

# *Cities for CEDAW:*

## A Campaign to Make the Global Local

*A toolkit to help promote human rights for women and girls in your community*



## Acknowledgements

Senior and Contributing Editors: June Zeitlin, Marilyn Fowler, Ellen Buchman, Tyler Lewis, Tara Yarlagadda

Layout and Design: Laura Drachsler

### **The Women's Intercultural Network (WIN)**

Women's Intercultural Network (WIN) is a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) with Consultative Status to the U.N. Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). WIN's mission is to ensure that all women and girls have a voice for full participation in their government and economy on the ground and on the Internet.

### **The Leadership Conference Education Fund (The Education Fund)**

The Leadership Conference Education Fund is a 501(c)(3) organization that builds public will for federal policies that promote and protect the civil and human rights of all persons in the United States.

Access this material online at <http://www.citiesforcedaw.org>.



# Table of Contents

- 1** Introduction: About Cities for CEDAW
- 4** Getting Started: Organizing a Cities for CEDAW Campaign
- 6** Using Social Media to Build Your Campaign
- 7** Where We Are: Cities for CEDAW Landscape
- 8** Success Stories and Recent Activities
- 9** Appendix
  - 9** Top 10 Achievements of the San Francisco Ordinance
  - 10** Additional Resources

## Introduction: About Cities for CEDAW

The aim of the Cities for CEDAW (The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women) campaign is to “Make the Global Local” and protect the rights of women and girls by adopting the principles of CEDAW in cities and towns across the United States.

The Cities for CEDAW campaign uses CEDAW, which is a comprehensive international women’s human rights treaty, as an overarching framework for advancing political and economic equality for women in the United States at the local level; while at the same time lifting up the important benefits from U.S. ratification of the treaty. By framing local concerns of gender equality and inclusion in a human rights context, the campaign underscores the importance of implementing gender responsive policies in cities nationwide. To find out more information about the women’s rights treaty, visit [www.civilrights.org/humanrights/cedaw/](http://www.civilrights.org/humanrights/cedaw/).

We strongly encourage individuals and NGOs who are interested in participating in the campaign to visit <http://citiesforcedaw.org/> and sign up to receive further updates and information about how to join a currently existing campaign or start a new one in their hometown. Whether you’re a new student activist or a long-time women’s rights leader in your community, the possibilities are wide open for you to get involved in the campaign.

This toolkit was created to educate, equip, encourage, and empower you to advocate

for women’s rights and CEDAW in your local community.

This is an exciting, emerging grassroots campaign that has the potential to advance the rights of women. Only through the help of enthusiastic activists like you can we truly make change happen.

## The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women - CEDAW

...because Women's Rights are Human Rights

### About CEDAW: The Treaty for Women's Rights

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) is a landmark international agreement that affirms principles of fundamental human rights and equality for women around the world.

To date, 187 out of 193 United Nations member states have ratified CEDAW. The United States is one of only six countries—along with Iran, Sudan, Somalia, Palau and Tonga—that have not ratified CEDAW.

CEDAW defines discrimination and provides a practical blueprint to promote human rights and open opportunities for women and girls in all areas of society. The treaty calls on each ratifying country to overcome barriers to discrimination in the political, social, economic, and cultural fields. This includes addressing issues of domestic violence, trafficking, affordable health care and child care, economic security, pay inequities, paid family leave, and educational and vocational opportunities.

**CEDAW strengthens the United States as a global leader in standing up for equality for women and girls around the world. Under the leadership of Presidents Reagan, Bush and Clinton, the U.S. ratified similar treaties on genocide, torture, and race.**

### CEDAW Works: Investing in Women Around the World

The empowerment of women is central to building democratic, peaceful, and prosperous societies. The World Bank provided substantial documentation of the important role that women play when it released its 2012 *World Development Report: Gender Equality and Development*. According to the report, “CEDAW has improved women’s literacy levels, labor force participation rates, and parliamentary representation—and in some cases has reduced absolute gender inequalities.”

**Ratification requires two-thirds of the Senate to stand together for women’s equality has no additional financial cost.**

In countries that have ratified CEDAW, women have partnered with their governments to engage in a national dialogue about advancing equality for women and girls, and as a result have shaped policies to create greater safety and opportunity for women and their families. See ICRW report on Recognizing Rights Promoting Progress at [www.cedaw2015.org](http://www.cedaw2015.org).

### The United States and CEDAW: The Treaty for Women’s Equality

American women enjoy opportunities and status not available to most of the world’s women, yet few would dispute that more progress is needed. CEDAW provides an opportunity for dialogue on how to address persistent gaps in women’s full equality, particularly regarding closing the pay gap, reducing domestic violence, and stopping trafficking.

**National Action:** Although President Obama supports ratification of CEDAW, the treaty has not moved beyond hearings in the Senate Judiciary and Foreign Relations Committees during his administration.

In 2010, the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Human Rights and the Law, chaired by Senator Richard Durbin (D-IL), held a hearing on CEDAW. In 2011, two Senate Foreign Relations subcommittees, chaired by Senators Barbara Boxer (D-CA) and Robert Casey (D-PA), held a joint hearing on Women and the Arab Spring, which highlighted how CEDAW has been used in the Middle East and North Africa to advance equality for women and girls. More recently, in June 2014, a Senate Foreign Relations subcommittee chaired by Senator Boxer held a hearing on Combating Violence and Discrimination Against Women: A Global Call to Action, which cited the importance of CEDAW for women around the world, including in the United States.

However, CEDAW has never been brought to the Senate floor for a vote. To ratify the treaty, CEDAW needs to be voted on by the full Senate, where it requires a two-thirds majority of support, or 67 votes. The House of Representatives has no formal role.

The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights convenes a CEDAW Task Force of almost 200 national organizations that continues to engage in educating policy makers and the public on the benefits of U.S. ratification of CEDAW.

**Local Action:** With CEDAW ratification efforts stalled in the U.S. Senate, local activists and public officials around the country are joining together in the *Cities for CEDAW* campaign to adopt local measures reflecting CEDAW principles as a way to address barriers to full equality for women and girls. Such measures generally require a gender analysis of city operations (e.g., workforce, programs, budget); an oversight body to monitor the implementation of a local CEDAW ordinance, (e.g., Commission on the Status of Women, Human Rights Commission, etc.); and funding to support the implementation of CEDAW principles.

Much is being done at the local level to promote the importance of the treaty. In 1998, San Francisco became the first city in the United States to adopt an ordinance reflecting the principles of CEDAW to improve the lives of women and girls. Since its adoption, San Francisco has developed new initiatives on domestic violence homicide, human trafficking, family friendly workplaces, and expanded language access for responders to domestic violence. More information can be found regarding the Top 10 Achievements of the San Francisco CEDAW Ordinance at [www.cities4cedaw.org](http://www.cities4cedaw.org).

The U.S. Conference of Mayors adopted a resolution in 2014 in support of the *Cities for CEDAW* campaign. Local activists and government officials are working in their communities to secure and implement a local CEDAW ordinance. The Women's Intercultural Network (WIN) in San Francisco and The Leadership Conference, a national coalition of diverse civil and human rights organizations, are working together to assist activists in communities around the country interested in the *Cities for CEDAW* campaign.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> More information can be found at either the Women's Intercultural Network (WIN) ([www.citiesforcedaw.org](http://www.citiesforcedaw.org)); or The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights ([www.civilrights.org](http://www.civilrights.org)). Contacts for each organization follow, respectively:

- Marilyn Fowler, WIN President/CEO, Peer Leader, Cities for CEDAW Campaign, San Francisco, CA ([win@WINaction.org](mailto:win@WINaction.org))
- June Zeitlin, Director, Human Rights Policy, The Leadership Conference Education Fund and The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights ([Zeitlin@civilrights.org](mailto:Zeitlin@civilrights.org))

December 2015

# Getting Started: Organizing a Cities for CEDAW Campaign

In cities where ordinances have been passed or substantial activities are underway to put forward an ordinance, grassroots organizations, advocates, and elected officials have organized different approaches to adopt CEDAW principles.

All of these approaches aim to achieve the following three key components through local implementation of CEDAW principles:

- a gender analysis of city departments and operations;
- an oversight body to monitor the implementation of a local CEDAW ordinance; and
- funding to support the implementation of the principles of CEDAW.

Most often, activists and nongovernmental organizations organize from the ground-up and form a coalition to apply the CEDAW principles locally. This can be done in many ways. In [Louisville, Kentucky](#), Cincinnati, Ohio and elsewhere, advocates have organized to pressure the city council to pass a resolution or ordinance affirming support for and implementing CEDAW at the local level.

As the first city to adopt an ordinance implementing CEDAW in 1998, San Francisco has become a model for advocates and NGOs in cities nationwide that seek to adopt CEDAW principles locally. The San Francisco CEDAW ordinance stipulates gender analysis of city agencies to ensure that they are non-discriminatory and fully serve all communities of women and girls, among

many other important provisions. See the Top Ten Achievements of the San Francisco CEDAW Ordinance on page 9 of this toolkit or visit <http://sfgov.org/dosw/cities-cedaw> for further information.

Additionally, sometimes particularly engaged mayors or city council members—often in conjunction with the cities’ commissions or departments on the status of women—are the ones driving the effort to adopt CEDAW principles locally alongside the work of civil society organizations. For example, on August 26, 2015, in honor of Women’s Equality Day, Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti announced an executive directive calling on city departments to implement CEDAW, which the city adopted in 2004.

While the majority of CEDAW activities has been organized within cities, this is by no means the only approach. Miami-Dade County, Florida recently adopted an ordinance in 2015, and advocates in Orange County, California are currently exploring a county-wide coalition to pass CEDAW legislation.

At the end of the day, you know your community best and where the power lies to make change. The campaign welcomes all efforts, whether they be in states, cities, counties, or towns.

## Nuts and Bolts Action Plan

Below is a suggested ‘nuts and bolts’ action plan for organizing a sustainable infrastructure for your Cities for CEDAW campaign—from the ground up.

1. Convene leaders of women's, civil and human rights' organizations in your city who are interested in working collaboratively to advance the rights of women and girls.
2. Form a steering committee representing the cultural, religious, age, class, racial and ethnic diversity of your city to plan your Cities for CEDAW Campaign and write a mission statement.
3. Identify and recruit a "hub organization" to serve as the NGO peer leader for your city's campaign that might also serve as the fiscal sponsor. For example, Women's Intercultural Network (WIN) created the California Women's Agenda (CWA) to serve as the HUB for the California action network.
4. Recruit volunteers for a Cities for CEDAW Campaign, keeping in mind a diverse representation of women in the different neighborhoods or districts in your city. Assist them in forming a task force of experts and organization resources on CEDAW.
5. Craft a plan of action for your campaign. See the California Women's Agenda Plan of Action as one approach for building an inclusive action coalition ([www.win-cawa.org/cawa](http://www.win-cawa.org/cawa)).
6. Invite relevant non-governmental organizations to join a call to action. Try to recruit organizations with memberships of diverse cultures, religions, ages, economic means, and lifestyles.
7. Fine tune each step of your strategic plan in "working groups" at a city call-to-action online, and list barriers, best practices and recommendations for action, with a list of resources and organizations for support.
8. Publish an action plan for the campaign with information about CEDAW and its benefits for the entire city online. Distribute it to participating organizations, elected officials, media and other policymakers and stakeholders in your city—don't forget potential funders and donors.
9. Build an electronic action alert network with list-serves that reach participating organizations, who will forward information and action alerts to their constituents, who, in turn, forward to their lists, and so on.
10. Stay alert on the progress of the Cities for CEDAW campaign, keep your coalition members updated and prepared for action by visiting <http://citiesforcedaw.org/>.

For more information on how to organize a grassroots campaign, please visit The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights' website and view the Grassroots Campaign and Advocacy Toolkit: [http://civilrights.org/action\\_center/toolkit/](http://civilrights.org/action_center/toolkit/).

## Using Social Media to Build Your Campaign

Social media is an increasingly important way to inform and engage new action-takers, and the Cities for CEDAW campaign is no exception.

Social media platforms such as Twitter ([www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com)), Facebook ([www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)), YouTube ([www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)) and Tumblr ([www.tumblr.com](http://www.tumblr.com)) provide individual advocates and organizations with easy ways to build powerful communities of support for your campaign.

Utilize your social media networks to get the word out about a growing Cities for CEDAW campaign. Take photos and post about important campaign updates as they occur, or tweet about emerging developments regarding adoption of CEDAW principles in your city, town or state.

Creating a website or a blog is also an effective strategy to get the word out about the campaign, providing a space for newcomers to learn more about the Cities for CEDAW efforts in your hometown and how to get involved. Several sites such as WordPress (<https://wordpress.com/>) provide several user-friendly and inexpensive—or even free—web templates to build your campaign's online presence.

### Cities for CEDAW on Social Media

To get inspired and find Cities for CEDAW-related clips and tweets, find the Women's Intercultural (WIN) on social media:

**YouTube** <https://www.youtube.com/user/winwomenspeak>

**Twitter** <https://twitter.com/WINCAWA>

For more information on how to use social media in a grassroots campaign, please see The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights' Grassroots Campaign and Advocacy Toolkit: [http://civilrights.org/action\\_center/toolkit/](http://civilrights.org/action_center/toolkit/).



# Where We Are: Cities for CEDAW Landscape

## Cities with CEDAW Ordinance

City/County/State	State
San Francisco	California
Los Angeles	California
Berkeley	California
Honolulu	Hawaii
Miami-Dade County	Florida

## Cities with CEDAW Resolution

City/County/State	State
Cincinnati	Ohio
Daly City	California
Edina	Minnesota
Eugene	Oregon
Long Beach	California
Louisville	Kentucky
Minneapolis	Minnesota
Kansas City	Missouri
Kentucky <sup>3</sup>	Kentucky
Salt Lake City	Utah
Santa Monica	California
St. Paul	Minnesota
St. Petersburg	Florida
Tampa	Florida
University City	Missouri
Washington, D.C. <sup>4</sup>	District of Columbia
West Hollywood	California

## Cities Exploring Possible CEDAW Ordinance or Resolution

City/County/State	State
Ashland	Oregon
Boston	Massachusetts
Denver	Colorado
Fairfax	Virginia
Juneau	Alaska
Laguna Woods	California
Monrovia	California
New York	New York
Orange County	California
Palo Alto	California
Philadelphia	Pennsylvania
Pittsburgh	Pennsylvania
Portland	Oregon
Raleigh	North Carolina
Rapid City	South Dakota
Richmond	California
Sarasota	Florida
Tacoma	Washington
Ypsilanti	Michigan

<sup>1</sup>For further information on Cities for CEDAW, please visit [citiesforcedaw.org](http://citiesforcedaw.org)

<sup>2</sup>These cities have adopted a resolution affirming support for the principles of CEDAW, or have one pending.

<sup>3</sup>Note: this was passed by the Kentucky House of Representatives. There is no similar resolution in the State Senate.

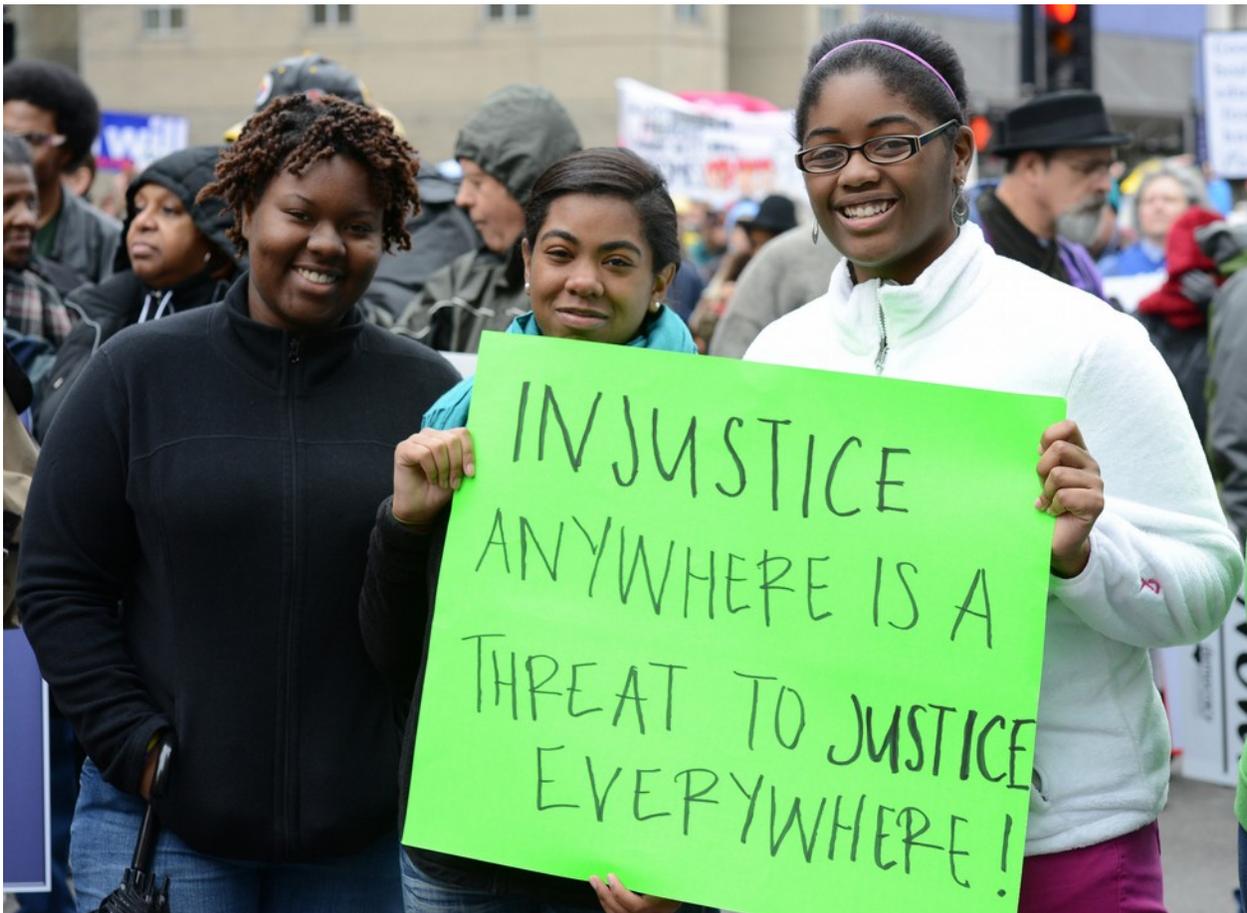
<sup>4</sup>This ordinance has been proposed but not yet been adopted by the DC City Council.

<sup>5</sup>These include cities that have begun organizing Cities for CEDAW activity (e.g., forming coalitions of civil society organizations; meeting with city council members), but have not yet formally introduced a resolution or ordinance.

Last Updated: May 2016

## Success Stories and Recent Activities

- In 1998, [San Francisco](#) became the first city in the United States to adopt an ordinance reflecting the principles of CEDAW to improve the lives of women and girls. Since its adoption, San Francisco has developed new initiatives on domestic violence homicide, human trafficking, family friendly workplaces, and expanded language access for responders to domestic violence.
- As of November 2015, 12 cities—from Los Angeles, CA to Louisville, KY—have either already passed an ordinance or are making serious progress towards an ordinance (such as by passing a resolution that affirms support for the principles of CEDAW).
- More than two dozen NGO coalitions in additional cities have expressed interest in organizing to establish the principles of CEDAW locally, and the number continues to grow by the day.
- In honor of Women’s Equality Day, on August 26, 2015, Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti announced an [executive directive](#) calling on city departments to implement CEDAW, which the city adopted in 2004.



## Top 10 Achievements of the San Francisco Ordinance <sup>1</sup>

1. **44 Months Without Domestic Violence Homicide** A new approach to domestic violence response led to a record 44 months without a single domestic violence homicide (2011-2014).
2. **Gender Equality Principles Initiative** Gender equality principles ranging from employment and compensation to supply chain practices support more productive workplaces for both women and men.
3. **Developed Proper Police Codes** Collaboration between the Department on the Status of Women and law enforcement agencies to adopt new codes for domestic violence, stalking, child abuse, and elder abuse.
4. **Expanded Language Access** Trained 150 emergency personnel in basic Chinese and Spanish phrases for responding to domestic violence and partnered with local foundations to provide cell phones to access 170 different languages at crime scenes.
5. **Family Violence Council** Addresses family violence across the lifespan by bringing together advocates working against child abuse, domestic violence, and proposes policy reforms to improve the criminal justice and social service responses to family violence.
6. **San Francisco Collaborative Against Human Trafficking** Community-based organizations and government agencies to eliminate modern slavery.
7. **Mayor's Task Force on Human Trafficking** A public effort, staffed by the Department on the Status of Women, with participation from law enforcement, public health, child welfare, the school district, and community-based organizations that work with trafficking survivors.
8. **Gender Analysis of City Agencies** Government agencies examined their workforce, programs, and budgets to ensure that they are nondiscriminatory and fully serve all communities of women and girls. Ten city agencies have undergone such analysis.
9. **Violence Against Women Prevention and Intervention Grants Program** Department on the Status of Women distributes antiviolence grants totaling \$4.6 million to 31 community-based programs.
10. **Family Friendly Workplace Ordinance** Working parents and caregivers have the right to request a flexible or predictable work schedule without fear of retaliation.

---

<sup>1</sup>Top Ten Achievements of the San Francisco CEDAW Ordinance. San Francisco Department on the Status of Women. <http://sfgov.org/dosw/cities-cedaw>.

## Additional Resources

Please see the following sites for additional resources to help you take action for the Cities for CEDAW campaign:

- Organizations in Support of CEDAW  
<http://www.civilrights.org/humanrights/cedaw/>
- Feminist Majority Foundation—Ratifying CEDAW  
[http://www.feminist.org/news/pdfs/CEDAW\\_2014FMF.pdf](http://www.feminist.org/news/pdfs/CEDAW_2014FMF.pdf)
- Making Rights Real: A Workbook on the Local Implementation of Human Rights  
<http://sfgov.org/dosw/sites/sfgov.org.dosw/files/wild-booklet-13mar14.pdf>
- CEDAW 2015  
<http://cedaw2015.org/>
- Sample CEDAW Resolutions, Ordinances & Reports  
<http://citiesforcedaw.org/resources-2/>
- The Leadership Conference Education Fund—Grassroots Campaigns and Advocacy Toolkit  
[http://civilrights.org/action\\_center/toolkit/](http://civilrights.org/action_center/toolkit/)



The Leadership  
Conference  
Education Fund

The Leadership Conference  
Education Fund

1629 K Street, NW  
10<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Washington, DC  
20006

202.466.3434 voice  
202.466.3435 fax  
[www.civilrights.org](http://www.civilrights.org)

Copyright © 2015 by  
The Leadership Conference  
Education Fund.  
All Rights Reserved.