

volume 2, issue 3  
fall 2004

Kosovar

# Women's Voice

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## announcements

**November 25, Peja**  
Women's Wellness Center organizes White Ribbon Day

**Mon., November 29, Prishtina, Oda Theatre, 20:00**  
KWN launches "Know Your Rights" campaign

**November 29-30**  
Women from Bosnia and Herzegovina visit Kosovar Women's NGOs

**December 4, Prishtina**  
Annual KWN Meeting

**February 7, Prishtina, HCIC, 11:00**  
KWN Bimonthly Meeting

RRJETI I GRUPEVE TË  
GRAVE TË KOSOVËS



KOSOVA WOMENS  
NETWORK

[www.womensnetwork.org](http://www.womensnetwork.org)

## Kosovars Discuss Gender Equality Mechanisms

The Conference on Gender Equality Mechanisms was a joint initiative organized by the Office of the Prime Minister, Advisory Office on Good Governance, Human Rights, Equal Opportunities and Gender (AOGG), Kosova Women's Network (KWN), OSCE - Department of Democratization, UNIFEM and the UNMIK - Office of Gender Affairs (OGA).

The conference was organized in the context of the newly promulgated law on gender equality. It provided a forum for advocates and experts involved in the effort to advance gender equality in Kosova at both the central and local level, to jointly review the existing gender equality mechanisms in Kosova and to discuss changes or actions needed to further institutionalize or strengthen advocates.

The international partners that supported this conference have all previously been involved in building the capacity of existing gender institutions in Kosova. Their support for this conference demonstrates a continued commitment to provide guidance and assis-



The Conference on Gender Equality Mechanisms was held at the Grand Hotel in Prishtina on September 17th and 18th.

tance for gender equality as Kosova moves forward with implementing the National Action Plan for Gender Equality and the new Gender Equality Law.

The objectives of the GEM conference were to:

1. Provide a forum to debate and examine the existing mechanisms on gender equality at the local and central level in relation to the Law on Gender Equality, analyze the experiences gained from current functioning gender equality mechanisms and draw from

the experience of other women's groups in Europe

2. Strengthen gender equality mechanisms at the central and municipal level and enhance their coordination

3. Discuss the legislative and practical measures necessary for the implementation of the Law on Gender Equality in Kosova and draw recommendations and guidelines to implement the above mentioned law.

Recommendations from the conference will be published in the next "Kosovar Women's Voice."

## Campaign Brings Women Politicians and Voters Together

The "Women Propose" campaign, an effort to increase the political participation of women in politics, has achieved many of the objectives it formulated during the summer

months in preparation for the upcoming election. Female political candidates have successfully met with voters from 30 different municipalities. Voters had the opportunity to voice their concerns directly to female candidates and candidates were able to get their names out to the public and express their platforms.

On September 21st, KWN launched the second phase of the campaign at a press conference in the

OSCE building. Participants of the conference discussed issues such as how to implement effective methods of information-sharing to further encourage female participation in politics.

KWN has also hired a new Campaign Coordinator, Violeta Selimi, and extends a warm welcome to her.

This campaign is funded by OSCE and the Swiss Cooperation and Development Office (SCDO), with technical assistance from STAR Network of World Learning and UNIFEM.



Violeta Selimi, Women Propose Campaign Coordinator leads a discussion in Prishtina.

## September Coordination Meeting Notes

- Project "Support Group for Breastfeeding Mothers" will start on October 2004 and last for six months. The project will be implemented by KWN and financed by UNICEF.

- Project "Girl's Parliament Initiative" is still being finalized. Planned to start in December 2004 and continue until December 2005, it will be implemented by Women without Borders (Vienna, Austria) with assistance from KWN and its members.

- "Women Propose" Campaign - second phase update.

- "Get out and Vote" Campaign to mobilize civil society to get out and vote. This campaign was organized by NDI and ATRC, with the assistance of KWN.

- Announcement: the conference, "Gender Equality Mechanisms in Kosovo," will be held on 17 & 18 September 2004 in the Grand Hotel, Prishtina

- "Handikos" has started a new initiative called, "Democracy for All," which focuses on raising awareness amongst voters, including disabled persons. They will prepare a National Agenda which will be delivered to political parties, the government and others.

- The local NGO Network in Gjakova, "Qeliza," started a project entitled, "Help Voters and Vote," funded by OSCE.

[www.womensnetwork.org](http://www.womensnetwork.org)

## Women Establish Support Groups

KWN, in cooperation with UNICEF, the Kosova Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) working group and local NGOs, is developing a project that aims to increase the exclusive breastfeeding rate of children. This will be achieved through the establishment of functional and sustainable "Women to Women" support groups in six locations. The support groups will primarily support, protect, and promote breastfeeding at the community level. "Women to Women" groups will be organized by local women's groups and NGOs already familiar with the targeted areas to better ensure the project's success. The project will further obtain and maintain close cooperation with health institutions and the BFHI working group. We will be able to support an estimated 4000 mothers of various ethnicities.

*An estimated 4000  
mothers of various ethnicities  
will benefit from  
the Women to Women  
support groups.*

"Women to Women" support groups will be responsible for the following activities:

1. Support, protect and promote breastfeeding for children from birth to over 2 years of age with special emphasis on exclusive breastfeeding during the first 6 months
2. Create and maintain close communication with maternity wards in order to collect information on new mothers, and, if necessary, pay them a home visit.



*The Women to Women campaign will help mothers support each other.*

3. Advocate, inform and consult mothers, women and family members on the importance of breastfeeding and lactation management in NGO centers and offices through telephone consultations or home visits

4. Offer information and consultancy on breastfeeding without discrimination and with special attention to women from the Roma, Ashkalia and Egyptian communities as well as the most vulnerable women living in selected locations

5. Through KWN and the NGO coordinating center, maintain close cooperation with local health institutions and the Kosova BFHI working group

6. Maintain regular evidence on activities by regularly preparing reports to share with involved partners

KWN will be the primary organization responsible for implementing this project. Preliminary selection of the locations was done in coordination with UNICEF and Kosov BFHI working group. The locations

are as follows: Gjakova, Prizren, Gjilan, Glogovc, Peja, and Ferizaj. The main coordinating center will be based in Prishtina.

After consulting with UNICEF and Kosova BFHI working group, KWN will establish "Women to Women" support groups in the six municipalities to fulfill the required criteria.

Initially, KWN will identify the key people for the project, including hiring a project coordinator and nominating municipal coordinators and assistants who will be directly responsible for the implementation of the project. An estimated 40 women representing KWN and other women's NGOs will undergo a three day training on Breastfeeding Counseling. By the end of the training, teams will develop municipal and general implementation action plans. UNICEF and WHO will support training by providing materials and information on certified trainers. After consultations with UNICEF, breastfeeding training will be enriched with themes that come from facts of life.

After completion of the project, KWN foresees the support groups continuing on a voluntary basis or branching out to other health education topics. We hope that this will help establish and maintain collaboration between women's groups and municipality health directorates. The project will begin in October 2004 and will last six months.



*Breast feeding is healthier for  
mothers and their children.*

### *Did you know?*

*Breastfeeding may reduce women's chances of breast cancer?*

*For more information, go to:  
[http://www.breastfeeding.com/all\\_about/all\\_about\\_breast\\_cancer2.html](http://www.breastfeeding.com/all_about/all_about_breast_cancer2.html)*

## Coalition Launches Get Out the Vote Campaign

KWN, in close cooperation with the Advocacy Training and Resource Center (ATRC) and the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, organized a Kosovo-wide Get Out the Vote (GOTV) campaign to encourage voter participation in the October 23 elections.

The GOTV campaign aimed to increase voter morale and improve citizen knowledge of the importance of voting in the coming election through the media, pamphlets, posters, e-announcements and canvassing.

Thirty campaign coordinators, one from each municipality, recruited and provided training for more than 2200 volunteers. The canvassers attempted to reach approximately 335,000 houses across Kosova.

KWN's role was to actively involve the local media so that the campaign would reach an even wider audience. KWN members invited community leaders to appear in more than # television talk shows, news briefs and other media events.

KWN and the GOTV coalition



*Get Out the Vote volunteers in Prishtina hand out pamphlets about why voting in the next election is important.*

believe that the campaign was a success as 53% of the population turned out to vote as opposed to 45%, which was predicted. Many voters told KWN members that it was the message on t.v. that convinced them to vote.

KWN became involved in this campaign based on the knowledge that this election was of great importance to Kosova.

Considering the imminent talks regarding Kosova's future political status, the election meant choosing who would manage the protectorate's democratic future. Citizens needed to play an active role in shaping that governing body.

Kosova's unique governing system, where power is shared between the local Provisional

**continue on page 4**

## Girls' Parliament Initiative Begins in Kosova

KWN hopes to establish an interactive educational platform on civil society, democracy and gender issues from the perspective of the younger generation through the Girls' Parliament Initiative.

Using a "Women without Borders"

curriculum, girls between 17 and 20 years of age are introduced to political processes and civil society in order to awaken their interest in Kosovar and international politics. In order to give the Girls Parliament Initiative a relevant and current framework, the initiative will use the European Union as its governmental model.

Thirty girls from five diverse regions will be trained in a one-year program. The program includes three workshops, project work in cooperation with five different local NGOs, travel to two European Union member states and project presentation with representatives of the Council of Europe. The project will offer the girls not only theoretical training, but will also enable girls to work together with groups that they would normally not encounter; for example, the program will incor-

*"Our goal is to establish an interactive educational platform for civil society, democracy and gender issues from the perspective of the younger generation."*

porate cross-ethnic and cross-urban contact. Through workshops and project work, the girls will develop concrete leadership skills that they can bring to the next generation of business people, social managers and political leaders.

The project will start in December 2004 and will last one year. It will be realized in cooperation with Women without Borders, an organization from Austria.

## KWN Strategic Planning

KWN members and partners held a second workshop on September 24th to finalize KWN's first 3 year Strategic Plan, which was drafted earlier this spring.

The Strategic Plan will include the following information:

- KWN's background and history
- Analysis of the social and political context that the Kosovar women's movement faces, including international and national governing institutions, legislation, and NGOs
- Analysis of KWN's organizational structure
- Formulation of KWN's key objectives for the next three years
- Summary of KWN's current and projected programs

The strategic plan was reviewed and finalized at the October Board meeting.

## Women NGOs Meet with U.S. Civil Rights Activists

On September 22nd, women NGO representatives met with Burt Reynolds and two civil rights activists from the United States, as well as Larry Corwin, the new Information Officer at the United States Office in Prishtina (USOP). They discussed strategies for empowering women's position in society and other important issues such as inter-ethnic relations, UN Resolution 1325, and women in decision-making positions.



*The Girls' Parliament Initiative will bring Kosovar girls one step closer to a future leadership role in business, politics and society.*

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**New Office Location!**  
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**Support for KWN**

STAR Network World Learning; Kosovo Foundation for Open Society (KFOS) and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) / Kosovo Local Initiative Program (KLIP) provide institutional support and capacity building for KWN.

**Special Thanks**

KWN would like to express a special thanks to TV21, for exceptional media support for all of KWN's activities.



"Kosovar Women's Voice" is written by Elita Gota; edited and designed by Alison Hyytinen and Nicole Farnsworth.

www.womensnetwork.org

# GOTV Campaign Continued...

Institutions of Self Governance (PISG) and the United Nations Mission in Kosova, it is difficult for citizens to know where to address their issues or who to hold responsible for government negligence. This further contributes to growing civilian frustration and cynicism.

As a result, experts predicted

a low voter turnout in the 2004 elections. Voter malaise is understandable given the situation; however, Kosova's final political status, amongst other important social and political issues, will most likely be settled over the next three years. While international and local government fight over political power, competencies and Kosova's future status, the real needs and concerns of citizens have been pushed to the margins.

Besides the immediate goal of increasing voter turnout, the GOTV campaign also strengthened ties between citizen volunteers and NGO groups, thereby increasing the average citizen's capability to participate effectively in Kosovar civil society. By promoting volunteerism and every day involvement in civil society campaigns, KWN hopes to encourage



*Student volunteers gather in the center of Prishtina to spread the message as to why voting in the election is important.*

**A DO?**

 RRYME?  
 UJË?  
 RROGË?  
 RRUGË?  
 SHKOLLË?  
 STATUS?  


**MOS U ANKO, VOTO!**

*"Do you want? Electricity, Water, Salary, Roads, Schools, Status? Don't complain, vote," posters, pamphlets and TV spots spread the GOTV message to a wide audience.*

citizens to take greater ownership in civil society. to build the canvassing capacity of citizens and civic groups.

## UNDP Launches the Second HDR for Kosova

"The promotion of individual rights and responsibilities is the best practice for the development of democracy and better living conditions for Kosovars," argues the Kosova Human Development Report 2004, launched on September 16, 2004 at the National and University Library in Prishtina.

The launch of the report - entitled "The Rise of the Citizen: Challenges and Choices" - was hosted by UNDP Resident Representative Ms. Christine Roth, with statements by the Prime Minister Bajram Rexhepi, the Chairman of the Association of Kosova Municipalities Mr. Lutfi Haziri, and the Executive Director of Kosova Women's Network Ms. Igballe Rogova.

The Kosova Human Development Report 2004 is the second such report for Kosova. It presents detailed analysis and recommendations to deepen democratic governance across Kosova and improve the living conditions and development choices of ordinary people. For the first time, the report presents data disaggregated by

municipalities. It highlights the fact that despite considerable progress since 1999, each day reaffirms the need to broaden the channels for participation and representation and to harness the talents of civil society organizations, the media, business groups and individual citizens.

The report's unprecedented economic, social and political data further show how the gains and losses of recent years affect different regional, ethnic and demographic

groups.

"From uneducated women and unemployed youth, to minorities that fear for their safety and the disabled and elderly who require personal care, it is the responsibility of all Kosovars to ensure that their issues are prioritized by government and civil society," the report said.

*This article was taken from: <http://www.kosovo.undp.org/news/news.asp#16September>*



*The UNDP Human Development Report for Kosova was launched on September 16 at the National and University Library in Prishtina. KWN Director Igballe Rogova, Prime Minister Bajram Rexhepi, UNDP Representative Christine Roth and Chairman of the Association of Kosova Municipalities Lutfi Haziri (left to right) made statements.*