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CLUB DE MADRID

Shared Societies Project

Briefing Paper on

Women and Shared Societies:

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"MINORITY WOMEN AS AGENTS OF CHANGE IN SHARED SOCIETIES"

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1. INTRODUCTION: 'DIFFERENCES WITHIN DIFFERENCE.'

2. INTERSECTIONAL CASE STUDIES

2.1 DALIT WOMEN IN INDIA
2.2 ROMA WOMEN IN EUROPE
2.3 MUSLIM WOMEN IN THE UK
2.4 KURDISH WOMEN IN IRAQ.
2.5 IRISH TRAVELLER WOMEN

3. CHALLENGES RELATED TO MINORITY WOMEN AND SHARED SOCIETY WORK.

4. EXAMPLES OF MINORITY WOMEN'SSHARED SOCIETY WORK

4.1 COMBINING WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT WITH SHARED SOCIETY WORK.

4.2 CHALLENGING VIOLENCE TOWARDS WOMEN, AND ISLAMIC VIOLENCE.

1.00   INTRODUCTION: 'DIFFERENCES WITHIN DIFFERENCE.'

1.1   While the Shared Society work of the Club of Madrid is addressing the nurturing of shared societies through strong political leadership, women are mostly absent from such leadership.[1] This absence is particularly problematic for minority women whose absence curtails both their ability to fight discrimination within their groups, as well as fighting discrimination and exclusion from majority groups.

1.2   While minority men are often affected by discrimination and exclusion from majority societies, minority and indigenous women frequently suffer from multiple discriminations (intersectionality) suffering as they do from the attitudes and behavior of the majority community, as well as from discrimination within their own communities.[2] This is called double, triple (or more) discrimination in that they often have lower rates than minority men of e.g. schooling and literacy, employment opportunities, wages, land ownership, and poverty. In addition, they often suffer from sexual violence, and from trafficking and slavery processes from both within and

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[1] http://www.clubmadrid.org/en/programa/women_s_political_participation_and_leadership
[2] Intersectionality is a feminist theory that starts from the premise that people live multiple, layered identities derived from social relations, history and the operation of structures of power. See Intersectionality: A Tool for Gender and Economic Justice (2004) Women's Rights and Economic Change
http://lgbtq.unc.edu/sites/lgbtq.unc.edu/files/documents/intersectionality_en.pdf

outside their communities.[3]

1.3   Thus, for many minority women around the world, the creation of Shared Societies that seeks to ensure that identity groups are equally included within majority societies is problematic. Within their own ethnic, religious, or racial group the plight of women often mirrors the dynamics that exclude their identity group from participating in a majority community. Thus women are often aware that advancing the cause of their minority communities may merely serve to perpetuate, or perhaps even deepen their own discrimination within their group.

2.00 INTERSECTIONALCASE STUDIES

The following examples will serve as a reminder of just how difficult it can be for minority women to actively participate in Shared Society processes.

' Consider the societal roadblocks experienced by a Roma woman living in Eastern Europe. As a member of the Romani population, she has few advocates and is the target of constant hostility. She is marginalized within her community because of her minority status and within her family because of her gender. The same can be said of an aboriginal woman living in Australia, a Dalit woman living in India, a female asylum seeker living in England and so on. These women live at the crossroads of gender and racial discrimination. [4]

2.1 Dalit women in India

'What is horrifying is that Dalit women work more than bullocks and men. Bullocks and men work in a hectare a year for 1064 hours and 1202, respectively, while women work for more than 3485 hours. The caste and patriarchal norms legitimize the poor economic conditions of Dalit women. She has to work to survive. She is powerless and has neither access nor control over resources.'[5]

Dalits, approximately 200 million people, are at the bottom of the Hindu caste system in India. Despite laws to protect them, they still face widespread discrimination and prejudice at almost every level e.g. access to eating places, schools, temples and water sources, and medical facilities. Most Dalits live in rural areas, and are bonded laborers whose jobs rarely provide enough income for them to feed their families or to send their children to school. As a result, many Dalits are impoverished, uneducated, and illiterate.[6]

Dalit Women are particularly vulnerable. They experience not only the discrimination of caste, but also of class and gender leaving them in a vicious cycle of marginalization and exploitation. National crime statistics indicate an average of over 1,000 rape cases against Dalit women are reported annually, the highest of any social group. The lack of effective law enforcement leaves many Dalit

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[3] Capdevila, Gustavo: (2004) RIGHTS: Women Suffer Double, Triple, Quadruple Discrimination
http://www.ipsnews.net/2004/08/rights-women-suffer-double-triple-quadruple-discrimination/
[4] UN World Conference Against Racism, 'At the Crossroads of Gender and Racial Discrimination'
http://www.un.org/WCAR/e- kit/gender.htm
[5] Unheard Voices -DALIT WOMEN (2007)
http://idsn.org/fileadmin/user_folder/pdf/New_files/Key_Issues/Dalit_Women/CERD-India_unheard_voices.pdf
[6] http://blogs.independent.co.uk/2013/07/04/the-plight-of-dalits-women-why-its-time-to-end-the-caste-system-both-in-india-and-the-uk/

women unable to approach the legal system to seek justice and 90 percent of crimes against Dalit women are not reported to the police for the fear of social ostracism.[7]

'Certain kinds of violence are traditionally reserved for Dalit women: extreme filthy verbal abuse and sexual epithets, naked parading, dismemberment, being forced to drink urine and eat feces, branding, pulling out of teeth, tongue and nails, and violence including murder after proclaiming witchcraft, are only experienced by Dalit women'[8]

Within Dalit families, domestic violence is prevalent and takes on a strong patriarchal dimension. Women are tortured within the home for not bringing enough dowries, for not bearing male children, for talking back to their husbands. Alcoholism among Dalit husbands is a strong contributing factor to this domestic violence. As this violence often starts when women are but children given in marriage, their ability to question and stand up to this violence is often severely diminished. [9]

While there are instances where Dalit women have been elected into local government, they have been met with resistance even to the extent of physical violence and some have been brutally attacked or killed, or gang raped for reporting child marriage to the authorities, and made to parade naked for hoisting a flag on Independence Day.[10]

2.2 Roma Women in Europe.

Roma, once known as "Gypsies," are the largest minority group in Europe. The group faces widespread discrimination and social exclusion. Roma people are often denied their rights to housing, employment, healthcare and education, and are often victims of forced evictions, racist attacks and police ill treatment. In some countries, they are prevented from obtaining citizenship and the documents required for health care and other benefits.[11]

Romani women in particular face discrimination based on ethnicity and gender, denial of education so that they can take care of the household, virginity tests, problems accessing the health care system due to discrimination and poverty, early and arranged marriages, as well as a high danger of being trafficked or forced into prostitution; and/or domestic violence.[12] They face prejudice in hiring, and if hired, they receive lower wages than the rest of the population.[13] In some countries over the last few years, especially in eastern European Member States, but also in Italy, for

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[7] AIDMAM All India Dalit Mahila Adhikar Manch, New Delhi, India. Violence Against Dalit (2012) Women: http://idsn.org/fileadmin/user_folder/pdf/New_files/Key_Issues/Dalit_Women/NCDHRSubmission2012_VAW_Dalitwomen_India.pdf

[8] AIDMAM ibid

[9] Violence against Dalit Women in India: Overview Report Overview Report of Study in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Study in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Study in Andhra Pradesh.

[10] Unheard Voices -DALIT WOMEN (2007) http://idsn.org/fileadmin/user_folder/pdf/New_files/Key_Issues/Dalit_Women/CERD-India_unheard_voices.pdf

[11] http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/feature-stories/europes-roma-community-still-facing-massive-discrimination-20090408

[12] Izsak, Rita (2009) The European Romani Women's Movement –International Roma Women's Network.http://www.comminit.com/?q=democracy-governance/content/european-romani-womens-movement-international-roma-womens-network

[13] 2006 European Parliament report 'Economic aspects of the condition of Roma women'

example) the living standards of Roma women have actually declined.[14]They are particularly vulnerable to violence from both members of the 'gadje' (non-Roma) community and from their own community of Roma men, as domestic violence is a socially accepted practice, and the men often expect submission from their women.

Roma girls often leave school earlier than the boys due to their family responsibilities that considers women as the custodians of traditional values. This lack of education has been identified as one of the key factors for the social exclusion and poverty of Roma women. As school can be an effective tool for social integration and promoting mutual respect and tolerance between Roma and non-Roma communities, Roma women benefit less than the men from this process.[15] While The Roma minority in general is rarely represented in Parliament, Roma women are particularly underrepresented in politics. As noted by Sabina Xhemajli, the suggestion that Roma women should fight to preserve their traditions is intrinsically alien to their needs as women, while at the same time possibly alienating them from their communities:

'I am absolutely in favor of the idea that we should preserve our language and culture and pass it on to our children. I am, however, not in favor of preserving our traditional relationships, relationships that oppress the personalities of other people. I refuse to accept traditions that imprison people and do not allow them their freedom. The consequences, however that one takes upon oneself in refusing such practices are hard. When one stands against tradition, one is shunned from the family. And because for us the family and togetherness are very important, being shunned from one's own family is the cruelest punishment'.[16]

2.3 Muslim women in UK

'Stuck between a rock and a hard place, some vulnerable Muslim women experience victimization on multiple fronts: they face violent anti-Muslim attacks at the hands of racist bigots, and encounter gender discrimination from within their own communities. Worse still, some women refuse to speak out against gender-based discrimination fearing this would only fuel anti-Muslim hatred – of which they'd be the likely victims.'[17]

A recent (2012) report submitted to the UK Government Inquiry described the portrayal of Muslims in the media in the UK as "*overwhelmingly negative, stereotypical, inaccurate – and racist*".[18] Within their community, Muslim women fare particularly badly as a result of their multiple minority status. They experience some of the worst forms of disadvantage and social exclusion, three times more often living in poverty than white women. While 13.6 % of overall

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[14] Statement by Dr. Brooks on the Empowerment of Roma Women at the OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting 2012 http://www.humanrights.gov/2012/10/01/statement-by-dr-brooks-on-the-empowerment-of-roma-women-at-the-human-dimension-implementation-meeting/

[15]Corsi, Marcells, Crepaldi, Chiara, Lodovici Samek, Manuela, Boccagni, Paola, Valilescu, Cristina. (2008) Ethnic minority and Roma women in Europe: A case for gender equality? European Commission Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities G.1 unit
[16]Xhemajli, Sabina (2000) Romani women in Romani and majority societies 2000. European Human Rights center. http://www.errc.org/article/romani-women-in-romani-and-majority-societies/626

[17] Khan, Sara Muslim women are caught in the crossfire between bigots on both sides (2013) Guardian. http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/mar/11/muslim-women-bigots-sexism ?? http://www.wewillinspire.com/index.php/sections/blog

[18]2012 report *Race and Reform: Islam and Muslims in the British Media*

ethnic minority women have no qualifications, nearly half (48%) of the Bangladeshi women and 40% of the Pakistani women have no qualifications. They face disproportionate employment problems e.g. overall Muslims are the faith group most likely to be out of the paid labor market as the unemployment rate for Muslim women is 23.3 per cent compared to 6.9 per cent for all women.[19] Their barriers to employment include language issues, cultural attitudes towards women, qualifications and lack of social capital.[20] They are most often the victims of prejudice, as they are particularly vulnerable to abuse, persecution and discrimination because many are easily identified because of their dress code. [21]

While there is little evidence to suggest that domestic violence against women is more prevalent in Muslim communities than in other ethnic communities in Britain, what is different is that it is it often underreported for various cultural or family reasons. According to Shaista Gohir, Chair of Muslim Women's Network UK, *"All forms of violence are vastly underreported in Muslim communities. Many victims continue to suffer in silence due to fear or shame and some men wrongly use faith to try and justify their behavior, which acts as a further barrier to seeking help. Such views must be robustly challenged."[22]* Not being fluent in English also acts as a huge barrier as they are often unable to access written information about services. In addition, many Muslims are uncomfortable with open discussions about domestic abuse lest it gives Islam a bad name.[23] South Asian women affected by domestic violence may choose not to highlight their abuse for fear of a racist backlash and stereotyping from wider society. Male community leaders often avoid dealing with sensitive issues such as domestic abuse to prevent negative representation of their community in wider society.[24] Women are taught that the public image of the family is more important than individual safety. Honor and respectability are dependent on a successful marriage, and women fear the dishonor and rejection from their community if their marriage should fail.[25]

The use of Sharia law in the UK is currently a parallel legal option for Muslim communities. While its purpose may have been a positive one i.e. to ensure that religious minorities did not have UK systems of mediation and justice imposed upon them, it has significant problems for some women as it has been used for rulings on divorces that are being enforced under UK law. Many of these Sharia courts have sexist tendencies, and often favor men's perspectives by, for example, requiring wives to pay money to their husbands, or return jewelry and money given as marriage gifts, in exchange for divorce. As a result, some Muslim women, who are poor, are effectively being held hostage in their marriages until they can pay for their freedom. Their dilemma is that they can either be Muslims, using Sharia courts that flow from their religious convictions but risk sexist outcomes, or they can be women, getting their divorces from the UK legal system that does not

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[19]Black and Minority Ethnic Women in the UK, published in 2005 by the UK-based campaigning organization The Fawcett Society,
[20]Government Equalities Office (2007), Ethnic Minority Women in the UK Fact Sheet, HM Government, London.
[21] 'Tell Mama" http://tellmamauk.org/
[22]Mosques urged to support Muslim Women's Network postcard campaignhttp://www.asianimage.co.uk/news/10223867.Mosques_urged_to_support_Muslim_Women_s_Network_postcard_campaign/

[23] Domestic Abuse: A guide for Muslim communities NHS Leeds. http://www.leeds.nhs.uk/Downloads/Public%20Health/Domestic%20violence%20-%20a%20guide%20for%20Muslim%20communities.pdf

[24] Puri, S. (2005) Rhetoric v. reality: the effect of 'multiculturalism' on doctors responses to battered South Asian women in the United States and Britain, Patterns of Prejudice, Vol.39, and No. 4, pp.416-430.
[25]Gill, A. Voicing the silent fear: South Asian women's experiences of domestic violence. The Howard Journal: Vol. 43 (5), pages: 465483, 2004

necessarily correspond to Islamic thinking but from which they may get better justice.[26]

'The misplaced notion of "not offending cultural sensitivities" at the expense of Muslim women cannot be defended. As a country that values equalities legislation, this protection must extend to all British women.'[27]

2.4 Kurdish Women in Iraq

The Kurds have been the victims of discriminatory policies of oppression throughout history. They have been subject to some of the worst atrocities possible including ethnic cleansing and mass graves, genocide, torture and chemical attacks by Saddam Hussein, as well as a ban on their language and culture, displacement, the destructions of their lands, homes and properties, restrictions on social, political, and economical rights, and the burdens of poverty.

Since the American invasion of Iraq, Kurdistan has become one of the most prosperous parts of Iraq with significantly growing wealth in the region. However, many Kurdish women have not benefited from such progress, because of the integral traditions of Kurdish culture in relation to women. While as a general rule, for historical and socio-cultural reasons, Kurdish women have enjoyed greater freedoms in their clothing and their interactions with men than in the rest of Iraq, such progress is being curtailed. Women who work for television stations often become objects of surveillance and malicious attacks by some clergymen under the guise of breach of chastity.

A July 2008 Turkish study on honor killings by Dicle University, Diyarbakir, in the predominantly Kurdish area of Turkey, showed that little if any social stigma is attached to honor killing, and that many of the perpetrators are well-educated university graduates. Kurdish women have fought alongside men in their struggle for Kurdish nationalist aspirations and their rights as women, seeing a link between the Kurdish nationalist struggle for freedom and the gender struggle for their own distinct women's rights. They now find it paradoxical that Kurdistan Regional Government, fearful of the religious forces whose ideological influence and presence is on the rise in the Kurdish society is now allowing conservative Islam, in the form of Sharia or Sunna, to be used as a legal, political and cultural framework, to define the rights and obligations of women and their moral conduct, thus consolidating a patriarchal hierarchy.[28]

2.5 Irish Traveller women.

'Traveller men think they're the boss, and that's it, quite simply. They just think they're the bosses and that's it and you're not supposed to answer'[29]

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[26] Moosa, Zorha: Balancing Women's Rights with freedom of religion: the case against parallel legal systems for Muslim women in the UK. 2010 State of the World's Minorities and Indigenous Peoples 2010

[27] Khan, Sarah (2013) Muslim women are caught in the crossfire between bigots on both sides. The Guardian March 11, 2013

[28]Cases of violence against women in Iraqi Kurdistan increasing 2.7.2012 http://www.ekurd.net/mismas/articles/misc2012/7/state6330.ht

[29] 3 Fay, R. „Pavee Beoirs: Breaking the Silence: Racism and Violence Against Women" in Community Workers Cooperative (1999) „Violence against Women – An Issue for Community Work' http://paveepoint.ie/sitenua/wp-content/uploads/2009/07/VAW_POSITION_2011_Final-1.pdf

Irish Travellers, sometimes called gypsies, but not to be confused with European gypsies, are a traditionally itinerant people of ethnic Irish origin, who maintain a distinct set of traditions, and a distinct ethnic identity. They live mostly in Ireland but have large numbers living in the United Kingdom and in the United States. They are acknowledged as one of the most marginalized and disadvantaged groups in Ireland and in the United Kingdom. They fare badly on every indicator used to measure disadvantage i.e. unemployment, poverty, social exclusion, health status, infant mortality, life expectancy, illiteracy, education and training levels, access to decision making and political representation, gender equality, access to credit, accommodation and living conditions. Infant mortality in Travellers is 3.6 times higher than in the majority population. [30]

Women Travellers fare even worse than Traveller men. According to Pavee Point the advocacy group for travellers in Ireland, Traveller women experience three types of violence - violence from an intimate partner, violence from the settled community and violence from the state e.g. in terms of evictions, for example.[31] Irish Traveller women are three times more likely to miscarry or have a stillborn child compared to the rest of the population. A study by the Irish Equality and Human Rights Commission in 2007 found 81% of Irish Travellers had experienced domestic abuse. Traveller Women are often reluctant to seek help from outside of their community due to a fear of experiencing prejudice and a general mistrust of the authorities.[32] Given their unease with the police, and the culture of their community, it is rare for women to call the police for help because *"You would be seen as a grass and disowned by the whole community,"*[33]

The rate of suicides among Traveller women is significantly higher than in the general population. In escaping or overcoming violence from an abuser that is generally a member of their own community, they risk ostracization within their community if they seek to get away from or take legal action against their abuser.[34] For a Traveller woman, leaving may mean leaving her community, culture and support networks, and choosing between her identity as a Traveller and seeking help.

'It is important to understand the burdens of gender and ethnic oppression experienced by Traveller women. The liberation of Traveller women from these burdens must come from an understanding of sexism and racism and a commitment to challenge and change the current situation. But what is important to stress is that in addressing the complex issues arising from sexist and racist attitudes and behavior Traveller women are not forced to priorities one form of oppression over the other.'[35]

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[30] Kelleher, C et al. (2010) Our Geels All Ireland Traveller Health Study, University College Dublin, Available at: http://paveepoint.ie/travellers-and-issues/traveller-health/our-geels-health-study/ http://paveepoint.ie/sitenua/wp-content/uploads/2009/07/VAW_POSITION_2011_Final-1.pdf

[31] http://paveepoint.ie/

[32]Watson, Dorothy, Parsons, Sarah: (2005) Domestic Abuse of Women and Men in Ireland, Report on the National Study of Domestic Abuse. ESRI Dublin

[33] Bindel, Julie: (2011) The big fat truth about gypsy life. http://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2011/feb/25/truth-about-gypsy-traveller-life-women

[34]Justice and Accountability: (2005) Stop Violence Against Women Amnesty international

[35]http://www.paveepoint.ie/pav_racism.htm

### 3.	CHALLENGES RELATED TO MINORITY WOMEN AND SHARED SOCIETY WORK.

'There's no such thing as a single-issue struggle, because we don't live single-issue lives. '(Audre Lorde)[36]

3.1 Feminism v Nationalism/ Ethnocentrism/Religion.

In many minority communities, challenging prejudice, discrimination and exclusion from the majority outside world is often seen as the priority, which should take precedence over challenging their own cultural norms in relation to gender. To challenge such norms is often seen as a betrayal of community unity, and women who pursue it are often labeled as traitors. Having to 'choose' between feminist solidarity or ethnic/religious/cultural solidarity is a severe challenge for many women.[37] There are some movements that link struggles for women's rights with struggles for group identity rights and/or national sovereignty in their goals of self-determination.[38] However there are also some feminists who regard feminist and minority/indigenous politics as irreconcilable, who criticize minority women for prioritizing their communities' national, cultural or religious identity needs, and fighting to preserve their culture even at the expense of individual women's rights.[39] Such assertions by feminists can alienate women whose families and communities are absorbed in struggling for their community's minority rights, or secession/ independence from a majority community.

3.2 Women's Traditional Roles

Women often have little time or power within a community to participate in developing or shaping shared societies. They are traditionally the family worker, the prime parent, whose family preoccupations occupy much of their waking lives. They are often married at a young age, and much of their day-to-day lives are spent within a narrow cultural context of markets, neighborhoods, schools and faith communities, and community/nationalist TV and radio. This context prevents many women from challenging the cultural and social boundaries within which they live, and often leaves them not only with little access to or knowledge of their rights as women, but also the rights of their community in relation to majority communities.

3.3 Minority Women often lack or have less educational advantages than men.

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[36] Lorde, Audre: (2007) Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches. Crossing Press Feminist Series

[37]Between Nationalism and Women's Rights: The Kurdish Women's Movement in Iraq 2011 Nadje al-Ali and Nicola Pratt http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/pais/people/pratt/publications/mjcc_004_03_06_al-ali_and_pratt.pdf

[38] Fluri, Jennifer. (2008) Feminist-nation building in Afghanistan: an examination of the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA) Feminist Review (2008) 89, 34–54. doi:10.1057/fr.2008.6http://www.palgrave-journals.com/fr/journal/v89/n1/abs/fr20086a.html

[39] http://www.awid.org/Library/Turkey-Feminists-Met-Against-War-Conservatism-Nationalism-and-Heterosexism Turkey: Feminists Met Against War, Conservatism, Nationalism And Heterosexism

Women and girls usually have less education than their menfolk, lower rates of school enrolment, higher dropout rates and lower literacy levels than minority and indigenous boys, as well as majority girls and majority boys. They often face open hostility to their participation in such education. In some areas, travel to school is more dangerous for women as they may be subject to violence. Even where they are beginning to make inroads into education, as in e.g. the Arab world they often have little chance to use it within their gender-restricted world.[40] Most minority women are even more disadvantaged when it comes to education, and this severely limits their active participation in Shared Society work,

3.4 Majority and Minority Groups Laws may exclude the individual rights of women.

Both majority and minority communities often have laws and traditions that exclude women from power and participation and implementing an identity group's rights can have an impact on the rights of women as the allocation of group rights can provide leaders within a group, who are usually men, to define what their culture entails.[41]

A classical liberal rights scheme bestows rights on individuals rather than groups. Those concerned with maintaining the existence of minority cultures within a dominant national majority culture may fear that a scheme based on individual rights cannot adequately protect minority cultures[42]The question of group entitlement has been thrown into sharp relief in many western democracies by the recent arrival of migrants whose "cultural practices" are at odds with any liberal understanding of rights. Extreme examples include the practice of female genital mutilation, domestic violence, and forced marriages with partners in distant lands. Whenever those practices are tolerated, the victims, who are usually women, are deprived of basic human rights, and the perpetrators enjoy a peculiar leniency.[43]

3.5 The Issue of women's rights is often abused by the majority community.

Often a majority group will condemn a minority group for their treatment of their women, and use such treatment as a reason to justify prejudice and discrimination against a minority group. This creates a 'catch 22' situation for the minority women. On the one hand minority women who claim their rights are open to the accusation by their community of 'rejecting their culture' and of wanting assimilation into the majority group, while on the other hand, the majority group view those women, who do not actively accept the majority view of what they need, as oppressed. There is often little recognition that women may wish to both improve their rights and defend their culture.

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[40] Lindsay, Ursula, Arab Women Make Inroads in Higher Education but Often Find Dead Ends (2012) http://chronicle.com/article/Arab-Women-Make-Inroads-in/130479/ur

[41] Pratibha Jain, (2005) Balancing Minority Rights and Gender Justice: The Impact of Protecting Multiculturalism on Women's Rights in India
http://scholarship.law.berkeley.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1285&context=bjil
Berkeley Journal of International Law: Volume 23 | Issue 1 Article 6
[41]'Gender, Minorities and Indigenous Peoples' 2005 Minority rights Group
http://www.minorityrights.org/?lid=1234

[42]Brian, Barry. (2001) The Strategy of Privatization, in culture and equality: an egalitarian critique of multiculturalism 19-62 (2001).

[43]Group rights v individual rights Me, myself and them (May 12th) 2011
http://www.economist.com/node/18681796

3.6 Limited Awareness of human and gender rights.

Because of the limited nature of their social connectedness due to family duties, and exclusion from the public sphere, women are often unaware of their rights as women or even as members of minority communities. They often have no legal, conceptual or knowledge framework from which to challenge their status as minorities or as women. Men are more likely to know about such issues given their generally higher literacy capacity, educational attainment, and social customs of interaction with the majority world which is often less available to minority women.

3.7 High personal price to be paid by women who involve themselves in Shared Society work.

In some cases, women have a high personal price to pay for moving up the educational or political power level within their communities. Many will find that that the men within their community are too reluctant or insecure to engage with 'powerful' women of their own community, thus curtailing the women's chances of partnerships and marriage. If they challenge the *status quo* about what are acceptable roles for women, many face difficulties or violent reprisals, often from both the majority community and their own families.[44]This can involve these women in invidious choices between raising the issue of sexism within their own community or being in solidarity with their own community in resisting external oppression.[45]

3.8 Separate systems of justice that enshrine discrimination

In some cases, parallel legal systems such as that of Sharia law within the UK reinforce the view that cultural and religious perspectives should be accommodated within the justice system of a country. Such a perspective suggests that an adjustment to the usual societal norm is appropriate if it serves those, usually men, within a particular minority. For Muslim women, this means that their rights and priorities are treated as 'special interest' rather than mainstream which de facto can ensure that the women receive less justice.

'Muslim women have the right not to be discriminated against for their religious beliefs and they have the right to practice their religion too. But Muslim women also have rights as women. Countries that have religious minorities need to treat the needs of women from these groups– as both women and as members of religious minorities – as a central issue. Governments must take responsibility for the needs of all their citizens, not just the ones that are in the majority or that fit the majority's rules. Muslim women are not part-time citizens.'[46]

3.9 Lack of women involved in Leadership and Politics.

'Although progress has been made in terms of the number of women elected and appointed to office around the world, women are still largely absent from relevant decision-making bodies at all levels. Often as targets of extreme violence, women continue to experience the full impact of violent conflict

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[44] Ramsay, Kathryn. (2011) Why focus on minority and indigenous rights? Minority Rights Oxford UK.www.minorityrights.org/download.php?id=1013ʳ

[45]Pavee Point: Racism versus Sexism http://www.paveepoint.ie/pav_racism.html
[46] Moosa, Zohra (2005) Black and Minority Ethnic Women in the UK.
Fawcett Society.

as civilians and combatants. They continue to face significant institutional disadvantages in politics and are generally excluded from the decision-making in peace processes.'[47]

In democracies, it is critically important that national and local politicians take a lead in creating equal opportunities and inclusive societies.[48] However, within both the majority and minority communities there is likely to be a deficit of women leaders and politicians. Currently less than 20 percent of parliamentarians and 10 percent of heads of state are women.[49] Yet women, minorities, and particularly minority women remain even more substantially underrepresented in high-level political positions worldwide.[50] While such lack of representation by minority women at leadership level can be attributed to many of the same factors as women in general e.g. exclusion and marginalization by men, a deficit of confidence, time and education on the part of women, it may also be that minority women need special attention in ensuring their success at leadership levels.

Existing processes that have been found to increase women's participation in politics are not as successful for minority women. Research has found that minority women's political outcomes are more often tied to the fortunes of minority men than to those of the majority women i.e. minority women are elected to national legislatures for the first time years after minority men, but decades after majority women. Also, while existing political quotas for women have been shown to be helpful in increasing the number of women in politics, they are unlikely to increase the number of minority women politicians. If political representation by majority women is to succeed, they may need extra processes such as tandem quotas, in which gender and minority identities are considered together.[51]

4.00 EXAMPLES OF MINORITY WOMEN'S SHARED SOCIETY WORK

Despite the above challenges, there are a variety of examples of minority women who, despite their status as minorities, and their unequal status within their communities, are undertaking Shared Society work. The following are a few examples of such organizations and the main approaches that they used:

4.1 COMBINING WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT WITH SHARED SOCIETY WORK.

Caucus for Women's Leadership – Women's Regional Assemblies in Kenya.

The Caucus for Women's Leadership (formerly the Kenya Women's Political Caucus) is a national network dedicated to building women's leadership in Kenya. In 2003, recognizing the need to have grassroots linkages and structures in order to make an impact at all levels; it established its first pilot

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[47] Club of Madrid: Women's Political Participation and Leadership
 http://www.clubmadrid.org/en/programa/women_s_political_participation_and_leadership
[48] Fitzduff, Mari: (2013) Public policies in Shared Societies. Palgrave MacMillan New York
[49] Women in the World Foundation: Politics and leadership http://womenintheworld.org/solutions/track/politics-and-leadership
Women in national parliaments (2013) http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm

[50] Hughes, Melanie: (2011) Intersectionality, Quotas, and Minority Women's Political Representation Worldwide

American Political Science Review / Volume 105 / Issue 03 / August 2011, pp 604-620
[51] Ibid Hughes (2011)

Women's Regional Assembly. Since then it has established 29 Women Regional Assemblies in 29 districts, spread across all the 8 provinces of Kenya. The mandate of the assemblies includes addressing HIV/AIDS, negative cultural practices, good governance and women's participation in leadership, economic empowerment and poverty reduction. Their work also includes peace building & conflict resolution, between all ethnic minority and majority groups, particularly since the 2007 elections, which were followed by extreme violence. The Caucus, together with the Women's Regional Assemblies, has been at the forefront in the search for peaceful co-existence amongst Kenyan communities.

Website for Caucus for Women's leadership:
http://www.kwpcaucus.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=43&Itemid=3

Website for Women's Regional Assemblies
http://www.kwpcaucus.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=16&Itemid=16&showall=1

4.2 CHALLENGING VIOLENCE TOWARDS WOMEN, AND ISLAMIC VIOLENCE.

INSPIRE.

The UK based INSPIRE organization, set up in 2009, has launched a 'jihad against violence' It is driven by Muslim women who are protesting both the violence experienced by Muslim women and girls in the UK, and all forms of violence, including terrorism and violent extremism. Concerned that Islam, instead of being recognized as a faith for peace, had become synonymous with violence, they launched a campaign that aims to challenge both violence against women and violence that's been carried out in the name of Islam. They are concerned that Muslim women should reach their full potential in society including their role as peace-builders and are inspired to become role models and tomorrow's leaders. They undertake their work though consultancy, training and development, publications, and the creation of local women's networks.

Website: http://www.wewillinspire.com/index.php/campaigns/javTo rectify persisting

4.3 CONNECTING PEACEBUILDERS

The N-PEACE NETWORK

The N-Peace network was established in 2010. It is a multi-country network of peace advocates in Asia seeking to advance Women, Peace & Security issues. It is active in Nepal, Sri Lanka, Timor-Leste, Indonesia, the Philippines and Afghanistan. Its members come from civil society, government, non-government organizations, academia, United Nations agencies, religious groups and the media. The network plays four key roles i.e. as a convener of inter ethnic dialogues between civil society women, governments and other groups on policies related to Women, Peace and Security, as an inter community connector of peace builders who share knowledge of policy and best practice on implementing UNSCR 1325, as an advocate for women's engagement in peace and security, and a capacity building resource for women leaders. They strive to create better social cohesion by uniting women from different ethnic, religious, linguistic, and ideological backgrounds, in the development of these key roles.

Website: http://www.n-peace.net/

4.4 MAINTAINING THE PEACE.

THE NAGA MOTHERS ASSOCIATION (NMA)

The Naga Mothers Association (NMA) in the North east of India was formed in 1984 as a state-level voluntary organization mandated to fighting social problems, especially alcoholism and drug addiction. It included the participation of women from the 16 major tribes in the region who are known for their distinct character and identity. The tribes are often vested in a strongly patriarchal system that disfavors women, and the implementation of 30% political quotas for women, while helpful, is still far from being implemented. [52] . With their 'Shed No More Blood' movement, they have nurtured and sustained a ceasefire between Naga underground groups and the government. After the ceasefire agreements of the militant groups with the Indian Government, when there were violent outbursts of inter ethnic conflicts within the region, the NMA worked with local and regional groups to reduce tension and facilitate reconciliation and peace. Today, Naga women continue to have a role in the peace process between the State agencies and the non-State army, and the trust-building process continues even in the midst of occasional violence. The insurgent leaders have repeatedly expressed their confidence in the women as negotiators and mediators. For their part the mothers correlate the role of women in the peacebuilding processes with the vision they have of themselves as mothers and caretakers – although it should be noted that this assertion has been the subject of much criticism since some critics feel it may depoliticize and discredit women. [53]

Website: http://www.inclusivesecurity.org/publication/naga-women-making-a-difference-peace-building-in-northeastern-india/

4.5 MENTORING WOMEN IN SHARED SOCIETIES

Women at Work: the KVINFO Mentor Network

In Copenhagen, the Danish Centre for Information on Women and Gender, or KVINFO, has developed a unique mentoring programme to combat professional and social isolation among immigrant women. Their aims are to increase the integration of immigrant women into Danish society, and assist them in their own empowerment. It had been estimated that more than 50% of all job openings in Denmark are filled via personal networks, which are rarely available to immigrant women, and it is hoped that through KVINFO, immigrant mentees can access their mentor's professional networks, and benefit from their overall professional experience. Potential couples are matched based on the mentees' education, professional and personal wishes.

The KVINFO approach is firmly anchored in the feminist values of 'mutual recognition, flat interpersonal power structures and a rigorous commitment to openness and inclusion that reflect the organization's historical past.' KVINFO also encourages greater political participation between immigrants and other ethnic minority Danes. In Copenhagen, while one in ten women is from an ethnic minority group, they only represent one in 55 city elected representatives. Furthermore, only two out of 179 of elected representatives in the Folketinget, the national parliament of Denmark, are from an ethnic minority background'. KVINFO therefore hopes to bolster political participation and strengthen relationships between elected politicians and ethnic minority women.

Website: http://www.kvinfo.dk/side/661/

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[52] http://www.quotaproject.org/uid/countryview.cfm?CountryCode=IN
[53] Escuola de Cultura de Pau: Database on Conflict and Peacebuilding
http://escolapau.uab.es/conflictosypaz/genero.php?idgenero=53&paramidioma=1

4.6 SHAREDCOMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WORK.

Women's Information Northern Ireland

There is evidence that the more social and economic processes that are shared between communities, the less likely are communities to involve themselves in aggression and violence.[54] An example of this is Women's Information Northern Ireland, which was established by local women in the often-violent interface area of West Belfast. Its objective is to build contact and trust between women on both side of the sectarian divide on issues of health, family, housing and finance. They provide courses supporting the development of women, young women and mothers, ethnic minority women, lesbian women and mothers of gay sons and daughters. Their work was seminal in the development of the Northern Ireland Women's Coalition which was founded in 1996 by both Catholic and Protestant women working together to contest and win two seats in the elections to the Northern Ireland Forum, the body which led to the Belfast Agreement. As Northern Ireland is now an increasingly diverse society, they have helped set up the Asian Indigenous Women's Network (AIWN) which was formed in response to the common experiences of discrimination of Asian women living in Northern Ireland. The objectives for AIWN are the same as those for the Women's Information group e.g. to encourage self-dependence and confidence in their ability to access social information and develop the lives of their families and their communities.

Website: http://www.womensinformationnorthernireland.com

4.7 PROMOTING MINORITY RIGHTS ACROSS INDIGENEOUS MINORITIES.

The Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact

The work of the Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact is focused on empowering minority indigenous women through networking, education and capacity building activities and in particular to lobby for the recognition of women's rights with a focus on violence against women. Their work takes place in the indigenous communities in three countries in the Philippines, in Northeast India and in Nepal. Their hope is to increase the number of indigenous women effectively participating in decision making at all levels, from their communities, to the national, regional and international levels. The project involves trainings and support for women in awareness raising, advocacy, dialogues and community mobilizations. In particular, the target is to effect positive changes in the practice and implementation of customary laws in which provisions and sanctions against violence against women are strengthened, and women are given the right to participate in traditional decision-making institutions. The AIPP is also committed to developing means to resolve conflicts, and to the establishment of conflict resolution mechanisms between ethnic and minority groups in the regions in which they work.

Website: http://aippnet.org/home/indigenous-women

4.8 WOMEN MAINTAINING PEACE IN SHARED SOCIETIES

Uzgen Local Authority Advisory Committees

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[54] Varshny, Ayhutosh: (2002) Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life Yale University Press

Kyrgyzstan has been blighted by ethnic tension since its independence from the Soviet Union, and has erupted into violence on two occasions, once in 1990 and more recently in 2010. As part of its development work, the UNDP has funded the Uzgen Local Authority Advisory Committee, which is helping women in the community to respond to political instability, resolve conflict and ease inter-ethnic tension between Kyrgyz and Uzbek women. As well as meeting regularly to identify conflict tends and mediating disputes, the Committee has helped organize cultural and social exchanges between the differing ethnic communities.

The Uzgen committee is just one of 15 provincial and local committees in the country and the evidence suggests that this localized approach to peacebuilding works. During the 2010 violence in Kyrgyzstan, the Uzgen District remained peaceful as other parts of the country experienced violence and looting. The group says that this is mainly due to its members actively discouraging their husbands and sons from taking part in the riots in Osh city and the surrounding areas. The women took to the streets during the unrest, and convinced mothers and wives to call their sons and husbands back, preventing them from getting into cars and collecting weapons.

Website:
http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/crisispreventionandrecovery/successstories/undp-promotes-peace-in-kyrgyzstan-/

4.9 MODERATING EXTREMISM

Pakistan: Women Moderating Extremism

In 2010, the Institute for Inclusive Security in partnership with the PAIMAN Alumni trust set up a Pakistani Women Moderating Extremism program that aimed to increase the visibility and capacity of Pakistani women to lessen extremism in Pakistan. PAIMAN is a well-established group working on a variety of social issues, including gender and development, and the program built substantially upon its work. The members for Moderating Extremism project were deliberately chosen from many different ethnic groups so as to ensure the strength of the network in an often ethnically divided context. The women's network advocated for curriculum reform to replace education materials that reinforce extremist values with ones that promote tolerance and diversity, and held conversations with religious leaders and scholars to promote better understandings of peaceful Islamic values and dispel misinterpreted ideologies.

The group also facilitated dialogues with women's and youth groups, teachers, political parties, and religious leaders to brainstorm for solutions to extremism and how to address it, and they hosted television and radio talk shows to draw attention to extremism's negative, and increasingly deadly, consequences; In addition, they also helped create student peace clubs in primary and secondary schools, formed youth peacekeeping groups and trained them in conflict resolution skills to mediate local disputes and prevent violence, and helped youth recruited by violent extremists to gain access to psychosocial support, alternative job skills training, and employment opportunities.

Website: http://www.inclusivesecurity.org/publication/women-moderating-extremism-in-pakistan/

4.10 REFRAMING IDEAS ABOUT GENDER AND CITIZENSHIP.

FEMCIT

Europe is now a very multicultural entity, so interpreting responses to such a diverse society can more easily focus on issues of ethnic, religious or cultural identity, without taking issues of minority women inequalities and exclusion into account. Ensuring that such minority women issues are at the core of the discussions about citizenship is a critical agenda for FEMCIT. It is an organization in Denmark that explores the relationship between the changing forms and practices of gendered citizenship in a multicultural Europe and the demands and practices of contemporary women's movements. They are studying how citizenship is gendered, and how women, as ordinary citizens and activists, have been involved in challenging inequalities and injustice across Europe. Their aim is to promote a wider understanding of gendered citizenship in a multicultural and changing Europe, and address the current state of women's citizenship in Europe, but with particular attention to differences of race/ ethnicity, class, sexuality, religion, region and nationality. It produces reports for policy makers and academics, scientific papers for journals, books, and articles aimed at the general public. Their work also includes discussing their research with journalists, policy makers and non-governmental and citizens' organizations.

Website; http://www.femcit.org/

4.11 LEGAL SERVICES FOR WOMEN.

INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S LEGAL PROGRAM

The aim of the Indigenous Women's Legal Program in New South Wales in Australia is to provide services that best meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their development, empowerment, and more equitable inclusion into the majority Australian society. The program was developed in 1995, and is staffed by Aboriginal women. It offers free services such as f legal advice, assistance in finding a lawyer, training and community workshops and Community Legal Education across New South Wales. It also organizes Speak Up workshops around NSW to provide an opportunity for Aboriginal women to discuss what assistance is available for those who have experienced family violence, and about what does and does not work in preventing family violence, and where to go for help. The program also trains community workers who come into contact with Aboriginal communities in Sydney and in regional NSW about family violence, and how to provide culturally appropriate services to the various communities they work with. Their hope is that their work will empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women to assume responsibility for working more effectively on their own inequalities, as well as ensuring that they take up their responsibilities in relation to Shared Society work in Australia.

Website: http://www.womenslegalnsw.asn.au/contact-us.html.

4.12 GLOBAL AND REGIONAL NETWORKING

a) The Network of Afro-Latin American, Afro-Caribbean and Diaspora Women

The Network of Afro-Latin American, Afro-Caribbean and Diaspora Women (La Red de Mujeres Afrolatinoamericanas, Afrocaribeñas y de la Diàspora) is an organization set up to fight racism, sexism and poverty in Latin America. They claim to represent more than 70 million women living in Latin America, including the Caribbean, the majority of whom are living in conditions of poverty and exclusion. The aim of this grassroots organization is to advance racial equity and social inclusion by mobilizing and empowering people of African descent in Latin America through community education, training, dialogue, and by building cross-racial alliances. They advocate for women on the issue of land rights and on multiple and aggravated forms of discrimination, as well

as on issues of human trafficking, sexual and reproductive rights, access to sexual health services and reproductive health, and equal access to education and in the labor market. They also work on issues of immigration, which is becoming a significant factor in community tensions, particularly in Brazil, but also in other Latin American countries. In addition they encourage the integration of Afro Latino women in processes of reconstruction and reconciliation, especially in Haiti,

Website: http://www.mujeresafro.org

b) The Afghan Women's Network (AWN)

The Afghan Women's Network (AWN) was founded in 1995 and now serves as a well-established network for the growing number of women's organizations and individual members operating in Afghanistan. Within Afghanistan there are at least 14 different ethnic groups in 34 provinces divided along tribal and clan lines. The Afghan Women's Network (AWN) has been involved in bringing awareness on UNSCR 1325 to both men and women in all of the eight regions of the country, and working with Afghan policymakers on key aspects of the Resolution. This includes the participation of women at the decision-making level and awareness on the legal rights for women guaranteed by the Constitution and Afghan laws. AWN both serves as a network, and undertakes its own advocacy functions such as gender-based violence, youth empowerment, and girl's education. They are also working to ensure that more women participate in political life with a guaranteed 25% female quota in parliament.

Website: http://www.afghanwomensnetwork.org/

c) WIPNET

The Women in Peacebuilding Network (WIPNET) Programme was launched in November 2001 with the aim of building the capacity of women to enhance their roles in peacebuilding and post conflict reconstruction in West Africa. It is a program of WANEP, the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding. It seeks to increase the number of trained women practitioners in peacebuilding as trainers, researchers, mediators and advocates. Through community mobilization and other innovative platforms, WANEP strives to provide a forum for women at the grassroots to amplify their voices on issues of peace and human security and it works from the premise that aside from the fact that women are excluded by design or default from peace processes by male establishments, women also suffer from lack of awareness and skills in peace making and also lack the confidence, exposure and the opportunity to get involved. WIPNET is inclusive of all ethnic and religious groups within a region. It is a program of WANEP, the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding There are currently two local WIPNET networks in Nigeria and Sierra Leone/Liberia. WIPNET was instrumental in founding Women of Liberia Mass Action for Peace.

Website: http://www.gnwp.org/members/wipnet

d) Women of Liberia Mass Action for Peace

Women of Liberia Mass Action for Peace is a peace movement started by women in Liberia, that helped to bring end to the Second Liberian Civil War in 2003, during which many women were

abducted and gang raped. It included both Christian and Muslim women working together to demand peace. Organized by a social worker Leymah Gbowee, the movement started with local women from across religious and ethnic divides praying and singing in a fish market. Thousands of women mobilized their efforts, staged silent nonviolence protests that included a sex strike and the threat of a curse. They thus forced a meeting with President Charles Taylor and extracted a promise from him to attend peace talks in Ghana. . A delegation of Liberian women then went to Ghana to continue to apply pressure on the warring factions during the peace process. They staged a sit in outside of the Presidential Palace, blocking all the doors and windows and preventing anyone from leaving the peace talks without a resolution. The women of Liberia became a political force against violence and against their government and their actions helped bring about an agreement during the stalled peace talks. As a result, the women were able to achieve peace in Liberia after a 14-year civil war and later helped bring to power the country's first female head of state, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf.

Website: http://www.myhero.com/go/hero.asp?hero=womens_peace_movement_liberia_08

5. AGENCIES CURRENTLY FUNDING MINORITY WOMEN AND SHARED SOCIETY WORK

5.1 The Caucus for Women's Leadership Kenya

Royal Netherlands Embassy, SIDA/UNIFEM - Now part of UN Women, ,African Women Development Fund, Urgent Action Fund, Centre for Development and Population Activities - CEDPA, Global fund for women, Heinrich Boll Foundation, Canadian Embassy, USAID/ACT Kenya, HIVOS, Open Society Initiative in East Africa - OSIEA ,Government of Kenya

5.2. INSPIRE:

British Council Pakistan, Higher Education Commission of Pakistan.

5.3 N-Peace:

United Nations Development Program, Institute for inclusive Security.

5.4 Naga Mothers Association:

Institute for Inclusive Security

5.5 KVINFO:

Danish Ministry of Culture.

5.6 Women's Information Group Northern Ireland:

Northern Ireland Community Relations Council.

5.7 Asian Indigenous People's Pact

European Commission (EC), Open Society Institute (OSI), Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), The Swiss Confederation, represented by the Swiss Federal Department of

Foreign Affairs, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), UN Women, Global Fund for Women (GFW) United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women (UNTF to end VAW), OXFAM Australia, The German Catholic Bishops' Organization for Development Cooperation (MISEREOR), Southeast Asia Center for e-Media (SEACeM), International Labor Organization (ILO), United Nations Development Program.

5.8 Uzgen Local Authority Advisory Committee:

United Nations Development Program.

5.9 Pakistani Women Moderating Extremism:

The Institute for Inclusive Security with the US Institute of Peace

5.10 FEMCIT:

EU's Sixth Framework Program, Coordinated by the University of Bergen.

5.11 Indigenous Women's Legal Program in New South Wales:

Commonwealth and State governments

5.12a The Network of Afro-Latin American, Afro-Caribbean and Diaspora Women:

Inter American Foundation.

512b The Afghan Women's Network:

Global Fund for Women, French Embassy, Action Aid, UNHCR, Roland Berger Foundation

5.12c Women in Peacebuilding Network/Women of Liberia Mass Action for Peace

Hunt Alternatives.

African Women's Development Fund.

Global Fund for Women.

6. INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL INSTRUMENTS FOR THE PROTECTION AND PROMOTION OF ETHNIC AND RACIAL MINORITIES AND OF WOMEN.

UNITED NATIONS

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)
The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) stipulates that everyone is entitled to the rights and freedoms set forth in the Declaration irrespective of their status, including their *racial and social origin* (article 2). Article 7 further affirms that all are equal before the law and are entitled to the protection of the law without discrimination.

<u>Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees</u> (1951)

The Refugee Convention gives individuals the right to seek asylum on the grounds of well-founded fear of persecution based on *race*, religion, nationality, and membership of a particular social group. Under article 3, states are required to implement these provisions "without discrimination as to *race*, religion or country of origin".

<u>United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination</u>(1963)

This declaration prepared the way for the treaty on the elimination of racial discrimination in 1965. States express their intention to eliminate "racial discrimination throughout the world, in all its forms and manifestations, and of securing understanding of and respect for the dignity of the human person" and intend to adopt "national and international measures to that end, including teaching, education and information".

<u>International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights</u> (1966)

Article 2 emphasizes that the rights protected in this treaty shall be exercised without distinction of social status or *race*.

<u>International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights</u> (1966)

This main human rights treaty on civil and political rights obliges states to guarantee the rights set forth the Covenant "without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status" (article 2). The treaty also requires governments to prohibit by law any "national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence" (article 20). ICCPR also stipulates that all persons are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to the equal protection of the law (article 26). Minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion, or to use their own language (article 27).

<u>Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court</u> (1998) (article 6, 7j)

The statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) gives the court jurisdiction over acts of genocide of specific national, ethnic, racial or religious groups under article 6.*Apartheid* is further defined as a crime against humanity in article 7(j).

UN treaties relating to specific categories of persons can also be used to protect racial and ethnic rights:

<u>Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women</u> (1979)

Discrimination against women from racial and ethnic minorities may also constitute breaches of this treaty and can be taken up with the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women defines the right of women to be free from discrimination and sets the core principles to protect this right. It establishes an agenda for national action to end discrimination, and provides the basis for achieving equality between men and women through ensuring women's equal access to, and equal opportunities in, political and public life as well as education, health and employment. CEDAW is the only human rights treaty that affirms the reproductive rights of women. The Convention has been ratified by 180 states, making it one of the most ratified international treaties. State parties to the Convention must submit periodic reports on women's status in their respective countries. CEDAW's Optional Protocol establishes procedures for individual complaints on alleged violations of the Convention by State parties, as well as an inquiry procedure that allows the Committee to conduct inquiries into serious and systematic abuses of women's human rights in countries. So far 71 States have ratified the Protocol

<u>Convention on the Rights of the Child</u> (1989)

This treaty protects the rights of children from ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities to enjoy their culture and to practice their religion and language. Violations of these rights can be taken up with the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) (2000)

The first resolution on women, peace and security, Security Council Resolution 1325 (SCR1325), was unanimously adopted by United Nations Security Council on 31 October 2000. SCR1325 marked the first time the Security Council addressed the disproportionate and unique impact of armed conflict on women; recognized the under-valued and under-utilized contributions women make to conflict prevention, peacekeeping, conflict resolution and peace-building. It also stressed the importance of women's equal and full participation as active agents in peace and security.

UN Forum on Indigenous Rights

The United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII or PFII), set up in 2000, is the UN's central coordinating body for matters relating to the concerns and rights of the world's indigenous peoples. The forum is an advisory body within the framework of the United Nations System that reports to the UN's Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention 169.

This is an International Labour Organization Convention, of 1989 by the International Labour Organization Convention. It is the major binding international convention concerning indigenous peoples, and is a forerunner of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

This declaration was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly 2007. While it is not a legally binding instrument under international law, It sets an important standards for the treatment of the planet's 370 million indigenous people and assisting them in combating discrimination and marginalisation.

Forum on Minority Issues of the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Right.

Established by the Human Rights Council resolution 6/15 (28 September 2007), the Forum on Minority Issues, provides a platform for promoting dialogue and cooperation on issues pertaining to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities.

There is numerous other UN treaties and declarations aimed at combating the problem of discrimination against various racial, religious, social, ethnic groups etc. Examples include, the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of _Apartheid_ (1973), International Convention against _Apartheid_ in Sports (1985). UNESCO has adopted the Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960), which protects the rights of minority groups to education, the Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice (1978) and the Declaration on Fundamental Principles concerning the Contribution to the Mass Media to Strengthening Peace and International Understanding, to the Promotion of Human Rights and to Countering Racialism, Apartheid and Incitement to War (1978).

AFRICAN UNION (FORMERLY ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY, OAU)

African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (1981) (article 18)
This treaty emphasizes the right of all individuals to enjoy the rights set out in the Charter irrespective of race or ethnic group.

African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1990) (article 26)
This treaty further upholds the principle of non-discrimination based on the child's or his/her parents' or legal guardians' race or ethnic group. Moreover, it recognizes the special needs of children living under apartheid or other regimes practicing racial, ethnic, religious discrimination and subject to military destabilization (article 26).

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1949) (article 14)
This treaty, commonly known as the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), prohibits discrimination on the grounds of race or social status in the enjoyment of the rights set out in the ECHR.

Protocol No. 12 to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedom (2000) (article 1, 2)
Article 1 reiterates this right and article 2 states that no public authority shall discriminate on the grounds of these rights.

Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (1995)
The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, the first binding international treaty to offer protection specifically for minorities, was adopted in 1995 and entered into force in February 1998. The groundwork for this treaty was laid in an earlier treaty, the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, which was adopted in 1992.

EUROPEAN UNION

Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (2000) (article 21)
This treaty prohibits discrimination on the grounds of race, color, ethnic or social origin etc.

Article 13 of the Amsterdam Treaty, the Racial Equality Directive (2000/43/EC), the Employment Equality Directive (2000/78/EC), and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. The Amsterdam Treaty provides powers to the European Communities to combat discrimination based on various grounds such as sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation

AMERICAS

The Inter-American Convention for the Prevention, Punishment and Elimination of Violence against Women (Belém do Pará Convention) (1995)

The Convention of Belém do Parà is a binding treaty inspired by the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (1993). The Convention includes provisions referring to: a number of concrete measures that States Parties agree to carry out with all appropriate means and without delay; another series of measures and programmes that States Parties agree to undertake and implement progressively; the need to take into account the plight of particularly vulnerable groups of women including migrants, refugees, and women who have been targeted by reason of their race or ethnic background; and, the reporting and redress mechanisms under the Convention.

7. FURTHER READING:

1. Freidenvall, Lenita, (2010) Intersectionalising Representation: Ethnicity, Gender and Political Representation in Multicultural Europe. FEMCIT Working Paper No. 1
http://www.femcit.org/files/WP1_WorkingpaperNo1.pdf

2. Guaranteeing the rights of minority women and girls: Chapter 4: Recommendations of the United Nations Forum On Minority Issues, Compilation Of Recommendations Of The First Four Sessions (2008 To 2011)
http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/MinorityIssues/Forum_On_Minority_Pub_en_low.pdf

3. Izsák, Rita (2011) Note by the independent expert on minority issues, on guaranteeing the rights of minority women: UN Human Rights Council Forum on Minority Issues. Fourth session Geneva, 29-30 November
2011http://www.wunrn.com/news/2011/11_11/11_14/111411_minority_files/MINORITY%20WOMEN'S%20RIGHTS-UN%20HRC%20Forum%20on%20Minority%20Issues.pdf

4. Izsák, Rita (2013) Minority issues and Governance Global Consultation on Governance and the Post-2015 Framework 28 February to 1 March 2013, South Africa. Submission by the Independent Expert on minority issues, Ms. Rita Izsák
www.worldwewant2015.org/file/328125/download/356499

5. Ramsay, Katherine: Why Focus on Minority and Indigenous Women (2011) Minority Rights. www.minorityrights.org/download.php?id=1013

6. Women's Rights and Economic Change Intersectionality: (2004) A Tool for Gender and Economic Justice http://lgbtq.unc.edu/sites/lgbtq.unc.edu/files/documents/intersectionality_en.pdf

7. The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) hosted an Expert Roundtable on 'Women as agents of change in Migrant, Minority and Roma and Sinti communities in the OSCE Area' in September 2012. A copy of the program, with speakers can be found at
http://www.osce.org/gender/93252

A copy of the report of the conference written by Fontini Sianou can be found here:
http://www.kede.org/userfiles/file/WOMEN%20AS%20AGENTS%20OF%20CHANGE%20IN%20MIGRANT%20%20II.pdf