



WDE Commentary

AVI Special Dialogue: “Women in Elections and Social Security”

The poster features the AVI logo at the top center. Below it, the text reads: 'SPECIAL DIALOGUE ON WOMEN IN ELECTIONS AND SOCIAL SECURITY'. The date and time are listed as 'Friday, 3rd June 2022 from 4:00 pm - 5:00 pm (Phnom Penh Time)'. Two individuals are featured: Dr. Dinna Prapto Raharja, Guest Speaker, and Dr. Chheng Kimlong, Moderator. Both are members of the Asian Vision Institute. At the bottom, there are social media icons for YouTube, Facebook, and a 'LIVE' button, followed by the text 'Asian Vision Institute's Page'.

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An AVI special dialogue entitled “Women in Elections and Social Security” was hosted and moderated on 3rd June 2022 by **Dr Chheng Kimlong**, Vice-President of AVI. This session was joined by a distinguished guest speaker, **Dr Dinna Prapto Raharja**, a member of the Board of Directors of AVI. This dialogue discussed the importance of women’s participation in the election and social security and their strength in contributing to society.

Dr Raharja began the discussion by mentioning that most policymakers miss one point when talking about the role of women in the public sector and politics, which is that they view women as incapable of making real impacts. She added that we, as human beings, need an essential ecosystem for our development. In this regard, women have important roles to play as an existential part of our ecosystem in public policy. Without them, this public policy ecosystem is not going to be completed. Moreover, women represent a majority in many societies globally, so it is a mistake to perceive them only based on what they lack.

In addition, in terms of elections, Dr Raharja pointed out that women have the strength to represent their own voices, their community, and other women. They can also contest, voice, and contribute different ideas to create public policy and implement those ideas into actions. Thus, women are a crucial part of the public policy ecosystem. Without women participating in politics and building ideas, legitimacy is not full enough for that policy. They are the workforce, inspiration, and hope for family and the backbone of the country. Moreover, with the current digital technology era, women also read the news, communicate

through phone, and access social media, indicating that they have their own preferences and desires for themselves and their families. Therefore, it is just about whether we give them a chance or not.

Besides, Dr Raharja said that women could be soft and kind or strong and brave if needed because they have a vision and voice for themselves, their children, and family. Women always speak, they can speak in elections for the better of society, and they can speak in the decision-making process about what they want for their family. Also, women are the key actor in eliminating poverty because women take care of finance and allocate family resources.

On top of that, Dr Raharja stated that women are vital in participating in social security because they can avoid serious health problems as some countries exclude health benefits for women. Therefore, she believed women should be motivated to participate in the public sector. Additionally, regarding gender equality, to get support from men, women deserved to be supported by external sources or society as well. Women’s voices should be heard and encouraged to speak out and share their experiences in society.

Lastly, Dr Raharja explained that in the case of Indonesia, to empower women to participate in politics, a women caucus in the parliament needs to be formulated, and a network of women in politics needs to be built, such as seeking experiences from other women about how they debate with other male or female candidates. Also, regarding budgeting policy, she raised an example of Emily’s funding in the United States.