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## Egyptian women take to streets to fight stereotypes ... by directing traffic

*A new phenomenon is catching the attention of passersby in the streets of Giza: young women directing traffic.*



In an experiment that began in early September, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, in collaboration with the Interior Ministry and Giza governorate, are turning to women ages 18-25 to direct traffic. If the program succeeds, authorities will consider implementing the same experiment in all Egyptian governorates, according to statements by Giza Gov. Khaled Zakaria al-Adly.

Fifteen young Egyptian women are taking part in the experiment to help traffic police at a number of traffic lights in Giza, in coordination with the General Directorate of Traffic. The women are dispatched at Giza Square, al-Nahda Square, Mostafa Mahmoud Square, Kit Kat Square, Orman Garden, at the intersection of Lebanon and Shehab streets, and in front of the Giza governorate council.

Read more:

<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2015/10/egypt-traffic-women-girls-stereotypes-ministry-youth-sports.html#ixzz3oMif3uyh>

## Women and girls crucial in fight against Islamic State ideology, experts say



When Saliha Ben Ali's teenage son was killed after leaving Belgium to fight for Islamic State in Syria, she wanted to do what she could to stop other mothers from going through similar heartbreak.

"My message is try to find some help, please speak about this, don't be alone," she said at a discussion on Friday about the role women can play in fighting the militant group's violent ideology.

Almost 30,000 foreigners have joined Islamic State and other militant groups to fight in Iraq and Syria, according to a study published by the United States Congress last month, thousands of them from western countries.

The organisation Ben Ali founded, Society Against Violent Extremism (SAVE) Belgium, works with families to try to protect young people from extremist recruiters, and helps families whose children have already left for the Middle East.

Read more:

[http://www.trust.org/item/20151009154926-ob16p?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Expresso+12+Oct+2015&utm\\_content=Expresso+12+Oct+2015+CID\\_36\\_b3ddb6126c91bd48367f695d47da74&utm\\_source=Campaign%20Monitor&utm\\_term=Women%20and%20girls%20crucial%20in%20fight%20against%20Islamic%20State%20ideology%20experts%20say](http://www.trust.org/item/20151009154926-ob16p?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Expresso+12+Oct+2015&utm_content=Expresso+12+Oct+2015+CID_36_b3ddb6126c91bd48367f695d47da74&utm_source=Campaign%20Monitor&utm_term=Women%20and%20girls%20crucial%20in%20fight%20against%20Islamic%20State%20ideology%20experts%20say)

## 2030 Development Agenda Gets Adopted – Strong on gender but structural obstacles remain

After a three-year process, country representatives meeting in the basement of United Nations headquarters in New York adopted, in the late evening of Sunday 2 August, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to guide global development priorities for the next fifteen years.

The exhausting final session of negotiations kept the adrenaline high to the very last minute, with a lot of back and forth on crucial but predictable issues: climate change, human rights, the means of implementation and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities (CBDR). This principle derives from the 1992 Rio conference and recognizes historical differences in the contributions of developed and developing States to global environmental problems, and differences in their respective economic and technical capacity to tackle these problems.

There is a cause for celebrating the commitments made for women and girls, as well as a sense of relief, as it became evident that prolonging the negotiating process would only result in a further watered down text.

The feeling is bittersweet for those of us demanding transformational change. The 2030 agenda is weak on providing the financial and structural change needed to make the outcome document a reality.

Read more:

<http://www.awid.org/node/4011>

## How feminist groups are taking on post-revolution Egypt



In 2012, international media talked about collective rapes targeting women in the protests in Tahrir Square for the first time. In reaction, several civil groups, such as Tahrir Bodyguard, OpAntiSH and Basma, were created to protect women and establish actions to prevent rape during the protests. Three years later, they had to change their way of action, from emergency to sustainability, with more or less success.

The Egyptian revolution, from 2011 to 2014, seems to have brought together and strengthened civil initiatives against sexual harassment and for gender equality.

Read more:

<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2015/09/egypt-women-anti-sexual-harassment-post-revolution.html#ixzz3oMhWa6fg>

## ***GENDER BASED VIOLENCE***

### **Yazidi women and girls held by Islamic State forgotten, say campaigners**



The world has abandoned the Yazidi people of northern Iraq, leaving women and girls from the minority group to be brutalised at the hands of Islamic State, two Yazidi sisters told a conference in London.

"After 14 months the situation is the same, nothing has changed," said Vian Dakheel Saeed, the sole Yazidi member of Iraq's parliament. "Nobody supports us."

Islamic State militants attacked Yazidis in northwest Iraq in summer 2014, killing or capturing and enslaving thousands of the minority group.

The jihadist group has targeted with particular cruelty the Yazidis, whose ancient religion derives from Islam, Christianity and Zoroastrianism. They are regarded as devil-worshippers by the Sunni Muslim militants.

Some 5,800 Yazidi children and women have been captured by Islamic State, the politician told the Women in the World summit in London. Some 2,100 have been freed.

Read more:

<http://www.trust.org/item/20151009135913-zfatt/>

## **UN submission on settler violence (2015)**

Today, WCLAC lodged a submission with two UN Special Rapporteurs providing an update on the situation on the ground relating to the impact of settler violence on women in the West Bank. This follows the publication of a UN report on Israeli settlement activity in January 2013 (UN Report) which found, *inter alia*, that the establishment of the settlements has fragmented the West Bank placing at risk the possibility of a Palestinian State, and by implication, a viable two state solution – a stated policy goal of the US, EU and UN.

WCLAC's submission notes that as of mid-2015:

- There are approximately 585,000 Israeli settlers residing in East Jerusalem and the West Bank representing an increase of 65,000 (12.5 per cent) since the publication of the UN Report;
- By 2016 the number of settlers will exceed 600,000, making the widely stated goal of a two-state solution increasingly improbable. Sixty thousand of the settlers in the West Bank are US citizens;
- Housing starts in the settlements are projected to jump 68 per cent in 2015;
- Although settler attacks are projected to be down in 2015, so called "price-tag" attacks are on the rise; and

Read more:

<http://www.wclac.org/english/etemplate.php?id=1563>

## **ISIS's female Gestapo wreaking terror on their own sex**

The loud knock on the family's farmhouse door was at midnight as they got ready for bed. Outside, five Islamic State fighters, Kalashnikovs hung on their shoulders and faces hidden by black scarves, were searching for girls to kidnap.

'We opened the door and they saw my wife's teenage sisters Sabiha and Sajida. The fighters told us they were going to steal them because they were beautiful,' says Kafi Osman, anger still burning in his eyes at the memory.

'We cried and the girls wept as they were led outside and driven away in an open truck. We have heard nothing of them since.'

The girls' kidnap in the northern Iraqi town of Makhmur came as jihadis from Islamic State (also known as IS and Isis) took control of it street by street. They beheaded men, raped women and then captured their trophies of war — virgins to be sex slaves or jihadi brides.

The Osman family now believe that Sabiha, 18, and Sajida, 16, are prostitutes in Raqqa, a seven-hour drive across the Iraqi border in Syria and the Islamic State's self-proclaimed capital, awash with jihadi fighters. It is a place of medieval barbarism, terror, torture, abuse and odious controls over the 100,000 women who live there. Some women are trapped in the city against their will.

They did not escape before IS marched in two years ago, building a Sharia court on the football pitch and imposing a regime where grisly public executions take place by stoning and crucifixion in the main square after mosque prayers on a Friday.

Read more:

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3156921/Isis-s-female-Gestapo-wreaking-terror-sex.html>

## **Hidden victims of the Syrian crisis: disabled, injured and older refugees**

New research published today shows that older, disabled and injured Syrian refugees are paying a double toll as a result of the conflict. The report, released by Handicap International and HelpAge International, provides new data showing how much these vulnerable refugees are struggling to meet their specific needs.

The two agencies are calling on all national and international humanitarian stakeholders providing assistance to Syrian refugees to change the way aid is delivered so that disabled, injured and older refugees are no longer the hidden casualties of the conflict. More precise targeting and registration of refugees and better training of staff will ensure humanitarian assistance is accessible, appropriate and effective, says the report.

The Syrian crisis has now generated the largest refugee movement since the 1994 Rwandan genocide. The report shows that, hidden amongst the overall refugee population, disabled, injured and older refugees and those suffering from chronic diseases, are facing significant difficulties in accessing appropriate aid.

Read more:

<http://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/hidden-victims-syrian-crisis-disabled-injured-and-older-refugees>  
**GENDER & HUMAN RIGHTS**

## Iran - Imprisoned cartoonist forced to face 'virginity test'



Court hearing for civil rights activist and cartoonist, Atena Farghadani, and her lawyer, Mohammad Moghimi, accused of shaking hands together, was conducted in secrecy behind closed doors on October 3.

The session at the Qods Judicial Complex in Tehran took place following Farghadani facing months of pressure and harassment based on the trumped up charge of illegitimate sexual relationship with her lawyer.

Reliable sources have informed JFI that last August this female political prisoner was summoned to a clinic where she was forced to undergo virginity and pregnancy tests.

During a visit last June Farghadani shook hands with her lawyer, Mohammad Moghimi. Charges of "Illegitimate sexual relationship" were pressed against both resulting in a three-day detention for Moghimi. According to the information shared with JFI detaining Faraghdani's lawyer resulted in missing the deadline to appeal her sentence of 12 years and 9 months in prison.

Read more:

<http://justice4iran.org/publication/call-for-action/imprisoned-cartoonist-forced-to-face-virginity-test/>

## *GENDER & HUMAN RIGHTS*

### Iranian Women Fined \$260 for 'Bad Hijabs'



"In recent days several cases have been filed in the court for bad hijabs and, in two of them, the accused were sentenced to pay 9 million rials (\$260/232 euros) in cash," reformist daily Arman quoted the official as saying.

When in public, all women in Iran, even foreigners, are required to wear the loose scarf, which covers the hair and neck.

But since the mid-1990s, there has been a gradual relaxation of the dress code despite continued campaigns by police to enforce it.

In some rich neighborhoods of northern Tehran, a city of 12 million, it is not uncommon to see women's scarves around their shoulders.

Many young women also wear tight clothes and short coats.

No details were given on what the women had done wrong to warrant the fine, which is equivalent to the monthly minimum wage.

Since his election in 2013, moderate President Hassan Rouhani has overseen some political and social reforms, but much Iran's political establishment remains deeply conservative.

Earlier this month, a police official said women drivers could have their cars impounded if they are caught driving with a poorly fixed veil or with their heads uncovered.

Read more:

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/189925-iranian-women-fined-260-for-bad-hijabs>

## Nepal Presses India for 'Justice' in Saudi Envoy Rape Probe



Majed Hassan Ashoor, the Saudi Embassy's First Secretary in New Delhi, is accused of beating and sexually abusing the two women, aged 30 and 50, while they were imprisoned in his apartment outside New Delhi.

"Our request is that the investigation continues and justice is provided to the victims," Shivani Basnet, second secretary at Nepal's embassy in India, told television reporters.

India's foreign ministry said late Wednesday that Ashoor had left the country but did not specify when, adding that he was protected by the Vienna convention on diplomatic relations.

Nepal's ambassador to India, Deep Upadhyay, said the case was "a very very inhuman issue" and that he sought speedy justice for the alleged victims.

"If there has been a crime, the criminal should be punished," Updhyay told reporters in New Delhi.

Indian police began investigating Ashoor for "rape, sodomy and illegal confinement" after the women earlier this month alleged that they were tortured in his apartment in the upscale satellite city of Gurgaon.

Read more:

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/190013-nepal-presses-india-for-justice-in-saudi-envoy-rape-probe>

## Niqab Ban is Hot Button Issue in Canada Election Debate



Prime Minister Stephen Harper sought to win over the key French-Canadian vote in an election debate Thursday with a firm defense of a popular niqab ban that has split his rivals.

With only four weeks left before October 19 legislative elections, a woman's right to wear the veil, which covers all of her face except the eyes, has become a hot-button issue.

A Conservative government policy, introduced in 2011, prohibited wearing such a veil during citizenship ceremonies. But last week, a court struck down the ban.

Harper appealed the decision to the Supreme Court, and said that, if re-elected, his Tories would make it the law.

"When we join the Canadian family we should not hide our identity and that's the reason we believe that new citizens should recite the oath with their face uncovered," he said.

A poll taken in March as debate over the ban reached a fevered pitch showed 82 percent of Canadians supported the ban. In the predominantly French-speaking province of Quebec, that number climbed to 93 percent.

Read more:

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/190538-niqab-ban-is-hot-button-issue-in-canada-election-debate>

## Headscarves in schools: On or off? Policies vary



“The first day of school, the headmistress called upon the Christian students to come forward in front of the entire morning queue. She grabbed the hair of a girl among us and started to braid it, saying that this is how we should have our hair done or she will force us to wear the hijab within a week,” Nathalie told Al-Monitor.

The headmistress could not carry out her threats. The five girls, who are all Christian, remain the only ones among 900 students who do not wear headscarves.

“There is no law imposing the hijab on students in government schools in Gaza, whether elementary or secondary,” Ziad Thabet, undersecretary of the Ministry of Education in the Gaza Strip, told Al-Monitor during an interview at his office. “The headmistress of the Ahmed Shawki School, Iman Abu Samra, did not force the hijab upon schoolgirls.” According to him, the girls who wear the hijab do so because of their religious conviction.

Ironically, this alleged ideological coercion is taking place in reverse in the West Bank and Jerusalem, where some schoolgirls say they are being forced to take off their veils.

One student at Terra Sancta Girls School-Sisters of St. Joseph-Bethlehem started to wear a hijab, as she felt she was ready, at the beginning of the new academic year.

Read more:

<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2015/10/palestine-gaza-west-bank-hijab-policy-education-girls-islam.html#ixzz3oMiVQftM>

## Isis targeting women with guides on how to be the “ultimate wives” of jihadists



Guidelines for women on how to be the ultimate wives of Isisfighters in Syria and Iraq are now being distributed by the militant group's new media arm.

The Zora Foundation is the latest Isis media group operating across social networks. Isis (also known as Islamic State) regularly release propaganda showing brutal executions and violent atrocities, training regimes for fighters and threats to the West as the US-led coalition air strikes continue.

But unlike most of Isis' propaganda that addresses men and attempts to recruit them, this specifically targets women supporting Islamist fighters by circulating advice on how to be 'good wives of jihad'.

The organisation's slogan is "preparing for the honour of jihad", with videos and tweets explaining the ways in which women can contribute to Isis' insurgency. Its social media accounts have already garnered over 2,000 followers after being established just over two weeks ago.

Zora's material, all of which is in Arabic, has been shared by Isis supporters across social media.

Read more:

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/isis-now-targeting-women-with-guides-on-how-to-be-the-ultimate-wives-of-jihad-9830562.html>



## Gender equality in politics still far away

For the first time, women in every country will be allowed to vote this year.

This year, for the first time in history, women in every country will have the right to vote; Saudi Arabia ended its status as the final holdout by granting women the right to campaign for office and vote in municipal elections later this year. But it is still critical for the United States and others who work to build democracy around the world to focus on advancing women's political participation.

In the last 20 years, the number of female members of parliament (MPs) has doubled to 22 percent, which is still well below the 30 percent target set 20 years ago by the U.N. Only nine women are heads of government. Even when elected, women are seldom appointed to significant legislative committees or awarded the most prestigious ministerial posts. As of January, only 17 percent of MPs held ministerial posts, many of them focused on social sectors such as education and family.

Read more:

<http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/opinion/oped/bs-ed-women-political-participation-20150916-story.html>

## RESOURCES & CALLS BOOKS & REPORTS

### TRANSFORM – The magazine for gender-responsive evaluation



UN Women regularly evaluates its own work to enhance accountability, inform decision-making and contribute to learning on the best ways to achieve gender equality while strengthening the capacity of United Nations agencies and governments in designing, managing and using gender-responsive evaluations.

To enhance effective communication of evaluation results, UN Women's Independent Evaluation Office developed *TRANSFORM – The magazine for gender-responsive evaluation*.

Read more:

<http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2015/9/transform-issue-04>

For a direct link to document:

<http://www.unwomen.org/~media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2015/transform-issue04-201509-en.pdf?v=1&d=20150922T173509>

## Turning Promises into Progress: gender equality and rights for women and girls - lessons learnt and actions needed

2015 represents an important moment to reflect on what has been achieved over the last two decades for gender equality and women's and girls' rights, and to garner renewed momentum to implement existing commitments. It is twenty years since the Fourth World Conference on Women resulted in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, with its comprehensive government commitments under 12 critical areas of concern. It is also the fifteenth anniversary of ground-breaking United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 which recognised the importance of women's full and equal participation as actors for peace and security. Furthermore, 2015 represents a pivotal moment in the development agenda with the advent of the post 2015 framework and sustainable development goals. This year therefore provides an opportunity to turn the commitments already made into real action on the ground in order to advance gender equality and women and girls' rights.

The report draws on knowledge and perspectives from experts and advocates in different areas of gender equality and women's rights who have come together to lay out an analysis of what has happened over the last twenty years, and identify priorities for the next decades.

Read more:

<http://www.eldis.org/go/topics/resource-guides/gender&id=73582&type=Document#.ViZ9ltIrJdg>

For a direct link to document:

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/536c4ee8e4b0b60bc6ca7c74/t/550ab0f6e4b048091fe0b18d/1426764022144/Turning+Promises+into+Progress+FINAL.pdf>

## Social norms theory and development economics

Social norms affect almost every aspect of people's lives, and can be an obstacle to or support economic development.

This paper outlines what social norms are and how they work, providing examples from everyday life and from development case studies. Sometimes not much can be done about changing undesirable social norms. In those cases, development economists need to be aware of how the existence of those norms can impact the effects of the policies they advocate.

But of particular importance to development economists is the ways in which social norms can be changed, at least under some circumstances. Understanding of social norm change is still patchy at best, but the paper outlines the theoretical underpinnings of change, with empirical evidence from various policies aimed at changing social norms.

However, some of those policies raise ethical concerns that would require attention.

Read more:

<http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/2015/10/25171546/>

For a direct link to document:

[http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2015/10/20/090224b08315917a/1\\_0/Rendered/PDF/Social0norms0t0development0economics.pdf](http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2015/10/20/090224b08315917a/1_0/Rendered/PDF/Social0norms0t0development0economics.pdf)

## WIDE+ 2015 Report: Women's rights need a transformation of the global development paradigm



that set the global development agenda for the coming 15 years. The agenda is presented in conjunction with a “Global Leaders’ Meeting on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment: A Commitment to Action” that took place on Sunday, which aims to commit governments to accelerate implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA) that member states adopted 20 years ago

Read more:

<http://wideplus.org/2015/09/28/wide-2015-report-womens-rights-need-a-transformation-of-the-global-development-paradigm/>

For a direct link to document:

[https://wideplusnetwork.files.wordpress.com/2015/09/wide-report-2015\\_en.pdf](https://wideplusnetwork.files.wordpress.com/2015/09/wide-report-2015_en.pdf)

The United Nations have adopted this weekend the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

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