

East Asia Gender Equality Forum:
Challenges, Opportunities, and Ethical Issues in the Digital Age
Forum Conclusion

11 November, 2022 | Taipei, Taiwan

1. The rapid development of digital technology has created many new opportunities for promoting gender equality. However, it has also resulted in gender-based violence (GBV) no longer being restricted to the real world but expanding to the online environment.
2. With similar cultural contexts, economic progress, and digital technology development, countries in East Asia are also facing similar opportunities and challenges regarding the advancement of gender equality in the digital era.
3. The East Asia Gender Equality Forum (hereafter “the Forum”) connects non-government organizations committed to promoting women’s rights and gender equality from Taiwan, Japan, and Korea. Aiming to achieve gender equality in East Asia, the Forum serves as a platform for gender equality activists in the region to exchange ideas and experiences regarding the challenges they have faced in addressing gender equality and the solutions they have found effective.
4. The Forum this year concentrates on the opportunities, challenges, and ethical issues involved in achieving gender equality in the digital era. The development of the Internet and social media has enabled people to easily access information such as human rights and gender equality. During the pandemic, digital technology also helped create new working styles that support women to participate in economic activities and exert their full economic potential. However, also because of these technologies, gender stereotypes, discrimination, and hate speech have been disseminated more quickly, and GBV has been increasingly prevalent.

5. Therefore, representatives, gathered in Taipei on November 11, 2022. Through we, activists of non-government organizations, government officials, scholars, and enterprise reph the East Asia Gender Equality Forum, we recognize that each sector must fulfill its responsibility to take on the following actions to facilitate the advancement of gender equality in the digital era:
 6. The forms of technology-facilitated GBV are evolving rapidly, and the existing laws are insufficient for protecting personal safety in the online world, especially that of women, girls, and gender minorities. Therefore, we emphasize that the government should consult with organizations and experts on women's rights and gender equality during the development of laws and regulations, to ensure the laws on the determination of the behavior, the violence prevention, and the penalties are adequate and comprehensive, and the victims are provided with proper litigation and protection mechanisms.
 7. Personal safety is a critical part of protecting women's rights. Based on the experience of domestic violence and GBV prevention, networks and mechanisms are both crucial for preventing technology-facilitated GBV. We urge that the government should help enhance the knowledge and competence of front-line workers in police, justice, education, hospitals, and social welfare systems and should establish an inclusive and closely-coordinated network that features the functions of prevention, reporting, and caring, to provide the victims friendly and effective assistance.
 8. Increasing the digital literacy of the public and creating an inclusive digital environment is a fundamental solution for addressing technology-facilitated GBV. As young people are the first generation using social media and digital platforms, we suggest that digital literacy education that incorporates a gender perspective should start in elementary school, to ensure our children understand the forms of technology-facilitated GBV, the risks and harms of filming or disseminating private sexual images, and the correct ways of protecting themselves and seeking help.

9. Social media, service providers of digital platforms and applications, online games providers and designers, and related enterprises all have the social responsibility of creating a user-friendly, safe, and inclusive digital environment. Therefore, we invite the private sector to take on more responsibility to examine the current platform management policy and incorporate a gender perspective into related policy and work, thereby preventing technology-facilitated GBV and ensuring that everyone can enjoy the right to freedom of expression in a safe and inclusive digital environment.
10. Echoing the theme of CSW67, we recognize that digital technology has exerted a positive impact on promoting gender equality and played a crucial role in supporting women to build economic resilience.
11. East Asian countries have higher working hours than the world average, while women's labor force participation rate is only slightly higher than 50%. We understand digital technology can help women manage their careers and family, but we also underscore that the integration of work and family should be based on an inclusive workplace and the equal gender division of labor, instead of replicating the existing gender division of labor. Therefore, we invite enterprises to adopt policies such as flexible working hours, from the perspective of long-term human resource investment, to support women to unleash their economic potential.
12. We sincerely but urgently call on the various stakeholders playing vital roles in promoting gender equality in East Asia, including government officials, scholars, enterprises, and human rights advocates and activists, in supporting the aforementioned policies and adopt corresponding actions, as well as to support all forms of actions and collaboration concerning gender equality, to realize the recommendations discussed in the Forum and thus achieving gender equality in the digital era.