

## **Statement on International Women's Day**

**8 March 2026**

Civil Society Organizations for Gender Equality Network, Chiang Mai

We — women workers and migrant women, Indigenous women, women of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities, women living with HIV, sex workers, stateless women, elderly women, girls and young women, rural women in the agricultural sector, women facing unintended pregnancies and those who have terminated pregnancies, women with disabilities, feminists, women advocating for democracy, and women human rights defenders working on community rights, land rights, and environmental justice — together with allied networks committed to advancing women's rights, freedoms, and gender justice.

On **8 March 2026**, we gather to mark International Women's Day, to celebrate the struggles and achievements of women at all levels, and to affirm that women play a vital and indispensable role in society.

Through our work across communities, we continue to witness persistent discrimination, exclusion, and human rights violations against women in many forms. These injustices are rooted in gender inequality and reflect deep structural violence within society. For example:

- Women human rights defenders face the misuse of laws to restrict their freedoms and participation in public affairs.
- Indigenous women experience violations of land and community rights and barriers in accessing natural resources. Indigenous girls remain at risk of forced marriage, while stateless Indigenous women are denied access to citizenship and political rights.
- Women with disabilities continue to face barriers in accessing higher education, employment opportunities, and equitable disability benefits.
- Lesbian, bisexual, and transgender women continue to experience discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC).
- Migrant women workers often receive unfair wages and lack adequate social protection.
- Sex workers are stigmatized and criminalized for their work.
- Many women still face barriers to accessing safe abortion services despite recent legal reforms, including elderly women and women living with HIV who continue to encounter obstacles in accessing reproductive health rights.
- Many women are unable to access justice when experiencing domestic violence, rape, sexual harassment, and online violence.

In light of these ongoing human rights challenges, we call upon all sectors of society to support the following demands:

- 1. Advance policy and legal reforms to promote gender equality**, and ensure that the Thai government fulfills its international human rights obligations in practice, particularly under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).
- 2. Support the decriminalization of sex work and recognize the rights of sex workers as workers**, ensuring safe working conditions and equal access to health services, justice, and social protection.
- 3. Establish fair and inclusive social protection measures for all**, including paid menstrual leave, free menstrual products nationwide, workplace childcare services, safe spaces for survivors of violence, and equal access to rights and welfare for all children in Thailand without discrimination.
- 4. Promote the protection of rights and access to essential services for migrant workers and their families**, ensuring safe and equitable access to public services, interpretation services in key institutions, access to healthcare and social protection systems, safe complaint mechanisms, and support services for women and children experiencing violence.
- 5. Promote comprehensive sexuality education and reproductive health rights for young people**, including safe spaces for youth — especially girls and LGBTQ+ youth — access to youth-friendly sexual and reproductive health services, and a shift from punitive approaches toward prevention and dignity-based care.
- 6. Strengthen women’s leadership and meaningful participation at all levels**, enabling women to lead transformative change grounded in human rights and gender equality and to participate actively in shaping solutions to societal challenges.
- 7. Encourage responsible media representation of women and people of diverse gender identities**, and end stigma and harmful stereotypes that lead to discrimination based on sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation.
- 8. Strengthen the role of civil society in monitoring, advocating, and ensuring that the government meaningfully integrates human rights principles into policies and governance.**

Throughout history, women’s movements have been a powerful force for social change, shaping laws, policies, and societies. International Women’s Day is therefore not only a moment of celebration but also a time for women around the world to stand together in demanding rights, freedom, and justice.

**Because women’s rights are human rights.**