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2 Yazidi Women Who Fled ISIS Slavery Receive E.U.'s Sakharov Prize



Nadia Murad in Ottawa on Tuesday. She created a global campaign to draw attention to the plight of Yazidis who are being held in sex slavery or remain displaced.

Nadia Murad and Lamiya Aji Bashar, two young Iraqis who escaped sexual slavery by the Islamic State and became advocates for women's rights, were honored on Thursday with the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought, the European Union's top human rights award.

Ms. Murad and Ms. Aji Bashar are among thousands of women and girls from the Yazidi community whom the terrorist group kidnapped, sexually assaulted, enslaved and in many cases killed.

In the summer of 2014, they were enslaved when the Islamic State overran their home village, Kocho, near the northern Iraqi city of Sinjar, a longtime hub of Yazidi life.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/28/world/middleeast/yazidi-women-isis-sakharov-prize.html? r=0>

New initiative aims to protect Palestinian working women

The work environment in Palestine suffers from violations of labor rights in general and women's rights specifically, as women are the weakest entity in their patriarchal society. Consequently, the Palestinian Ministry of Labor and the National Committee for Women's Employment (NCWE) coordinated with the Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions (PGFTU), with the support of the International Labor Organization, to launch the first Guideline for Women's Employment Rights on Oct. 4 in Ramallah.

The guideline took six months to complete, and it aims at instilling equality and social justice, eliminating gender-based discrimination at the workplace, improving the work environment and raising women's awareness of their rights.

NCWE coordinator and head of the Gender Unit at the Ministry of Labor in Ramallah Iman Assaf told Al-Monitor that the guideline was the result of the ministry's inclination to increase working women's awareness of their rights.

Many of the women are not well-informed of the Palestinian Labor Law and the issued laws related to their rights and duties. Consequently, they keep mum about their employers' violations, such as depriving them of leaves and increasing their work hours without paying them overtime.

Read more:

<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2016/10/palestine-labor-employed-woman-rights-guideline.html#ixzz4QHhpfxtK>

New programme aims to increase representation of female farmers in the Middle East



Young Arab women studying agriculture will be offered a development programme that will hopefully enable them to improve the region's food security.

Tamkeen, also known as the Young Arab Women Scientists Leadership programme, will focus on mentoring women who are studying agriculture at university to deal with challenges faced by female farmers.

It was developed by Dubai's International Centre for Biosaline Agriculture.

"Women are under-represented in our field," said Dr Henda Al Mahmoudi, 41, a Tunisian PhD graduate in plant biology.

"They have a lot of challenges and there is no encouragement, so programmes like these are good initiatives to put women from different regions in touch because networking in science is so important."

Read more:

http://www.thenational.ae/uae/environment/20161024/new-programme-aims-to-increase-representation-of-female-farmers-in-the-middle-east?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=New%20Programme%20Aims%20to%20Increase%20Representation%20of%20Female%20Farmers%20in%20the%20Middle%20East&utm_campaign=October%2025th%20WED0%20Links

CLARA: How a livelihoods and risk assessment tool is supporting women's economic empowerment



There are more than 3.3 million displaced people in Iraq. Women and girls, and their ability to participate in livelihoods, have been particularly affected by this displacement. In this blog Corrie Sissons explains how the Cohort Livelihoods and Risk Assessment (CLARA) tool has been informing programme design and livelihood initiatives that can safely seed longer-term recovery.

When a shock happens, be it a natural disaster or conflict, displacement often occurs and community or household assets are lost or destroyed. This means individuals, households and communities are subject to new and increased vulnerabilities. This can be particularly severe for women and girls, who face multi-dimensional and different vulnerabilities to men and boys, based on accepted gender norms in their society and context. Oxfam recognises that in the Emergency Food Security and Livelihoods (EFSVL) work we do, that emergency interventions will inevitably affect vulnerabilities and capacities and there is therefore an imperative to design them well to ensure we do no harm.

Read more:

<http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/blog/2016/10/clara-how-a-livelihoods-and-risk-assessment-tool-is-supporting-womens-economic-empowerment>

GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

Women in Daesh: Jihadist ‘Cheerleaders’, Active Operatives?

Until recently, the women in Daesh were viewed mainly as misguided teenagers overly active on social media, or volunteers destined to produce fighters for the caliphate and play the role of housewife. But the foiled attacks in Paris and Nice in September this year, which were set to be executed by women, drove home the fact that the female component of the organization is every bit as dangerous as its male contingent.

Women in Daesh have been underestimated for several reasons: they constitute only up to 20% of the Western foreign fighters (estimates range between 550 and 2,500 in total), are somewhat younger than their male counterparts (22 on average compared to 25), and are portrayed by Daesh propaganda as conforming to highly conservative and consequently passive roles. But the narrative of the submissive Muslim woman – largely echoed by European public opinion – glosses over the fact that *muhajirat* (female migrants), especially Western ones, join the organisation with a radical agenda and the desire to see action.

Profiles

The women of Daesh can be divided roughly into three main groups: women held against their will, such as captured Yazidis; Arab and Asian women who play no executive role (so far); and Western women.

Read more:

<http://www.css.ethz.ch/en/services/digital-library/articles/article.html/62063795-c45d-4c86-8e34-952eddc439f9>

Erdogan’s War on Women

Kurdish women in one of the strongest and most radical women’s movements in the world are taking a battering from the Turkish state with impunity - as Europe looks the other way



“We will resist and resist until we win!” chants Sebahat Tuncel before her mouth is forcibly shut by half a dozen police officers who drag her along the floor and detain her in early November.

Nine years ago, a convoy of victory signs, cheerful slogans, and flowers received Tuncel as she was released from prison to enter parliament, having been elected while still inside. Tuncel, now in jail again, is one of dozens of Kurdish politicians from the Peoples’ Democratic Party (HDP) or the regional Democratic Regions Party (DBP) arrested by the Turkish security forces since late October under Turkish president Erdogan’s “anti-terror” operations against those challenging his authoritarian rule.

This crackdown follows the attempted coup in July and represents a re-escalation of the war between the state and the Kurdish movement since the summer of 2015, ending a two- and-a-half-year-long peace process. Like the advice given to the German anti-terrorist squad in the 1980s “Shoot the women first!” the toxic masculinity of the state became apparent in its declaration of a war on women;

Read more:

<https://www.opendemocracy.net/5050/dilar-dirik/erdogan-s-war-on-women>

AKP bill to pardon child rapists who marry their victims

Defying a nationwide outcry, Turkey's ruling Islamist Justice and Development Party (AKP) appears bent on ramming a bill through parliament that would pardon child rapists if a perpetrator marries his victim. AKP parliamentary whip Mustafa Elitas refused to withdraw the measure, which is likely to be approved in a second round of voting on Nov. 22. Scrapping the bill "is out of the question," he said.

A simple majority, which the AKP commands, will suffice for its adoption.

Many see pardoning men who engage in sex with little girls as part of the AKP's broader agenda of imposing what human rights lawyer Erdal Dogan described to Al-Monitor as "a medieval lifestyle governed by Islamic laws."

Elitas claimed that his party would consider changes to the bill proposed by the main opposition secular Republican People's Party (CHP). Deputy Prime Minister Numan Kurtulmus echoed the offer. But CHP whip Ozgur Ozel said no one from the government had contacted his party with regard to the affair thus far. He further asserted that the bill, if passed as is, offers "a ticket to freedom" for "17,000 abusers."

Women's and other rights groups, including some prominent pro-Islamic female essayists, have reacted with fury to the proposal, saying it will give free rein to pedophiles. "It will in the long term transform the lives of young girls into hell," wrote Fatma Barbarasoglu in Yeni Safak.

Read more:

<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2016/11/akp-bill-pardon-child-rapists-marriage.html#ixzz4QkjYfPvg>

UN Women's 'Orange the World' kicks off 16 days of activism to fight gender-based violence



The extent to which violence is embedded in society means that uprooting it is everyone's job, senior United Nations official said today, lamenting that violence against women and girls continue to be a low priority on the international development agenda and urging more action – and more funding – to end the pandemic of such violence now, once and for all.

"The statistics almost defy belief. What is even harder to understand is why: why men prey on women and girls; why societies shame the victims, why governments fail to punish deadly crimes, why the world denies itself the fruits of women's full participation," Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon told a UN Women-hosted Orange the World event at UN Headquarters in New York to raise money to end violence against women and girls, and kick off 16 Days of Activism against gender-based violence.

The campaign

<http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/take-action/16-days-of-activism> begins on 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and ends on 10 December, Human Rights Day.

Read more:

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=55621#.WDXuv9J95dg>

GENDER & HUMAN RIGHTS

One woman's brush with Sharia courts in the UK: "It ruined my life forever"

"My daughter and I appeared before the Sharia court at Regent's Park mosque in London. They were not interested in anything we had to say, the whole process was shocking."



The UK government is conducting an inquiry into the operation of Sharia courts which is being boycotted by a number of women's organisations because its remit is too narrow, and the panel of judges is not seen as 'independent' enough.

Parallel to this, the Home Affairs Committee has also launched an inquiry into whether the principles of Sharia are compatible with British law.

On 7 November, there will be a public seminar on "Sharia Law, Legal Pluralism and Access to Justice" 7-9pm at Committee Room 12 at the Houses of Parliament. Below, we publish the story of a woman Shagufta (not her real name) who spoke to the campaign group, One Law for All, and described how a brush with the Sharia courts ruined her life forever.

Read more:

<https://www.opendemocracy.net/5050/rahila-gupta/one-woman-s-brush-with-sharia-courts-in-uk>

Will Egypt's parliament toughen punishment for rape?

Many Egyptians are hoping that a new bill, set to come before parliament in two months, will put a stop to a surge in rapes throughout the country. The bill, prepared by the National Council for Women (NCW), a state-run agency that seeks to defend women's rights, would authorize the death penalty for rapists — a first in Egypt. The bill is seen as an attempt by Egyptian authorities to demonstrate their seriousness in criminalizing violence against women and putting an end to rape.

"The bill toughens penalties with the only aim of deterring rapists and preventing this crime from happening," Sanaa Khalil, a senior member of NCW's Legislative Committee, told Al-Monitor. "Rapes have reached alarming levels in this country."

According to the bill proposed by Khalil and his colleagues, if the rape victim is under 18 or has a mental or psychological disorder, the rapist will be sentenced to death. However, if the rape victim is over 18, the rapist will be sentenced to death or life in prison, depending on the court's judgment.

Egypt ranked the worst among Arab countries for women's rights, according to a 2013 poll conducted by the Thomson Reuters Foundation. Furthermore, a staggering 99.3% of Egyptian women have been exposed to some form of sexual harassment, according to a 2013 survey by UN Women.

Growing violations in this regard have given rise to a large number of anti-harassment movements in Egypt that lobby for maximizing penalties for rape and harassment. Many sexual assault victims count the days until rapists will pay for their crimes.

Read more:

<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2016/11/egypt-parliament-draft-rape-punishment.html#ixzz4QkhHI2Xu>

Jordan's woman crash through gender stereotypes at the wheel of taxis



The only difference between Hiba al-Sharu and her male counterparts is the color of the sign that sits atop her taxi – hers is pink, a symbol for a woman-friendly service in a country dominated by men. She is one of 10 women who earlier this year became some of the first female taxi drivers in Jordan. They are being hailed as pioneers in a conservative society where jobs are dictated by gender and women often feel uneasy taking taxis driven by men.

"It's a beautiful job because of the relationships you form and the freedom that comes with it," says al-Sharu as she swiftly changes lanes in the traffic. Also, she adds, "I have a passion for driving cars."

Al-Sharu became a taxi driver in March after her friend told her about a new female-driven service being offered by Taxi al-Moumayaz, one of the leading companies of its kind in Jordan. CEO Eid Abu al-Haj says the reason for creating the initiative was twofold: to give women the chance to work in the male-centric transportation sector and to provide female riders with a more comfortable option.

Read more:

<http://www.albawaba.com/news/jordan%E2%80%99s-woman-crash-through-gender-stereotypes-wheel-taxis-901290>

Better Work Jordan and local stakeholders are calling for the creation of workplace nurseries to help mothers continue their careers

Better Work Jordan and local stakeholders are calling for the creation of workplace nurseries to help mothers continue their careers amid a challenging environment that prevents more women from joining the job market.

Every morning Suhair Shwairah and her one-and-a-half-year-old son Mohammad leave their home on the outskirts of Jordan's central town Madaba and wait on their doorstep for the bus that will take them to a local garment factory. While the 26-year-old data entry clerk gears up for another day at work at Al Safi Garment Factory in the Dleilet Al Hamaideh area, Mohammad gets ready to spend his time at the company's nursery.

In August, the factory opened an on-site nursery for the children of its employees. The project has turned out to be a success, with some 30 toddlers now attending the crèche daily.

"The nursery changed our lives because no one could tend to my child before," Shwairah said. "Now we feel very comfortable. Mohammad is very happy at the nursery. He sees his friends there."

Article 72 of the country's Labour Law stipulates that any firm which employs at least twenty female workers who together have at least ten children under the age of four, should provide a day care facility at the workplace, said Abdallah Al Jbour, Director of Inspection at Jordan's Ministry of Labour.

But the main challenge so far has been turning the article of the national law into local action.

Read more:

<http://betterwork.org/blog/2016/11/11/on-site-nurseries-helping-jordanian-mothers-at-work/>

RESOURCES & CALLS
BOOKS & REPORTS

Women do four years more work than men in lifetime, report shows

Report by ActionAid ahead of UN general assembly reveals burden of unpaid care work on women around the world

A young woman entering the job market today can expect to do an average of four years more work than her male peers over her working lifetime, according to a report.

Time spent by women around the world on paid and unpaid labour amounts to an extra month for every year of work.

The charity ActionAid will present the report, *Not Ready, Still Waiting*, at the United Nations general assembly on Thursday.

Highlighting the global burden of unpaid care work on women, the report finds that a woman living in the UK can expect to do two and a half years more labour than her male peers over her working life.

The report warns that the burden of unpaid care work limits women's opportunities to pursue income-generating options, to have their voices heard in decision-making and political activities, and for rest and leisure.

Read more:

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2016/sep/22/women-do-four-years-more-work-than-men-in-lifetime-report-shows>

For a direct link to report:

http://www.actionaid.org/sites/files/actionaid/not_ready_still_waiting_final_0.pdf **Mosul**

BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE: A Preliminary Inquiry; Tangible Protection Mechanisms for Women Human Rights Defenders in the MENA Region and Beyond

The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and beyond is rife with political instability, a legacy of conflicts, and human rights violations. In 2016, it continues to suffer one of the worst humanitarian and human rights crises since the World War II. The recent events of the so-called "Arab Spring" opened a window of hope for the human rights activists, groups, and organizations for an opportunity to enact widespread systemic change. However, current geopolitical wars, policies and violent government regimes have increased the volatility in the MENA region and beyond: human rights violations are committed and permitted under tactics of 'counter terrorism' and 'national security'. During peaceful public protests and uprisings in the region, women have taken leading roles in defending the human rights of their own and wider communities. The centrality that Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRDs) have played in each of these movements and protests cannot be understated. Their methods of activism have taken a variety of forms: research, direct action and activism, roles in public communication, direct assistance etc.

Read more:

<http://www.gc4hr.org/report/view/55>

For a direct link to report:

[file:///C:/Users/User/Downloads/GCHR_Report - Final.pdf](file:///C:/Users/User/Downloads/GCHR_Report_-_Final.pdf)

Global Gender Gap Report 2016

Through the Global Gender Gap Report, the World Economic Forum quantifies the magnitude of gender disparities and tracks their progress over time, with a specific focus on the relative gaps between women and men across four key areas: health, education, economy and politics. The 2016 Report covers 144 countries. More than a decade of data has revealed that progress is still too slow for realizing the full potential of one half of humanity within our lifetimes.

Progress towards parity peaked in 2013, according to the 2016 Global Gender Gap Report.

The world is facing an acute misuse of talent by not acting faster to tackle gender inequality, which could put economic growth at risk and deprive economies of the opportunity to develop, according to the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report 2016, which is published today.

The report is an annual benchmarking exercise that measures progress towards parity between men and women in four areas: Educational Attainment, Health and Survival, Economic Opportunity and Political Empowerment.

Read more:

<http://www.wunrn.com/2016/11/global-gender-gap-report-2016/>

For a direct link to report:

http://www3.weforum.org/docs/GGGR16/WEF_Global_Gender_Gap_Report_2016.pdf

Picking Up the Pieces: What Yemenis need to rebuild their lives in a country torn apart by conflict

Since March 2015, more than three million Yemenis have fled their homes, displaced by ongoing conflict. Many have been displaced for months or more than a year; they are quickly running out of ways to make ends meet. The situation is dire and getting worse, and hope for successful peace talks is fading. Both displaced people and the communities hosting them face severely depleted funds, runaway inflation and a lack of opportunities to make a living. Forced coercion into armed groups, forced early marriage and tensions within families and communities are on the rise.

Drawing on surveys conducted in Yemen, this paper sets out what Yemenis are facing and what governments, armed parties and agencies must do to help get Yemenis back on their feet and reduce the chance of an entrenched, long-lasting crisis.

Read more:

<http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/picking-up-the-pieces-what-yemenis-need-to-rebuild-their-lives-in-a-country-tor-619918#>

For a direct link to paper:

https://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/file_attachments/bp-yemen-picking-up-the-pieces-210916-en.pdf

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