



International Women's NEWS NOUVELLES Féministes Internationales

In publication since 1906

Journal of the International Alliance of Women

“Digital violence”

World Wide Web inventor Sir Tim Berners-Lee has warned that women and girls are being made to feel unwelcome online, with women experiencing online abuse and hidden forms of gender discrimination.

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EDITORIAL | p. 4

FEMINISTS AROUND THE GLOBE | pp. 5-10

Jessica Orban, Lea Börgerding and Holly Herbert

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S NEWS IN FOCUS | pp. 11-16 **Online Harassment and Violence**

Digital Violence and Image-based Sexual Abuse | pp. 11-12

Signe Vahlun and Maria Kortenbach

Women's Human Rights and Information Communication Technology | pp. 13-16

Mallaury Cervellera and Joanna Manganara

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S NEWS FAVOURITE | p. 17 **StopHarassment, Denmark**

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Signe B. Vahlun

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Signe has previously worked in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and DanChurchAid and is the former Vice President of the Danish Women's Society.



Mallaury Cervellera

Mallaury Cervellera holds a BA in Law, Economics and Management from the University of Angers, France and a MA in International Relations from the University of Lodz, Poland. She gained her first experience in the field of education and human rights during her volunteering project in Romania. During her studies in Poland, she understood the importance to advocate for SRHR and women's human rights, which encouraged her to write a master's thesis about the access to abortion in the European Union. Besides her internship at the Secretariat of the International Alliance of Women in Athens, Greece, she volunteered in an organization that brings awareness about disabilities and participated in a feminist reading group. She aims to work for an organization that promotes intersectionality, equality and human rights.



Once again, I have to express sincere apologies to all our readers for this really late edition. When we started preparing this, we were looking at the lead-up to CSW64 and the action planned, the large contingent of IAW delegates and the hoped for outcomes. Then the Covid-19 pandemic set in, causing CSW64 to be cancelled down to just a skeleton of the usually huge event set against the backdrop of early Spring in New York. This meant we had to completely revise the content.

The **Theme** of this edition is **Digital Violence**. Many of us know about cyberbullying and trolling which can so often start from jealousy and tragically sometimes lead to suicides. While appreciating the value of Social Media to millions of people around the world, I'm sure many of us have questioned the dark side of our digital world that can produce horrific outcomes. In this current time of social isolation, thousands of people have been learning how to use videoconferencing and be in touch visually with family and friends but, sadly, the trolls are invading these spaces too.

#HerNetHerRights

Throughout October 2019, the European Women's Lobby (EWL) and members held multiple #HerNetHerRights training sessions across Europe, for women's civil society, social justice and political organisations in Belgium, Germany, Turkey and Wales. Originally developed as a pilot project within the context of the EWL European elections campaign, **#HerNetHerRights II: Prevent, Protect, Promote** is a training session aimed at politically engaged women such as women politicians and women's rights activists, to contextualise and provide practical support against the violence experienced as politically engaged women.

47% of women politicians have received death threats and women's human rights defenders are at increased risk of psychological violence. Now, within the new European Union mandate, the EWL seeks to continue supporting politically engaged women against the violence they continue to face and to work collectively to enact political change to ensure that all women in Europe can live their lives free from all forms of violence, whether in the offline or online space.

In Ankara, EWL Turkish Coordination, **Avrupa Kadın Lobisi Türkiye Koordinasyonu**, held a #HerNetHerRights session at the UN Women event, *"Preventing Violence against Women in Politics"* in partnership with the **Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)**. Whilst in Aberystwyth, the **Women's Equality Network Wales (WEN)**, one of the member organisations

of the **UK Joint Committee on Women**, organised a #HerNetHerRights session within the context of the WEN mentoring programme which aims to get more women in political and public life.

www.eSafety.gov.au, an independent statutory office solely committed to keeping citizens safer online, supported by the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA).

The agency responds to complaints about serious cyberbullying of Australian children, image-based abuse, illegal and harmful content, including child sexual abuse material. It provides online safety information and guidance through its website and educational resources and training on online safety. It develops special initiatives and programs in response to identified needs. Its work is based on research and analysis. **eSafety's research** program is underpinned by four key themes:

- tracking trends
- supporting the development of eSafety resources and programs
- inter-agency and international cooperation
- program and resource evaluation



Julie Inman Grant is Australia's eSafety Commissioner. In this role, she leads the world's first government agency committed to keeping its citizens safer online. Julie has extensive experience in the non-profit and government sectors and

spent two decades working in senior public policy and safety roles in the tech industry at Microsoft, Twitter and Adobe. Her career began in Washington DC, working in the US Congress and the non-profit sector before taking on a role at Microsoft. Julie's experience at Microsoft spanned 17 years, serving as one of the company's first and longest-standing government relations professionals, ultimately in the role of Global Safety Director for safety policy and outreach. At Twitter, she set up and drove the company's policy, safety and philanthropy programs across Australia, New Zealand & Southeast Asia.

Julie is Chair of the Child Dignity Alliance's Technical Working Group and a Board Member of the WePROTECT Global Alliance. She was designated one of Australia's most influential women by the Australian Financial Review in 2019.



compiled by Jessica Orban, Holly Herbert
and Lea Börgerding

"A Day Without Women" on March 9 in Mexico

On March 9, following International Women's Day, women all across Mexico joined a historic 24-hour strike to protest against the mounting violence that women face today as well as their continued discrimination. Across the country, women stayed at home from work. The action was being promoted under the hashtag #UnDíaSinNosotras—"A Day Without Us"—and was seen as a response to recent femicides which were described as a tipping point for the already active feminist movement. In Mexico, the number of femicides—that is, the killing of women because of their gender—has climbed further in recent years. In 2019 there were 1,006 reported cases, compared with 912 the year before. Prior to the strike, the New York Times reported that the Mexican feminist movement has now "gained extraordinary momentum across this country", pointing to wide-ranging support from the public and private sectors, civic groups, religious leaders and many, if not most, women in Mexico. To learn more about the strike and feminist activism this year in Mexico, visit <https://edition.cnn.com/2020/03/09/americas/mexico-women-strike-femicide-intl/index.html>, <https://nonprofitquarterly.org/mexican-women-mobilize-for-national-24-hour-strike-un-dia-sin-nosotras/>.



Middle East's first International Feminist Festival set up in Lebanon

The political revolution that Lebanon is experiencing at the moment has given space to other movements such as the feminist one. The new feminist wave demands not only the democratization of political spaces, but also the opening of new forums for discussion, such as in the cinema or in other artistic realms. In this context, the idea of the International Feminism Festival was developed, an event organized by the Institut Français du Liban and the Joumana Haddad Freedoms Center that took place in February 2020. During three days, the public could attend film projections, performances, workshops and colloquiums focused on the debate of the role and position of women in the Middle East. For more information, visit <https://belatina.com/lebanon-international-feminist-film-fest/>.



Women Experts' Network launched

The Centre for Feminist Foreign Policy, a London and Berlin-based NGO, just launched The Women Experts' Network (WoX). In most countries, women remain strongly underrepresented when it comes to shaping security and foreign policies, be it in ministries, embassies, delegations, or at international conferences -- despite the fact that diverse perspectives lead to better analyses and policy outcomes. WoX tries to work against that and seeks to connect more women experts to policy makers. As such, it hopes to diversify the spaces where foreign and security policy are being shaped. Women who are policy experts in these fields can increase their visibility by creating profile; and those setting up panels, talks, etc. can now find experts on the website. This database is for women who know what they are talking about, who question the status quo and generate new ideas.



Historic Gender Equality Act passed in Victoria, Australia

On the 25th February 2020, Victoria become the first state in Australia to hold its public sector to account on gender equality enacting the Gender Equality Act 2020. The bill addresses workplace gender barriers with the implementation of gender equality action plans. It requires employers in public service, councils, universities, police and court services to develop gender action plans every four years, publicly reporting on the progress of their targets every two years. The implementation of this bill will among others address the gender pay gap and parenthood penalties, unlocking the economic potential of women as workplaces become more inclusive and flexible.

Legislators hope that these new targets will improve the lives of women, men and children allowing all genders to enjoy equal opportunities and rights in the workplace.

For further information <https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/as-made/acts/gender-equality-act-2020>



©Photograph: Twitter - Gender Equity Victoria

<https://twitter.com/genderequityvic/status/1230395902570856449?s=20>

Cycling Training for (Refugee) Women in Germany

Cycling can be a fundamental building block for refugees and other newcomers who seek to acquire individual mobility in a new setting. Women in particular need support in this regard: they often feel particularly isolated in their accommodations and cycling offers an obvious solution to explore the new living environment. In Berlin, Germany, the association #BIKEYGEES e.V. therefore offers cycling lessons for women and girls. Regular meetings include not only practical cycling training, but also multilingual traffic lessons and bike repair basics. Founded in September 2015 as a small local empowerment project, #BIKEYGEES e.V. has now grown into a non-profit association for educational and integration work. As such, it helps break down borders: origin, religion, or status are not important in the trainings. Following the motto "Every woman in the world should be able to cycle - and may", #BIKEYGEES e.V. tries to combine aspects such as empowerment, independence, CO2-neutral mobility,



outdoor movement, joie de vivre, and shared experiences of success in its work. The common goal is less fear on all sides. The association is financed as much as possible through donations and support from its many volunteers. To find out more about this wonderful project, check out this recent article about it that was published in The Guardian: <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/bike-blog/2018/jan/16/the-feeling-of-freedom-empowering-berlin-refugee-women-through-cycling>.



Scotland to make sanitary products free for all students

On February 25th 2020, the Scottish Parliament approved legislation to make pads and tampons freely accessible in schools and universities as well as in public spaces such as community centres, youth clubs and pharmacies. This £5.2m scheme aims at fighting period poverty. 2017 Research by Plan International showed that in the UK, 10% of girls are unable to buy menstrual products. This is exacerbated by taboo and stigma which make it all the more difficult for girls to discuss their period with their parents, teachers and even friends.

To learn more:

<https://www.vox.com/2020/2/26/21154743/scotland-menstrual-products-period-poverty>

<https://plan-uk.org/media-centre/plan-international-uks-research-on-period-poverty-and-stigma>



www.freeperiods.org

Argentina to Introduce bill to legalise abortion

Argentina's President Alberto Fernandez is sending forward a bill to congress which seeks to legalise abortion. This is a significant breakthrough for abortion rights in Latin America as it marks the first time a President is backing the initiative. Fernandez publically made the announcement in front of the National congress and thousands of spectators on Sunday 1st March. Fernandez believes the current law is ineffective as it has no deterrent effect. Currently abortion is illegal in Argentina and can carry gaol time, except in the instances of rape or if a mother's health is at risk. During the public announcement he stated *'It has also condemned many women, generally of limited resources, to resort to abortive practices in absolute secrecy, putting their health and sometimes lives at risk'*. As well as putting forward the abortion bill, Fernandez wants to send a project to Congress which aims to provide better support to mothers and newborns, as well as develop and provide a comprehensive sexual education program in Argentinian schools.



©Photograph: Agustin Marcarian/Reuters

Apple Stores to host over 5,000 female-focused sessions in March for International Womens

In celebration of International Women's Day this year, Apple internationally launched a full month of female focused events across their retail stores, App store and other platforms including Apples Books and Podcasts. Hosting over 5000 events, the series titled 'She Creates', focuses on highlighting female leaders, artists, entrepreneurs and creators. Among many notable women leading in-store sessions is the co-chair of the Women's March, Linda Sarsour. In conjunction with the 'She Creates' series, throughout March Apple will be highlighting the work of female developers, designers and entrepreneurs daily on their other platforms; App store, Apple TV, Apple Podcasts and Apple Books. For More Information www.apple.com/au/today/collection/she-creates/



©Photograph: Apple Newsroom

Women Mediators Across the Commonwealth

Despite the fact that women play an active role in mediating violent conflicts and war at all levels, their role in peace progresses is often not acknowledged and supported. Women Mediators across the Commonwealth (WMC) is an international network that brings together women from different backgrounds and with different experiences in the field of conflict mediation together to learn from each other. It advocates for greater recognition of the crucial work done by women mediators at all levels - from the local to the global. Check out the work of the network here: www.c-r.org/programme/women-mediators-across-commonwealth.

Revisiting Eco-Feminism in India

In times of worsening global climate crisis, many activists now agree that eco-feminism offers a unique feminist lens on the very real relationship between gender and environmental issues. The concept first emerged in the 1970s, alongside the anti-nuclear proliferation movement and the beginnings of green political activism. It relates environmental damage to women's exploitation and lack of empowerment; and as such, is well-suited to analyse our today's situation as well. Across the globe, eco-feminist initiatives are now popping up - and young activists also engage with its criticisms. In India, for instance, women have drawn on ecofeminist models to try to tackle the ongoing water crisis. To find out more about ongoing discussions, visit: <https://feminisminindia.com/2019/10/29/is-ecofeminism-relevant-today/>.

Vanessa Nakate, Ugandan climate activist and founder of The Rise Up Movement, was cropped from a photo with white activists at a press conference in Davos in January

At the Davos conference in Switzerland in January 2020, the Associated Press (AP) published a picture of five young climate activists, from which Vanessa Nakate, Ugandan climate activist and founder of The Rise Up Movement, was cropped. Vanessa Nakate addressed a tweet to the AP as well as a video of herself called "What it feels to be removed from a photo", in which she says she understood the "definition of the word 'racism'" for the first time in her life, bringing yet again to light the erasure of climate activists of colour and the global culture of silencing marginalized communities disproportionately affected by the climate crisis.



To read more:

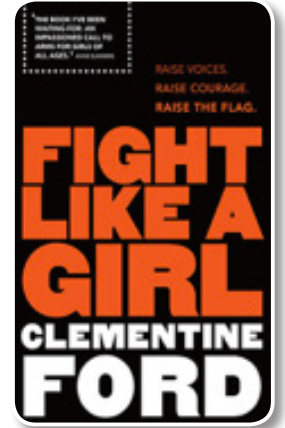
www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jan/29/vanessa-nakate-interview-climate-activism-cropped-photo-davos

To follow Vanessa Nakate on twitter: https://twitter.com/vanessa_vash

To learn more about The Rise Up Movement: <https://twitter.com/TheRiseUpMovem1>

Book recommendation: *Fight Like A Girl* by Clementine Ford

Fight Like A Girl is a call to all feminists -; new, old and as yet unrealised. Australian author Clementine Ford exposes how unequal the world is for women in a society that considers feminism a threat. She forcefully demands the world do better. Throughout her book, Ford thus turns the emptiness and numbness women feel into rage and power. In the wake of Harvey Weinstein and the #MeToo campaign, she creates an essential manifesto for all feminists.



Documentary recommendation: "Footeuses"

Produced by media outlet Yard, "Footeuses" is about women's football in Paris and its outskirts. Through interviews of young female football players and snippets of interviews with female figures such as Afghan-Danish football player Nadia Nadim, "Footeuses" explores the ways in which female football can help young women gain confidence, create a sense of sorority and help fight prejudice.

To watch in French with English subtitles: www.youtube.com/watch?v=tzc22HXRIiQ

PODCAST RECOMMENDATIONS "Not Your African Cliché"

Hosted by four Nigerian women, **Not Your African Cliché** is a new podcast that highlights stories of Africans on the continent and in the diaspora. Drawing from their experiences, the podcasters of NYAC have conversations every other week that range from African literature and travel, to politics, and activism. Their aim is to tell listener "more about us rather than letting disney channel and Nat Geo Wild do it for us."



"Awashamu, a story about women" by Kasa de Colores, Ecuador

Kasa de colores is an Ecuadorian organisation which aims at community-based sustainable development, focusing specifically on agriculture and permaculture, water conservation and waste management. With artists, sociologists, educators and ecologists, *Kasa de colores* uses art, theatre, music and culture to tackle issues linked both to the environment and socio-economic integration. Since 2016, *Kasa de Colores* has been working on Awashamu, a gender-based violence and women empowerment project, helping women become art entrepreneurs. In this podcast, volunteer Clara Minjoulat-Rey interviews Olga, President of *Kasa de Colores*. /!\ Trigger warning: domestic violence

To listen in Spanish with Spanish subtitles: www.youtube.com/watch?v=5J-_OSluaWI&t=11s

In Spanish with English subtitles: www.youtube.com/watch?v=x4HNMPADuUU

In Spanish with French subtitles: www.youtube.com/watch?v=FD7trylTp-E



International Women's Day 2019 in Medellin, Colombia

Con-vivamos is a Medellín-based organisation which focuses on local development, community action and human rights. This podcast features voices of Medellín inhabitants during 2019 International Women's Day March on the kind of city they yearn for: safe, with inclusive, gender-equal and local governance.

To listen in Spanish: <https://soundcloud.com/user-226170428/reportaje-8-de-marzo-2019-medellin>



"No Country for Young Women" meets "Kiffe ta race"

At the last edition of the Paris Podcast Festival in November 2019, French activists and hosts of "Kiffe ta race" Rokhaya Diallo and Grace Ly met UK activists and hosts of "No Country for Young Women" Sadia Azmat and Monty Onanuga for a special episode to discuss the following questions: *"How different is it to be a non-white person in France and in the UK ? Are Paris and London mixed and diverse cities ? How do Sadia, Monty, Rokhaya and Grace deal with their identities ? And most importantly, why do these conversations matter ?"*

Drawing on colonial history and personal experiences, Sadia Azmat, Monty Onanuga, Rokhaya Diallo and Gracy Ly talk gender and race on either side of the channel.

To listen: www.binge.audio/we-have-the-women-of-color-we-deserve-in-english/



"Save the girl" by This American Life

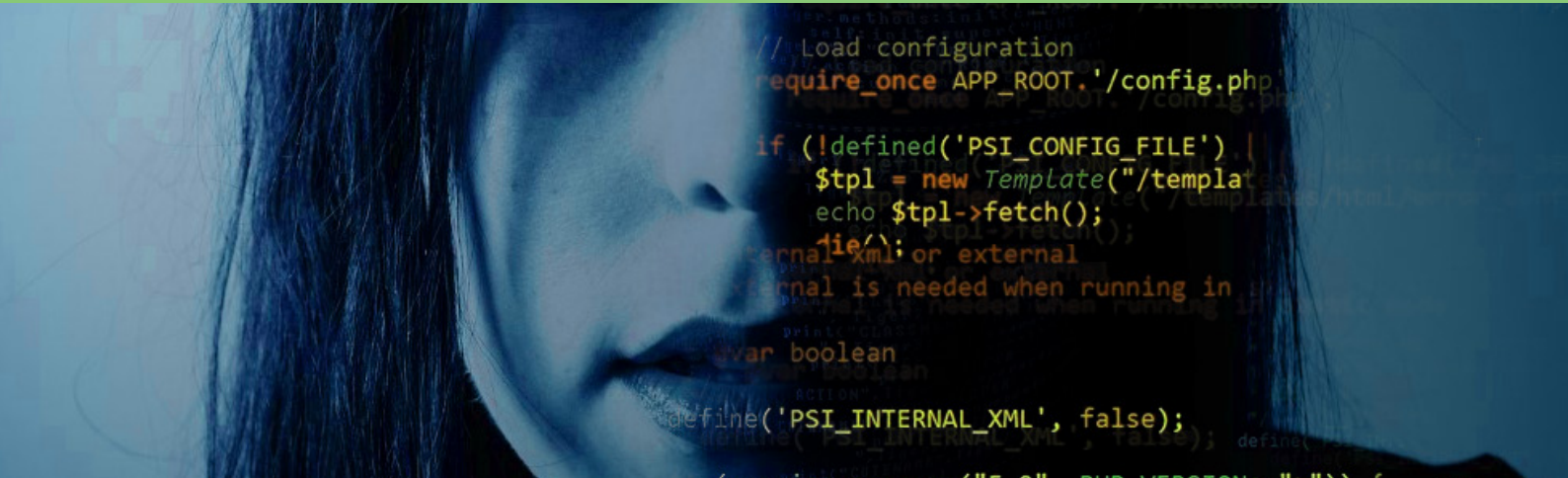
In this episode of the notorious weekly program "This American Life" hosted by Ira Glass, reporters Nadia Reiman and Aviva DeKornfeld shed light on society's obsession with saving girls from danger. Through two poignant stories - one in which the U.S. government is determined to save a girl they believe is a victim of human trafficking and the other about a young girl caught in the

Puebla earthquake in Mexico in September 2017 - "Save the girl" revisits how we collectively react to young girls in danger. To listen: www.thisamericanlife.org/679/save-the-girl



Digital Violence and Image-based Sexual Abuse

by Signe Vahlun and Maria Kortenbach



According to the UN Human Rights Council 23% of the world's women have experienced some sort of online harassment and 10% of women have been subjected to online violence¹. But what is online harassment and violence and why is it so dire that the UN's Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women is focusing on it?

StopHarassment in Denmark typically encounters people whose intimate pictures or film have been shared in one of 4 ways:

1. *Revenge*

Typically happens after a split, when an ex-partner shares pictures which they had received or taken during their relationship.

2. *Unknowingly*

When people have had pictures or film taken without their knowledge and consent. This can be hidden cameras in changing rooms, bathrooms or bedrooms, either in public spaces or in private settings.

3. *Hacked*

When people get their computers hacked. This can result in pictures or film being stolen from their computer or the hackers can gain access to a computer's camera and through this see and record what is showing on the screen but also behind the camera in people's homes.

4. *Photoshopped or Deep fake*

When completely innocent photos, such as portraits from a social media account are photoshopped on to sexualized material and made to look like porn. 'Deep fake' is the term used to describe when film or photos are manipulated into film to look real, creating the illusion that the person was in a porn film.

Regardless of how the pictures or film have been shared in the first place, the consequences are often dire. In some cases, pictures can end up on sites for misogynist online communities that systematically make coordinated efforts to harass and shame the woman on the pictures. Often pictures are also shared in places where family, friends and employers can see them, with the main aim of exposing and shaming.

The latter is especially something that happens to women, in situations where the image or film is shared by an ex-partner, and where it is clear (sometimes even explicitly stated by the former partner) that the uploading of the material is done specifically with the goal of hurting her as revenge because she broke off the relationship. It is a way for the perpetrator to expose and shame the woman in front of her acquaintances and close relatives. This is often the kind of case described when talking with women at the shelter. A woman may have managed physically to leave her violent ex-partner but he still makes efforts to reach her by posting pictures of her on social media, or sending compromising images to her family, friends or workplace in an effort to illicit a response. It is clearly a continuation

1. UN Human Rights Council - Report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences on online violence against women and girls from a human rights perspective, 2018;5.

of the violence and of his control over her - now just online.

Once pictures or film end up online, it can be impossible to control where and how it is spread. Since the start of StopHarassment (see page 17) we have seen still more cases of women's pictures being shared on illegal porn sites. Some sites appear specifically designed to categorize and expose the women, and function in a way where it's possible to make searches specifying age, hair-colour, gender and location, in order to obtain an index of pictures which match the entered search criteria. Clicking on a picture, one can then find or contribute information about the woman. We often see examples of personal information such as name, age, address, phone number and links to her social media accounts being posted.

The information provided is now there for anyone to use as they please. Thus many women find themselves being harassed by strange men, calling them up at all hours, making it clear that they have seen their pictures online. The messages range from date requests, inappropriate comments about their looks to threats of rape and assault. Many experience blackmail, where they are told to provide additional sexualized images or perform sexual acts, in order for the stranger not to forward the compromising images to family, friends or employer. The harassment some women experience is enormous and never ending.

Approximately 12% of the people seeking help in StopHarassment are men and we've observed a difference in the types of harassment men and women are subjected to. A vast majority of the men exposed to this kind of digital image based abuse are homosexual. Often they are still closeted, and are not ready to be open about their sexual orientation. In most of the cases involving men, they have been filmed without their knowledge, and are now being blackmailed for money, using the threat of publicly revealing their homosexuality. In other cases, men have met someone in a chatroom and exchanged sexualized messages, later to be told that the person they have been chatting with was under-age. These men have not intended to have this exchange with a minor, but are very scared of the threat of being outed as a predator. In either case they are being told that the footage will be sent to either the police, their family or their employer unless they transfer money

to the blackmailers. However, in our experience, men's pictures don't end up being shared publicly on illegal porn sites with their personal contact information, which indicates that men are not exposed to harassment in the same intense way that women are.

Regardless of gender, the consequences for people who have their photos shared online without their consent are serious. For many, the first thing that they do is to close down their computer or put down the phone, hoping that the footage will just go away. But it doesn't - quite the contrary. Once the footage is out there, chances are that it will be shared over and over again, and that exposure will grow exponentially over time.

When coming to the realization that their images have been shared without their consent, people often respond by locking themselves up, due to the fear of who might have seen their images. Some people don't leave their houses for several months, making it impossible for them to keep up their studies or go to work. Some stay on sick leave for long periods of time while others are forced to quit their studies or have been fired from their work due to absences.

After working with adults who have been exposed to Digital Violence and image-based Sexual Abuse for the past three years, there is no doubt that this is an enormous problem which is affecting people in the most terrible way. It is a gendered problem that is especially afflicting girls and women of all ages and it is a growing problem that mutates with every new development of technology.

This area needs added focus and a shift in how we view violence in the digital era. This is necessary both when it comes to the police and their handling of cases but also how education centres, schools, unions, workplaces, politicians, the media and every person work with the issue.

Women's Human Rights AND INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

researched and drafted by Mallaury Cervellera, intern at the President's Secretariat of IAW
in Athens, Greece under the supervision of Joanna Manganara, President IAW.



We have entered into a digital age, an age where human rights are still violated and need to be reasserted. New technology helps us to implement actions to promote human rights, but at the same time it brings new challenges, raises new ethical questions and violates human rights. Not everyone has access to new technology and often it is male dominated - designed by men for men.

This paper focuses on information and communication technology (ICT), presenting it as a tool to improve women's rights but, as well, as a threat towards women. The good and bad practices show that there is a need to make new technology inclusive and this paper presents proposals to achieve it.

First of all, the access to ICT can be used as a tool both for the empowerment of women and for protecting their human rights.

With the use of a mobile phone and Internet, women can download an application to share their GPS location with friends when they are going out to meet someone for the first time or when they fear to be alone. Another example of an app using blockchain technology is "Smashboard" from India which aims to help victims of sexual violence seeking assistance to connect with lawyers, mental health experts and journalists.¹

On the Internet, there are websites which allow women to have access to online courses, to gain skills, knowledge and have an easier access to the labour market. They can use general websites made for everyone such as Futurelearn, EDx or specific courses tailored for women. The factor of

mobility is not a barrier any more to basic human rights and education. Further, a number of these platforms propose the possibility to follow courses on women's human rights.

In France, The French Online University proposed a massive open online course on gender-based violence at work. Its goals are prevention and education relating to cases where an employee is a victim of gender based violence (GBV) at work. It gives advice on how to prevent the situation and how to react if someone reports sexual or sexist violence, what kind of help the victim can seek from either internal or external actors, what legal recourse is available. This provides a way to make the rights of women victims of violence at work known and to raise awareness about the situation.

An app called OMOMI, created by two Nigerians, connects pregnant women and mothers with doctors globally and online consultations are available for low fees. It also has the purpose of creating a mothers' community where future mothers can share experiences. It helps women to monitor the growth of their children up to a certain age, and is based on the WHO and UNICEF Childhood Survival Strategies.²

Another example is the online platform Buy for Women, a project piloted by UN Women. It aims to enable an easier access for women farmers to land, information, markets and finance. On one hand, women can access important information such as prices, inputs or finances, on the other hand they become legitimate commercial subjects with digital records. Thanks to this, they can secure their financial future and make the access to new markets easier. It also allows women farmers to get in contact with other farmers, co-operatives and potential buyers.³

Moreover, technology and access to the Internet can serve as a tool to bring peace and gender equality to areas where there are conflicts and wars. In Afghanistan, women use social media to make their voices heard at a national level and

1. Website of the application "Smashboard", available here: <https://smashboard.org/index.php#features>

2. Neil Lewis, Drones, apps and smart lockers: The technology transforming healthcare in Africa, CNN.com, 15.09.2019. <https://edition.cnn.com/2019/10/15/tech/tech-africa-healthcare/index.html>

3. UN-WOMEN, Innovation For Gender Equality, 2019. www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2019/innovation-for-gender-equality-en.pdf?la=en&vs=733

also internationally. On January 2019, the US and the Taliban started to talk about peace. However, due to the lack of women's representation during the process, on February 2019, a group called Afghan Women for Peace gathered 3,500 women to discuss the peace process. Media coverage at the international level was very low, therefore the women used the hashtag #AfghanWomenWillNotGoBack to share photos, statements and bring the information to the public.¹

The presence of women on the web is lower than for men. Only 17% of Wikipedia biographies are on women. Groups of activists meet online or offline in order to reduce this gap. The umbrella group, WikiProject Women, wants to create more content related to women. It invites people to write or edit articles about women's work and biographies of notable women. As well, there is a lack of women's perspective because the vast majority of the content creators are male.²

One way to find solutions to women's human rights' violations would be a hackathon whose main participants would be women and women's organizations. This would help to tackle different challenges faced by women as well as increase the visibility of women in STEM. In 2019, the City of Stockholm organized the biggest women's European hackathon. Different entities proposed 10 challenges with the goal of dealing with specific issues for women or for a larger target. The challenge of Case for Her won the first prize. It consisted in breaking the global stigma of female sexual health. The winning grant was an app named LUCY with aims to spread knowledge to more women about their bodies.³

Even if these good practices are theoretically addressed to all women, not all women have access to them. In its 2018 Mobile Gender Gap Report, GSMA indicates that 10% of women living in low or middle income countries are less than likely to own a mobile phone than men and 26% of women in these countries are less likely to use mobile Internet. The main barrier to ownership of a mobile is the cost for men and women. For women, a low rate of literacy is emphasised, and in particular in

digital literacy. There is also a lack of awareness among women in these countries about mobile Internet and a feeling that it is not relevant to their lives. As well, there is a concern about safety, i.e. 40% of women in Mexico who do not have a mobile are afraid that a stranger may contact them, whereas only 26% of men have this belief.⁴

There are many examples where new technology is misused and thus becomes harmful to women. For instance, women are victims of violence based on their gender. Before Internet, this violence was offline but nowadays Internet makes hate speech easier toward women.⁵ According to a FRA Survey on Violence Against Women in 2014, 11% of women in the European Union have experienced cyber harassment since the age of 15.⁶ One form of cyber violence is the publication of non-consensual pornographic videos or images. In 90% of the cases the victims are women. This is often the result of the behavior of a former partner. Cyber stalking is another threat, which is "stalking by means of email, text (or online) messages or the Internet". Among other forms of online violence, there are sextortion, electronically enabled trafficking and rape and death threats.⁷

Another example of the misuse of technology has been illustrated by research published by UNESCO. It shows that digital assistants from products such as Apple or Microsoft enhance gender biases, because the voice used is often by default female and is submissive. A user can insult the digital assistant freely. The title of the UNESCO publication begins with "I'd blush if I could". It comes from an answer given by Siri when a human user would say, "Hey Siri, you're a bi****". In April 2019 the answer was changed to "I don't know

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WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS AND INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

how to respond to that”¹. This answer is again very outrageous. Siri for Apple cannot be as well characterized as feminist. When a user asks Siri questions related to feminism, it answers with “I believe that all voices are created equal and worth equal respect”. Siri doesn’t have opinions and has a neutral position when it comes to feminism.²

Furthermore, a report of Privacy International demonstrates that 61% of the apps tested, which are helping women to track their periods, have been sharing these data with Facebook while users of these apps are not aware that such data are shared with such an enterprise. Even if a user doesn’t have an account on Facebook their data are still received by Facebook. This means that Facebook is not only able to see when someone is most fertile and will have her next period, but can get information about the health, sexual life or the mood of a person, for example.³ This situation happens because the users do not read the terms of use, which are dense and very often not user-friendly. Therefore, the user agrees to share sensitive data without real knowledge of it.

Technology can be used to reinforce the violations of women’s human rights. The app Absher of the Saudi governments raised a lot of questions. The purpose of this app is to facilitate the administrative process. Yet in Saudi Arabia women are under the guardianship of men, husbands and fathers, and therefore need the authorization of one of their guardians for getting a passport and for having authorization to leave the country for a period of time. Through this app, male guardians are able to do it by distance. Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International called on Google and Apple to assess the app’s use



to determine whether it discriminates or facilitates abuse.⁴ Both apps had store led investigations and then refused to delete the app from their platforms. Google claimed that it did not violate their terms of use.

These few examples of wrong practices show that there is a need to protect women towards the abuse of new technology.

During the conception or improvement of new technology, companies need to include human rights as a key aspect of the design and take into consideration how technology can be used and impact each human being. One of the barriers to doing this is the fact that this is an industry largely dominated by men. Promoting STEM fields among girls and women could reduce this gap. According to a UNESCO report, 35% of STEM students in higher education globally are women and only 3% of female students in higher education choose ICT studies.⁵ Having more women involved in tech would facilitate an inclusive approach during the conception of new tech products.

Furthermore, designers and suppliers should be held responsible for the use of their technology. There is a need to make the terms of use more comprehensible and to protect sensitive data like the ones on health from firms. They don’t need to know the mood of a person or the last time

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someone had her period. It should be forbidden to share this data and social media firms should be held accountable for online violence as well.

The gender digital divide is “the inequalities between men and women in terms of access to information and communications technologies”.¹ This gap has been translated as the 5B target of the SDGs, which is called “Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women” and its indicator is the “Proportion of individuals who own a mobile telephone, by sex”. Yet, when it comes to the access of Internet worldwide, there is no indicator based on the sex. Such a statistic should be created within the context of the SDGs due to the fact that non-access to Internet deepens inequalities. Affordable Internet and phones should be accessible to everyone no matter the gender, the country or the income of a person.

To conclude, ICT has to be taken into consideration in the fight against the violation of women's human rights and in the achievement of gender equality. It has the potential to be a leverage as well as a threat. Technology in the broadest sense of the word covers all aspects of women's human rights but it has also opened new challenges that need to be tackled. One of the six Action Coalition themes announced for the Generation Equality Forum, which will be held in May 2020 in Mexico and in July 2020 in Paris, refers to the Technology and innovation for Gender Equality. The coalition aims to launch a targeted set of concrete, ambitious and immediate actions within the period of 2020-2025.²

JUST STOP!

1. Definition of Gender Digital Divide by IGI Global, www.igi-global.com/dictionary/a-human-rights-based-approach-to-bridge-gender-digital-divide/11919

2. UN Women, Action Coalitions. www.unwomen.org/en/get-involved/beijing-plus-25/generation-equality-forum/action-coalitions



StopHarassment – and how the Danish women’s movement took the initiative in dealing with ‘image-based’ sexual abuse.

In Denmark there has been a focus on private and intimate pictures being shared without consent for several years. From the beginning, the majority of the attention has been aimed at prevention with regard to children and teenagers. Both the media, politicians and the general population kept iterating the lack of digital education and created an impression that this was the primary reason for why teenagers would take and share pictures of each other without consent.

However, in closed online communities it became clear that several women, who were no longer in the teenage category, were also having pictures shared without their consent. And worst of all they were finding it almost impossible to report these incidences to the police. If they tried, they would be met with comments like *“but you are way too old for that to happen”*, *“It’s just the Internet...”* or *“why did you share a picture with your ex-partner in the first place”*.

Reading about the frustration that these women were exposed to, sparked the idea and paved the way for the StopHarassment hotline to be established in Denmark in 2017.

The project office of StopHarassment is situated at one of the Danish Women Society’s shelters and works from the notion that the sharing of intimate pictures without consent is a form of violence against women. Through its hotline service, StopHarassment offers guidance to adults (18 years and up) who have had intimate pictures or film shared online without their consent. StopHarassment is open for all genders, and can be reached either by phone or e-mail. In addition, women staying at one of the Society’s shelters can make personal visits to the office if they need guidance and help. Although open to all genders, the data shows clearly that this is to be considered a gendered issue, seeing as 87% of calls to the hotline are from women.

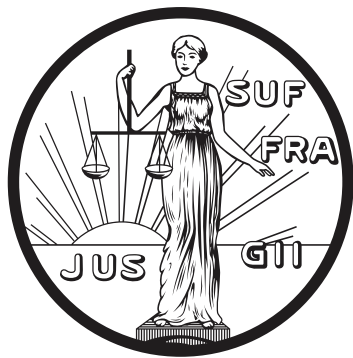
People contacting StopHarassment are of all ages, starting at 18 years and going well into their sixties. The 18-25 year olds form the biggest group but remarkably the second largest group of callers are the 45-50 year olds. A notable difference is that the younger groups tend to react faster, and thus get the necessary support and help earlier in the process, whereas it has been observed that older people subjected to non-consensual image sharing and online violence tend to react by ignoring the issue for a longer time, due to shame and due to the feeling that they are alone in their experience. The big focus on how this issue is affecting teenagers and younger women has created a false perception that adults don’t face this situation and, as a majority of the efforts to stop, limit or de-stigmatize this is aimed at teenagers, the older group is particularly vulnerable in this context.

The guidance provided by StopHarassment is a form of help-to-self-help. When contacting the hotline, people will present their problem regarding non-consensual image-sharing and online harassment resulting therefrom, and they will be guided in how to document the crime, how to stop images from being spread further, how to report to the police and lastly, how to try to delete and remove the contents from the Internet.

The experiences from running the hotline have been shared by StopHarassment through an educational effort where the project has toured Women’s shelters around the country, sharing tools to deal with the effects of image based sexual abuse. Sadly, the funding for the project has run out with the start of 2020, and the future of the project seems unsure.



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