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Women in Global Affairs

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Message from the Editors

Message from the Editors

One of the most fascinating emerging trends in international affairs is the increasing attention paid to women and girls in the global dialog on development, security, and international relations. From global public health to combating terrorism, the international community is recognizing the added benefits of challenging the plight of women globally in order to reach development goals, international security, and respect for human rights.

Due to the significance of this important dialog and our desire for its continued ongoing relevance in international affairs debate, Perspectives on Global Issues is delighted to release our Spring 2011 issue, "Women in Global Affairs."

The contributions to our new issue come from all over the globe – New York to Nigeria – and successfully delve into several topics of relevance with regard to women and global affairs including the benefits and misconceptions of women and microfinance, the role of women in politics, women and war, and women in the re-development of post-conflict Rwanda. Our issue also addresses two extremely timely debates –women in security and "the girl effect" – in interviews with esteemed academic Dr. Laura Sjoberg, and 4GGL founder and ambassador for the empowerment of girls locally and globally, the passionate and experienced Ms. Jin In.

We hope that this issue can foster further inquiry and debate into the issues of women in politics, peacebuilding, terrorism, microfinance, gender inequality, gender based violence, and much much more. May the 21st century offer more to the girls and women of this world than any century before it, and may the world finally stop turning a blind eye to the brutal inequality and injustices faced by woman worldwide.

We would like to extend a warm thank you to all of our contributing authors for their insight on the various topics covered in this issue. We also would like to extend an extra special thank you to Ms. Jin In and dr. Laura Sjoberg for their willingness to share their expertise and insight with us and with you. Readers thoughts, perspectives, and questions are welcomed and encouraged and may be directed to us at pgi.editorial@gmail.com

Thank you,

The PGI Team

PERSPECTIVES
ON GLOBAL ISSUES

Women's Transformations during Conflict; the New Political Face

By Devon O'Reilly

While women are not new to politics, women's presence and faces in politics have become increasingly more commonplace. Furthermore, women's entrance to politics is not just during times of peace, but also in times of unrest. During a change, conflict, transition or political shift more women are found entering politics, albeit through a series of factors and different representational capacities.

The relationship between women's political representation and conflict-driven system changes is currently best exemplified in two African countries: Rwanda and Liberia. Despite their significant economic and conflict-related setbacks, Rwanda and Liberia are considered current global trailblazers for women's political representation. Furthermore, while many African countries have unfortunately endured conflict, few have had an increase in women's representation to the extent that Rwanda and Liberia have.

In Rwanda and Liberia the political representation of women varies from descriptive representation, (the number of women represented), in the former and substantive representation, (attention to women-friendly policy and issues), in the latter. While the female face is present in politics in both states, it is the alternate types of women's political representation that illustrate the scope of this new political face.

RWANDA

The conflict in Rwanda, the genocide of 1994, claimed an estimated 800,000 to one million lives in 100 days, caused another two million

plus people to flee to neighboring countries[1], and another 1.5 million people became internally displaced persons (IDPs).[2] In the wake of this egregious death toll and the population's expulsion from the state, the remaining population in Rwanda was largely made up by females. Since the majority of the perpetrators, persons killed or those who fled were men, Rwandan women came to represent 70% of the population.[3]

Prior to, during and immediately following the genocide, Rwandan women were the typical examples of the woman's face in politics and in conflict: the underrepresented and the victim. Following Rwandan independence women were largely underrepresented due to political exclusion and a weak, practically non-existent civil society. By 1988, a few years after the United Nations Conference on Women held in Nairobi, women's representation had reached a then record high of 15.7% or 11 of the 70 seats in the National Development Council, and the Rwandan women's movement formally emerged.[4] In the wake of these shifts, the 1991 Rwandan Constitution declared equality between men and women.[5] A year later, the Ministry for the Promotion of Women and the Family was established, and

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[1] Economist Intelligence Unit. "Country profile 2008, Rwanda." (2008b) 5.

[2] United Nations. Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees. The state of the world's refugees 2000; Fifty years of humanitarian action. (2000) 246.

[3] Elizabeth Powley, "Strengthening governance: The role of women in Rwanda's transition, a summary." EGM/ELEC/2004/EP.5. (2004) 5.

[4] Jennie E. Burnet. "Gender balance and the meanings of women in governance in post-genocide Rwanda." African Affairs 107.428 (2008) 372.

[5] Binaifer Nowrojee. Shattered lives: Sexual violence during the Rwandan genocide and its aftermath. (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1996) 19-21.

in 1993 Agathe Uwilingimana was appointed the first female Prime Minister of Rwanda.[6]

Yet, despite all of these advancements, the genocide endorsed systematic tactics of discrimination against Tutsi women through the circulation of the *Hutu Ten Commandments,* spread by the extremist Hutus surrounding the Habyarimana government. The focus of these three commandments was to degrade Tutsi women and elevate Hutu women's status and desire.[7] Once genocide began violence against women became more vicious, grotesque and targeted all women, Tutsi and Hutu, because they were the vehicles of reproduction.[8] Violence committed against women included rape, gang rape, rape by objects, sexual mutilation, sexual slavery and being buried alive.[9] One United Nations report estimates that from the time of the Rwandan Patriotic Front's incursion in 1990 to the genocide in 1994, 250,000 to up to 500,000 women were raped by the Interhamwe, as well as by the Rwandan army.[10] Many rape victims became infected with HIV/AIDS and, despite surviving the genocide, the stigma of being raped dissuaded most from seeking treatment or seeking psychological help.[11]

While the violence against women was horrific, in comparison, men as a group were the primary targets of extermination, and they made up the majority of the perpetrators and the majority of persons who fled. As a result, the most palpable aspects to post-conflict Rwanda became the overwhelming number of women. Women became the surviving face of conflict. This drastic change, first and foremost, disrupted gender roles. In terms of politics, women's clearly discernable face and presence resulted in the start of significant strides being made by the government for women. For instance, in 1999 the interim government, the Government of National Unity (GNU), reorganized the mandate of the Ministry of Gender and Women in Development (MIGEPROF) to integrate gendered perceptions into all policies and legislation, thus mainstreaming gender throughout all branches of government. MIGEPROF also set up women's councils whose specific function is to advocate and advise women in local politics.[12] Outside of party and state control, women's organizations flourished, with much of their work focusing on rebuilding society, individual lives,[13] lobbying and teaching potential candidates.[14]

Women's political reach continued despite the government increasingly authoritarian practices. For instance, women's representation went above 20% during the final two years of the transitional government,[15] and 27% of the judges elected for *gacaca* were women.[16] Then, in the 2003 election women were elected to 39 out of 80 seats (48.8%) in the Chamber of Deputies (lower house) and to six of the 20 seats (30%) in the Senate (upper house).[17] In the lower house women exceeded their constitutional mandate of 30% by 18.8%. This led to Rwanda's lower house having the highest percentage of women represented in the world, out-ranking the usual Scandinavian suspects. Since then Rwanda has not only remained at the top of the Inter-

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[6] Burnet 372-373.
[7] Powley 3.
[8] Timothy Longman. "Rwanda: Achieving equality of serving an authoritarian state?" Women in African parliaments. Gretchen Bauer & Hannah E. Britton. (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2006) 136.
[9] Social Institutions & Gender Index. "Gender equality and social institutions in Rwanda." (2009b); Nowrojee 39.
[10] Nowrojee 40.
[11] Nowrojee 2-3.

[12] Burnet 368; Longman 139-140.
[13] Burnet 371.
[14] Longman 139.
[15] Burnet 370.
[16] Longman139.
[17] Inter-Parliamentary Union. "Women in national parliaments; world classification." (30 September 2003).

Parliamentary Union list of *Women in National Parliaments,* but the percent of women has increased*.* In 2008, women's representation rose to 56.3% in the Chamber of Deputies and to 34.6% in the Senate.[18]

Although women's descriptive representation in Rwanda has reached the highest levels in the world, the government has become increasingly authoritarian. Consequently, the significance of Rwanda's substantial level of descriptive women's representation is challenged due to its existence within a non-democratic political system.[19] In an authoritarian system the significance of a large female presence in politics does not have the same clout as it would in a democracy.[20] Its authoritarian nature is also suspected to infringe upon women's political capabilities, despite women's high representation in government.

Despite the challenges faced by the Rwandan female political figures, many assume that the increase in women's political representation will be able to transform the authoritarian nature of the Rwandan government.[21] Furthermore, although women's political learning curve is occurring under an authoritarian government, they are nonetheless learning political skills applicable to all political systems.[22] Moreover, women are set to potentially face long-term benefits because their presence in government will undoubtedly mainstream women in Rwandan institutions, structures and culture.[23] Women's presence in Rwandan politics is set to become the norm. Since the genocide women have become a new political face in the Rwandan government, and as a result,

they have become a part of women's transformation after conflict.

LIBERIA

In contrast to Rwanda's 100-day genocide, Liberia's civil war waned on for fourteen years. The conflict began December 24, 1989, when Samuel Doe's nine-year military regime came to an end with an attack by the multi-ethnic rebel group the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), led by Charles Taylor. The attack ignited a rebellion of other rebel and splinter groups, which precipitated into the first phase of civil war that ravaged the country for the next six to eight years. Then in 1997 Charles Taylor, the leader of the NPFL rebel group, was elected president of Liberia.[24] By this time an estimated 150,000 people had been killed and more than 850,000 had become refugees.[25] Within a few years, just as rebel groups had formed against Doe, rebel groups formed against Taylor,[26] and in April 1999 an uprising against Taylor marked the beginning of the second phase of civil war. Then, after four more years of civil war, on August 14, 2003, after numerous delays, Taylor succumbed and resigned as president, leaving for exile in Nigeria. After a two-year transitional government Liberia held a unique post-conflict presidential election which was neither threatened by rebels nor had an incumbent running, and furthermore, the election was between a soccer star, George Weah, and a woman, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf. On November 23, 2005, the elections proved to be historic when a woman, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, was elected as

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[18] Inter-Parliamentary Union. "Women in national parliaments; world average." (21 October 2009).
[19] Longman 133.
[20] Longman 149.
[21] Longman 145.
[22] Burnet 385.
[23] Burnet 381.

[24] Economist Intelligence Unit. "Country profile 2008, Liberia." (2008a). 4.
[25] United Nations. Department of Peacekeeping. "UNOMIL: Background." (2001).
[26] Joseph Saye Guannu. "The political history of Liberia and the civil war." War to peace transition; conflict intervention and peacebuilding in Liberia. Kenneth Omeje. (Lanham, Maryland: UP of America, 2009) 36.

the first female president of Liberia and on the African continent.

In the case of Liberia, the woman's face not only became a face to represent Liberia post-conflict, but also as the political face of the state. Naturally, the election of Johnson-Sirleaf raised the questions of how and why did a woman get elected in post-conflict Liberia? For instance, throughout Liberia's history women's status has fluctuated in accordance with the political settings. Prior to the quasi-colonization by the American Colonization Society, and followed by the hundred-year rule by the True Whig Party (TWP), Liberia functioned under a hierarchal system that was headed by chiefs. Parallel secret societies existed, *Poro* for men and *Sande* for women, that assisted with decision-making, labor issues, creating allegiances and accumulating resources.[27] Under the Americo-Liberian rule of the TWP, only certain women – elite settler women – were able to buy and sell land, initiate divorce, and have legal agency. During the 1950's women's suffrage occurred creating an opening for women in politics, academia, healthcare and legal fields. Economic standing for indigenous rural women also shifted as men increasingly migrated for jobs and the feminization of agriculture occurred. While rural women's

gender roles and traditional tasks altered, they still lacked formal access to education and consequently maintained a lower status than urban women.[28] Thus, despite some progress, women's rights in Liberia at the time of the 2005 election were not necessarily equal between women or to those of men.

Furthermore, when these past mediocre political and social standings were paired with the onslaught of violence from the civil war, women's integrity was challenged overall. From the beginning of the civil war violence against women was significant but the extent varied according to ethnic group, religion and social status.[29] While many women were abducted for forced labor or for sexual slaves, some women did join rebel forces for protection and others resorted to prostitution as a means of economic necessity.[30] Although Liberian women became in many instances the face of the victim, seemingly in the spirit of Johnson-Sirleaf, many women seized the opening created by conflict and found opportunities.

For instance, since men became increasingly absent, either because they were killed or in hiding from rebels, the scope of women's economic activity widened, and their political positions and the number of women's organizations increased. For example, Ruth Sando Perry used her *sowei/zoe* (headwoman) status to negotiate with rebels during the civil war,[31] and was chosen to be the chairwoman of the Council of State after the first phase of the civil war. As a result, women's status in Liberia has fluctuated from

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[27] Veronika Fuest. "'This is the time to get in front': Changing roles and opportunities for women in Liberia." African Affairs 107.427 (2008) 206-207.

[28] Fuest 207-209.
[29] Social Institutions & Gender Index. "Gender equality and social institutions in Liberia." (2009a).
[30] Fuest 210.
[31] Gwendolyn Mikell. "A woman you can trust; Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf and political leadership sub-Saharan Africa." Georgetown Journal of International Affairs (Winter/Spring.2009) 18-19.

the disenfranchised poor to esteemed leaders during and post-conflict.

The election of a woman Head of State continued Liberian women's unique path. Despite her Harvard education and prior policy-making and political experiences, the election of Johnson-Sirleaf in the male-dominated Liberia political climate came as a surprise to many.[32] Johnson-Sirleaf's significant career resume included being the first female Finance Minister in Africa under former Liberian President William R. Tolbert,[33] and positions as an economist at Citibank Africa, the World Bank and the UN Development Program. While the credentials of the more qualified candidate shows why Johnson-Sirleaf won, the question of how the election of a woman in a post-conflict time period, riddled with ex-combatants in a patriarchal society, is nonetheless still shocking.[34]

The reasons behind Johnson-Sirleaf's election also show the transformation of Liberian women—the female vote, women's organizing and women's organizations. This transformation of women is exemplified by a recent study that examined the involvement of women's organizations surrounding the 2005 election, which found that women's

organizations were the only civil society groups that were constantly active throughout the entire election period, even between the election and the run-off.[35] Also, according to the Liberian National Election Commission (NEC), women constituted over 50% of voters, and during the run-off, literate women had the highest turnout of any group.[36]

Since the election of Johnson-Sirleaf women have been able to transform through the substantive representation of the president. For instance, one of the first laws Johnson-Sirleaf passed after becoming president was a law criminalizing rape and gang rape, making rape a non-parole offence in order to prevent abusers from returning to their communities and threatening victims.[37] The following year the same law was expanded to include spousal rape as a recognized form of rape and as a crime.[38] Since the 2005 election, Johnson-Sirleaf has also appointed many women to high office positions, counter-acting the fact that only five women (16.7%) were elected to the Senate and eight women (12.5%) were elected to the House.[39] Currently, women make up 25% of Johnson-Sirleaf's Cabinet and 40% of the ministerial deputies and assistants, the highest percentages in Africa.[40] Since the end of the transitional government the numbers of civil society organizations have also proliferated. As of 2007, there were 70 women's organizations registered to the Women's NGO Secretariat of Liberia, but it is estimated that the real number of women's

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[32] BBC News. 2005. "Q&A: Liberia's election."
[33] Alex Otieno. "Gender mainstreaming through women's leadership: The Liberian example." Critical Half 6.1 (2008) 29-35.
[34] BBC News.

[35] Jacqui Bauer. "Women and the 2005 election in Liberia." Journal of Modern African Studies, 47.2 (2009) 193.
[36] National Election Commission. "2005 voter registration statistics." (2005); Bauer 194.
[37] United Nations Development Fund for Women. "Progress of the world's women 2008/2009: Who answers to women? Gender and accountability: 05, justice, field stories." (2008).
[38] Social Institutions & Gender Index. (2009a).
[39] Inter-Parliamentary Union. "Women in national parliaments; world classification." (30 November 2005).
[40] Otieno 31.

organization is around 100.[41] This large number of women's groups is consequently able to apply pressure around issues, which has slightly eased the president's passage of gender-sensitive policy.

Yet, while women's numbers in politics are changing, it is minimal and the positions are usually subordinate.[42] As a result, Johnson-Sirleaf demonstrates that one woman has the ability to improve women's overall status, albeit slowly, through policy reform, engaging more women, and leading as an example to encourage women in politics. However, her presidency shows that a single president cannot create gender equality by herself or through policy alone. There must also be representational parity.[43] Furthermore, in the case of Liberia better-rounded, gender-sensitive policy requires more women in government. The case of Liberia demonstrates that even when the president represents women substantively, descriptive representation is still essential.

CONCLUSION

The female political figures discussed in Rwanda and Liberia exhibit the emergence of a new political face in two post-conflict societies. Moreover, these political figures also portray the overall transformation of women from both countries. While conflict may have initially disrupted social norms and created an opening, it was the decision of these women to pursue such a course. As a result, the Rwandan and Liberian cases suggest that it is the utilization of the space that emerges from conflict that is important, and not just the conflict or the subsequent

space. Numerous countries have endured conflict, but women's political representation has not grown in the wake of all conflicts. It is the actions taken by the respective government, women's organizations and women themselves that determine how the political opening after conflict is dealt with. Rwanda and Liberia may be the current exceptions; however, they have created a platform from which women can change conflict into an opportunity and become the new empowered political face, and no longer be the face of the victim.

Devon O'Reilly graduated from New York University's Center for Global Affairs in December 2009 with a concentration in Human Rights and Humanitarian Assistance. Since graduating she has done various consulting jobs, including a research consultant position at Women's World Banking. She recently returned from presenting her Master's thesis at the Ontario Council for International Cooperation in Toronto, Canada. In January she leaves for Guatemala to work at Asociación Hogar Nuevos Horizontes, a non-governmental organization that works for the rights of women and children in the Highlands region of Guatemala.

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[41] Fuest 212.

[42] Annie Jones-Demen. "Dynamics of gender relations in war-time and post-war Liberia: implications for public policy." War to peace transition; conflict intervention and peacebuilding in Liberia. Kenneth Omeje. (Lanham, Maryland: UP of America, 2009) 112.

[43] Otieno 31.

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http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/co_mission/unomilS.htm

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The World's Women: Political Power Gains

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Introduction

The essence of political participation in any society, either civilized or primitive, is to seek control of power, acquire power and dispense power in order to organize society, harness and distribute resources, and to influence decision making in line with organized or individual interests (Arowolo and Abe, 2008). Women's political participation has gradually increased at the local, regional, national and international levels, both in government and non-government organizations. Still, however, the power that women exercise collectively is far less than that of men, and few countries exhibit gender-balanced decision-making. Men continue to monopolize politics and much of that monopolization contributes to sustaining male privileges as the status quo. In view of this, this commentary explores the extent to which women participate in politics globally, the decision-making positions they hold, and the obstacles that are bewildering their political participation in the developing world. It examines women in decision making positions and then provides recommendations for donors and national policy makers on how to increase support for women's political participation—especially in decision-making positions. Data were drawn from the empirical literature, archives and secondary sources.

A Brief History of Women's Political Participation

Every human being has the right to participate in the making of decisions that affect their lives and their community. In recent history, affirmation of women's rights has been outlined in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* adopted by the United Nations (UN) resolution in 1948. This widely-accepted document clearly specifies that these rights apply to all equally, "without distinction of any kind such as race, color, sex, ...or other status" (Art.2). The adoption of the Convention on Political Rights of Women worldwide and endorsement of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1967 further affirmed women's rights. Also, the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action made concrete plans to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in power structures as one of its strategic objectives, and even to increase women's capacity to participate in leadership and decision-making processes. Additionally, in 2000, Security Council Resolution 1325 urged member States to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels (UN, 2000As/1325).

Nevertheless, going through the history of the world political system, it seems that democracy serves men better than women. Inglehart and Norris (2003) note that there is still a global dilemma in respect to gender equality which is one of the ingredients of democracy. Frazer (1990: 66) identified that women's gains in political participation, (he refers to it as 'participatory parity'), have been marred with inequality in the public sphere as a result of the 'systemic social inequalities'. This implies that gender equality in politics is still an eyesore. There is an obnoxious belief that women are fit for domestic roles and also, due to their suitability in caring roles as mothers and wives, their relevance to the political sphere seems immaterial within the public sphere. This political dichotomy in the gendered world remains the bedrock for different types of democracies in the world, as noted by Philips (1998) and Rai (2000). Thus, the combinations of prejudice, traditions and vested interests in the social-economic and political arenas have relegated women to the special interests of the private sphere, where

their statuses are disproportionately rendered as subordinate.

Women's Participation and Access to Decision-Making Positions

In preparation for the United Nations-sponsored women's conference in Beijing in 1995, the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) *Human Development Report* produced a special publication on gender (1995). Presently, two initiatives have helped to spark active interest in the political role of women (Randriamaro, 2004). The first is the introduction of the Millenium Development Goal (MDG) on gender equality, while the second has been the increasing attention given to the idea of 'good governance'. Ignoring women's interventions in the world of politics has made it difficult to eliminate gender equalities, or better still, to be responsive to women citizens. This shows that women's participation in politics is therefore recognized to be both a right and a requirement for effective development. It is generally agreed that a critical mass of women in politics - usually estimated at at least 30 percent of parliamentarians - is needed in order to have policy impact (Richard, 2005).

The struggle for women's emancipation in politics has led to many specific programmes which have received a boost from the developed countries and other international institutions in the areas of mainstreaming gender into the agenda of good governance[44]. For example, UNIFEM (now part of UN Women) developed a gender-sensitive definition of good governance and models of how state accountability functions for women (UNIFEM, 2008). Although, there is a seemingly increased understanding that economic rights do not produce an egalitarian society, the post conflict state-building

process has somewhat been a catalyst to strengthen women's participation in reforms, peace and political processes. Through this, there is a renewed consciousness of the importance of women's participation, as argued by Lyytikainen (2009). Although women have made tangible gains in political participation, the increased representation of women in politics has not provided women with the necessary power to make the changes they desire.

Today, women hold significantly more decision-making positions; the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh have all elected two different women as chief executives. In 2005, parliamentarians selected Angela Merkel as the first female Chancellor of Germany. In 2006, voters elected two women presidents and set important precedents. In war-torn Liberia (West Africa), Ellen Johnson Sirleaf became the new president, the first-ever female chief executive in an African country. In Chile, voters selected the first-ever female president, socialist and feminist, Michelle Bachelet. The recent record numbers of women to national parliaments worldwide (IPU, 2011) affirms that women are beginning to be appointed for cabinet positions in larger numbers than two decades past. This trend reveals that 'more women are entering political positions more than ever before' (Jalalzai and Krook, 2010). In other words, female political participation continues to increase tellingly.

In summing up the advancements made so far, there is impressive progress; specifically 78 women from 57 nations have been added to the existing female national leaders between 1960 and 2009, as shown in Table 1. The table further reveals that these women in positions of executive leadership hail from geographically diverse locations. Though Europe ranks highest, other regions in the world are now increasing the proportion of their female leaders (21 women are now

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[44]See www.gaportal.org/areas-ofgovernance/governance-and-gender accessed on 29th April, 2011

occupying political office: ten presidents and eleven prime ministers)[45].

TABLE 1: WOMEN AS NATIONAL LEADERS, 1960-2011

REGION	NUMBER	COUNTRIES
Western Europe	18	Finland (3), France, Germany (2), Iceland (2), Ireland (2), Malta, Norway, Portugal, Turkey, Switzerland (3), United Kingdom
Eastern Europe	13	Bulgaria, Georgia, Latvia, Lithuania (3), Macedonia, Poland, Serbia, Ukraine, Yugoslavia, Slovakia
Latin America	11	Argentina (2), Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador, Guyana, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Costa Rica, Brazil.
Sub-Saharan Africa	11	Burundi, Central African Republic, Gabon, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mozambique, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principle (2), Senegal, South Africa
Central and South Asia	9	Bangladesh (2), Pakistan, India (2), Mongolia, Sri Lanka (2), Kyrgyzstan
East Asia	5	Indonesia, South Korea (2), Philippines (2)
Caribbean	6	Dominica, Haiti (3), Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago
Oceania	3	New Zealand (2), Australia
Middle East	2	Israel (2)
North America	1	Canada

Source: "Women World Leaders, 1945–2011," http://www.terra.es/personal2/monolith/00women.htm (accessed February 23, 2011) and Jalalzai and Krook (2008).

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[45] See www.guide2womenleaders.com Accessed on 27th April, 2011.

The Future is Not as Bright as It May Seem

Looking at the different political positions held by women, Jalalzai and Krook (2010: 13; 2008) contended that it is shocking to know that "37 or 67 percent-are from dual executive systems and therefore in power-sharing roles and also it is not all national leadership posts that are created equal". They argued that "women serve more often in systems where executive authority is more dispersed, as opposed to in those with more unified executive structures". Furthermore, in most of these cases, "women tend to be placed in positions of weaker authority". Some of these serving female leaders are even tagged as "figureheads or just holding relatively nominal positions" (Ibid.).

For example, as argued by Jalalzai and Krook, Mary McAleese, the President of Ireland, "has very little substantive power as compared to the prime minister". In addition to this, there are numerous examples of weak female prime ministers operating under much stronger presidents. This is typically the case for women in Africa, who are often unilaterally appointed by the president and frequently subject to dismissal at his will. The same is true of several female leaders in Eastern Europe. The fact that women have increased their numbers as executives is important. However, the specific powers and level of autonomy at their disposal are crucial in assessing how far they have yet to go' (Jalalzai and Krook, 2008; 2010).

A cursory look into the gains women have made in various regions of the world reveals varying success across countries, especially in Africa. More striking is that although 13 out of 29 women contestants won seats in the Nigerian Federal House of Representatives in the 1998 elections, 360 seats were contested thus making women account for less than 4% of total representatives. This demarcation of roles meant that, from the outset in some countries, women are largely excluded from

decision-making positions in the public domain (Republic of Kenya 1999 [a]). Longwe (1995:7) blames this phenomenon on traditional patriarchal principles.

In summary, all efforts to tease-out the paradox of gender equality, particularly women's powerless voice in the public sphere, has mapped-out the importance of 'kingship ties as a path of office' (Hodson, 1997; Richter, 1991), and 'structural relations of dominations and subordinations' (Nancy Fraser, 2003:66). In some stratified societies, women's headship is largely associated with patriarchy or their association with the former rulers or opposition chiefs. Women's successes under these circumstances, while noteworthy, do not suggest a viable path to office for most of the world's women.

While the political playing field in each country has its own particular characteristics, one feature remains common to all: too few women are in positions of real power. Women who want to enter politics often find that the political, public, cultural and social environments are unfriendly or even hostile to them. Furthermore, in most of these cases, women tend to be placed in positions of weaker authority. The domination of men, patriarchy, and institutional problems tend to be considered as potent barriers to women's political headship in different regions of the world. Undoubtedly, female leadership has increased, even despite all odds against them. Meanwhile, the level of power and autonomy they posses are very important in ascertaining the progress made so far[46]. Nevertheless, women around the world at every socio-economic level find themselves underrepresented in parliament and far removed from decision-making positions.

Recommendations to Promote Women's Participation

What else is needed in terms of programming and governance for women to gain more ground in the political realm? These are suggested below:

1. There is a need to remove patriarchal structures that prevail not only in the state apparatus but also within families and societies at large, especially in some developing countries. The legal impediments facing the women in these regions should be amended and should be aligned closely with the stipulations of CEDAW.
2. Gender must be mainstreamed in justice systems, so that judicial equity is achieved.
3. Greater financial resources must be made available, including through increased support for women's civil society groups.
4. Media must increase their coverage of women candidates, and women – in turn - must seek out greater public exposure.
5. Long-term initiatives must be developed to train young girls as political decision-makers, empowering the next generation of female leaders. The 1993 declaration issued at the UN Vienna World Conference on Human Rights regarding the rights of women and the girls should be implemented.
6. Political parties should create an enabling environment to provide equal opportunities for women to participate in the political process, select and serve as candidates and run for office.

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[46] See Jalalzai (2008).

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Women's Empowerment through Microfinance: Interrogating the Economic and Socio-cultural Structure

By Sabrina Regmi

Abstract

Over the past few decades, microfinance initiatives have started to primarily target women and a debate has emerged as to whether microfinance is in actually a critical component of women's empowerment. This debate is divided by the boundaries of west/south and surrounds the conceptual understanding of women and/or gender and development that has continuously been shaping the discourse on microfinance and women's empowerment in the South. Several microfinance initiatives have been launched and carried out in southern regions from Africa to Asia, with mixed outcomes. The socio-cultural setting of South plays an important role with regards to the outcomes of women's empowerment, refuting the common assumption that women's empowerment is an automatic outcome of microfinance. The paper looks into the debate, the issues, and the evidence and concludes that microfinance may play important role in transforming women's economic empowerment but also has the potential to be detrimental to a women's overall empowerment if it solely concentrates on the economic agenda of rationalizing women's economic activism and using women for poverty reduction while ignoring the socio-cultural structure of a given society that presents a barrier to the process of women's empowerment.

Microfinance Revolution

Since microfinance initiatives have started targeting women, the debate has been whether microfinance is actually been a critical aspect of women's empowerment (Mayoux 2002 / 2006, Skarlatos 2004, *Jyotish*

2006, SIDA 2009, Gobezie, 2010). This debate has mostly been held in relation to the South where gender based inequality has been a historic reality and women's participation in income generating economic activities has been low. Moreover, women have also lacked access to their economic rights, to property inheritance, bank loans, or even agriculture based credit as they have been perceived as merely the helping hands of the male farmers (Regmi 2011). In rare cases, agricultural based credit was provided to single women with children, as the burden of responsibility for agricultural farming became solely theirs in the absence of their husbands. However, in other cases, where a grown up son was present, this type of credit was given to the son rather than his mother. In the years following the beginning stages of targeting women for microfinance initiatives it has become evident that the microfinance revolution has brought about several changes in the unequal economic structure that has traditionally marginalized a woman's economic needs, particularly those of poor women. The microfinance revolution has brought access to equal economic opportunities to both poor men and women by providing micro financial services such as microcredit to start microenterprises on group collateral (relieving them from monetary collateral, often charged in high interest rates by commercial banks), safe deposit savings, micro insurance, microenterprise skill trainings, and so on. With the equal access to microfinance services, many women have gained equal opportunities to utilize their skills and generate much needed income on the market, a domain that has been traditionally dominated by men. Consequently, microfinance seemed to have brought a positive transformation towards the economic activism of women and has offered a semblance of gender equality in economic terms (Bista 2008 in Guichard et. al. 2008).

Unarguably, the change in the micro economic structure of the South has had

positive impacts on the lives of impoverished people. Women in particular have benefitted as microfinance has increased their economic participation on the market. However, since the regions in the global South represent a socio-cultural setting that can be described as traditional, the question arises if the positive transformations of microfinance have had the same impact on the socio-cultural structure of the south, where gender disparities occur simultaneously with economic inequality? This paper aims to answer this question by exploring several issues including the west/south debate on the role of microfinance on women or gender and development, the neoliberal development agenda, and the creation of rational yet altruistic woman. The paper also explores empirical evidence that reveals the role and potential of microfinance initiatives and finally concludes by presenting the overall role of microfinance and its strengths and weaknesses.

The West/ South Debate

Microfinance services cater to the needs of microbusiness creation such as microcredit as capital, uses of microcredit for business, business skills training, and establishing market linkages. These are most of the time delivered by national microfinance institutions that are supported financially by different stakeholders such as national governments, national banks, foreign government aid, and international development agencies such as the Asian Development Bank, World Bank, UNDP, etc. The theoretical underpinnings that surround the goal of the microfinance initiatives often carry on the legacy and act according to both feminist development perspectives and economic development models. Western feminist perspectives that influenced the approach of development institutions included the perspectives of prominent feminists, such as Ester Boserup, who held the belief that women in the South needed economic freedom and equal economic

opportunity on par their male counterparts (Boserup 1970). Consequently, Boserup's research found that women in the south were lagging behind men with regards to access to economic opportunities while their economic activism in the agricultural sector was found to be virtually ignored and lowly remunerated. Boserup and other western feminists argued that women in the South had been excluded from the development process and thus needed urgent attention. Hence, these perspectives held that women's inclusion in the nation's development process would be an immediate solution to development and empowering women. It was believed that equal access to microfinance services would enable women to self employ and begin to take up income generating activities that would enhance their opportunities and social standing while also enhancing the overall GDP and development situation in a given country. Moreover, the belief was held that a women's access to microfinance would give them equal opportunity to be engaged in the market which would concurrently raise their status in the household and community and that would eventually empower them socially, economically, and politically. This debate surrounded the initial stage of the microfinance revolution for women's empowerment and was the backbone to the conceptual understanding of "women and development."

However, feminists experts from the global South have argued that microfinance development initiatives carried out from the perspective of westerners have in actuality served to exclude women from mainstream development. This is because the income generating activities that women were engaging in through microfinance were found to be mostly home-based or near the home. Furthermore, the economic generating activities that women were being introduced to could generally be classified as transitionally feminine activities such as sewing, dress making, vegetable gardening,

and so on. Thus, experts in the global South have argued that microfinance has rather served to further embed and restrict a woman's mobility, not increase her engagement with society and the larger market. This alternative perspective to women and microfinance finds that women in actuality became dependent on men for the marketing of their products rather than using the leverage of business to become more independent. Consequently, the earned income was found to go into the hands of the male counterparts rather than the women entrepreneurs. Feminists from the South have urged the development community to take socio-cultural realities into account while implementing development initiatives so as to ensure that microfinance initiatives do more than just generate income but work to transform societal relations and empower women (Beneria and Sen 1997). Thus, this alternative perspective has led to a conceptual transformation of women and development. This new conceptual framework is known as "gender and development" and has become the basis of women's empowerment in the south.

As such, previous initiatives began to be modified towards reaching the true goal of microfinance; social and economic empowerment. Initiatives such as introducing more remunerative enterprises outside the homes, encouraging women to start up enterprises generally dominated by the men in the market, the offering of microenterprise skills trainings, and global market linkage opportunities were some of the modified initiatives of microfinance by the development community. This evolution in microfinance initiatives has taken on the agenda of women's empowerment.

Microfinance and "Rational Economic /Altruist Women"

Although microfinance has become extremely popular among women and particularly for its women's empowerment agenda, there are other critical aspects of microfinance initiatives that need to be comprehended well before we move on to the debate on whether it has the potential to truly empower women. One of them is the main goal of microfinance initiations in the South, that is, the overly promoted goal of "poverty alleviation."

Microfinance initiatives gained prominence after Professor Mohammad Yunus introduced these initiatives in the acutely poor villages of Bangladesh. Professor Yunus's first encounter with a woman who was seeking small credit to maintain her street business turned out to be a path breaking experience that opened the door for the initiation of microfinance. With this encounter, Professor Yunus learned how the woman was maintaining her micro business by borrowing money from a loan shark in her village who charged extremely high interest rates. Professor Yunus utilized this opportunity to help the woman by loaning her small amount of money with low interest rate. Later, not only he received his loan but also the interest back on time. This experience illuminated how beneficial a small amount of credit can be for the poverty stricken, particularly women who have generally had little access to credit. Moreover, Yunis also found that overall women were more reliable than men in the repayment of a loan. As such, Professor Yunis started the Grameen Bank, a bank that would provide

microfinance services at a low interest rate while saving deposits at a reasonable interest rate. Professor Yunis began offering this service mostly to poor women as well as to some poor men in the villages of Bangladesh.

This initiative was later embraced by various microfinance institutions in the South, from Africa to Asia. The empirical evidence in various regions throughout the global South has confirmed one of Professor Yunis's findings; that the repayment rate on microfinance loans is typically higher among women as compared to men, and women were more honest and reliable to repay back on time. Moreover, the results also showed that women would use their earning to spend more on the family welfare such as nutritious food, children's education, other household necessities rather than on their personal needs as compared to men who were found to spend more on their personal needs such as alcohol, and gambling (Regmi 2011).

Due to the seeming success of the economic aspect of microfinance, microfinance became a more visible tool and women began to be consistently targeted by microfinance initiatives and development institutions with the goal of generating financial sustainability, poverty reduction, and economic development in the global South. The major aim of these initiatives has seemed to create a "rational economic woman with an altruistic character." This woman not only works hard to earn her own money; she also contributes to the financial gain and sustainability of the microfinance institutions and the nation as a whole by being an active economic participant in nation's development. This new rational economic and altruistic woman is seen as contributing to the family's income by being an economically active household member and through this she relieves her husband from the sole breadwinner role. Furthermore, she sacrifices her own personal needs in order to meet the larger needs of the family such as providing food to the family

and making sure her children go to school and obtain a good education. Thus, the rational and altruistic woman not only lifts herself and her family out of poverty, she also is utilizing her new found role to nurture future development of the overall society (Rankin 2002, Regmi 2011). However, through all of this, it is still falsely assumed that the female beneficiaries of microfinance benefit more than they actually contribute. As such women's empowerment is rather viewed as an assumed aftermath effect of the other major goals of poverty alleviation and economic development rather than an end in and of itself. For the economic benefits of the nation and the stakeholders involved, women's agency and economic potential is made flexible and can be bent in either one or both directions of the rational economic woman or the altruistic woman – both which serve to maintain the economic motives of the microfinance stakeholders and economists but not necessarily to improve the socio-cultural position of women in their own societies.

Microfinance and the Socio-Cultural South

Although, microfinance initiatives have served to provide various financial services, especially for women in various regions in the south, the neoliberal economic approach that supports the notions of economic freedom and development can be problematic because in many cases this approach minimizes the real potential to achieve the overall women's empowerment outcome. Evidence shows both positive and negative outcomes of microfinance in women's empowerment in the South. Socio-cultural ideology and practices play a large and important role in either facilitating or impeding the microfinance initiative towards women's empowerment.

In most parts of Africa, microfinance initiatives showed the potential to empower women as they became economically

empowered through the success of their businesses. In Ghana, a study shows that with access to microfinance services and the creation of businesses women were able to maintain sound relationship with both suppliers and customers and gained both respect and trust within the larger business community (Cheston and Kuhn, 2001) Moreover, the study showed that in Ghana it is rare that men control either a woman's loan or income. Hence, through microfinance women have obtained equal control over resources and decision making power. This is also a result of flexible gender relations which made it possible for women to not only economically empower themselves through successful business initiatives, ownership, and profit/income in their hand, but women also faced less difficulties in turning their economic empowerment into the overall empowerment in social, business, and political setting.

However, a similar case in rural Nepal reveals somewhat different outcomes. A study conducted in the villages of central Nepal shows that women in the nuclear family setting have been able to succeed in their micro business and have had success in taking control of their business ownership and profit. However, women from extended households had less luck and overall women from both types of households benefit less than their male counterparts and children from the initiatives of microfinance, even though women are the targeted population of these particular initiatives. In fact, in Nepal microfinance initiatives have shown that women have become multiburdened, saddled with triple roles to perform at home, in the office, and on the farm. The study further shows as major gap in the neoliberal agenda of microfinance initiatives that target women as the ultimate poverty alleviator of the household because these initiatives have benefitted men by relieving them from their one familial role as the breadwinner. Thus, microfinance that has targeted women in

Nepal has freed up time and space for males while overburdening females (Regmi, 2011).

Conclusion

Microfinance can play a significant role towards the empowerment of the female in the global South. Microfinance initiatives targeted at women have facilitated access to the economic rights that were once denied to females on the basis of sex. However, microfinance directed at women is not a panacea for development, poverty alleviation, and empowerment. There are many faults to the current approach of this model and problems arise as microfinance initiatives have become increasingly concerned with targeting women due to women's high repayment rates, their tendency to repay on time, and their investment family welfare. As financial sustainability of microfinance institutions, household poverty alleviation, and rural development are the major agendas of the economic development community, the goal of women's empowerment has become marginalized in the microfinance debate and is being used as a "promotional tool" rather than a legitimate and necessary goal in and of itself. Moreover, women's labor and agency is also being manipulated and used whenever appropriate if it falls along the lines of achieving the overall goal of poverty alleviation. Thus, it can be understood that the although microfinance advocates being a bottom up / grassroots /participatory approach to development that aims to rescue the poor and disadvantaged, especially women from poverty and disempowerment, the approach of microfinance has a neoliberal agenda that ends up ignoring the socio-cultural reality of the South and has the potential to further marginalize and disempower women. Socio-cultural realities are a critical factor the microfinance debate because as illustrated, socio-cultural realities have important implications for facilitating or impeding a women's empowerment and are critical to the overall effort of microfinance initiatives and how they impact women.

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23

Interview with Dr. Laura Sjoberg

By Erin Hogeboom

Dr. Laura Sjoberg is a leading feminist scholar in the field of international relations and international security. The author of "Gender, Justice, and the Wars in Iraq" and co-author of "Mothers, Monsters, Whores: Women's Violence in Global Politics," she's written numerous works that challenge conventional ideas of thinking about gender in international relations. Dr. Sjoberg is currently an assistant professor of political science at the University of Florida. She received her B.A. from the University of Chicago and her Ph.D. from the University of Southern California School of International Relations in 2004, under the distinctive instruction of her mentor and forerunner in the field, Ann Tickner. Dr. Sjoberg also holds a J.D. from Boston College. Her work has been published in a number of international relations journals, including the International Feminist Journal of Politics, International Studies Quarterly, International Studies Review, International Relations, International Politics, International Studies Perspectives, Politics and Gender, Feminist Review, and the Austrian Journal of Political Science. She also holds a research fellowship with the Women and Public Policy Program at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and has taught at universities such as Virginia Tech, Duke University, Merrimack College and Brandeis University.

I recently had the unique opportunity to speak with Dr. Sjoberg and ask her a little about her perspective on some phenomenon occurring in the world today.

Erin: Could you first just give us a little insight into how it is you became interested in the field of International Relations (IR) and what made you see the need to focus on gender?

Dr. Sjoberg: I first became interested in IR because I was a policy debater in high school

and college. The policy debate every year was a research topic, on either domestic or international politics, and I was always drawn to doing research on the international politics topics. I thought that that was a really interesting thing to think about in terms of policy.

In terms of gender, I guess two ways. The first way was also through debate, that is, I found some of the feminist research as I was doing research on international politics and started writing about the debate topics as they related to that. But also, in my IR research and classes, I kind of felt like this 'is a story of great men in history,' there were no women and there are no normal people. And it was frustrating to me because the story of history is really the story of women and normal people, so that's what I wanted to dedicate my career to exploring.

Erin: Well, I think I speak for a diverse audience when I thank you for following those pursuits and contributing to the dialogue in a meaningful way. You've written a book entitled "Mothers, Monsters and Whores," where you essentially discredit the idea of a woman's lack of agency in international relations through examples such as the 'Black Widows' in Chechnya and female suicide bombers in the Middle East. This challenges a very pervasive assumption that women are the mere victims of war. How does this "game-changer" affect the ways in which local communities up to international agencies deal with conflict?

Dr. Sjoberg: I don't know that it's changed it all, I would hope.

The challenge on the ground dealing with questions of gender is to be gender sensitive without being gender essentialist. That is, a lot of international agencies were actually far [ahead of] academics, in terms of thinking about dealing with and being sensitive to questions of gender. Unfortunately, more often than not, that meant paying attention to

woman who want to be "X" when they grow up, and then encouraging them to do that. Which, wasn't poorly intended but it was kind of some sense of paying attention to gender—first, gender means women and second, women means traditional roles that women are supposed to have. The reality on the ground, especially in conflict areas, is so much different than that. Some of the things you'd expect happen, like high levels of war time rape, and things like that. But the thing is, when you go looking for women who are more peaceful than men, you don't really find that, and when you pretend like you've found that, it usually makes for bad policy.

Erin: Okay, so what you've looked at are the policy implications of assuming that women are kind of passive recipients of war? Whereas, what we need to be doing is looking at them in the full context of what's going on on the ground?

Dr. Sjoberg: Well I think that's true, and I also think of it as a broader implication for gender subordination. Because in some sense, it's the spectrum of what we think women are capable of. So much that in everyday life it doesn't even look like there are constraints, especially in everyday life in the United States. But, for example, the idea that we are horrified by women's violence and think that it is something different than men's violence, and more upsetting and more unnatural, that shows that there are still boundaries on what we think women are. And that applies to women who even don't go out and kill people.

Erin: So, if I understand it correctly, you are taking that example and looking at it as the ways in which we still, whether realized or not, constrain women by boundaries that we construct for them. At a recent discussion with our gender working group here at NYU's Center for Global Affairs, Lysistrata, the question about how a woman's role in conflict and conflict prevention is different came up. Can you elaborate on the unique role that you might see women playing both in pre-conflict

and post-conflict scenarios and what the international community can do to facilitate that role?

Dr. Sjoberg: Can I object to the question?

Erin: Absolutely!

Dr. Sjoberg: There are a couple of levels on which you can answer that question. The first is my obnoxious academic theoretical insert, which is, the inclusion of women in conflict and conflict prevention and conflict negotiation shouldn't be based on some idea that women will do something different than men. It should be based on the idea that women should be included because people should be included, because different voices should be included. Do I think that there is anything essentially different about woman than men in that context, no. That said, do different social and life experiences that women are likely to have, like subordination, matter in terms of the voices that people would have in conflict and conflict negotiations, absolutely. There are a couple of interesting things that are worth pointing out about the increasing attempt to include women in conflict negotiation, and places like that. There are a lot of places, especially in the UN Security Council where women are increasingly included in the room, but nobody is measuring its effects. There are two things I believe we could look at that would reveal interesting results. First, what is the percentage of words uttered and ideas ultimately accepted that are coming from women, which I think is actually significantly less than the men. And the second thing, is what sort of women are recruited to be part of these negotiations. Because the men at these tables are often the leaders in the conflict, and the little data that we've been able to collect shows that the women at these tables are part of peace organizations. Which, on one hand, is fine and good and peace organizations should be included, but on the other hand it's a different sort of person being put at the table. But the women involved in

the conflict are being excluded both by their conflict parties and the international organizations that are holding these negotiations. This creates multi-layer dynamics, which is not an argument not to include women, but more so an argument to include women involved in the conflict.

Erin: It's interesting you brought up the UN Security Council. What are your thoughts on UN Security Council Resolutions 1325, 1820 and 1889? Are they sufficient? What can be done to strengthen their viability?

Dr. Sjoberg: Well, I guess the first thing I'd say is I don't know enough to give you a professional opinion, but I can give you a personal opinion. To me, are those watershed resolutions that r*eally* matter, absolutely. Have I heard creative uses that have really made women's lives better, yes. I had a talk four or five years ago at the Boston Consortium on Gender Security and Human Rights where this woman from Liberia had had Resolution 1325 translated and wandered around to local village chieftains explaining to them that the UN would punish them if they didn't let women vote, and it worked! And that was nowhere near true or the intended point, but it made a difference in Liberia. So, it matters and I say that because the rest of my answer is not quite as friendly to the idea. It matters, but I don't think it matters in the same way that a lot of people in the feminist community thought it would. When 1325 was passed, there were a bunch of people in the feminist community who had worked to get it past and who were really excited and thought that this was a significant change in security council behavior. But my inner realist wonders why the Security Council would do that, and why would they do it when they did. And in the late 1990's, the Security Council was in a lot of trouble for peacekeeper abuse of local civilians, and there was a lot of talk about getting the Security Council out of the peacekeeping business at all, which of course is the only thing it does. And then in early 2001 it wasn't just 1325, there's the HIV/AIDS resolution,

the Children War resolution. It was like a newer, softer face of the big, bad, evil Security Council. And, to me, it works and it works without enforcing Resolution 1325 really at all. And, so, four or five years later when enforcement was uneven at best, everyone who celebrated it as significant change in the Security Council was curious as to why it wasn't enforced. And to me, the answer is it wasn't enforced because it was never intended to be. The policy reason for doing it was not exclusively, if it really was at all, about bettering women's lives. And if that's true, then what has happened makes more sense. And it's not that there's zero enforcement or zero attempts to enforce it, that's not true either. There have been a number of attempts to hire gender coordinators in the field, etc. The first problem is that the intent to enforce it is haphazard because the commitment to doing it isn't there. And the second is, if you read these resolutions, they're so gender essentialist. They still say 'because women are essential to international peace and security,' 'because women are essential to negotiating good peaces,' 'because women are good at peace we should include them.' And I think that that pigeonholes women into doing something that they may or may not want to do, and if they do want to do it that's fine, but if they don't then it pigeonholes them into doing it. It also makes it surprising when you find a non-peaceful woman, and then what do you do, because women are essential to peace and security. And I think that that language is dangerous. So, would I have voted for Resolution 1325? Absolutely. Am I happy that it exists? Sure. Am I a little bit of a cynic about it? That too.

Erin: I'm sure you have heard the argument that discussing gender as a separate issue in IR is actually a discredit to the field because it isolates a theme that should be integrated into all talks we have on international relations, security, human rights, etc. What is your response to this?

Dr. Sjoberg: I think those people are just reading what gender is and interpreting gender as sex. What they are saying is that if you are studying women, then you're not putting women into the main stream and you should just study women whenever you study other topics. And I'm sure that's a good argument, but I know that doesn't argue with what I do. That is, I'm not only interested in women, and when I say gender I don't mean women and I don't even really mean women and men. What I mean is gendered relationships, where we read gender-based characteristics into people and even states based on their assumed biological sex or their place along gender hierarchy. So, I think of Peterson's idea of 'feminization' as a policy tool, and that has nothing to do with being a woman or not, it's just that we make that association because it happens to women. So, I'm interested in gender relations in the international arena, and can that be separated from race relations and class relations and things like that, no, but I'm not trying to do that either. I'm starting at gender and analyzing what you see when you start from that point.

Erin: Do you believe that the events that have gone on in Egypt will change the reality for Egyptian women on the ground? Do you think they will gain more equality or will status quo be maintained?

Dr. Sjoberg: Okay, I'm trying not to pick on the word equality, which I'm not sure what it means and I'm not sure if it's a useful word to use. I don't know if the status of women in Egypt will get better, I don't know enough about Egypt to know the answer. I was concerned, and turned out to be right, that the status of women in both Afghanistan and Iraq would be at serious risk with attempts to liberalize the government. And part of the reason that that is true is often dictatorial regimes liberalize policies not because the popular opinion on the status of women has changed. Iraq is one of the best places in the middle-east on gender, not because Talabani is a developed feminist or because the Iraqi

people all of a sudden see women as equals, but because it's a cynical attempt to gather multi-ethnic coalitions, which actually really worked for him. He enfranchises women so that he can maintain control of the state, but nobody is actually convinced that women should have all of the privileges that they had in the Iraqi society before. So, the problem with that then becomes, how do you know if people actually want women to be equal or not? And I don't know enough about the political actors in Egypt to know that. But I don't think it's as easy as democracy, or increasing liberalization of government, that makes progress against gender subordination. Especially because democratizing states are among the most violent, statistically speaking, which changes when they become democracies. But there's not a whole lot of resources with what happens in between, the things we don't know and don't see.

Erin: Since you've been in the movement, have you noticed a change in the dialogue around women in international relations, particularly in the security sector? What has been the response to your discussion in academic circles?

Dr. Sjoberg: I guess that the field of IR has gotten to the point where they know they should include women who think about gender, but they haven't reached the point yet where they understand why they should respect that work and that it has different epistemological assumptions and different objects of study than the other work that they read all the time. So, on one hand, I feel very welcome in a lot of places in IR. On the other hand, sometimes I get the sense when I actually start talking substance about what I do that I'm welcome so long as no one really has to understand that part. And that's problematic but expected. I talk to some of the people that I know, my mentors, like Anne Tickner and Janice Peterson and Christine Sylvester who did this 25 years ago. And from what I can tell, they were singled out every day of the week and twice on Sundays. At the

same time, a couple of weeks ago at ISA I asked some of the 'boys' to be on a panel on gender and security, and they behaved but one of them actually started his talk with a joke. He said, 'I like sex, but I'm not particularly into gender.' So there are still challenges, there are still exclusions, but I think it's getting better. But it's getting better outside the U.S. faster than in the U.S. Feminism in IR is thriving in the U.K. and in Europe, Australia and New Zealand. When I look at where people in feminism are getting jobs after they finish their doctorates, it's mostly there. It's imbalanced, and the center of feminist work in IR is definitely outside the U.S.

Erin: What do you see as ways we can improve upon participation of women in global affairs in the coming decade?

Dr. Sjoberg: What one can do, that's reasonable, is hold their school accountable for teaching gender. The other thing one can do, and this is harder but I think more important, is to take seriously that the best training in gender is at different places than the best training in main-stream political science. To take that seriously, both as a student when considering what program to go into, but also for the school to take that seriously when they are hiring someone to teach gender. Because if you hire a teacher to teach gender and they teach how peaceful women are, then you're not hiring the state of the art in the field. And that to me is frustrating, trying to explain to people that you want people who are good at this, not people who are good at IR and have the word gender in there someplace. And that structure, both in the classroom and in graduate training, means that it will continue to remain marginal to the field. And that's what I'm trying to make piecemeal changes in.

The PGI staff, on behalf of the students at CGA, would like to thank Dr. Sjoberg for taking the time to share some of her perspectives with us.

The Role of Women on the Re-development of Rwanda

By Emma Diaz

"The situation in Rwanda after the 1994 genocide is that…women constitute the majority of the adult working population in Rwanda, [and] they are central to economic development and reconstruction"

President Kagame[47]

Introduction

Starting in April 1994, in a span of 100 days, between 800,000 to one million people were killed in Rwanda; the majority of those killed were men (World Bank 1997, 2). The genocide impacted the lives of all Rwandans, but the effect it had on women was profound because of the change it necessitated in the way they lived their lives. After the genocide, women represented 57% of the "adult working population aged 20 to 44" (Hamilton 2000, 1). The genocide left women in a position that most had not previously experienced. Many became the sole providers to their families, roles formerly held only by men. Women necessarily became instrumental in the redevelopment of Rwanda in the informal work sector, the agricultural sector and also in the public sectors, including becoming more involved in the political process.

The Roles of Women in Pre-Genocide Rwanda

The structure of Rwanda pre-genocide was one steeped in patriarchy. Men were the sole holders of property and wealth. **"**In pre-genocide Rwanda, women's roles were limited by the idealized notion of women as child bearers" (Human Rights Watch 1996, 19). Women had very little freedom, were heavily dependent on the males in their lives, were rarely able to work outside the home and had little to no legal standing. Few women were educated outside their roles as mothers and wives. "Girls made up 45% of primary school students, but by secondary school, boys outnumbered girls 9 to 1. By the university level, that disparity had grown to 15 to 1" (Human Rights Watch 1996, 21). It was expected that women would stay in the home after primary school in order take care of their families and prepare for marriage and motherhood.

A woman's place was in the home, but they also made up half of the workforce in the years leading up to the genocide, working mainly in the agricultural sector (Human Rights Watch 1996, 22-23). Women made up approximately 65-50 percent of the agricultural sector, but they had no legal right to the profits or the land they worked. Women were expected to contribute to the family by working in the family fields and taking care of the children, whereas their husband or father would go out to earn a wage (Jefremovas 1991, 381). In addition, the Commercial Code stated that a woman could not work outside the home without express permission from her husband or male family member (Human Rights Watch 1996, 22). Those women who were allowed to work outside the home worked mainly in lower-paying "female" jobs, i.e. administrative work, teaching, social work or nursing. In addition to being restricted from work, women were restricted in their access to money. Women were allowed to have bank accounts, but in order to access the money they would need permission from their husbands (Jefremovas 1991, 382). The same was true for access to credit or loans, so any woman seeking to begin a business would have to do so with the permission and assistance of a male relative or her husband.

Land ownership and inheritance laws were other areas of restriction for women. Women could not directly inherit property from their

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[47] Kagame 2002

parents or husbands[48]. Property would pass from one male relative down to the next, usually father to son, bypassing the female relatives. A father may give his daughter land, but inheritance was not guaranteed. The women with the "most power" were widows. A widow was considered to be the head of her own household, but was still subject to inheritance and land ownership restrictions. A surviving widow would be allowed to maintain control of her land as long as she remained in the "matrimonial home" (UNIFEM 2001, 43). Women seeking legal recourse had little standing in the law, being seen as little more than the chattel of their male relatives.

Women's involvement in the political process prior to the genocide was also limited. Women received suffrage in Rwanda prior to the country's independence in 1961. However, husbands dictated how wives voted. Few women were able to run for office because of the patriarchal nature of the society. Women's participation in the parliament did not rise above 17% and it was rare that they were able to rise to positions of power within the government. In fact, "No women were appointed within the executive branch until 1990 and even then constituted only 5.26% of the appointees" (Center for Law and Globalization). An exception to this was Agathe Uwilingiyimana, a Hutu woman who became Prime Minister in 1993 and served until she was killed during the genocide in 1994. She was killed as a result of her membership in the opposition party that came into office after the power sharing government was established by the Arusha Accords.

The subservient position of women prior to the genocide made them some of the most vulnerable targets of *Interahamwe*[49] when the genocide started. Hutus targeted women because of their roles as reproducers of the next generation of Tutsis. As such, the first 3 commandments of the 10 commandments of Hutus[50] specifically address women:

1. Every Hutu should know that a Tutsi woman, whoever she is, works for the interest of her Tutsi ethnic group. As a result, we shall consider a traitor any Hutu who
- marries a Tutsi woman
- befriends a Tutsi woman
- employs a Tutsi woman as a secretary or a concubine.

2. Every Hutu should know that our Hutu daughters are more suitable and conscientious in their role as woman, wife and mother of the family. Are they not beautiful, good secretaries and more honest?

3. Hutu women, be vigilant and try to bring your husbands, brothers and sons back to reason.

Women were targeted not for killing but instead for rape. The use of rape as a weapon was widespread throughout the genocide. It resulted in the shame of these women and made them less likely to be marriageable. Also, because of the high rate of HIV and STDs in the country many women contracted disease. The genocide attempted to destroy women's abilities to move forward once the genocide had ended.

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[48] Center for Law and Globalization. "Even though discriminating against women is prohibited by the Rwandan Constitution, it is customary law that generally holds sway. Under customary law, not only will a woman not inherit property, but she may even count as the husband's "belongings" after he dies".

[49] The paramilitary organization established and trained by President Habyarimana (Des Forges 1999)
[50] The 10 Commandments of Hutus was a document that was published by the Hutu Power group in *Kangura* in December 1990. The commandments laid out the need for Hutu purity (Des Forges 1999)

The Responsibility of Reconstruction

After the genocide, women represented 57% of the "adult working population aged 20 to 44" (Hamilton 2000, 1), and they bore much of the burden of rebuilding a country in ruins. For many they became the sole breadwinners of their family, especially since 34% of heads of households were women (Izabiliza), compared to the 25% prior to the genocide (Newbury & Baldwin 2000, 6). For the first time in Rwandan history, women were forced into the position of providing for themselves; in the process of rebuilding their own lives, they became instrumental in rebuilding Rwanda.

One way that Rwanda's women pushed for reconstruction and change was through women's organizations. Women in rural areas began to come together to form organizations that would address the needs of the women and children who had the most need. The groups that formed provided a "network of mutual support", a space where women could share experiences, offer support and share ideas on how to rebuild their communities, and "by 1999 there were... an average of 100 [groups] per commune" (Baldwin & Hamilton 2000, 3). An example is a group of women who came together in Kigali. They were both women who had been a small organization before the genocide along with women who had recently returned to the country as refugees or exiles. They drafted the "Campaign for Peace", a "means of addressing Rwanda's postgenocide social and economic problems" (Baldwin & Hamilton 2000, 2). Many groups also formed with the help and connection to other international women's organizations. The connections that were formed helped to encourage aid and donations for the rebuilding of Rwanda on the local level. Ghani and Lockhart discussed similar efforts in "Fixing Failed States", when they encouraged development to begin on a community level. They felt that by placing the development in the hands of those who most understood the needs of the communities,

that the development would be more effective. The international cooperation that the women's groups encouraged helped to focus the aid that was received and make sure that it was used to help the right groups in the right ways.

A key area that women's groups focused on, along with international organizations, was the rebuilding of Rwanda's agricultural sector; since "about 92% of the economically active population of Rwanda is in the agricultural sector" (World Bank 1997, 15). In this sector, reaching women and empowering them with the necessary tools was essential because women "produced up to 70% of Rwanda's agricultural output" (Hamilton 2000, 1). The first step taken by the international community was a pledge of $79 million for agriculture and the rural economy with a focus on widows and other vulnerable groups (Kumar 1996, 25). Project objectives included the provision of "seeds and agricultural inputs... [and] assistance for animal breeding" (World Bank 1995, 8). One such group was Women in Transition (WIT), a partnership between the Rwandan Ministry of Family, Gender and Social Affairs (MIGEFASO) and USAID (Hamilton 2000, 9). WIT was involved with the distribution of small livestock and helping women to increase agricultural yields (Baldwin & Newbury 2000, 6). Without the partnerships that these women created locally and internationally, many areas of Rwanda would not have received the aid necessary to rebuild their agricultural structures.

After the genocide, women also became involved in entrepreneurial activities. In October 2008, a report by the International Finance Corporation, part of the World Bank, estimated that 58% of enterprises in the informal sector were headed by women. They estimated that this made up 30% of the country's GDP (IFC 2008, 8). The majority of this activity was found to be in the retail sector, such as the making of traditional

baskets for sale. The report also found that one of the reasons that these activities were "informal" was a result of the licensing and registration procedures in place. These procedures are difficult for the women because they lack the relevant information to take advantage of them. Because of this, the government has made efforts at reforming the system through the "Companies Act" which is aimed at simplifying the registration process. It has also implemented outreach programs that target women to give them the information they need in order to register their businesses. Many of these programs are themselves run by women in order to make their targeted audience feel more comfortable with the process (IFC 2008, 14).

Another effort that has been forth to aid women entrepreneurs is the reform of credit and lending laws. Prior to the genocide it was impossible for women to get a loan without the permission of her husband. In response to this, the Women's Guarantee Fund was established in 1998 by the Ministry of Gender and Women in Development, in association with the Commercial Bank of Rwanda (IFC 2008, 22). The goal of this fund was to make financing businesses for women easier. The government has endeavored to make the process easier by enacting laws to make lending more accessible. It is allowing the use of all "possible moveable assets to be used as collateral" (IFC 2008, 22). This is especially helpful to women since they "use less land in their enterprises" (IFC 2008, 22).

Women have also been working with international corporations and organizations to have access to the international markets. Companies such as Starbucks have formed partnerships with small coffee growers to aid in the exporting of the goods overseas. The efforts made by women, the government and international organizations have shown an encouraging trend toward independently owned women's businesses in Rwanda. This allows women greater freedom and control of

their lives. It has also moved the economy of Rwanda forward by creating businesses that contribute to the growth of the economy.

As previously mentioned, land and inheritance laws seriously impeded a woman's ability to hold property. After the genocide many women faced difficulties making claims to their family land without husbands or other male relatives. The government at first was addressing the problem on a case by case basis but soon realized that this was ineffective. Steps were taken to reform both the land and inheritance laws and "the government passed a law in 1999 giving women inheritance rights equal to those of males" (Kimani 2008). In addition to this law, after a decade of negotiations, the government passed the Organic Land Law of 2005. This law gives equal rights to men and women in regards to land ownership. Both of these laws came about through the collective action of women's organizations and the parliament. Women's organizations lobbied hard for changes in the laws, knowing what impact it would have for the sustainable development of the country. Through these laws women will be able to further contribute to the reconstruction of their country. They will be able to invest in their land without fear that it can be taken away.

The last way in which women have contributed to the reconstruction of Rwanda is through their participation in politics. As previously stated, prior to the genocide women had few roles in the government. In the years after the genocide women's participation in government has increased. Rwanda has the highest percentage of women in government of any country in the world at 56% of the parliament, including the speaker's chair. This is because of a quota system that was established by the current government after the genocide (McCrummen 2008). Because of this change in the makeup of the parliament, women's issues are pushed to the forefront of the agenda. They have also

pushed for greater solidarity, a Rwanda without the labels of Hutu or Tutsi. Women lawmakers have pushed for laws to increase international trade and bridge the gap of imports and exports (McCrummen 2008). Their contribution to the change of Rwanda's laws has proved invaluable in the rebuilding of the country.

Conclusion

Rwanda was a country ravaged by ethnic conflict. Many countries that have suffered a similar fate have fallen back into that strife within a short amount of time. In Rwanda an emphasis was placed on incorporating women into the rebuilding of the country and perhaps this is the reason that more than a decade later, Rwanda remains at peace within itself. Women have moved forward the economic and political growth of Rwanda through their tireless efforts at change and their entrepreneurial spirit. It is on the backs of its women that Rwanda has regained a sense of security and is moving forward in economic rebuilding.

Emma Diaz is a second year student at New York University's Center for Global Affairs concentrating on International Relations. She is primarily interested in post-conflict rebuilding and protection in Africa, and hopes to participate in and conduct related research related to this subject. She graduated from the University of California, Santa Cruz with a Bachelor's degree in Legal Studies and a minor in Politics. Emma's work experience includes working in the legal and recruiting sector, as well as assisting Professor Jennifer Trahan.

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Book Review of
Women and War: Power and Protection in the 21st Century

Kathleen Kuehnast, Chantal de Jonge Oudraat, and Helga Hernes, Eds.

United States Institute of Peace Press, Washington, D.C. (2011)
ISN 978-1-60127-064-1

By Rachel LaForgia

On October 31, 2000 the United Nations Security Council adopted resolution 1325, the first of a series of resolutions on the women, peace and security. In this landmark resolution the Security Council identified women and children as most adversely affected by armed conflict and affirmed the importance of women's participation in efforts to ensure the maintenance and promotion of peace and security. Accordingly, the Security Council called for the increased protection of women in armed conflict and the increased participation of women in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post-conflict peacebuilding activities, referred to respectively as the "protection" and "power" pillars.

In the wake of the 10th anniversary of resolution 1325 in October 2010, *Women and War: Power and Protection in the 21st Century* examines the current literature on women, peace and security, focusing on the two pillars of UNSCR 1325. Responding to the lack of data and empirical research on these issues, as well as the limited implementation of 1325, Kathleen Kuehnast, Chantal de Jonge Oudraat, and Helga Hernes seek to stimulate both greater action and research on the role of women within the field of peace and security. Comprised of essays that analyze various aspects of women's protection and participation, this book identifies the gaps within the current literature on women and war, contributes to existing research, and identifies future areas of inquiry.

Kuehnast, de Jonge Oudraat, and Hernes provide an overview of the state of the field and women's experiences in conflict, calling attention to the lack of systematic, analytical data on gender and conflict. Building upon this, contributor Sanam Anderlini discusses the ways in which the normative framework established by the women, peace and security resolutions has been translated into action within the legal and rule of law sector at the global, national and local level. In her chapter on sexual violence, Elizabeth Wood discusses variations in sexual violence during conflict, establishing a theoretical framework for understanding these variations based on the internal dynamics of armed groups. Skjelsbœk used the Yugoslav wars as a case study on sexual violence due to the unprecedented level of international engagement in addressing sexual violence, and discusses the successes and failures of post-conflict international efforts to address sexual violence.

As post-conflict economic development and the regeneration of livelihood activities are considered a form of conflict prevention, Tilman Brück and Marc Vothknecht analyze the impact of armed conflict on women's economic situations. This is done so that future policies may reflect the gendered economic dimensions of conflict. Donald Steinberg concludes by identifying a plan of action to revitalize UNSCR 1325 in the next decade—calling for the need to translate words into action.

A recurrent theme throughout all the essays is the pressing need for further analytical research and empirical data. In articulating the current state of the literature and identifying gaps, the authors establish a much-needed research agenda for the next decade of 1325. Additionally, the chapters delve into the complexities of power and protection, moving past anecdotal evidence and providing well researched, nuanced analyses to the existing literature on women, peace and security and expanding the

understanding of the protection and participation pillars of 1325. As a research-based approach is crucial for developing effective policies to implement 1325, *Women and War* is a valuable tool for researchers, policy-makers and practitioners.

Women and War is an important and much needed addition to the literature on women's experiences both during and following conflict that constructs an analytical research agenda to promote the protection and participation agenda of 1325. *Women and War* successfully identifies the gaps within the current body of research in the ten years since the adoption of resolution 1325: it is now time to fulfill the promise of 1325 and fill in the gaps that make protection and power incomplete.

Interview with Jin In

By Christie Martin

About Jin In:
Founder & Training Director,
4Girls GLocal Leadership (4GGL)

Jin In is Eastern born, Western bred with a global vision – empowering the world's poorest girls as a powerful lever to make our world better. Jin's journey began in South Korea. Born to a wealthy family, she was deprived of that wealth at seven months when her father died. Overnight, she became poor simply because she was a girl. The inheritance laws at the time did not protect female family members. Jin's sudden poverty changed the course of her life.

Building upon her local experiences, Jin created the first girls' leadership advisory group at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health. She also managed the first federal for girls, by girls, national health program. This received the *2001-2004 White House Award* and was ranked #1 for girls' health information by Google, MSN, Yahoo! and AOL. Then, at Girl Scouts USA (GSUSA), Global Action, she spearheaded GSUSA's highest leadership program. Also as GSUSA's representative to the United Nations, she worked with over 1000 NGOs creating the girls' platform at the UN's 51st session, Commission on the Status

of Women. Foremost, she started *Discover Your Potential* position statement for the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts and its 145 member organizations – the voice of 10 million girls, worldwide.

Recognizing leadership development is the foundation and an effective tool to empowerment, and yet, it is unknown or too costly for girls in poor countries, Jin created 4Girls GLocal Leadership (4GGL) to make it possible. She also launched *the 4GGL Movement* – the only movement valuing and investing in the world's poorest girls. Jin speaks at universities around the world, cultivating today's agents of change, tomorrow's leaders to advance gender equity, locally and globally.

Jin follows the moral imperative noted by Simone Weil: "We have to accomplish the possible in order to touch the impossible." To date, she has received local partnership requests to reach nearly **500,000 girls in the developing world**. Jin's immediate focus is South Asia, where she has worked with NGOs like BRAC in Bangladesh, the world's largest NGO with 250,000 girls (and 25,000 boys). And she is partnering with universities across the U.S. to develop *4GGL Global Trainers*. Her goal is one community at a time for a global transformation for the world's poorest girls.

For her services, Jin is the recipient of Luce Leadership Award by James Jay Dudley Luce Foundation, Global Citizenship Award for Leadership in Helping Humanity by Orphans International, Women's Social Leadership Award by BT Executive Women and was named One of 100 Young Women Making a Difference in the World. For more information on Jin and her work with 4GGL please check out http://www.4ggl.org/

Christy: So, do you want to start by telling us a little bit about your background and what led you to start your organization 4GGL?

JI: 4GGL is really my experience but more importantly my life story. I began doing

community service since I was eight when I immigrated to the United States and found a mentor who taught me to serve the most vulnerable people in my community. It began in Houston, Texas, then to other large cities across the U.S. (San Francisco, NY, DC…) which expanded to communities around the world experiencing abject poverty. So my community became global. What I didn't know in the beginning was that I was the poor. I was an immigrant little girl raised by a widow mother. But this mentor – Barbara Crocker - didn't label me. She simply taught me to serve and to care about people. So It's difficult to say what came first, my story or the experience. But I believe great innovators and visionaries are those who take chaos or some great injustice that has happened in their lives and turn it into an opportunity to do greater good. They bring order and justice to our world.

This is my story. I was born in South Korea but came to the United States when I was 8 years old because my father passed away. He died when I was only 7 months old and overnight, I became poor. Literally, I became poor because I was a girl. A female's worth in South Korean culture at the time was tied to the man in her life and without a father, I was worth nothing.

My mother moved us to the U.S. She came first, leaving us with her parents who raised me and my sister. The interesting turn to this story is that I didn't know that my father died. My whole family played along as if he was still alive, working in the U.S. with my mom. I found out when I came to the U.S. But honestly, I cared more about adjusting to this new country – United States – and learning a new language. And what was even more remarkable was Barbara. She introduced me to a whole new world. She said rather than a world predetermined by my gender, my destiny is shaped by my action. That's powerful, especially for an 8 year old!

So I began to serve my community, and at first, I wasn't trying to focus on girls and

women. But they were everywhere – domestic violence shelters, health care services for the poor, definitely the disenfranchised and marginalized were the women and the girls. I also worked with men and boys but only because women were taking care of them. Now I see the marginalization and disenfranchisement of women is global.

Advocating for gender equity became my focus when Barbara was diagnosed with a disease. Houston, Texas, with the world's largest medical center couldn't cure my Barbara. So I went to medical school to do it myself. There I learned that western medicine has failed women. And it wasn't until 1991 that Congress mandated the National Institute of Health to do clinical trials on women. So before that, even breast cancer research was done on men. And this isn't about fairness or 50%…we're talking about gross clinical errors. We now know women are different than men. Our bodies digest differently, need more/less nutrients…we're now finding out even Aspirin works different for men than women.

So I became disillusioned with medicine and went to graduate school in public health. There I was asked to write a paper - something that you feel very passionate about and that you want to make a change. So I searched and this woman popped up on my screen and she said she was in charge of health and wellness of every American girl and woman. So I wrote about her office and her work.

Christy: And what was the name of the person, the woman that you wrote your paper on?

JI: Right, exactly well I'm gonna get to that. I also presented this as my master's thesis – a comprehensive women's health curriculum for schools of public health. And the University of California Berkley rejected it. They said they already had Maternal Child Health. I said, 'Yes, but that is all about the CH

– child health, not the M – the mother.' in fact, Maternal Child Health didn't start until they saw a large increase in child mortality and they thought, "Oh we better study the mother." So if it wasn't for the child there would be no maternal child health. Also what about women who aren't choosing to have children? adolescent girls? young women? And older women? You're saying that they don't matter and we only care about those who are having babies. So I was on fire to prove my point. Then my mentor at UCFS medical school told me that I should enter this proposal to the International Congress on Women's Issues. It got accepted and I went to Seoul, South Korea to present my paper. There, I met the woman that I wrote about. She was the Keynote Speaker and I went to go work for her. She was the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Women's Health for the U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services. But I was coming from Berkley, California, as a flaming liberal and who would be my ultimate boss? George Bush. So I went to Washington to go work in probably the toughest environment to advocate for women's health. But it turned out to be great training and one of the best opportunities ever!

Now, I told you my thesis was rejected. That was how I got the job. I had to write a whole new one and It was on girls' health. And this is exactly what the Office on Women's Health needed – girls' health expertise. So I became a girl champion, literally the poster child for girls' health. You name it, I went to partner with everyone – other Executive Branch Departments and the White House and within the Department like NIH, CDC, SAMHSA. I also briefed foreign government ministries and shared what we were doing – the first federal for girls, by girls program. They thought it was fantastic and didn't think about engaging girls. In fact, they were totally disconnected with their girls.

So, I knew global girls advocacy and programs were needed and this is where I went next - Global Action, Girl Scout USA (GSUSA). GSUSA is great model of girl power.

The girls themselves generate about $76 million in annual revenue through Girl Scout cookies, and they are the number 1 sold cookie in America. I also lead a program that was the highest girls' leadership awards, and girls were making a difference through community service (like I did when I was a girl). Girls would build eye clinics in China, libraries in India…it's amazing when you tell girls they can do anything.

Now, although girls can be a powerhouse in the U.S. girls in the developing world are NOT even recognized as humans. They are killed, abused, raped. In fact, a gentleman I met at the time said that they were the "disposable" population. He was right but I was disturbed that he labeled them that way. So I wrote him an email describing why economically it's the best solution any organization, any nation for that matter, can do. A few weeks later I got an email invitation, saying 'we heard you met our Chairman, and we want to invite you to Bangladesh to work with us, with 255,000 girls.' This organization is called BRAC and they are the world's largest NGO. That was when I knew I had something. And the more I worked with the girls in developing countries, I realized that they were not different than our girls. We can develop their skills and enable them to have a significant impact their community. And we shouldn't see girls as our girls or their girls, but just as girls and help every girl to live out her full potential.

This is 4GGL and what led me to start it. Because this powerful empowerment tool – leadership development – is unknown or too costly for girls in developing countries. And if we are committed to achieving the MDGs, eliminating terrorism, supporting the Arab Spring…whatever, this is the one thing – the magic bullet – we must do.

Christy: It is really interesting that you came from a public health background and the whole connection that led you to 4GGL.

JI: Actually many people note that. But to me it makes perfect sense. The body is our

foundation so physiology is where I started, then to development and wellness, now developing girls' utmost potential - leadership. It's like the Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. The bottom of the pyramid is food, then security, love, and belonging, to human potential or self actualization. So this has been my journey and experience and I'm dedicating it to the world's poorest girls because it's not accessible or affordable for them.

Christy: When you're working internationally and you're working in places where women aren't valued, how difficult is it to go into a community and say, I'm here to do leadership development for girls?

JI: Good question. Everyone asks that because the kind of international development Americans are use to is here, we know all and we're going fix you. But this not is what 4GGL is doing and why we're different and innovative. 1) We focus on girls. I don't know why, but when we talk about women, people blame and victimize. When it's about girls, the conversation is totally different. It's about the future and since 4GGL is about leadership development, it's about resource making. Also when we talk about women's issues, it's generally only the women who participate. When it's about girls, both men and women participate. 2) I'm clear that this is leadership development, NOT creating dominant women leaders or women taking over. When you frame it as a resource it's not threatening to them. In fact, many times, I'm talking with the men. 3) I'm there as a student and teacher. I learn about their culture, I teach them about girls' leadership development. It's a true and equal partnership.

Christy: So I guess what I'm trying to wrap my head around is, you know, in India for example, there's this huge practice of infanticide because women just aren't valued like you said so when you have this culture that's so against girls, how do you engage with a community that has this prejudice against the existence of girls, never mind against them having any kind of rights?

JI: First I want to make clear that I'm in the business of changing people. Change must come from within so I only go where I've been invited. And to date, this has not been a problem. In fact, currently, we have more requests than we can fulfill – 25 communities with nearly 500,000 girls across South Asia and Africa. That is half a million girls who are waiting for 4GGL, and India is on this waiting list.

Now, for countries like India and China which have killed so many girls, we called this gendercide and 100 million girls are NOT alive today because they were killed or aborted, they need a societal transformation. Their hearts and minds must change about girls. It's why I also launched a bold social change movement – the 4GGL Movement – to value and invest in the world's poorest girls. Because until we tackle the root cause – not valuing girls – girls will forever suffer from some symptom or form of discrimination.

The hope is that you and your readers will

change your hearts and join the 4GGL Movement. Go to 4GGL.org. It's only $10 – less than a movie to value a girl. It's a global movement and we need everyone to be the change.

Christy: What happens when somebody says, 'We want you to come and work with our organization?' Who are the first people you engage with, what's the process of what you're doing from when you're first in contact with the organization to when you leave after having successfully transitioned the projects over?

JI: I developed 4GGL's unique "glocal" approach – global model for local action. In brief, it's a multi-generational women's leadership model to train local trainers who in turn cultivate girls' leadership potential. This makes leadership development possible and affordable for the girls. And our signature – co-creation with the locals develops socially and culturally appropriate programs for the girls.

Now the process is simple. I call it ABC. A is assessment of the community. Here I live, breathe and eat with the people - my local partner(s). B is Building Capacity. This where leadership training of local trainers comes in. This includes educating them about positive girls' development and their needs; providing the trainers with leadership training; and facilitating open dialogues with the men about local girls' issues. C is co-creation and an important part is mentorship. I remember training trainers in Bangladesh and they said that they don't even have the word mentor. So I teach what mentoring is about. And being a recipient and a practitioner of life long mentoring, I'm a firm believer that it plays a major role in leadership development. Then we have on-going communication and follow-up monitoring.

Christy: From an organizational standpoint, how long have you been around, how many staff do you work with, what are some organizational challenges?

JI: Fortunately, 4GGL received nonprofit 501c3 status quickly. We had an excellent global law firm do the work probono so we completed in 2009. Program wise, it really began in 2010. Pakistan and Nepal have been assessed. We're fundraising to complete B and C of our ABC.

4GGL is 100% volunteer run organization. Even I don't get paid.

Now, I once heard your greatest strength is your weakness and this is definitely true for 4GGL.

Strength: 4GGL is the work of passion and compassion. It's a calling for me. For others, it's compassion. They come to apply what they're good at for 4GGL. Also being a 100% volunteer run organization, we can proudly tell our donors 100% of their gift is going to the work, not the workers.

Weakness: Having no paid staff to manage the volunteers. So I have been wearing the executive director hat, training director hat, communication director hat…all directors hats directing at one time about 50 volunteers, women AND men. Clearly, this isn't possible if I'm not getting paid so I have to do other work for an income. So this is 4GGL's greatest challenge, currently.

But the great news is that there's a solution! One, is to downsize. We now have about 10-15 volunteers. We're also fundraising to hire *essential* staff. Essential is the key word. This keeps us in check asking for what we need, as opposed to what we want. It also keeps the integrity of our core value, what I've done since 8 years old – volunteer service or I call it selfless leadership. Studies now show those who give(money and/or time) are happier AND healthier. Maybe that's why I haven't had a cold since 7th grade!

Christy: So what's next for 4GGL? Where and what do you see 4GGL doing in the next few

years to grow and really reach as many girls as possible?

JI: as noted earlier, 4GGL isn't just an organization but a bold movement. We are fundamentally changing the way girls in developing countries are viewed – from poor girls with a runny nose, to the ads you see on TV, to transforming these girls into powerful agents of change for themselves and their communities.

And as Nicolas Kristof, NYT columnist advocates for, this is the moral obligation of our time. But even if you don't care about girls or the MDGs, you should still join the 4GGL Movement for one simple fact – it will impact your life. Today, we have the largest youth population ever. Most are in the developing world so if half of them – 600 million girls – are continually repressed and marginalized, the global crises we're experiencing today – from poverty to terrorism – will multiply, impacting every life in our interconnected world. So if you think what we're seeing today is unpleasant, just wait. And this the reason why leaders like Kofi Annan and Secretary Clinton and economists like Amartya Sen are passionately advocating for this issue. In fact, the World Bank has come out and said the number 1 investment for any country is investing in a girl.

So no one is excused from this accountability. And developing girls' leadership in gender repressed traditional societies will end up helping us from terrorism, instability, riots…what we are seeing in the Arab World, right now. The young people there need leadership development training too!

Now we know the need of 4GGL. And it's being confirmed by the demand - we have 25 local organizations and community schools wanting to partner with 4GGL to develop the leadership potential of nearly 500,000 girls across South Asia and Africa. The only way we can do this is to partner with universities mobilizing our globally conscious and connected young people, particularly young women (though not exclusively.) We also need men to join our movement as we need male role models.

Currently, I'm developing pilots with 3 universities. I want to invite you and NYU to be one of them!

Christy: Well, I think that's all of the questions I have for right now. Is there anything that you would like to add?

JI: Yes. I remember the day I shared my vision of 4GGL with a friend in Bryant Park. I told him about the massive crisis - the suffering of girls in the developing world. Then I introduced the idea of 4GGL. Just imagine empowering 600 million girls - the world's most powerful force for change. My friend replied, "Jin, interim deliverables."

My friend was right and my interim deliverable is the 500,000 girls who are waiting. With this said, just empowering one girl, and I define empowerment as having a voice and a choice, is why I do what I do. If one girl knows that she's valuable and her community supports her full potential, then I've done my job.

I realize we have a long way to go. For so long we have treated girls as being "disposable." But I know it's possible because I've seen it in my birth country. I told you how I lost my

father at 7 months and became poor overnight. South Korea was a developing country at that time. But in my life time, I saw it go from developing to developed. Today, South Korea has a literacy rate of 100% for both women and men. So I know it's possible but first, people must value the girls and help girls value themselves.

And this isn't about money…in fact, when I was in Seoul for that International conference where I met my boss to be, it was then I learned how wealthy my father's family is – they are millionaires. But I saw the life I could have had if my dad was still alive – no voice or choice. So I see the fate of life as a blessing and I know empowerment is priceless.

Notes:

*Good news for students interested in joining the 4GGL Movement! 4GGL recently launched a Call to Action for 100 Leaders 4Girls. We hope that students will take the time to look at this incredible opportunity to make an impact on girls and join the movement! For more information please check: http://www.razoo.com/story/4-Girls-G-Local-Leadership-Aka-4-Ggl

*For individuals or universities interested in partnering with 4GGL, please contact: info@4GGL.org

*For more reading on Jin and her contributions to the world's girls please check out her full story written for the International Museum of Women: http://bluworld.org/shareastory/index.php/stories/read

Lysistrata: New York University's Center for Global Affairs' Gender Working Group

About the Founder, Marisa Tramontano

Research Assistant to Sylvia Maier, at the Center for Global Affairs; Former director, Off-the-Record Lecture Series, The Foreign Policy Association; Representative, Human Rights Concentration, Center for Global Affairs, *Assessing the Global Peace Index;* Working Paper Contributor, Center for Global Affairs, *Assessing the Global Peace Index;* Presenter, Kroc Institute Student Peace Conference, *Partnering for Peace*, University of Notre Dame; Presenter, The French Research Centre for Archaeology and Social Sciences International Conference, *Gender transformations in the Arabian Peninsula and the Horn of Africa*, University of Sana'a, Yemen; Co-author, "Beyond Outrage – Bringing Sexual Terrorists to Justice," http://www.huffingtonpost.com/marisa-tramontano/beyond-outrage-bringing-s_b_695671.html. Affiliations: MSGA Gender Working Group, Lysistrata; Women's Initiative, NYU CGA; The Women's International Forum, United Nations; United Women of All Nations; Young Professionals in Foreign Policy, and Women's Foreign Policy Group. Research Interests: Gender and International Security, Human Security, Women's Movements, Feminist International Relations Theory, Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict, Nationalism, Ethnic Conflicts.

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Tatiana Bessarabova, Sara (Saghar) Birjandian, Talia Hagerty, Erin Hogeboom, Jumana Kawar (co-founder), Natasha Lamoreux, and Erica Mukherjee

The Centerr for Global Affairs "educates and inspires students to become global citizens capable of identifying and implementing solutions to pressing global challenges…[the CGA provides an] indispensable context for understanding critical issues in international politics, economics, dispute settlement, law, human rights, energy, the environment, and related areas" (http://www.scps.nyu.edu/areas-of-study/global-affairs/). Through the Masters in Global Affairs' (MSGA) seven concentrations: International Relations, Transnational Security, Human Rights and Humanitarian Assistance, International Law, Energy and the Environment, the Private Sector and Development, and Peacebuilding students are offered "knowledge and familiarity in these areas…critical for those preparing for careers in virtually every arena: international or nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), the United Nations and its affiliated agencies, diplomatic missions, foreign offices, government agencies, international business, press and media, law firms, foundations, and a host of allied institutions and professions" (ibid). In line with this pedagogical approach, the CGA understands gender, not as a separate discipline or course of study, but instead, as "mainstreamed," and a part of any and all of the concentrations offered.

In January 2011, the Center for Global Affairs gender working group was launched. As an interdisciplinary, interactive, collaborative working group, the mission is as follows:

> [Our] goal is to provide MSGA students and faculty with a forum to discuss the dynamic relationship between gender and international politics. Our mission is to raise awareness of how gender plays an essential role in today's current international affairs and to mainstream gender issues in the minds of the MSGA community through dialogue and discussion.

[Student]-led discussions will reflect an intellectual, thematic and ideological diversity characterizing all concentrations in our program with topics ranging from the more abstract gendered nature of politics to the very tangible relations between the sexes in a given situation.

The name of CGA's gender working group is Lysistrata or "releaser of war." In the ancient Greek play, Lysistrata rallies the women of Greece to refuse sexual relations with their husbands in effort to persuade the men to negotiate peace during the Peloponnesian War. This strategy, however, starts a battle between the sexes. This name was chosen for three reasons. First, this working group aims to discuss and research ways to reduce violence, whether it manifests as direct violence or gender-based structural violence, as did Lysistrata. Second, like the working group, Lysistrata employs unconventional and even controversial methods to reach her goals. Third, the play serves as a cautionary tale of how women's-only movements can often alienate men and even exacerbate divisive gender relations. This group name reminds Lysistrata's participants of the difference between discussion of gender versus discussions of women, includes and encourages the views of CGA's male students, and the importance of thinking through the long term ramifications of direct action to affect change.

Lysistrata events are open to all students and faculty and seven concentration leaders, who represent each of the CGA concentrations listed above, determine the direction of the organization. Currently, Lysistrata engages students in two different types of events: speaker events and student-led discussions. Speaker events give MSGA students the opportunity to hear from distinguished experts in their field. Spring 2011 events included a conversation with Maria Butler of PeaceWomen (part of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom) on PeaceWomen's monitoring of the UN system's promotion of the role of women in preventing conflict, and the equal and full participation of women in all efforts to create and maintain international peace and security; as well as Patricia DeGennaro, for a talk on women and security in Afghanistan. Dr. DeGennaro is a professor of International Security at the NYU Politics Department, as well as an independent consultant, and she spoke to MSGA students about her experiences working with women in Afghanistan, and more generally, her work to encourage a holistic and integrated international policy approach that looks beyond war and the use of force. Student-led discussions are meant to provide a forum for real discussion, different from a lecture-based speaker series. This format gives MSGA students a chance to articulate, defend, and reevaluate stances on the gender dynamics of global affairs. The remainder of this article is a review of some of the diverse ways in which Lysistrata concentration leaders have identified cross-sections between gender and their research interests and coursework for discussion.

Transnational Security

How has the expansion of the definition of security to encompass human security threats brought gender inequality to the forefront in the debate on security studies? What role do women have to play in the dialogue on security, considering that this is a field traditionally associated with socially accepted masculine traits? How will the discussion of security go beyond military solutions, nation-states, and the powerful elite? Are there inherently feminine definitions of security versus classically understood masculine definitions and do

women's lived experiences inherently differ from men's in the security realm? By interlinking security and gender, do we reach a greater understanding of how subordination plays a role in international relations? Given that gender should not be treated as a separate entity, but integrated into the grander schema of academic study, will promoting a more well-rounded discussion through incorporating ideas of gender and a gender bias in transnational security help the field along in the protection of all people?

International Law

Can international law offer a mechanism for the protection and promotion of women's rights? What is the relationship between international, national, and religious law (i.e. *sharia* law) and how do these bodies of law contradict one another? How can law play a role in protecting women's human rights without further polarizing their position? Does law have a place in the discourse on women's experiences in traditional societies, such as forced veiling, child marriage, or female genital mutilation/cutting? How can issues of cultural relativism be dealt with through the law? Is there an inherent contradiction between the promotion of freedom of religion and the promotion of universal women's human rights? How can we address the gap between national law that is discriminatory against women in states who have ratified the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)? Who should hold these states accountable for not implementing these laws domestically and how? How can we address the absence of women in transitional justice in post-conflict zones? When women are left out of the process of creating constitutions and governing bodies in new democracies, how can international law assist in filling the gaps? What are the particular difficulties

faced by female lawyers when representing clients, such as Guantanamo detainees, from societies where this is not an acceptable role for women?

Human Rights

How has the focus on the rights of girls and women by the US Department of State's Hillary Clinton and the appointment of Melanne Verveer to head the Office of Global Women's Issues changed the discourse about women's rights as human rights? How has the passage of UN Security Council Resolutions such as 1325 (focused on involving women in peace negotiations) and 1820 (deeming sexual violence as a tool of war in armed conflict) affected women on the ground in conflict and post-conflict nations? What is the role of NGOs in promoting women's empowerment as a the best bet for creating broader social change? How can women's disproportionate suffering in conflict, economic crises, environmental degradation, and religious and nationalist extremism be used to promote the role of women as agents of change? How can a deliberately gendered perspective in international relations, development, and humanitarian assistance counter men's voices and experiences as the "universal" lens through which academics, policymakers, development workers and other leaders have long viewed the world? Given that women cannot rely on men to represent their experiences as women, mothers, sisters, wives, sexual-violence survivors, care-givers, citizens, ethnic and religious group members, lesbians, etc. locally, nationally, or internationally, how can women harness their unique experiences without reinforcing gender divisions? How can we avoid the instrumentalization of women's empowerment as simply a means to an economic development end? For example, there is ample evidence that educating

women may alleviate poverty and improve community's economies, but how can we ensure that women's human rights are upheld as ends in themselves?

Peacebuilding

Given there is no formulaic route to peace, how do complications effect finding a definitive role for gender in peacebuilding? What are some of the complex ways that gender identities affect peace and conflict and how can gender be mainstreamed within peacebuilding processes and in the training of peacebuilding practitioners? How can a nuanced understanding of needs and identities and their impact on human relationships aid in conflict transformation? How can we avoid the trap of polarizing women as inherently peaceful and men as inherently violent as of the role of women in peacebuilding is promoted? At the same time, how can we avoid the stereotypical gender roles in peacebuilding processes, mainly men conducting official, state-level negotiations and women leading community initiatives without the same capacities or resources? Despite the male-dominated peace talks, peacebuilding work is often characterized as feminine. How can the field of peacebuilding gain the same level of legitimacy that work in international relations, security, or economics is met with? How can the work of peacebuilders – in ending conflict, identifying social dynamics, advancing change, and building sustainable peace – benefit from established research methods in order to be legitimate and effective? How can recognizing the philosophical value of the peacebuilding approach while applying the rigor of the social sciences allow peacebuilders to advance gender studies and equality throughout global affairs?

Private Sector/Development

As women can be found at any point of the development project as policymakers or farmers, activists or mothers, or any combination of these roles, Lysistrata will be focusing on women in Microfinance in Fall 2011. Why did Grameen Bank, formed by Muhammad Yunus in 1976, focus on poor women and how has that impacted the development of gendered microfinance? How has their focus on financial education and home economics been as effective as the lending of money? Conventional wisdom states that women are better borrowers than men because they not only prove to be better credit risks, but they are also more likely to invest in their families' health and education, but does providing microcredit to women prove to be the best strategy for creditors and the international development community? How do the loans affect the lives of women? Is there any change to the traditional roles of a community in which women are receiving microloans? When a woman enters the workforce as a wage earner or small business owner how does that change her domestic dynamic? Overall, does her quality of life improve or does she simply end up working two full-time jobs, one inside and one outside the home? How do men react to the concept of female-centric loans? What does that do to their status in the home and community? Are these microloans truly empowering women or just keeping them vulnerable? How can we involve women in development and give the work of women, whether wage earning or inside the home, the credit it deserves, without reinforcing gender divisions? How can we avoid falling into the trap that female-centric microloans are a panacea to address gender inequality and ensure the discourse remains open to a variety of solutions in solving the problems of development?

Energy/Environment

Lysistrata will aim to promote and "mainstream" the gendered perspective of the energy and environment concentration in Fall 2011. Are women invisible as managers of natural resources in rural areas? How are women disproportionately affected by the effects of climate change and environmental pollution? What are the implications of comparing the destruction of mother earth to the war fought on women's bodies? Does this, in fact, disempower women because the earth does not have the agency to be a changemaker in the way that women clearly can or can this be a powerful analogy to affect change? Does the disproportionate suffering of women stem from being practically absent from the world of policy-making, planning, adaptation and attempts to mitigate the negative effects of environmental degradation and resource exploitation around the world? Does the lack of gender-specific approaches and severe under-representation of women in the energy sector and the policy planning to address the challenges lead to women's exclusion from other national and international decision-making processes? Do the very few women in the energy sector today not address gender inequality due to their minority positions and enormous pressure to adapt to a masculine environment? If so, what can be done to address this? Does taking the risk of speaking against their disadvantaged and under-represented position mean risking their hard won acceptance, and if so, is that actually worse?

International Relations

Lysistrata will be focusing on the role of United States foreign policy in the advancement of women's political participation in emerging democracies in Fall 2011. How can we assess the current diplomacy and development efforts, such as the Quadrennial Development and Diplomacy Review lead by the US State Department, to mainstream gender issues globally? What role will the 'Hillary Effect,' as manifested in the unprecedented 25 female ambassadors posted to Washington DC, play in this discourse? How will President Obama and Secretary Clinton's policies of full commitment to advancing the agenda of women as 'agents of peace and stability' unfold? Given the President's national security strategy: 'countries are more peaceful and prosperous when women are accorded full and equal rights and opportunity. When those rights and opportunities are denied, countries often lag behind,' will the role of women in the new democracies brought about by the 'Arab Spring' prove this to be true? How does a stance that men and women should have equal rights and opportunities differ from a female-centric approach? How can women diplomats and experts in the field give insights on how these efforts are perceived in different countries?

Lysistrata looks forward to discussing some of these important and complex questions with experts and in student-led discussions in the Fall. We look forward to seeing all members of the MSGA community often. For more information, please email lysistrata.nyu@gmail.com. Our website, http://www.lysistratanyu.blogspot.com, is currently a work in progress, but will be a valuable resource for Lysistrata's activities and other gender-related news and events in the Fall.

PERSPECTIVES
ON GLOBAL ISSUES

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Village Women, photographed by Ivana Kvesic

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Pg. 19 - Liberian women demonstrating for peace in the Cote d'Ivoire; photographed by Rachel Laforgia

Pg. 31 - Women from woman's cooperative in the Chichicastenango Market in Guatemala; photographed by Devon O'Reilly

Pg. 37 - "DIL 1", Jin In, Founder & Training Director of Girls GLocal Leadership (4GGL), with a group of girls; photo courtesy of Jin In

Pg. 40 - Bottom Left: "adv guides classroom"; photo courtesy of Jin In / Top Right: "adv guides circle"; photo courtesy of Jin In

Pg. 42 - "Training girls 1"; photo courtesy of Jin In

Pg. 43 - "trainers1" with Jin In; photo courtesy of Jin In

Back Cover
Tibetan woman; photo courtesy of Dongbo Wang