Magazine.

GENDER & DEVELOPMENT

THE DECEMBER ISSUE // 2018

Welcome to a brand new magazine!

The Swedish Development Forum, FUF, is a Swedish non-governmental organisation which seeks to spread awareness about global development issues. This Magazine is produced by the local division in Lund which consists of around 20 volunteers, most of them students.

Now, spreading awareness about global development is tricky. The subject is complex, with many different actors promoting their various agendas across the world. Both state and non-state actors have been working with the issue for decades, trying to alleviate people from extreme poverty.

As you start to think about what is going on in the world at this time, with economic injustices, climate change and millions of refugees, development might be one of the answers to start tackling these issues. This is why we need to pay attention to it, not only because we care (which we do), but also since it affects us all.

That is why FUF is continuously working to spread awareness and debate. This magazine is one way to do it, and we really hope you will enjoy it.

Fredrik Björksten
Editor

FÖRENINGEN FÖR UTVECKLINGSFRÅGOR

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Contributors

From left to right.
Front-row: Hanna Geschewski, Tessa Stockburger & Yvonne Jila
Mid-row: Alexandra Håkansson Schmidt, Johanna Caminati Engström, Maria Ricksten & Fredrika Sweno
Top-row: Fredrik Björksten, Lisa Elamson, Lauren Tropeano & Siobhan Coskeran
Not in the picture: Carolina Yang & Kathrin Hegger

Why Gender Matters

An editorial piece by Fredrik Björksten

It was not very surprising when the video of Janusz Korwin-Mikke, a Polish member of the European Parliament, went viral in early 2017. On the f oor of the EU parliament, the Polish right-wing extremist stood up and proclaimed that; “women must earn less than men because they are weaker, smaller and less intelligent!”.

Responding to the Polish man, the Spanish EU parliamentarian Iratxe Garcia-Perez stood up and, after a few powerful lines, concluded that; “I am here to defend all European women from men like you!”. If it were up to Mr. Korwin-Mikke, she (and all women alike) should not have the right to be representatives in the parliament. Clearly, women are still forced to defend their rights.

At large, this story illustrates how long the journey really is towards gender equality. However, it is of course not only the EU that suffers, but gender inequalities are spread across the world and affect all branches of all societies. It is therefore vital that we consider gender impacts when we talk about development. For instance:

1. The economic inequality, where the world’s countries loose 160 trillion dollars (yes, trillion) in wealth due to salary gaps between men and women.

2. The legal inequality, as 104 countries still have laws preventing women from working certain jobs.

3. The political inequality, where (out of the world’s 46.076 members of parliaments) 3 out of 4 are men.

4. The health inequality, where 830 women die from complications related to pregnancy or childbirth every single day.

As such, gender matters for development to be successful. FUF Lund, a part of the Swedish Development Forum, has prepared an issue of FUF Magazine that will touch on a number of these issues and take you from Indonesia – via South Africa, Rwanda, Kosovo, India and Russia – to Australia. If you also think that gender matters, feel free to share this magazine in order to spread some light into the dark corners of the world (where people like Korwin-Mikke probably hides)!

Have a good read!

Fredrik Björksten

Fredrik is currently studying for a Bachelor's in International Development at Lund University. He is 23 years old, originally from Gothenburg, Sweden, and is mainly interested in international politics - especially processes in West Africa, the US and France

Photos: UN Women/Flickr.

The White House in Moscow that serves as the seat of the Russian parliament. Photo: Kirill Vinokurov, Flickr.

Russia Gives Green Light to Domestic Violence

An article by Lisa Elamson and Maria Ricksten

The Istanbul Convention is a legal framework that seeks to prevent and combat violence against women. In Russia, where it is estimated that 14,000 women die every year as a result of domestic violence, the signing and ratification of the Convention is an urgent matter. But instead, last year Russia chose to decriminalise some forms of domestic violence.

"If he beats you, he loves you." That's how the infamous Russian proverb goes. In Russia, it is estimated that 14,000 women a year die as a result of domestic violence, and recent changes in the country's legislation have deprived women of legal protection from domestic violence.

In February 2017, Russia decriminalised some forms of domestic violence. Under what has been nicknamed "the slapping bill", a first offence of battery that does not injure a person severely enough to be hospitalised will result in a fine of 5,000 to 30,000 roubles (approximately $75 to $450), community service or up to 15 days in prison. Previously, these offences resulted in a penalty of up to two years in prison. A Russian MP defending the bill said it would help build "strong families", but the bill has been criticised by

international and nongovernmental organisations as incompatible with Russia's international human rights obligations.

The Istanbul Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence has been signed by all member states of the Council of Europe, except Azerbaijan and Russia.

The Istanbul Convention is considered to be the most comprehensive legal framework to combat violence against women that has ever been created at the international level. Amnesty International and UN Women have called it the "gold standard" of legislation to address domestic violence against women. It is also the f rst international legal convention that acknowledges violence against women as

"The 'Gold Standard' of legislation to address domestic violence against women"

a human rights violation. These praises of the convention are mostly due to its "whole-system approach" that it employs in its strategy to tackle the violence. It includes a variety of policy measures such as school education on gender-based violence, increasing the capacity of law enforcement agencies to prosecute offenders and governments providing support programs for domestic abuse survivors.

Because of this multifaceted legal framework, it is assumed that it can substantially decrease the rates of domestic abuse. Evaluations made show that countries that have implemented the Istanbul Convention have increasingly shown progress in terms of a strengthened police force and increased reporting on domestic violence to the authorities.

According to Human Rights Watch the decriminalisation has lead to an increase in domestic violence in Russia. Recently

Human Rights commissioner Tatyana Moskalkova. Photo: Wikimedia.

Russia's Commissioner for Human Rights Tatyana Moskalkova, who had spoken in favour of decriminalisation, said that it was a "mistake" and that the country needs to adopt a law to combat domestic violence. Moskalkova has also called for a ratif cation of the Istanbul Convention. Until this is done, Russia will continue to give a green light to domestic violence.

Lisa Elamson

Lisa is a master's student of International Development and Management at Lund University. Her interests lie mainly in gender and migration with a focus on the Asia region.

Maria Ricksten

Maria is currently studying a master's degree in European Affairs at Lund University. With a background in political science and development policy she's mainly interested in women's rights issues.

Photo: Maka Gogaladze/UN Women.

No Space for ‘Otherness’

An article by Lauren Tropeano & Hanna Geschewski

Photo: Lingeswaran Marimuthukumar, Flickr.

THE SWEDISH DEVELOPMENT FORUM

What happens if you don’t behave like your gender ‘should’? Examples from Native American, Indian and Iranian cultures highlight that gender is diverse, but that the acknowledgement of gender variance doesn't necessarily make us inclusive.

It’s easy to hold simplistic understandings of what it means to be a woman or a man. Jeans are bought in different stores, buttoned up on opposite sides, and taken off in separate toilets. The idea of gender that much development policy and practice enforces is one of women and men as two diametrically opposed categories, with the terms ‘gender’ and ‘sex’ being used interchangeably. However, being a woman or a man is not a f xed state or a genetic trait, but is inf uenced by society and culture. One is not born a woman, but acquires and enacts femininity in culturally appropriate ways. When we understand gender in this way, as a socio-cultural phenomenon, it follows that genders can be as varied and diverse as the cultures which formed them.

Examples of non-conforming gender roles and identities abound in both the medical and anthropological literature. Cultures or nations that identify, support or incorporate the idea of gender variance (or a specif c third or fourth gender) are often touted as progressive victories of tolerance. But in some cases the presence of more than just the strict man-woman gender categories can instead imply a more restrictive system of gender. In these cases, certain behaviours force an individual (often via exclusion) into a new and distinct gender category.

Many Native American tribes are well-known for their Two-Spirits, an umbrella term for gender-variant people. In the Navajo culture, nádleeh have a gender status that is neither man nor woman. Typically male, nádleeh

“Gender variance doesn’t necessarily make us inclusive”

adopt the opposite gender role and prefer tasks generally reserved for women, such as gathering food, weaving, knitting and leatherwork. They are said to act as mediators in their societies, functioning as go-betweens in disputes and spousal conf icts. Similarly, wíŋkte, the two-spirited male-bodied people of the Lakota, display behaviours more aligned with those of women in their culture, and were traditionally housed in the less prestigious women’s part of the camp. In both

cases, examples of females taking up male gender roles were historically rare.

In India and neighbouring South-Asian countries, the hijra represent a separate social caste of genetically male and intersex individuals who do not identify as strictly male or female. They are often assigned tasks in religious festivals, weddings and birth ceremonies, enjoying certain privileges in society. At the same time however, they are considered outcasts and suffer abuse, sexual harassment and rejection by their families. This often forces them into prostitution and begging. There is an important commonality worth noting here: if men do not 'behave' like typical men or conform to the idea of masculinity dominant in their culture, they are placed (or pushed) outside their sex-determined category. The presence of a third gender within a culture does not necessarily infer an absence of sexism or a progressive approach to gender.

Strict gender categories can not only push people into a state of 'otherness', but can also be radically enforced in cases where individuals do not align. In a contemporary context, this concept is perhaps most strikingly evidenced by Iran's recent move to acknowledge gender variance. While the idea of a third gender has not played a signif cant role in Iranian history, Iran has become the only Muslim country in the Persian Gulf region to allow transgender people recognition under law. However, this recognition comes at a price, with 'otherness' def ned as a medical condition that is to be 'cured' through subsidised sex reassignment. A person is only legally allowed to change his/her gender after undergoing surgery. Thus, what at f rst seems surprisingly progressive is ultimately nothing more than the enforcement of the strict dichotomy of woman and man.

Hanna Geschewski

Hanna is currently pursuing her master's degree in Environmental Studies and Sustainability Science (LUMES) at Lund University. She is 28 years old, comes from Northern Germany and has spent the last nine years in Nepal and India, making South Asia her second home.

Lauren Tropeano

Lauren "Trops" Tropeano is practically the same person as Hanna. She is 28 years old, studies Environmental Studies and Sustainability Science (LUMES) at Lund University, and wishes she came from Northern Germany. She is Australian and studied anthropology at the University of Adelaide.

Photo: Lingeswaran Marimuthukumar/Flickr.

WHEN MEN CARE

A reportage by Yvonne Jila & Siobhán Coskeran

Photo: UN/Flickr.

The fight against gender-based violence has often been cast as a women's issue. However, successful programmes in Africa show the importance of engaging men and boys in the discussion.

As this year's 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence draws to a close, it is disheartening to note that 27 years after the campaign launch, violence against women and girls continues unabated. According to UN Women, 1 in every 3 women worldwide experience physical or sexual violence in their lifetime. If it were a disease, it would have been called an epidemic.

Decades of f ghting for a gender just society, particularly by women and women's organizations, have achieved change. We have seen women activists at the frontlines with campaigns such as #MeToo, #HearMetoo, Time's Up and, at the extreme, #MenAreTrash. We have also witnessed countries sign and endorse agreements committed to ending violence against women and girls, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. But while these initiatives place women at the centre of the issue, there is a new wave of programmes focused on prevention rather than response, putting men and boys at the heart of the discussion.

Africa provides a particularly illustrative example both of the problem of violence against women and of the innovative solutions that are creating change. Across Africa, women's lives continue to be compromised and endangered, with a notable spike in recent years of cases of abductions, forced child marriages, rape and sexual abuse and threats, owing to religious fundamentalism, conf ict and legacies of colonialism. In this context, new solutions are emerging.

"Campaigns in South Africa and Rwanda, focusing on fathers as engines of change"

MenCare are leading the way. Coordinated by the organizations Promundo and Sonke Gender Justice, they have since 2011 set up context-specif c, targeted programmes that provide training for men and boys on

violence-related issues. The mission of the campaign is to promote "men's positive involvement in the lives of their partners and children as this creates a global opportunity for equality, and it benef ts women, children, and men themselves". The hallmarks of the campaign are improved maternal and child health, stronger and more equitable partner relations, a reduction in violence against women and children, and lifelong benef ts for daughters and sons.

Campaigns in South Africa and Rwanda have achieved success by adapting this approach to the local context, focusing on fathers as engines of change. In South Africa, MenCare helps men live beyond the legacies of apartheid violence. More than 50 percent of children in the country grow up without their fathers. This absence has contributed to some boys looking for alternative sources of masculine identif cation and validation like gangs. As a result of this exposure, they grow up to become abusive, thereby contributing to high levels of abuse of women and girls in the home. On the other hand, girls grow up to accept domestic violence as the norm.

To combat this, MenCare's campaign promotes the positive and active involvement

MenCare programmes encourage fathers to play an active role in their child's education. Photo: Sonke Gender Justice/MenCare South Africa.

of fathers in the lives of their partners and children. Their main tool is the provision of positive parenting classes of 12 weeks where participants (both male and female, though it is mainly the men) go through different modules learning how to deal with abuse they may have experienced earlier on in their lives

"Why am I doing this to my children? I wanted to change to be a role model for my kids"

and how to use non-violent ways in resolving conf ict within and outside the home. Above all, participants learn what it is to be a positively-involved father, sharing care-work in the home. They are challenged to think about what kind of legacy they would want to leave behind for their children and family.

The participants of the programme are its biggest advocates. One father who participated said: "Violent behaviour came quick to me. Sometimes I would ask myself: 'Why?' But I think it was stress; sometimes you are not going to work but need to provide for the family." He recalls that he would shout at his wife for no reason, admitting that the presence of a crying baby only made things worse. During the training, he asked himself, "Why am I doing this to my children? I wanted to change to be a role model for my kids; you must break the cycle of violence because your child will learn from you

In Rwanda, the effects of gender-based violence are well-known. The country is still tackling the legacy of the 1994 genocide, in which violence was clearly gendered: men formed the majority of the 800,000 deaths, while 500,000 women suffered sexual violence. Out of this tragedy, a more equal society has emerged, driven by higher female participation in politics and the workforce. However, 34% of women are still estimated to have experienced intimate partner violence.

Similar to the campaign in South Africa, a programme developed by MenCare in 2015 sought to reduce violence by providing counselling and education for expectant fathers. Two years later, they found that levels of domestic violence among participants were 44% lower than the national average. The focus of the training? Simply providing a forum for men to gather with their peers and have an open and frank discussion about topics such as pregnancy, communication, and sharing caregiving responsibilities.

MenCare falls under the umbrella of

Photo: The World Bank/Flickr.

Promundo, an organisation set up in Brazil in 1997 which now operates on a global scale to promote a new kind of masculinity. One of its

"MenCare redefines the relationship between violence and masculinity"

latest programmes, 'Manhood 2.0', has responded to the #MeToo movement by harnessing the power of open discussion, using arts-based therapy, role-playing, and peer-to-peer conversations to deconstruct harmful gender norms among young men in the US. Such programmes do not represent a shift from 'victim-blaming' to 'man-blaming'; they are recognition that men, too, suffer from rigid, restrictive gender roles.

We live in a world that has a paradoxical view of violence. Society often projects violence on the one hand as a necessary - even positive, heroic - force in the context of war and security, but on the other hand as a negative, destructive force in the domestic sphere. Faced

Training programmes in Rwanda aim to engage men in caregiving responsibilities.
Photo: Sonke Gender Justice/MenCare South Africa.

with two conf icting images, men are tasked with striking a balance between the two. The continued prevalence of violence against women and girls shows that, all too often, the balance cannot be sustained. Campaigns such as MenCare are essential to redef ne the relationship between violence and masculinity, and in doing so create a productive role for men in ending gender-based violence.

With thanks to the participants of the FUF seminar on gender-based violence (28/11-18), who inspired some of the discussion points in this article.

Yvonne Jila

Yvonne is a a gender justice activist and her research interests include women's human rights and positive masculinities. She has worked with MenCare South Africa as an intern. She is currently studying towards a Master's Degree in Social Studies of Gender at Lund University.

Siobhán Coskeran

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LGBTQ+ Rights Are Under Threat in Indonesia

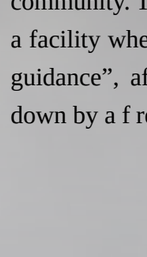
A news article by Alexandra Håkansson Schmidt

Since 2015, the violence towards the LGBTQ+ community has been on the rise in Indonesia. The violence has in many cases been sanctioned by the Indonesian state, who are further fueling hostile attitudes towards the community.

Since the end of 2015, there have been numerous reports on acts of violence towards the LGBTQ+ community across Indonesia. The abuses have included humiliation, intimidation and arbitrary arrest. A large part of the violence has been conducted by the Indonesian police. This year, there have been several attacks on individuals identifying with or belonging to the waria community. Waria is a third legal gender in Indonesia, typically encompassing individuals "who were assigned a male sex at birth but whose gender identity or expression does not match this assigned sex", as def ned by Asia Pacif c Transgender Network.

Looking at the historical context of Indonesia, there has been a general acceptance of the waria community. However, ever since the Aceh province started enforcing Islamic criminal code in October 2015, the documented violence against waria and those identifying with or belonging to the LGBTQ+ community has been on the rise. The violence in the province has continued and in the beginning of 2018 the police raided several businesses that had employed individuals identifying as waria. In early November this year, the police in the province Lampung also arrested three individuals from the waria community. The arrestees were brought to a facility where they were given "Islamic guidance", after which they were hosed down by a f retruck on the street outside.

So far, the Indonesian government has failed to respond to these acts of violence. Rather, discriminatory sentiments have been further fueled by anti-LGBTQ+ statements from top government off cials. In these statements LGBTQ+ rights activists have, among other things, been accused of spreading propaganda labelled as a threat to Indonesian culture, faith and identity. Against this backdrop, the current state of affairs are indeed painting a bleak picture of the future of LGBTQ+ rights in Indonesia.



Alexandra Håkansson Schmidt

Alexandra is a master's student of International Development and Management at Lund University. Her main interests lie in minority rights, gender and migration, particularly in the regions of Southeast Asia and the Western Balkans.

Photo: Tony Webster, Flickr.

The War on Women

An opinion piece by Fredrika Sweno

Women killed by intimate partners or family members account for 58 per cent of all female homicide victims reported globally last year. We need to recognize that a lot of homicides should be regarded as casualties in the war against women.

Photo: UN Women/Flickr.

Hate crimes perpetrated by men against women and girls simply because they are females is not a new phenomenon. Our sex has been targeted throughout the centuries – from the burning of witches in the past, to today's widespread custom of killing unwanted female infants, honour-related killings, and deaths as the result of domestic or intimate partner violence. The term "femicide" was coined to def ne this phenomenon. That is, the killing of women by men motivated by hatred, contempt, pleasure, or a sense of ownership over women, rooted in historically unequal power relations between women and men. Some countries have brought femicide into their legislature as an attempt to combat the structural culture of male violence. Despite this, there is still no standardized def nition of femicide globally.

On the 25th of November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, the UN released their global study on homicide which focused on gender-related killing of women and girls. The study shows that women killed by intimate partners or family members account for 58 per cent (50 000 women) of all female homicide victims reported globally last year. These f ndings illustrate how women continue to bear the heaviest burden of lethal victimization as a result of gender stereotypes and inequality. Victims of femicide by a current or former partner is usually a result of the culmination of prior gender-related violence. Fear of abandonment and jealousy are among the motives. Women killed by family members in dowry and honour killings are common across certain regions because of their expected roles and inferior status.

However, the study does not capture all killings of women which could be labelled as femicide. It excludes the deaths of women outside the family sphere, like murdered female sex-workers, lethal mass rapes and killings of women in armed conf icts. Still, we do know that women continue to be killed simply because they are women. Gender stereotypes, patriarchal norms and gender inequality – it all comes down to power relations. Just like opposing groups and

"It all comes down to power relations"

nations have engaged in wars against each other, large numbers of men are engaged in a war against women. The traditional def nition of war, in its most basic form, is an active conf ict which claims more than 1000 lives a year. Moreover, the modern warfare def nition, also called the "new wars", does not

necessarily entail clearly def ned actors like nations. Rather, most cases involve multiple formal and informal actors, often in a non-specif ed geographical area.

The femicide victims of the world surely amount well enough towards this def nition of warfare. Therefore, we need to recognize the intent and power relations behind murders and that a lot of homicides are, in fact, femicides. So, why should we not call it what it is, a war on women.

Fredrika Sweno

Fredrika is currently doing a bachelors degree in Development Studies at Lund University. She is passionate about environmental issues, gender/sexuality, and participatory development. In the future, she wants to work with community development projects on a local level.

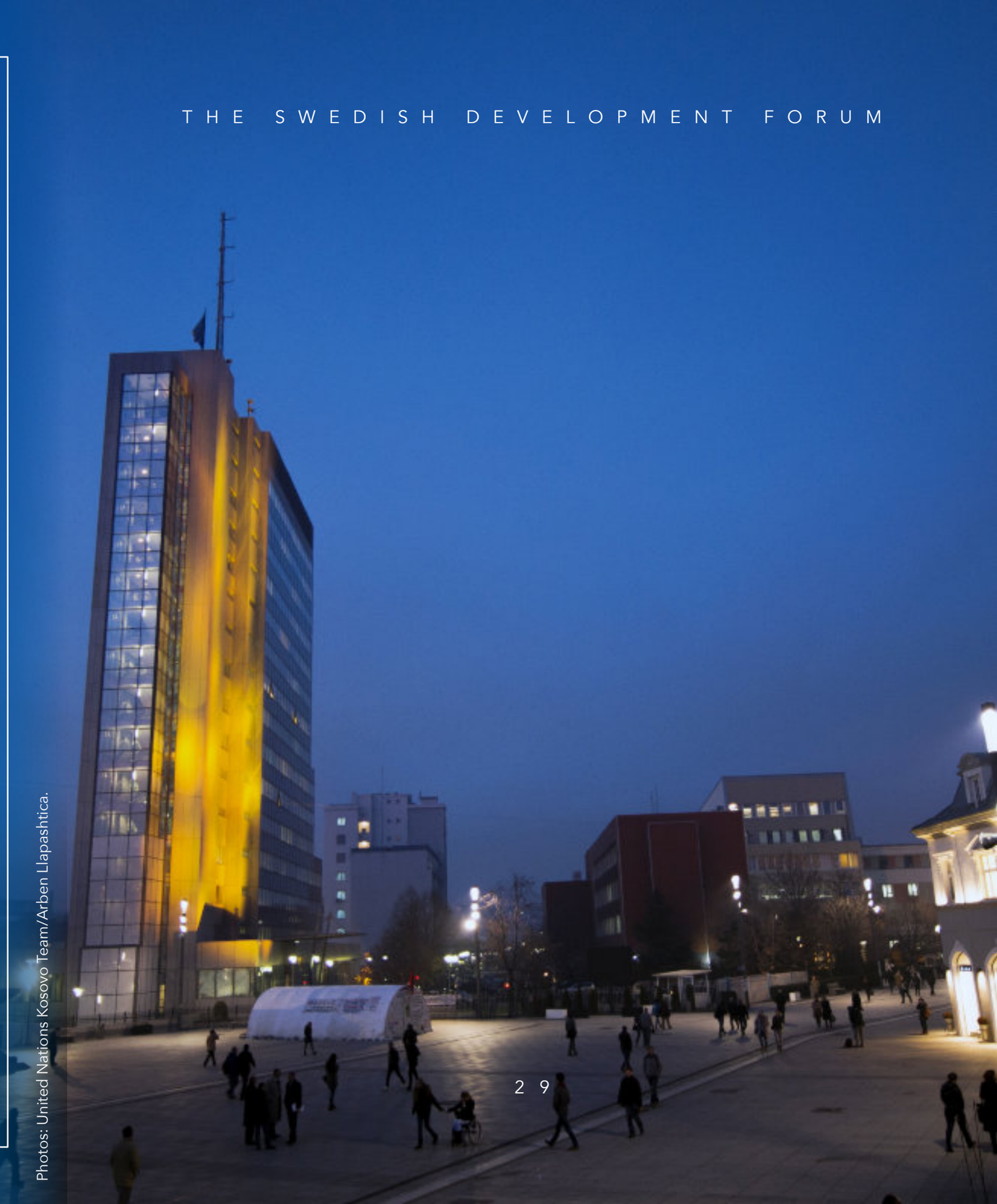
Demonstration in Madrid against gender violence on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. Photo: Adolfo Lujan/Flickr.

The Gap Between Laws and Reality

An Outlock from Kosovo

A guest article by Visare Gorani Gashi

On November 30th, the government building in Pristina, Kosovo, was lit in orange to commemorate the "16 Days of Activism" against Gender-Based Violence. But according to Visare Goroni Gashi at the Swedish embassy in Pristina, Kosovo still has some work to do.



Photos: United Nations Kosovo Team/Arben Llapashtica.

"Freedom from fear is a summary of the whole philosophy and human rights."

Dag Hammarskjöld, Swedish diplomat and former UN Secretary General

Gender-based violence is a shameful reality in many societies around the world and is unfortunately also present in Kosovo. This phenomenon is deeply rooted in gender inequalities that are often ignored and silently accepted, not challenged. In Kosovo, the widespread attitude is that physical violence is part of married life and that domestic abuse is a private family matter that should not be reported to the police. It is assumed that over 70% of women are subjected to violence in their lifetimes by their partners, husbands and or male family members. It is merely an assumption because not all domestic abuse and violence is reported.

On the other hand, Kosovo has developed a comprehensive and modern legal framework with regards to the protection of the rights of women and gender equality. These laws are in compliance with international standards and conventions on gender equality and anti-discrimination measures. Kosovo's constitution makes gender equality a fundamental value of Kosovo society. Specif cally, the constitution obligates the parliamentary assembly of Kosovo, civil services, the judiciary, prosecutors, and court systems to respect the principles of gender equality – in compliance with international standards. Kosovo's legal framework therefore forbids gender discrimination in any form.

In the constitution, Kosovo has adopted and enshrined many leading women's rights protection instruments such as the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security and the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Further, the Council of Europe's convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, or the Istanbul Convention, is regarded as an essential tool in

combating all forms of violence against women. Unfortunately, there is still a large gap between establishing policies and implementing them in everyday life in Kosovo.

Whether you are born as a girl or a boy in Kosovo still determines how you will be treated and treating others during your life. These differences are, among other things, ref ected in a very low participation of women in the labor market. This is one of the most pressing challenges that must be addressed. Women make up 49.7 percent of the Kosovo population and 50.2 percent of the working age population. Yet, women's labor participation rate is alarming; only 21.1 percent of the 40.5 percent economically active women participates in the labor market. This is three times lower than the male participation rate. The situation negatively affects women's earning capacity, economic security and places women in a very vulnerable and subordinated position.

In order to contribute to the improvement of women's situation in Kosovo, as of 2015, Sweden supports the Agency for Gender Equality (AGE) – the highest government institution mandated to implement and monitor the implementation of the Law on Gender Equality. The main objective of the support is to strengthen the institutional capacities of AGE and national gender mechanisms to effectively, and eff ciently, fulf l their mandate. In mainstreaming the gender equality agenda in all Kosovo policy frameworks and systems, the goal is to partner with local and external actors for the advancement of the gender equality agenda in the Kosovo society.

Through these contributions, Sweden hopes to see a Kosovo where women can live a life free from violence and discrimination – a prerequisite for a dignif ed life in a fair and fear-free society.

Visare Gorani Gashi

Visare manages the portfolio of democratic governance and human rights and serves as a gender focal point at the Embassy of Sweden in Pristina.

Sex Workers Demand Rights not Rescue

An interview by Tessa Stockburger & Kathrin Hegger

Laws that prohibit the sex industry perpetuate gender-based violence. That is the opinion of Chantell Martin and Cameron Cox from the Sex Workers Outreach Project, SWOP, Australia.

The International Day to end Violence against Sex Workers takes place on the 17th of December every year. This day is to remind us how discrimination often stemming from laws against sex workers can perpetuate and even legitimise violence. The international day of activism was initiated following the trial against American serial killer Gary Ridgway, known as the Green River Killer, in 2003. Many of Ridgway's victims were sex workers, his explanation for this being that he "knew they would not be reported missing right away and might never be reported. I picked prostitutes because I thought I could kill as many of them as I wanted without getting caught"'

We spoke to Chantell Martin and Cameron Cox from SWOP (Sex Workers Outreach Project) Australia, a peer sex worker organisation. Both have a long history in sex work as well as contact with thousands of sex workers every year. They both made their concerns clear when discussing gender-based violence.

Photo: WeArePlanC,

Chantell and Cameron agree that, like in all other industries, the vast majority of violence in the sex industry is perpetrated by cis men against cis women and trans women. However, unique to sex work they highlight, “it is the stigma and discrimination of sex work that often legitimises and perpetuates violence.” Cameron continues to explain:

– Sex workers still face discrimination which impacts their access to health care, access to a safe workplace and access to protection under the law. [...] It’s well known that sex workers are less likely to report violence against them because it outs them to start with. It’s also less likely that the crime will be investigated and that the crime will receive proper punishment.

Cameron spoke of the sex offender Adrian Ernest Bayley, who raped f ve sex workers in Melbourne, Victoria. Lenient sentencing relating to these offences meant Bayley could sexually assault and murder another woman named Jill Meagher in 2012. Jill’s husband, Tom Meagher, said at the time: “I’m aware that his previous victims [...] were sex workers, and I’ll never be convinced that doesn’t have something to do with the lenience of his sentence.” Tom Meagher was right; it was only following this case that consent laws

Cameron Cox, CEO of Sex Workers Outreach Project, and Chantell Martin, Community Service Worker, Sex Workers Outreach Project.

were changed in Victoria to ensure sentencing of sexual assault irrespective of the occupation of the complainant.

– Sex workers are not only discriminated against in the law but also in its implementation, Cameron points out.

According to Cameron and Chantell, laws often ref ect a belief that sex workers shouldn’t exist. They argue that models of full criminalisation of sex work as exists in Croatia or partial criminalisation as in Sweden do not serve or protect sex workers. And while there is little evidence that these laws reduce sex work, they do push sex work underground where sex workers are more likely to provide riskier services such as working in isolated areas.

Chantell makes it clear what she would like to see for sex workers.

– The decriminalisation of sex work around the world. This would implement a major shift for all sex workers towards our human rights, sex worker rights, legal rights, and allowing better access to health for sex workers. Here in New South Wales [Australia] there has been decriminalisation for over twenty years and has proved that decriminalisation of the sex industry is the world’s best practice.

Tessa Stockburger

Tessa is from Australia and studying a Master’s Programme in International Development and Management at Lund University.

Kathrin Hegger

Kathrin is from Germany, studying a Master’s Programme in Environmental Studies and Sustainability Science at Lund University.

Empowering Women Yields More Food

An article by Carolina Yang

Gender-based violence (GBV) refers to the denial of resources aside from the physical or emotional abuse, according to the UN. Women in agriculture face GBV with regards to both disproportionate workload and limited access to land and resources compared to their male counterparts. It is therefore essential to recognize the contribution of female farmers, and to end the unequal access to resources.

Imagine waking up before dawn to prepare breakfast for the family, working in and out between the farmland and the kitchen throughout the day, and only getting rest after attending to every family member's needs – it is the daily routine typically seen among women in rural agricultural areas. As approximately 80 percent of food produced globally is sourced from family farming, women play a critical role in agricultural production. On average, women constitute 43% of the agricultural labor force in developing regions, yet they make up less than 13% of the landholders. Their restricted access to land rights further leads to economic insecurity, lack of decision making, and limited access to subsidies or credits for agricultural productivity improvement.

This hardship for women is especially evident in India. After thousands of farmers in India committed suicide due to loss of produce and unpredictable harvest in association with climate change, their wives are left behind as

Photo: UN Women/Flickr.

widows. Due to the lack of access to land, they become very vulnerable and are left at others' disposal. The adversity not only comes from private lenders and banks, but also their in-laws and the broader society. Farmer widows are often labelled as inauspicious with additional stigma for their husbands' death and debt. Therefore, it is not uncommon that women are expelled by their in-laws, whom they usually live with, after their spouse's death. In some cases, the authorities even disapprove the compensation for such suicides to the widows, for they are only seen as cultivators not farmers.

Conf ned access to land rights, as well as technical and f nancial support, are important not only for farmer widows, but also for a growing number of female farmers after the male migration from villages to cities. If women were given equal access to agricultural resources and services as their male counterparts worldwide, the yields could be increased by as much as 30 percent, according to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

In India, there is an emerging formation of self-help groups to support female farmers through knowledge sharing and monetary aid. The gender inequity in access to resources, opportunities and services is also addressed by FAO under the scope of gender-based violence, for such vulnerabilities exacerbates food insecurity. At a global scale, education on gender equality, in addition to practical training, are provided for capacity building at the Junior/Farmer Field and Life Schools. Furthermore, the engagement of women in the decision making process is encouraged through Dimitra Clubs in local communities worldwide.

As agrarian women are both the caregivers and food-providers in the majority of rural contexts, it is vital to safeguard their rights. By closing the gender gap in agriculture, it opens up new opportunities to women and allow them to reach their full potentials. Such empowerment in female farmers further contributes to sustainable community development by ensuring agricultural productivity and food security.

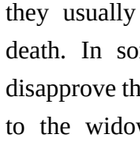


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Photo: UN Women Guatemala/Flickr.

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