APRIL 2024 ISSUE NO. 02

#HERstory

# E-DAW MAGAZINE

## COURSE MAGAZINE

**BY THE PARTICIPANTS OF "YOU CAN ELIMINATE DISCRIMINATION AGAINST VIOLENCE"**

**GCED ONLINE CAMPUS INSTRUCTOR-LED COURSE**

**MARCH 13 - APRIL 18, 2024**

# ABOUT THE MAGAZINE

This magazine is created to showcase the voices of the participants from various nations. It consists of creative life, works, and writings by the contributors with the theme "YOU CAN ELIMINATE DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN".

**Disclaimer: Images in this magazine are for illustrative purposes only. The magazine is solely for educational purposes and will not be used for any commercial purposes.**



# Editor's Note

## E-DAW MAGAZINE

**Join us in our mission to eliminate discrimination against women . Explore powerful stories and insights advocating for gender equality. Let's create a world where every woman is valued, respected, and empowered.**



Mangalam & Romary

Magazine Designers and Editors

### In this issue

**Welcome to our latest issue! Dive into captivating stories, insights, and compelling features. We hope you enjoy the diverse range of content curated just for you. Happy reading!**

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# E-DAW MAGAZINE

# Contributors



2024

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VISION AND MISSION

# MORE THAN PRETTY DREAMS: FIGHTING FOR WOMEN'S AMBITIONS



MANGALAM ILANGKOVAN
MALAYSIA

*Each time a woman stands up for herself, without knowing it possibly, without claiming it, she stands up for all women.*

Manju took a deep breath as she confronted her father. She could see the worry etched on his face, but she knew she had to stand firm. "Appa, I understand your concerns, but this is my dream," Manju stated resolutely. "I want to become a teacher and the best opportunity for me is at that college 545 kilometers away. Her father shook his head adamantly. "It's too far and too dangerous for a young girl to go live alone in a different state. I cannot allow it". All her life, Manju had been raised to be obedient, to not push boundaries that made her family uncomfortable. But this time was different.



This was about taking charge of her own future. "Appa, I know you want to protect me, but by stopping me you'll be protecting me from growing and reaching my potential," Manju replied "I have to take this chance to prove myself, to become independent and self-reliant. Isn't that what you've raised me to be? A strong, capable woman, "Her father opened his mouth to protest further, but Manju barreled on.

"If I don't do this, if I don't take this opportunity out of fear, I'll always regret it. And I'll resent the limits placed on me just for being a girl." Finally, Manju's father sighed deeply. "You're right, child. We became too afraid, overprotective because you're our daughter. But you deserve every chance to chase your ambitions fearlessly." Pulling Manju into a fierce hug, he whispered, "Promise me you'll be careful. But more importantly, promise you'll never stop fighting for yourself and your dreams this way." Tears shone in Manju's eyes as she hugged him back tightly. "I promise, Appa. I'm going to be a trailblazer."

Her dream, her passion burned ever brighter and she knew that she was not just achieving this for herself, but setting an example for countless other girls to always back themselves up, even when the world says NO.



# Unveiling Equality: The Battlefront Against Women's Discrimination

*By: Romary Reyes Lincod, Philippines*

In the ongoing pursuit of a fair and just society, the fight against discrimination, especially that faced by women, stands as a critical battleground. Despite strides made towards gender equality, women globally still encounter systemic barriers, from wage disparities to limited access to education and leadership roles.

Education remains a cornerstone in this battle. Equal access to quality education empowers women to challenge societal norms and pursue their aspirations unhindered. Moreover, promoting women into leadership positions is crucial to driving change and creating gender-sensitive policies.

Legislation and policy must also play their part, enacting laws that protect women's rights and address gender-based violence. Yet, the journey towards equality is a collective effort. It demands the combined action of individuals, communities, and governments to challenge and change the status quo.

*In this fight to unveil true equality, our commitment to championing women's rights remains paramount. By addressing discrimination's root causes, empowering women through education and opportunity, and fostering collective action, we can pave the way for an equitable future where every woman can thrive without fear of prejudice.*

# "SHATTERED CEILINGS, UNBROKEN SPIRITS: WOMEN'S STRUGGLE FOR EQUALITY"



Women are the undeclared slaves of men and marriage is a trap in which they get trapped and end their existence.

Their real names are unrecognized, even their likes and dislikes, tolerance, clothing and food habits are snatched away in the name of in-laws' traditions. Though this change is so sweet and beautiful that women surrender themselves because this change is done with great love by the man. And after one or two years, when the love fades away, then the women realize, oh what have I done? But by then, she has become the mother of one or two children and she has no options left.

In a male-dominated society, the lonely life of women is a curse. People harass her even if she does not marry and even after marrying, she faces the same plight because after one or two years of love, she has to travel an endless difficult journey which is called family life. And in this, women often end their own existence while making other people happy. In the end they find that no one here is happy with them. Only two or four percent of women are lucky who get everything as per their wish in life; otherwise, female birth is a curse in itself. The irony of our society is that here women are called by the names of Goddess Durga, Saraswati but only a very few people believe.

Women have been limited to only the household work and service of men...and the interesting thing is that along with men, women also feel that they were born to serve men within the four walls of the so-called home. The day that the women will regain their existence is the day that the entire structure of the society will change because by that time, women will realize their inner beauty instead of cosmetics. They will believe in becoming their own shadow and not the shadow of any man.

It will take time, the destination is still far away...



PENNED BY:
SMILY KAPOOR
India

# UNVEILING THE VEIL OF GENDER DISCRIMINATION IN LESOTHO

by Masehlabaka Mokose
Lesotho




**Gender discrimination, a pervasive issue worldwide, casts a long shadow over Lesotho, a small but culturally rich country nestled within South Africa. Despite strides towards gender equality in recent years, Lesotho still grapples with deep-rooted biases and systemic barriers that hinder women's empowerment and limit their access to opportunities.**

Historically, Lesotho's patriarchal society has entrenched traditional gender roles, relegating women to subordinate positions in both the public and private spheres. While legal frameworks exist to safeguard gender equality, including the constitution and international conventions ratified by Lesotho, implementation remains a challenge.

While gender discrimination remains a significant challenge in Lesotho, concerted efforts at the national, community, and individual levels can drive meaningful progress towards gender equality. By dismantling systemic barriers, challenging cultural norms, and empowering women and girls, Lesotho can pave the way for a more inclusive and equitable society where every individual has the opportunity to thrive, regardless of gender.



# "A FATHER'S DESPERATE BARGAIN"



by SAKINA NAIMI

A toy in her hand, she played with her brother in the house, feeling hungry. Suddenly, her father came home. Though she was only 10 years old, she sensed something was wrong as her parents whispered to each other. For many days, they had struggled to find enough food, and she didn't realize she was the solution to their hunger.

When her parents stopped whispering, her mother called her into another room, her eyes filled with sadness and sorrow. The young girl went to her mother and stood before her, head bowed. Her mother struggled to explain what her father had said because her daughter was so young. She knew what lay ahead, having experienced it herself, but she couldn't ignore the hunger her other five children faced. Her mother said, "You will go to the market with your father today."

The young girl was excited, thinking they were going to buy something. She didn't realize she was a victim of her family's bad economic situation. Her father took her small hand, and they left the house.

When they arrived at the market, it looked different from their usual visits. A group of old men stood there. Her father placed her in the middle of the group, and she felt embarrassed and anxious, clinging tightly to her doll.

When her father announced, "Who wants to buy my daughter?" one of the old men asked about the price. Her father replied, "50,000 Afghani." After some thought, one of the men agreed to buy the girl for that amount.

## A WORLD FREE OF GENDER DISCRIMINATION IS OUR GOAL.

They returned home with 25,000 Afghani. Her mother asked how much he had sold her for, and her father replied, "50,000 Afghani." "The old man gave me 25,000 of it, and he'll pay the rest when he comes to take the girl." The young girl still didn't understand what was happening, but her actions had ended her family's hunger and poverty.

After four years, when she was 14, she had a real baby instead of a doll. It's often women who solve problems and yet become victims. A world free of gender discrimination is our goal.

# Sherbano's Plight: A Daughter's Struggle in a Son-Favoring Culture

*by: Shafiqa Taraki, Afghanistan*




The preference for sons over daughters in Afghan communities is deeply ingrained in cultural and societal norms that perpetuate gender discrimination. This phenomenon stems from the belief that sons are more valuable, perceived as stronger, more capable, and better suited to carry on the family name and legacy. Daughters, on the other hand, are often viewed as a financial burden, expected to leave the family upon marriage.

This disparity is illustrated in the story of Sherbano, the youngest of four children with three older brothers. From a young age, she witnessed the stark differences in how her parents treated their sons versus their daughter. Her brothers received the best education, nutritious meals, and new clothes regularly, while Sherbano was kept home to help with household chores and often given lesser portions of food.

When Sherbano asked her mother, "Why can't I go to school like my brothers?" The reply was always the same, "You're a girl. Your job is to learn how to be a good wife and mother." As she grew older, the disparities became more pronounced. Her brothers were praised for their accomplishments, while her interests and dreams were dismissed, as her father would say, "A daughter's place is in her husband's home."

When it came to marriages, Sherbano's family spent lavishly on her brothers' weddings, but for her, they settled for a modest celebration with a man twice her age. She had no choice but to accept, knowing that in her community, a daughter's worth was measured by her obedience and ability to bear sons.



# "The Hidden Casualties: Women's Experiences in Wartime"

by Sabrina Karimi

I had woken up in the morning with a hope, that day we had a history test. A history that was full of war and women were rarely mentioned in the history of that country. I prayed and then had breakfast and went to school. My exam passed very well because I had prepared a lot for the exam.

After the exam, I went home and did math-related exercises, because in addition to school, I had taken a math refresher course in order to get into the field of my choice in the Kankor exam that I was going to take two years later. I was doing the gay factory when my father came home and said that the government has fallen and the Taliban have taken over Kabul. I couldn't believe it because I went to school in the morning and there was no conversation at all. I told my father, no, it's not possible, it can't happen at all, but my father said with great sadness that unfortunately, the sellers of the homeland sold the homeland. It was there that my future was visualized like a darkness in front of my eyes.

What dreams I had, I wanted to be the minister of women's affairs. To make the women of my country aware of their rights and make them the strongest women in the world. But we were in a situation where we are not allowed to do anything. There is no more news about the entrance exam to enter the university and I am not allowed to work. All the dreams of Afghan girls have been buried in the ground. And we are not allowed to this day.

The situation is getting worse day by day, many girls were arrested by them and taken to unknown places and their families have no information about their daughters. Many girls committed suicide and ended their lives. I even tried to commit suicide several times because I was under a lot of pressure. In one of these suicide attempts, I was in a coma for two nights and I was close to heaven, but I came back to the world and I see this return to life as a good omen because God must have prepared plans for me that He wants me to do and I I will do the work. I will fight for the women of my country and create gender equality.



# The Female Revolution: Challenges and Triumphs Against Gender-Base Laws in Iran

By: Mahsa Kayyal, Iran

Since the revolution in Iran, the Islamic regime has imposed strict Sharia law, including hijab laws, leading to widespread discrimination against women, particularly in political participation. This has resulted in systematic abuse of women's rights across all aspects of life. Iranian women face unequal and severely limited rights concerning divorce, inheritance, and travel outside of Iran. Shockingly, the age of criminal responsibility for women starts as early as 9 years old, with some crimes punishable by flogging or even death. Moreover, a woman's testimony in court holds only half the weight of a man's. Workplace, political, and public sphere discrimination further exacerbate the challenges faced by women in Iran.

Every day, Iranian women confront challenges to their rights and endure systemic human rights abuses and discrimination. They have demanded the dismantling of discriminatory laws and practices, yet peaceful advocacy for women's rights is criminalized, leading to the imprisonment of many activists However, the murder of 22-year-old Masha Amini in government custody due to an inappropriate hijab sparked large-scale protests across the country, garnering global support. The motto "Women, the life, freedom" evolved into a female revolution, marking a significant movement in the Middle East in support of women's rights.

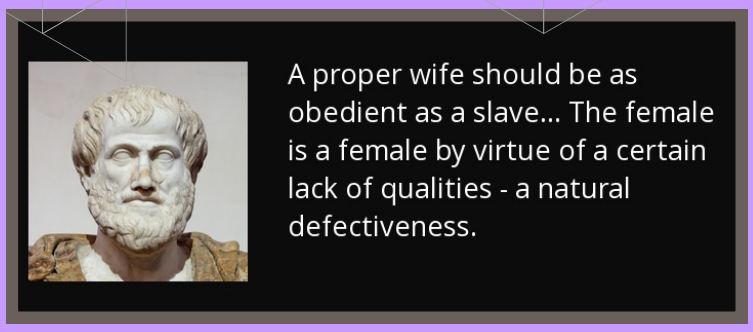
Unfortunately, these protesters have been met with intimidation, repression, and violence. Despite international treaties and Iran's obligations, the lack of implementation has resulted in dire consequences and human rights abuses against Iranian females. Reports reveal numerous cases of women and girls being killed, injured, or blinded during protests, with some subjected to rape and sexual abuse while in custody. Others have been deprived of education and employment opportunities, further exacerbating their plight.

To make matters worse, some protesters have been sentenced to death or long-term imprisonment without fair trials, and executions are being carried out in Iran. As a member state, Iran has ratified major human rights treaties, yet it remains uncommitted to crucial conventions such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. This neglect allows domestic and political rights abuses of women to go unaddressed.

The international community has repeatedly called for accountability from the Iranian government to end structural gender-based discriminatory laws and practices, as well as other human rights violations. Pressure has been exerted on Iran to ratify relevant human rights treaties and align national legislation with international standards. Despite some support from the international community, including the UN Human Rights Council's decision to investigate Iran's lethal violence against protesters and the vote to remove Iran from the UN Commission on the Status of Women, more concerted efforts are needed to support Iran's movement for social and political change.

In conclusion, the plight of women in Iran underscores the urgent need for global attention and action to address systemic human rights abuses and discrimination. The ongoing struggle for women's rights in Iran is not just a domestic issue but a global concern that demands solidarity and concerted efforts to effect meaningful change.

# "ARISTOTLE'S MISOGYNY: UNCOVERING THE PHILOSOPHER'S PREJUDICED PERSPECTIVES ON GENDER"




I just want to share my thoughts on Aristotle's views on women and I quote, *"A proper wife should be as obedient as a slave."*

This is an example of discrimination against women. It's very obvious how Aristotle looked down at women as he viewed them as inferior to men but superior to slave. If Aristotle is still alive at this very moment, maybe he would gain lot of criticisms from different organizations and movements that support women and they would make him rethink, realize that **women are not inferior to men** but **there is a need to be equal with men.**

This is how men and the society should look at women and I stand for it! Hence, Biblically speaking, in Genesis 1:27-28, God created men and women in His own likeness and image, and were given equal tasks in ruling over His creations.

According to Fact Sheet: The State of Women in the Labor Market in 2023 , women's overall employment has reached 99.9% and prime-age women's employment stands at 100 % as of their February 2020 levels. This data is a manifestation and a good start for **all women to fight and eliminate discrimination against women!**



**MARICEL C. CARPIO, Philippines**
**Gender Equality Advocate**

# A unique perspective on the Syrian Conflict

by Maya Othman

While it is true that the Syrian conflict has affected many women and young girls due to the deteriorating economic situation caused by economic sanctions, Gender Norms in Syria are starting to shift in some places -although there is still a long way to go-

Right now, I am specifically referring to the coastal cities that I am well aware of. Families now are more convinced than ever about the importance of educating their children, regardless of their gender as they have come to understand the significance of education and women's involvement in the workforce.

Even in rural areas, it is not surprising to find families doing everything they can to send their children to school and provide them with private tutoring to continue their undergraduate studies. Personally, I have witnessed many individuals, including internally displaced people, working for 12 hours a day, so that their children, both boys and girls, can receive quality education. In some college programs, there is a higher representation of females compared to males, such as in the faculty of pharmacy, where female students outnumber male students. Moreover, it is worth mentioning that the number of female professors is higher.

Furthermore, women are taking on leadership roles in various domains. Many schools are now being led by female principles, their right hands can be women too. Women are leading businesses now, starting their own initiatives, and sometimes juggling many jobs at the same time. In the field of medicine, there has been a notable shift. More women are currently pursuing General Surgery, a field that was previously considered unsuitable for them. These changes show a significant departure from traditional gender roles and reflect the increasing empowerment and opportunities available for women in recent years.



# "THE TRAGIC LEGACY OF KARO-KARI: EXPLORING FEMICIDE AMONG SINDHI WOMEN"




Karo-Kari, a term steeped in the tragic narrative of honor killings, continues to haunt the social fabric of rural and tribal communities in Sindh, Pakistan. This insidious practice, rooted in patriarchal notions of honor and shame, perpetuates violence against women under the guise of preserving family reputation. Originating in the heart of Sindh, Karo-Kari represents a lethal manifestation of societal norms dictating female behavior and sexuality.

Women deemed to have transgressed these norms, whether through alleged premarital or extra-marital relations, become targets of premeditated honor killings. These brutal acts, perpetrated by family members or community members, are carried out with the twisted justification of restoring honor to the family. The victims of Karo-Kari are predominantly women, whose lives are brutally cut short by the hands of their own kin.

They are accused of dishonoring their families, often based on mere suspicion or false claims, without any opportunity for defense or due process. The perpetrators, emboldened by a culture of impunity, carry out these heinous acts with little fear of repercussions from law enforcement or the judicial system.

The consequences of Karo-Kari extend far beyond the immediate loss of life. It perpetuates a cycle of violence and fear, instilling a sense of terror within communities and perpetuating gender-based discrimination. Women in rural Sindh live under constant threat, their autonomy and agency undermined by archaic beliefs and traditions..

Addressing the scourge of Karo-Kari requires a multi-faceted approach that tackles its root causes at both the societal and institutional levels. Education and awareness campaigns are essential to challenge ingrained patriarchal attitudes and promote gender equality. Additionally, legal reforms and enforcement mechanisms must be strengthened to hold perpetrators of honor killings accountable for their crimes.

Empowering women and girls with access to education, economic opportunities, and legal protection is crucial in breaking the cycle of violence perpetuated by Karo-Kari. By challenging entrenched gender norms and advocating for justice and equality, we can strive towards a future where women in Sindh are no longer subjected to the horrors of honor killings.

The fight against Karo-Kari is not just a battle for justice; it is a fight for the fundamental rights and dignity of Sindhi women. It is a call to action for society to reject violence in all its forms and embrace a culture of respect, equality, and human rights for all.
In memory of the countless women who have fallen victim to this senseless violence, let us stand united in our resolve to end the scourge of Karo-Kari once and for all.
Sindh's women deserve nothing less.



**Sannum Habibullah Kabooro**
**(GBV, Gender justice and Climate change Activist Sindh, Pakistan )**

# A BITTER REPETITION: GRAPPLING WITH THE RETURN OF TALIBAN RULE IN AFGHANISTAN



In the bitter annals of history, Afghanistan finds itself under Taliban rule once again. The echoes of their oppressive regime resound, a painful reminder of the past. From 1996 to 2001, they held sway, and now, on August 15, 2021, they tightened their grip again.

As a student, I devoured tales of Afghanistan women and girls under the Taliban's iron fist. Never did I imagine that those stories would become our reality. How I wept for each character, trapped in a world where dreams were crushed under the weight of tyranny. For the girl denied an education, her aspirations were dashed. The schools, once filled with laughter and hope, are now tainted by coercion and deprivation. My tears flowed for them, for every girl robbed of her future in the shadows of the Taliban. But today, the nightmare transcends mere pages. It's a harsh truth unfolding before our eyes. Every girl, every sister, every friend - deprived of the fundamental right to learn simply because of her gender.

**I long for this tale to be confined to books, swiftly read and forgotten. But it's our reality now. A reality marred by ignorance and fear, a reality we struggle to comprehend, let alone confront.**



BY HUMA NABIZADA
Afghanistan

# LONG LIVE THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA!

BY KANA RASHIDA ALIYU
Nigerian
Advocate Against
Gender-Based Violence




It's disheartening to acknowledge that Gender-Based Violence continues to be a pressing issue that affects countless women in Nigeria. Violence Against Women could also mean Domestic Violence, Physical Abuse, Sexual Assault and harassment specifically targeting women, leading to conditions like depression and post-traumatic stress disorder which largely affect the victims.

## "WHAT IS THE WAY OUT?"

Education and empowerment are potent weapons against Gender-Based Violence in Nigeria, as it seeks to provide women with the tools, resources, and support needed to assert their rights and challenge societal norms that perpetuate violence against them. By empowering women, we can create a society where gender-based violence is not tolerated. Women who are educated and aware of their rights are better equipped to protect themselves.

It is important for individuals, communities, governments, and organizations to come together in solidarity against Gender-Based Violence.

# "SILENCED CRIES"

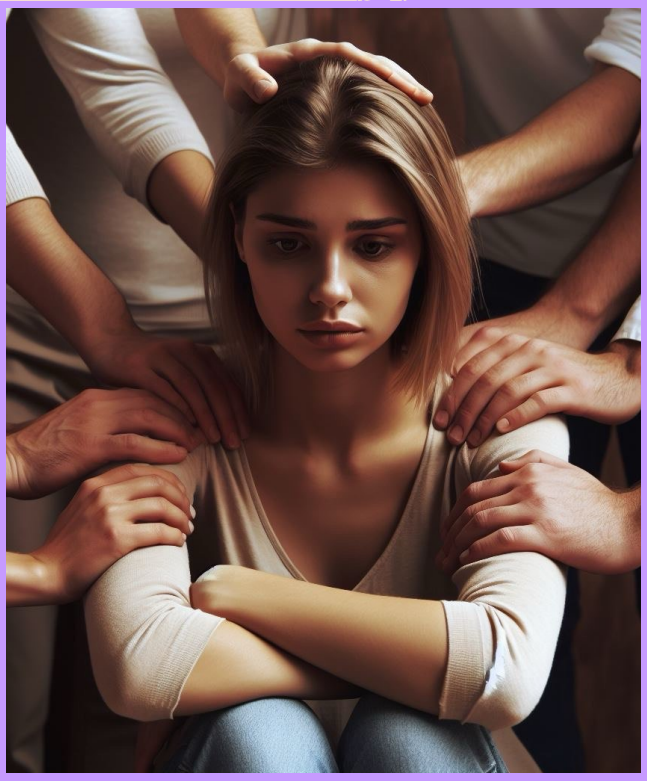
Just a 3 year old girl, born behind 2 sons of my mother. Yet I had so many questions, of why I was different from them. Why would I be beaten, any time I sat "inappropriately?"

In my tiny brain, I wanted to be a boy or a man. But it seemed an invalid dream, although I hated it. Growing up into abuse by boys, innocence stolen from me.

Just because no one really bothered to tell me what to expect and how keen I should be as I navigate through life as a vulnerable girl in a male-dominated society.

My primary school teachers could not bear seeing my tiny breasts pop up and my body taking shape. Touchy and itchy hands of grown-up men, hungry for sex with little girls. I was a smart tiny girl but it seemed this would never give me peace.

Why would my male university lecturers and work supervisors see a sex object in me? Why would they think I am so desperate, and I need some cheap potato fries? Why would they want to have their genitals penetrate my body anyhow for their own pleasure?



Don't I have a choice too?

I believe I am unique!
I am valuable!
I have a right to be a woman!
I can be alone and happy!
I have the power to cultivate my own joy!
I deserve the best!
Yes! I am a superwoman!
And so is every other woman under the sun ✌

Judith Kawikya Musa
Kenya



# The Handprint



BY SHANIJA SHAMSUDHEEN

India

She was six years old. One day she was returning home from her classes along with a schoolmate. They were talking about random things when suddenly the boy asked, "Do you know what a bumper is? And do you have it?" with a crooked smile looking at her chest. She got scared and ran from there as fast as she could without saying anything.

Years later, she was with her friends attending a festival. Thousands of people were there, forming a tightly packed crowd. Initially, three of them were together until they got separated in the chaos. Their efforts to find each other were in vain. The girl wanted to find a way out, utilized a vishari she got from one of the stalls to push through the crowd. Some people made way for her, while others remained unmoved. Despite feeling exhausted, she kept pushing forward to escape. Suddenly, she felt a hand on her back, and someone grabbed her. An enormous surge of energy coursed through her body as she turned and screamed, "Who the hell is that? What the hell do you want?" But, all she could see were indifferent faces, with the response, "We don't know".

She wanted to hit the person and show her anger, but to whom? There was no one. She felt helpless, and wanted to cry out loud. She found a space near a railing where she went and stood for some time, trembling with anger and sadness.

On the way back home, she tried to convince herself that it was never her fault, it was the perverted mind of the person who did that. She desperately wanted to remove her dress and wash it a thousand times. Upon reaching home, she rushed to the bathroom and cleaned herself thoroughly as if she hadn't taken a shower in a decade. Yet, she still felt the lingering handprint on her back. She kept crying as she washed herself and her dress repeatedly. It took a long time for her to wear that dress again. And she made sure to wear a backpack whenever she went out in a crowd...



# "YOU CAN ELIMINATE DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN/FEMALE GENDER".

Discrimination of Women/Female Gender in Nigeria is on the rise.
Discrimination is an unjust or prejudicial treatment
of different categories of people,
on the grounds of ethnicity, age, sex, or disability.
"When the purpose of a thing is unknown abuse is inevitable".
Even God said let's make man (male & female) in
our image and likeness.
I believe God's intent was in unified nature and character.
So, when women/female are discriminated and abused,
is this God's character?
(John 3:16, 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 NIV, Ephesians 5, 1 Peter 3:6-13).
As a man demands peace, make your surroundings,
habitable and treat the women/female gender well.
What are the motives behind any relationship
(schools, workforce, homes, families
or community)? Amos 3:3 (KJV).
This must be well defined, understood and respected.
The society at large today, should go back
to the original plan of creation.
Laws and Order came in after creation,
because human race behaved like animals.
(1 Peter 3:6-13, Colossians 3:19,1 Timothy 3:12, Ephesians
5:21- 25).
"Respect for ourselves guides our morals, respect
for others guides our manners".
"Respect is a two-way street".
'Aniket Yadav'
"Treat people the way you want them to treat you".
Our society need to be a safe haven. "
Discrimination against Women/Female Gender is a high Offense".
Women/Female Gender are not Slaves, Object or Price Tags,
but precious to God,
as intended purpose on Earth.

**BY RITA. I. AMAYO**



# Let her learn!




Once upon a time, in a small village, there were young girls named Fatima and Zainab. They had been best friends since childhood and loved spending their days together, playing games and exploring the beauty of nature. But as they grew older, things began to change for them.

One day,Taliban took control of their village, imposing strict rules and restrictions on the local people. Among other things, they banned girls from going to school, visiting parks, or even attending beauty salons. This was devastating news for Them, who had always dreamed of getting an education and improving their lives through hard work and determination.

Despite this setback, the three friends refused to give up hope. With the help of their families and community leaders, they found ways to continue learning in secret, using books and online resources to study everything from math and science to literature and art. They would gather every night after sunset to read aloud, quiz each other, and discuss what they had learned.

Over time, their dedication paid off. One by one, they managed to pass exams and earn degrees, becoming teachers, doctors, and engineers. And when the Taliban were eventually ousted from power, they returned to their village to help rebuild their community and promote education for future generations.

Although they faced many challenges along the way, they never gave up on their dreams. Their courage and resilience inspired countless other girls in their village and beyond, showing that even in the face of adversity, education remains a powerful tool for change and progress.

*By Yalda, Afghanistan*

# BREAKING THE SILENCE

By Razeale G. Resultay
Philippines



Discrimination against women is a global issue that has significant negative impacts on women's lives and on society. It is crucial to address this issue and work towards achieving gender equality to create a more equitable, just, and peaceful world for all.

Women are essential contributors to the economy, and their exclusion and marginalization limit economic growth and development. Gender discrimination also undermines social and political stability and perpetuates poverty and inequality.

To address discrimination against women, it is crucial to challenge and change societal attitudes and norms that perpetuate gender stereotypes and inequality. This can be achieved through education and awareness campaigns, as well as through policies and laws that promote gender equality and protect women's rights. It is also essential to ensure equal access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities for women.



# BREAKING BARRIERS: STEPS TOWARDS ELIMINATING DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN

In a world striving for progress, eliminating discrimination against women is a fundamental goal. Despite significant strides, women continue to face barriers rooted in societal norms, cultural traditions, and systemic biases. However, through collective effort and awareness, meaningful change is within reach. Women globally earn approximately 77 cents for every dollar earned by men, with the gender pay gap persisting across industries and regions.

Moreover, women hold only 25% of senior management positions worldwide and a mere 23% of parliamentary seats. Shockingly, one in three women experience physical or sexual violence in their lifetime, highlighting a pervasive culture of gender-based violence. Education emerges as a powerful tool for empowerment, yet globally, 130 million girls remain out of school. We can start by promoting education and awareness about gender equality, challenging stereotypes, and advocating for policies that promote equal opportunities for women in education, employment, and leadership.

Supporting organizations that work towards gender equality, volunteering our time, and amplifying women's voices in our communities are vital. By fostering a culture of respect, inclusion, and equality, we can collectively work toward a world where discrimination against women is eradicated, and every woman is empowered to reach her full potential. We must challenge ingrained prejudices, advocate for equitable opportunities, and amplify women's voices.

In a world striving for progress, eliminating discrimination against women is a fundamental goal.





Women globally earn approximately 77 cents for every dollar earned by men.

Women hold only 25% of senior management positions worldwide and 23% of parliamentary seats.



Globally, 130 million girls remain out of school.



We can start by promoting education and awareness about gender equality, challenging stereotypes, and advocating.



We must challenge ingrained prejudices, advocate for equitable opportunities, and amplify women's voices.



***by:Selin Gokkut Turkey***

# Peace is FEMALE



The participation of women in the peace process is a crucial step for fostering positive peace. The absence of women risks perpetuating cycles of hatred and conflict. Women offer unique perspectives and solutions for making peace. Effective leadership encompasses high emotional intelligence and empathy traits that understand the needs of underrepresented conflict-affected groups. Sadly, these skills have been unfairly labeled as weaknesses in women, hindering their involvement in decision-making.

The inclusion of women spans various avenues such as civil society, politics, mediation, and more. From grassroots movements to international negotiations, women continue to demonstrate unparalleled resilience and commitment to peaceful coexistence. Their understanding of community needs is profound. Excluding women drastically affects conflict situations, especially for victims of violence and rape. Misogynistic attitudes in decision-making sideline women's rights, worsening social-economic conditions. Research highlights that female absence in peace talks hampers processes, amplifying political corruption and neglecting women's rights.

Leadership monopolized by elites exacerbates conflicts, ignoring vulnerable populations. Women in peacebuilding face financial constraints and grave dangers in conflict zones. Statistics show women bear the brunt of war-related violence, with underreporting and stigma skewing these numbers. Female involvement is not just about equity but about the effectiveness and fairness of peace processes. Empowering women in decision-making is vital for sustainable and inclusive peace, addressing the multifaceted challenges faced by conflict-affected communities.

Sources: United Nations "Women’s Participation in Peace Negotiations: Connections between Presence and Influence." First edition, August 2010.
WPSsourcebook-03A-WomenPeaceNegotiations-en.pdf (unwomen.org)

Biography of the author :
I’m Zainab Ainouni, a passionate advocate of peace resolution and the promotion of human rights. I have a Bachelor's degree in business and Administration. I was awarded by OSCE scholarship for peace and security training. I am a member of the MENA coalition on youth, peace, and security and I had the opportunity to join the training about youth and peacebuilding.

# "WHISPERS OF THE SOUL"

In the stillness of the night, I ponder,
As a woman, I hear voices wander,
"You've got it all, why raise your fist?"
But in my heart, a fire persists.

For though I stand in privilege's light,
I'll champion those in the darkest night.
My soul ignites with each injustice I see,

Inequality's grip, it beckons me.



When women earn less, and doors shut tight,
My spirit cries out, ready to fight.
Children violated, innocence torn,

Injustice like a piercing thorn.

On buses, in meetings, at work they're scorned,
Their dignity crushed, their voices mourned.
In every struggle, every plight,

I'll lend my voice, I'll join the fight.

For being a woman isn't just a name,
It's a call to arms, a burning flame.
To uplift, to empower, to break free,

In solidarity, we'll rise, you'll see.

BY BINEETA,
*Nepal*

# "WHISPERS OF LIBERATION"



Beneath Africa's vast, star-studded sky,
An orphaned child, dreams cast aside.
Uncle's cruel hand, aunt's deafened ear,
In school's embrace, hopes slowly died.

Alone I walked the dusty path,
Where whispers linger, tears unseen.
In the home's warmth, a chilling wrath,
No solace found in the in-between.

Yet in the darkness, a spark ignites,
Resilience born from depths untold.
Through fear and pain, in silent fights,
In Africa's heart, our stories unfold.

For in our struggles, triumph lies,
In every tear, a seed of strength.
Though shadows loom 'neath African skies,
Together, we'll go to great lengths.

Let's shield the girls from cruel fate's hand,
In their laughter, let futures gleam.
For much as there's suffering in the land,
Success can be more than just a dream.



Charity
*Malawi*

# Whisper Rhymes

Eat vegetable soup using a spoon and fork
While enjoying the beauty of the island
Women are experts in household work
Don't underestimate a woman's hands

Always keep calm and walk slowly
Always achieve your hopes with joy
Make decisions carefully
Think rationally, not emotionally

The best education is a choice
It's never too late to achieve your dreams
Always at the forefront of your voice
Voice your rights by raising your arms

Always keep calm and walk slowly
Always achieve your hopes with joy
Make decisions carefully
Think rationally, not emotionally



Calm yourself when you're confused
Use common sense to find a way
Use your time so you don't get bored
Always make the most of your day

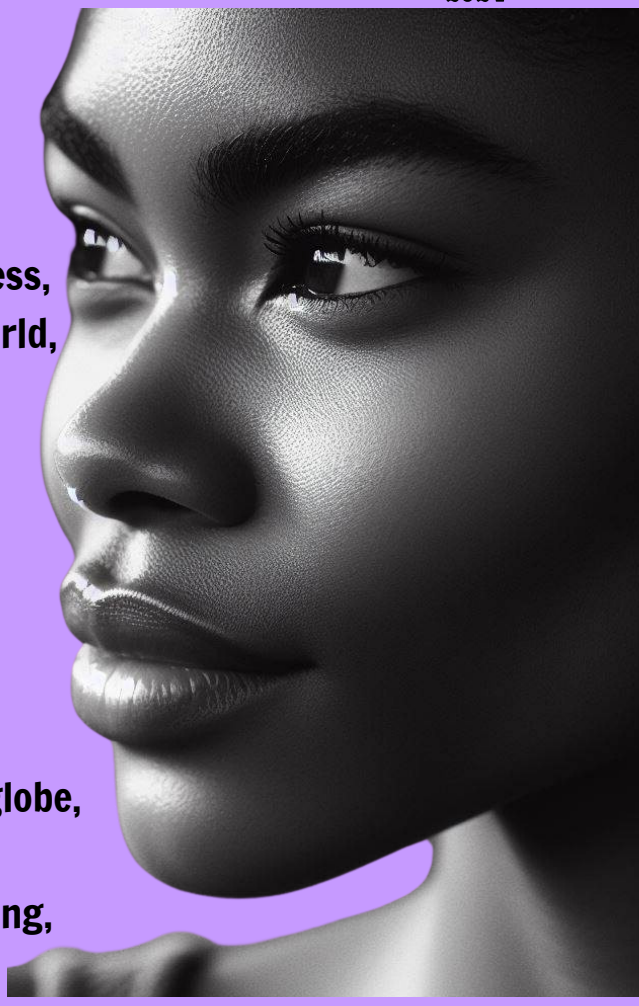
Winter is coming, prepare a jacket
Use it to avoid catching a cold
Be grateful for what you get
Remember that you will get old

Digital developments must be vigilant
The bad impact is felt in childhood
Please all of you speak up don't be silent
Tell the truth avoid falsehood

By Ofiya Nisah, Indonesia

Winter is coming, prepare a jacket
Use it to avoid catching a cold
Be grateful for what you get
Remember that you will get old

# DEAR WOMEN,



The most divine being of this world,
Who endure everything to the point of selflessness,
The most delicate and strong creature of this world,
Always stay as you are!
Even when they want to crush you,
Even when they want to humble you,
Even when your voice is stopped and not heard,
Even when you've fallen a thousand times,
Find the strength to rise again.
Remember, you are not alone!
Don't forget, how many are like you around the globe,

How many like you are experiencing the same thing,
How many like you are enjoying the little things,
How many like you with small things are building big things,
Woman, STOP and think...
God created and gave you the strength of a man, the delicacy of a feather, the fabulous beauty of
nature, gave you all the powers to be a SUPER woman, a super mother, sister, grandmother and
a source of inspiration and strength for all other women .

Woman, you can make it, don't give up!
Together we can!

*by: Ornela Quku*

# She, Gracing the Workplace

Denied of our birthrights
to champion
and self-express,
fearing that
some boats will be rocked.

Denied of opportunities
to compete
and perform,
simply they are concerned over
unattended younglings at home.



We may
come in different colours
and forms;
But our spirits
are as great as the buffalo,
ploughing moving forth
in the sawah bendang1

We may look meek
near shy;
But be extremely worried,
Our horns
may thrash a potential threat,
If we wish.

We get the work
done
and well,
At times, better;
Simply because we
have the greater semangat juang2



*By Hanita Hanim Ismail*
*Malaysia*

1 Sawah bendang (Malay language) - paddy field
2 Semangat juang – fighting power

# LISTEN!

Listen! Now, it is our turn to tell upon a tale
Yours and Ours, but certainly not a shared sail
We will weave it while prancing over and plucking out
All your nicely plugged in, firm nails.

Our structure shall be frail
It might appear as a monstrous fail
But we will still struggle through our hue and wail
To lift the moldy, musty veil.

Listen! Each one of us will be piercing holes in this relationship's pail
I will, we will track down our relationship's trail
Of Gaslighting, Triangulation, word salad, projection
All, to deflect and unplug from the bucket it's secure bail.

No, No, just let me/us finish! Don't appear so pale!
What you have started, will lead you directly to jail
Dear Male, wait for an official email
And the hailing of your coffin's nails

**Just listen carefully to the sound of your successful carreer, Derail.**

by Arooj Ehsan, Pakistan

# Bittersweet Journey of the Unseen: A Woman

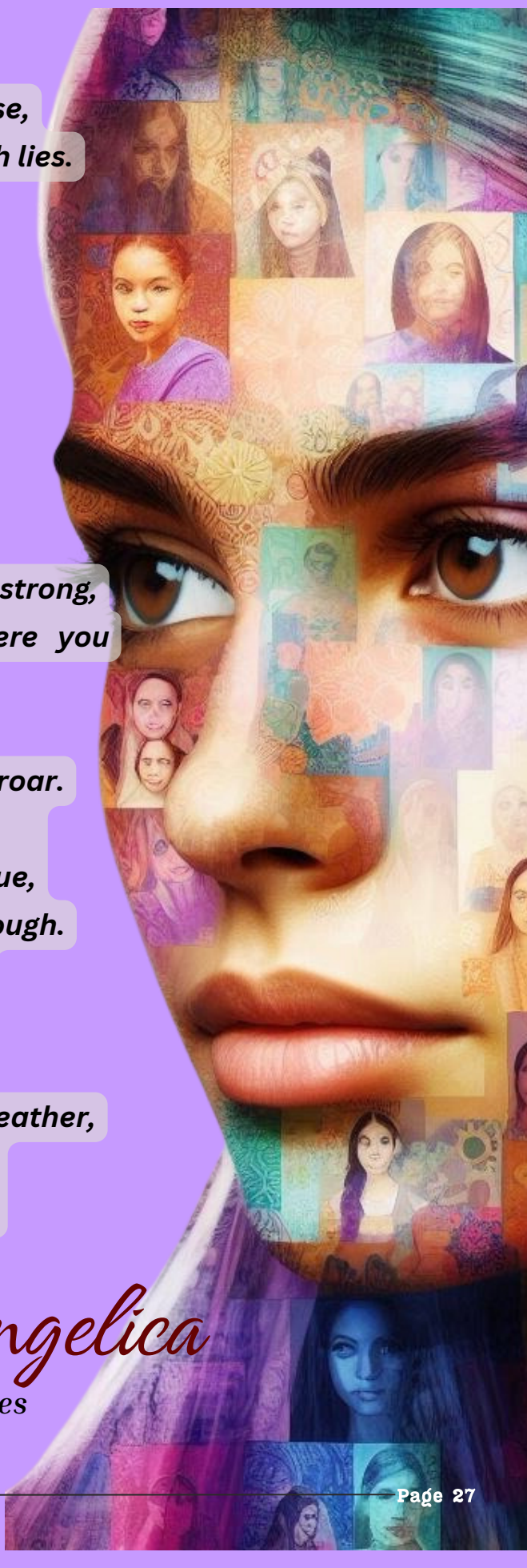
*Behind the smile, beyond the laughter's guise,*
*Behind your bright eyes, where true strength lies.*
*Beyond the grief, despite society's glare,*
*Beyond the judgmental stare, you dare.*

*Behind the tests that life may impose,*
*Behind every pain, where resilience grows.*
*Behind every tear, a story untold,*
*Behind every sorrow, a spirit bold.*

*You are a fighting woman, courageous, and strong,*
*Standing for yourself and your kin, where you belong.*
*Keep working hard, keep striving for more,*
*Keep fighting to stand, even when the odds roar.*

*Love yourself fiercely, in every shade and hue,*
*Dream big dreams, for they will see you through.*
*Do what you want, follow your heart's call,*
*Be true to yourself, and you'll never fall.*

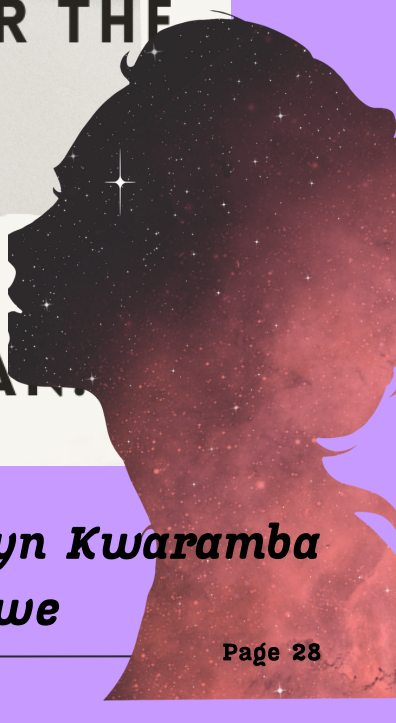
*Take care of yourself amidst life's stormy weather,*
*Don't trample on others, lift them together.*
*You're not just a girl, but a woman of might,*
*A beacon of hope, shining ever brightly.*



*by Angelica*
*Philippines*

WE TEACH GIRLS TO SHRINK THEMSELVES, TO MAKE THEMSELVES SMALLE. WE TELL THEM, YOU CAN BE AMBITIOUS,BUT NOT TOO MUCH. YOU CAN BE SUCCESSFUL BUT NOT TOO SUCCESSFUL, OTHERWISE YOU WILL THREATEN MEN.
MAKE LIFE CHOICESBUT KEEP MARRIAGE IN MIND. MARRIAGE IS A SOURCE OF JOY AND MUTUAL SUPPORT BUT HAS BEEN SOURCE OF ABUSE AND VIOLENCE.
WE RAISE GIRLS TO BE COMPETITORS, WHICH I THINK IS A GOOD THING BUT NOT FOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS BUT FOR THE ATTENTION OF MEN.

I AM ONLY A POEM
IN THE BODY OF A WOMA



*by Ruvimbo_Roselyn Kwaramba*
*Zimbabwe*

# Bonsai Dreams

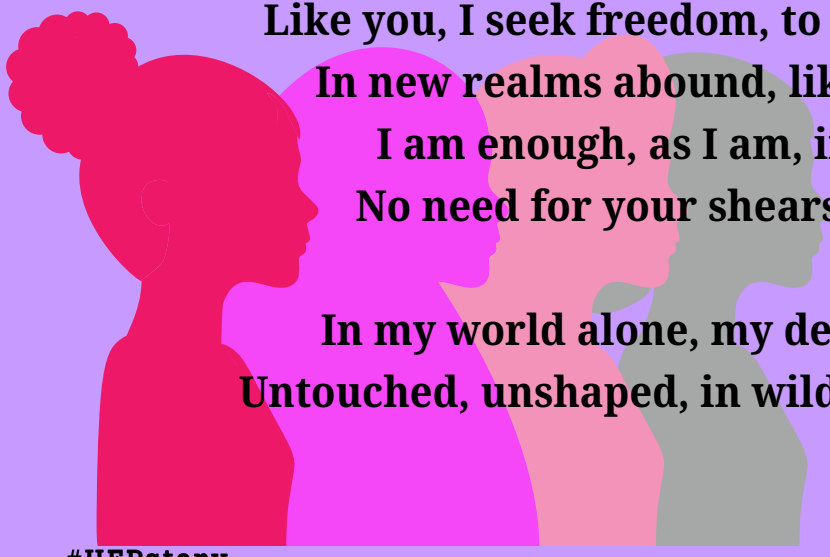
by: Jaya Sharma
Nepal

Don't cut my roots, don't trim my branches,
I'm meant for more than these restricted chances.
If you embrace the sun, why can't I?

I have the power to stand tall, to reach the sky.
In this pot, I see a limited view,
But inside me, there's a strength, bold and true.

Why should I be molded by your plan so slight,
When beyond a bonsai, I can reach greater height?
I am more than a piece for your gaze,
I deserve to grow, in so many ways.

Out of this pot, there is a world to see,
In the wild's embrace, I long to be free.
Don't hold back my growth, don't curb my life,
I'm made for the open, beyond any strife.



Like you, I seek freedom, to grow and explore,
In new realms abound, like never before.
I am enough, as I am, in full bloom,
No need for your shears, in my room.

In my world alone, my destiny's my own,
Untouched, unshaped, in wildness, I have grown.

# UNDIMMED FLAME:
## THE ENDURING SPIRIT OF WOMEN

*by: Sanjha Ibrahim*



Why the fight for rights so keen,
A woman's journey, rarely serene.
To prove her worth, a constant quest,
Yet judged and doubted, put to the test.

Neglected voices, unheard pleas,
A shadowed path beneath the trees.
Society's whispers, a burden to hold,
The weight of tradition, a tale untold.

Homemaker's duty, a mantle to wear,
But dreams and ambitions, a silent despair.
Nurturing life, a love so deep,
Yet childcare's burden, a one-sided leap.

The label of weak, a societal sting,
Inner strength ignored, a song left unsung.
Early marriage, a whispered decree,
Robbing of choices, a life meant to be.

Injustice unfolds, a bitter display,
Unfair treatment marring each day.
But rise, oh women, with voices bold,
Shatter the silence, this story unfold.

For minds are sharp and spirits are bright,
A yearning for equality, a burning light.
Together we stand, a force to behold,
A future rewritten, a story retold.

# TO BE A WOMAN



**Laone Caren Moruisi**
**Botswana**

There is joy in being woman
I am more than just the term
I am a friend
A mother
A sister
A wife
A sister in law
A confidant
A child in my mother's house
Yet I am more than these
I am foe to be reckoned with
My aspirations run wild like the raging sea
My dreams as high as the sky,
I am in motion
towards a future I envision
I future inclusive
A future beautiful
And before you derail me or tell me I am just woman
Also know that I have bore presidents,
doctors, lawyers, bus drivers who get you from A to B
I am more than just woman!

# WE ARE WOMEN!
# WE ARE HUMANS!

*Conceptualized by: Ornela Quku*

**W**e provide
**O**pportunities, create important
**M**ovements,
**E**mpower the society, and
**N**urture the nation.



# GIRLS CAN LEAD: EMPOWERING THE LEADERS OF TOMORROW

"Bringing change from classrooms to communities, my contribution to gender equality resonates in every voice heard."

B. Buyanjargal, Founder of the "We are Global Citizens" project





# I am woman.

1

Gentle soul, warrior...
Entails quintessence, vigor;
You are all, woman.

2

How lovely you are,
Blossoming fighter of rights;
Run, leap, soar, Woman!

SHE HER



# Triumph of Women: A Celebration of Strength

*by: Dure Sameen Akhund*
*Pakistan*






**Women worldwide are rising against discrimination, their stories echoing with resilience and determination. Despite the challenges, they inspire hope and change, showing that progress starts with one voice and one act of defiance!**

**Let's join hands with these courageous women, breaking the chains of discrimination for a brighter future where every woman can thrive without limits!**







# NEVERTHELESS.. SHE PERSISTED!

-CM.PRIVETT-




INSPIRED BY DAISY BERNARD




*by: Sofia_Indonesia*




# by: Ofiya Nisah Indonesia

# Young Women's EMPOWERMENT




The above huge mural was drawn by Vena to introduce the importance of **accessibility to education for girls**. Address: 13 Building In Microdistrict in Osh, Kyrgyzstan



## Vena & Yumi

at AUCA a roundtable workshop (May 12, 2023)

The right mural "Bilimduu Kyz" (Smart Kids) was created by Vera & Arslan. The concept is **the rights of girls' education.** Address: gymnasium No. 11 of Karakol city, Issyk-Kul, Kyrgyzstan in Onc 2023.



# I want to LIVE...



By Firly Ratna Fauzia, Indonesia

## I want to live ...

My name is...you can call me Rose
I am 15 years old
I am no longer exist in the world
I just died two weeks ago
Public knew me as a suicide perpetrator
Are you sure?
My papa and mama asked me to jump from the 21st floor of apartment.
Together with my little brother
we all died miserably.
My hand was tied with Papa's hand.
And my little brother's hand tied to mam.
The news said my head was smashed
My brain splattered on the floor
Once I was a brightful teen
But now I was known as a frightful corpse



Are you sure that I want to die?
Are you sure that I want to jump?
Can't you feel how scare I am at that time?
Before my body touch the ground.
Things came to my mind.
What if tomorrow everything changes to be fine?
What if my life turns out to be better tomorrow?
Ma and pa...
Am I a bad daughter if I refuse to die with you?
Am I a bad daughter if I want to stay alive?
Because...I am so young
and I want to live.

*(An imaginary letter from JL, the daughter of family mass suicide)*

## HOT NEWS

**Jakarta.** A couple and their two teenage children died after falling from the roof of a 21-floor apartment in Jakarta on Saturday, with police suspecting a mass suicide. the father and daughter had their hands tied to each other with a rope, and the mother was tied to her son when their bodies were discovered. *(jakartaglobe.id)*

# "Veiled Oppression"



**Above: Defaced mural of the Aurat March (Women's March) in Islamabad, Pakistan (AlJazeera)**



AFSHEEN
*Pakistan*

With years of observation, I have come to realize that religious extremism is directly linked to the disenfranchisement of women in developing countries. Historically, religion has been used to control women. In my experience of teaching at a university in Pakistan, I have come across many students both male and female who believe in subjugating women because that's how they interpret religion. Unfortunately, a lot of women themselves believe in such ideas.

For example, I have seen young educated women talking against Feminism as they strongly believe it to be against Islam. They conveniently forget that whatever rights they have such as the right to vote, the right to have a job, and the right to marry the person of their choice, etc. all because some women fought hard for these in every part of the world. This prevalent mentality is setting back the feminist movement in countries like Pakistan. To eliminate this we need to work on women's education and collective psychology to overcome this learned inferiority complex in the name of religion.

# SEXUAL HARASSMENT ABOVE THE CLOUD

BY KHALIUN TSEVEEN-OCHIR, MONGOLIA

November 2019. News broke out about a high-profile male official of Mongolia being held in South Korea on the grounds of sexual harassment. He was the Chairman of the Constitutional Court, D.Odbayar. According to the eyewitnesses, he had groped a female stewardess of Korean Airlines. He paid KRW 7 million to a South Korean court as a fine and returned to Mongolia.

A recent online survey conducted by the Mongolian Women's Foundation found that eight out of 11 women (survey respondents) have experienced the gender-based violence in the workplace. The same survey highlighted that 97.5 percent of the perpetrators are men.

So why are women being affected who are claimed to have been protected by the Law on Gender Equality, the Law on Labor, and the Law on Violations? According to the Code of Violations, the perpetrator is fined about 300 USD. A person in authority who has been fined will continue to fire the victim, harass, and humiliate the victim in the public for revenge.

The NGOs and the National Human Rights Commission of Mongolia are still advocating to the authorities to recognize the gender-based violence in the workplace as a crime. Even though D.Odbayar stepped down as a Chairman since this case; he continued to act as a member of Constitutional Court till his term had expired on November 16, 2023.



# WHY ALWAYS WOMEN???

Words
IGWE MAKUOCHUKWU
*Nigeria*



'Ministry of Women Affairs, Laws Protecting Women and Children, Women in Tech, Protecting the Girl Child. All these things for the girl child and what does the boy child get?'

Obi probed me. Before today, that's the point I go dumb, maybe trying to reason with him, as to why so much attention is on the girl child.

But not today, I'd just heard that Mr.Koko who had been sleeping with Rubi (Mrs Koko's niece) since she was 10, now 14, had been granted bail on grounds that it was a family matter, so they should go home and settle.

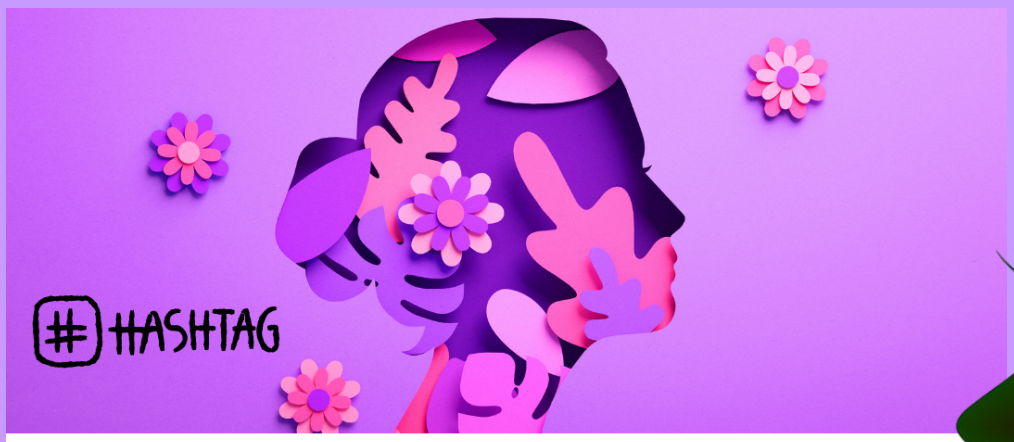
'Yes, we have Ministry of Women Affairs, Laws Protecting Women and Children all that, yet Mr.Koko is going back to that house with that child and Mrs. Koko has no say in this matter even when she is the one related to this child' I angrily replied Obi.

Few years later, Rubi got pregnant by her aunt's husband, and like the what the authorities said, it still remained a family matter. The trajectory of a young girl's life has changed by the one meant to protect her. But alas! It is but a family matter.

it was at that moment that I swore to go to any legal possible means to ensure that my gender is treated equally and no violence against women will be tolerated. So help me God.

You too can be that resolute, you don't have to wait to know a Rubi. This my dear is the reason we fight.

*(Names and scenarios are fictional.)*






# STOP GENDER BASED VIOLENCE!

# Let Our Voices Be Heard!

# Women SPEAK!

#You Can Eliminate Discrimination Against Women

# your VOICE is my VOICE, your FIGHT is my FIGHT!

# I am a Woman and I stand for what I am !

**Maricel Carpio,** PHILIPPINES



# YOU CAN ELIMINATE DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN



VALERIA GĂVOAZĂ
Romania

In the contemporary world, gender equality, based on the promotion and respect for human rights, stands as a ubiquitous topic in international societal debates. It underpins one of the guiding principles of the 2030 Agenda - the concept of leaving no one behind, aiming to eliminate gender inequalities and discriminatory attitudes towards women by promoting their participation in decisions affecting their lives. The official stance of the United Nations Development Programme, advocating for the creation and implementation of such policies, is that eradicating poverty and inequality could become a palpable reality through this approach.

To ensure a healthy socio-economic environment, it is imperative to consider the gender dimension in policy-making processes. This approach, conceptually framed within the notion of gender mainstreaming, is not new and has been applied both internationally and within the European Union, recognizing that effective policies must address the interests and concerns of both men and women. In the European Union, gender mainstreaming began to develop in the early 1990s and is now widely utilized by national governments and intergovernmental or non-governmental organizations to ensure the maximum impact of adopted policies.

Within the European Union, policies aiming at gender equality, particularly regarding women' integration into the labor market, are aligned with the main objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy, which generally targets sustainable economic growth across all member states. One crucial objective is the employment rate target of 75% for individuals aged 20 to 64. However, despite advancements, challenges remain, such as gender stereotypes persisting in societal perceptions and the underrepresentation of women in decision-making roles.

Success in gender mainstreaming policies in the European Union depends not only on macro-level factors but also on more contentious socio-cultural particularities, often leading to stereotyping of gender roles. While progress has been made, stereotypes persist, affecting women more adversely, especially in economic terms, such as lower wages and pensions for the same work as men. Initiatives like the European Equal Pay Day aim to raise awareness and foster a change in mindset regarding gender differences.

Public perceptions of gender equality have evolve positively, with a vast majority recognizing its importance for a fair and democratic society. However, disparities persist, particularly in leadership positions, where women are underrepresented. This issue is also evident in EU institutions, highlighting the slow progress despite well-intentioned policies.

While the European Union promotes gender equality, challenges remain in effectively implementing gender mainstreaming strategies due to national particularities. Current policies have not entirely eliminated gender disparities, but concerted efforts and tailored policies can lead to tangible progress.

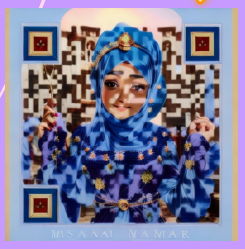
In conclusion, the European Union is committed to promoting gender equality, but challenges persist. Eliminating discrimination against women requires comprehensive policies addressing societal perceptions, economic disparities, and familial roles. It is incumbent upon all members of society to actively contribute to this endeavor to transform the European community into one based on tolerance and respect for all its members' needs.

# BOLD and Retro!




# STRONG WOMAN

Scan me!



Short animated film




*In the eyes of God, we're all one,*
*Beyond the bounds of the country, united under the sun.*
*Shapes and sizes merely for description's role and to divide.*
*Pronouns are tools, not to segregate, but to communicate, collaborate and relate.*
*Gender is spectrum, a beautiful array, not a means for bias to hold sway.*
*Directions guide us, not to separate or divide but to explore the world together.*
*Religions are paths to peace and love, not excuses for conflict.*
*Skin tones paint a picture of our diversity, but they don't dictate our shared humanity. From every corner of this earth we've come, one race, one family under the same sun.*
*So, let us embrace our differences, large or small, for in our diversity, we find strength standing tall. In God's eyes, we're one, forevermore, Humanity's tapestry, rich and pure.*

**LOTS OF LOVE AND PRAYERS**
**KUENGA CHODEN**
**PARO, BHUTAN.**




# ELIMINATE DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN

*Magazine*

## VISION



**Empowering Women, Eradicating Discrimination - A World Where Equality Reigns Supreme**

## MISSION



**Through thought-provoking content and advocacy, our magazine aims to breakdown barriers, challenge stereotypes, and inspire action towards a society free of Gender Discrimination.**