



# Kosovar Women's Voice

Supporting, protecting, and promoting the rights  
and interests of women and girls in Kosovo

## Join Us!

**KWN Bimonthly Meeting**  
2 Sep. 2013

**KWN Retreat (Members only)**  
Durrës, 3-6 Oct. 2013

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KWN members: take any good photographs of your NGO's activities lately? Send them to [info@womensnetwork.org](mailto:info@womensnetwork.org) by 31 August for the chance to win a €50 prize. The winning photo and caption will appear in KWN's September newsletter. Only KWN members are eligible to apply.

## KWN Reacts against Hate Speech

The Kosova Women's Network (KWN) supported the reaction and demands made by the Women's Caucus of the Assembly of Kosova regarding the denigrating, offensive and immoral language that Imam Irfan Salihu used against Kosovar women at Suzi Zerrini mosque in Prizren. KWN considers Imam Salihu's statement a violation of human rights and freedoms. The Constitution of the Republic of Kosova guarantees "the rights of every citizen, civil freedoms and equality of all citizens before the law." (Click [here](#) for KWN's press release).

## Members Shoot Photos in Germia

In response to members' requests, KWN hosted a [training on photography](#) on May 28. Held in Gërmia National Park, the training was both relaxing and informative. They learned elements to consider in taking good photographs, such as

light, reflection, action, composition and ethics (e.g., when one should request permission to take pictures).

"This training was really needed," said Sylbije Sahiti from NGO *Parajsa Jonë* (Our Paradise). "It helped us learn to take good pictures and now we can better portray our NGO's activities and events."

NGO representatives immediately put their new knowledge to use, taking photos indoors and outdoors at Gërmia National Park.

"We learnt a lot today, but we also had fun," said Ganimete Tolaj from NGO *Mentor Tolaj NDERI*. "The training topic and the venue where the training was held are more entertaining."

## Show Your Skills: Enter the KWN Photo Competition, Win €50



*KWN members, staff pose at the end of the photography training held at Gërmia National Park on May 28.*

## Young Women from Kosova, Serbia Strategize

Young women from Kosova and Serbia met in Split, Croatia on 7-11 June. Young women from Croatia, Armenia and Azerbaijan joined them. They discussed the rights of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) persons, as well as exchanged information and experiences. They also attended the Parade for the Rights of LGBT persons.

Since 2011, [Kvinna till Kvinna \(KtK\)](#) has supported the empowerment of young women from Kosova and Serbia through study visits. This was the fourth such visit. Prior visits have been held in Israel/Palestine, Kosova and Serbia.

Study visits have fostered strong friendships among participants. "We now have someone in Kosova, and Kosova girls have someone in Serbia who they can contact and cooperate with, despite the problems between our two countries," a participant from Serbia said.

Young women from the region already have initiated cooperation on joint initiatives (click [here for more information](#)). Among these, KWN launched the Young Women's Empowerment Initiative this year with support from KtK. If you're a young woman living in Kosova, please join our [group](#).



*In Split, participants discuss initiatives towards young women's empowerment.*

## Food Hygiene Plays Role in Finding Markets for Products

Ensuring hygienic preparation of food is the first step that women must take in preparing products for market. Therefore, NGO *Parajsa Jonë* (Our Paradise) invited 20 women to its training on food hygiene in Krojmir village in Lipjan Municipality. The topic raised so much interest that more than 43 women, ages eight to 55, attended.

Participants engaged in discussions related to food hygiene, setting the right temperature for food, avoiding the spread of diseases, pasteurizing food, buying raw products and delivering final products.

Hanife, a participant, offered her garden for the training. "I am very happy to share this space with women," she said. "It's hard for women to leave their houses. This is a perfect excuse for them to get out of their daily routine."

Sylbije Sahiti, Executive Director of *Parajsa Jonë*, who participates actively in fairs, shared her experience. She encouraged participants to undertake initiatives to earn money and empower themselves economically.



*Sylbije Sahiti from Parajsa Jonë (Our Paradise) talks about food hygiene.*

"Do not be ashamed or afraid of sharing your ideas with others and making your dreams become a reality," she told women who had gathered on plastic lawn chairs. "When I first started this initiative, I didn't have support from my family. My husband didn't think I could do it. However, today he has seen the success and he is very supportive. Now I can provide income for my family" she said. "I believe that each of you has unique ideas, can become successful and can earn money for yourself and your family."

## Campaign "Dëgjo zërin tim" (Hear My Voice) Starts

As a part of the campaign "Dëgjo zërin tim" (Hear My Voice), [Qendra Kosovare për Rehabilitimin e të Mbijetuarve të Torturës \(QKRMT\) \[Kosova Rehabilitation Center for Torture Victims \(KRCT\)\]](#), supported by the Ministry of European Integration in Prishtina, showed on Jun. 28 at ABC Cinema, the documentary of the same name, which is dedicated to women who survived sexual violence during the war in Kosova. ASHA Company produced the film.

The documentary depicts horrendous and true stories of one survivor. The film also involves well-known personalities who express their opinions, including Tony Blair, Adem Demaçi, Mufti Naim Tërnavë, the Minister of European Integration Vlora Çitaku, Prof. Ismet Salihu from the Institute for War Crimes, KWN Executive Director Igballe Rogova and Executive Director at KRCT Feride Rushiti - all experts on the circumstances and consequences of these serious crimes committed during the war in Kosovo.

## Young Women Activists Mobilize in Mitrovica

KWN organized a [Young Women's Empowerment Initiative \(YWEI\)](#) meeting in Mitrovica on May 30. Approximately 25 young women from various NGOs and institutions attended.

Young women discussed the problems and issues young women from Mitrovica face in everyday life and their strategies for overcoming these issues, including young women's access to education, early marriage, inter-generational conflict and difficulties entering into decision-making positions.

"This meeting provided us with clear ideas for overcoming the difficulties that we as young women face today," a participant said. "It also showed us how important it is to gather more often and share experiences."

Young women believe that the first step towards overcoming these problems is raising awareness among young women and older generations, as well as hosting intergenerational experience exchanges. They were encouraged to continue thinking about ideas and solutions for solving the issues they face. They will bring their ideas for discussion in future meetings.



*Girls identify their concerns and needs during the YWEI meeting organized by KWN in Mitrovica.*

YWEI came out of KWN members' interests in furthering the sustainability of women's organizing in Kosovo. It aims to involve more young women in the women's movement by empowering them to advocate for their concerns and needs.

This meeting followed prior discussions held in Prizren and Gjilan. YWEI receives support from KtK.

## 5000 Feminists (including Men) Discuss Healthcare Rights

Approximately five thousand participants from around the world attended the [Third Global Conference 2013](#) organized by Women Deliver on May 28-30, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Government leaders, policymakers, healthcare professionals, NGO representatives, corporate leaders and global media outlets from 150 countries around the world gathered to discuss women's access to healthcare. Most participants arrived from Africa, Latin America and Asia. Very few came from Europe, but among them was Mimoza Paçuku, KWN's Project Coordinator for the [Kosova Women's Fund](#).

"I was glad to be able to present Kosovo in the largest global event of the decade organized about health," she said.

Conference participants were diverse, not only by nationality but gender as well.

"In the Women Deliver conference, among 5,000 feminists 40% were men," Mimoza reflected. "I was surprised by their engagement and awareness about equality. WE'VE MOVED forward!"

Mimoza was among [100 Young Leaders](#) attending the conference. For one year prior to the conference, young leaders took e-courses on health, advocacy and media communications; shared opinions; and blogged regularly about health issues in their countries. Mimoza was invited to join this select group late in the year, but worked triple-time to catch up and become involved in discussions. Women Deliver provided space for these young leaders to voice their needs during a Pre-Youth Conference on May 27.

Participants presented issues that youth in their countries face to leading change-makers, including Kathy Calvin, President and Chief Executive Officer of the [United Nations Foundation](#); Barbara Bush, co-founder of [Global Health Corps](#); Kate Gilmore, Deputy Executive Director [UNFPA](#); Joy Marini, Director, [Corporate Contributions, Johnson & Johnson](#); Netherland's Princess Mabel; and Denmark's Crown Princess Mary.



*Lakshmi Puri, Assistant Secretary-General for Intergovernmental Support and Strategic Partnerships at the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), led the plenary session.*

## Did You Miss the Last KWN Meeting?

Here's what happened. In the morning, KWN members heard the conclusions and recommendations of the [Gender Study in Kosovo](#), which examined the implementation of the Law on Gender Equality and Kosovo Program for Gender Equality to date. Undertaken by two independent experts in Nov.-Dec. 2012, the study was funded by the [Swedish International Development Agency](#) (Sida) to inform its future strategy in Kosovo and the region.

Following the presentation, KWN members had the opportunity to comment on the findings and discuss the challenges faced by women-led organizations with Sida representatives Maria Melbing and Visare Gashi-Gorani. KWN members raised concerns regarding their access to funding and the recent tendency of donors to provide funding through the government. KWN members discussed how this might impact their independence and ability to hold government officials accountable.

In the end, Ms. Maria Melbing voiced Sida's commitment to continuing its support to civil society and to furthering gender equality in Kosovo. However, she said that Sida continues to discuss the mechanisms through which such support will be provided as part of its strategic planning process.

In the afternoon, Igballe Rogova, KWN Executive Director, notified members of a Public Hearing that will take place on Jun. 12 regarding the amendment of the draft law for the status and rights of martyrs, invalids, veterans, members of the Kosova Liberation Army and civilian victims of war and their families. KWN members were encouraged to participate in this session where activists hope to amend the law to include women who suffered sexual violence during the war.

Members also were invited to join the KWN retreat to Durrës, Albania on 3-6 October, supported by KtK.

Naxhije Buçinca, a founder of [the Foundation for the Education of Girls "Çifti Buçinca"](#), explained this new Foundation, which aims to further girls' education. They raised €24,000 during a Gala Event, which will go towards girls' [education](#). This included a €1,000 donation from KWN.

Zana Hoxha-Krasniqi, Executive Director of [Artpolis](#) shared information about its First Festival for Human Rights "[Femmes Fatales](#)" where women artists from the region showcased their work.

Belgijzare Muharremi, from [Dera e Hapur \(Open Door\)](#), informed KWN members about the handmade products fair on Prishtina Day, Jun. 11.

Drita Vukshinaj from the [Association of Women with Disabilities Women for Women](#) presented the magazine *Gruaja në Fokus* (Women in Focus), published in close cooperation with the Gender Equality Officer of the Municipality of Prizren and other women-led NGOs. She also announced that the Association of Artisans would organize a fair on Jun. 16, the Day of Prizren.

Actress Anisa Ismajli presented the [Kosovar Gender Studies Centre \(KGSC\)](#) and Multimedia project being organized in high schools around Kosova. Actors aim to raise awareness among young people through short sketches related to healthcare, gender equality and sexuality. Three actors enacted two short sketches about violence in teen relationships and insufficient communication within the family.

Emilija Dimoska, a representative from [KtK in Macedonia](#) requested KWN's support in rejecting the proposed amendment to the law on abortion in Macedonian. KWN members agreed that KWN should react and support women's free choice on this issue.

Approximately 60 members, staff and supporters participated in KWN's bimonthly meeting on Jun. 7.



Drita Vukshinaj from the [Association of Women with Disabilities Women for Women](#) in Prizren presents the magazine "Woman in Focus" published in cooperation with Gender Equality Officer and other women-led NGOs in Prizren.