared becoming a victim of violence by a family member.

The pandemic in Finland prompted a change from face-to-face to digital services; however, all shelters remained open. Shelter services provide urgent crisis help, safe accommodation and psychosocial support, advice, and counseling for people in crisis.

Nollalinja, a free national helpline for victims of psychological, physical, or sexual assault, is available 24/7. Nollalinja works closely with the service network of domestic abuse shelters and provides up-to-date information on free refuge locations across the country to provide cases of domestic violence.

Other than the essential support services for women we aim to prevent violence against women by accommodating economic support, mitigating income loss, increasing funding, supporting women's organizations and using media and digital space to increase women's safety and access to support.