EQUALITY NOW

AGENTS OF CHANGE

ANNUAL REPORT 2004

COVER PHOTOS Former circumcisers participating in the 2004 meeting of Equality Now's Fund for Grassroots Activism to End Female Genital Mutilation. Top, left to right: Mariamu Athumani, Tanzania; Isnino Shuriye, Kenya; Mariam Bagayoko, Mali. Bottom, left to right: Tiranke Koulibaly, Guinea-Conakry; Noolamala Saaya, Kenya; Aicha Kayad Oude, Djibouti. *Mariamu Athumani, Mariam Bagayoko, Tiranke Koulibaly, Noolamala Saaya, and Aicha Kayad Oude photos by Jessica Neuwirth. Isnino Shuriye photo by Guillaume Bonn/The New York Times.*

VISION, COURAGE, TRANSFORMATION

Agents of Change

In 2004, Equality Now convened the first international meeting of former circumcisers—nine women from six African countries who have laid down their knives and are now working to end female genital mutilation (FGM) (see page 16). The campaign against FGM has made tremendous progress over the past decade. As young girls, parents and circumcisers come to understand the life-threatening harm of FGM, as well as the possibility of reshaping cultural expectations that make the cutting seem necessary, the end of this harmful practice is now within reach. Education has increasingly led girls to resist FGM, parents to protect their daughters from it, and now circumcisers to stop cutting.

The campaign against FGM is a model of social transformation, and we commend the remarkable activists who have had the vision and courage to reach out to women who perform FGM. These former circumcisers, who have often played an influential role in the community, are now using their status to support rather than oppose efforts to end FGM, greatly accelerating the success of these efforts.

It takes courage for activists to confront circumcisers, women who are considered by many to be responsible for the harm that society has imposed on so many girls and women through the practice of FGM. It takes vision to work with them rather than against them. It also takes courage for former circumcisers to confront their past—many of them have witnessed girls die as a result of their own action. They are often ostracized for breaking with tradition. Yet the power of their transformation will help break the cycle of harm that has been passed down through generations.

Equality Now is working to harness this power of transformation, to reach out with information, education, and a call to conscience around the world. The broader our reach, with your help, the sooner we can end violence and discrimination against women.

Rinkaso Kodonto, a former Maasai circumciser from Kenya, speaks with a reporter during the 2004 meeting of Equality Now's Fund for Grassroots Activism to End FGM.

SOMMAIRE

En 2004, Egalité Maintenant a organisé la première réunion internationale d'anciennes exciseuses — neuf femmes de six pays africains qui ont abandonné leur métier et oeuvrent aujourd'hui pour mettre fin aux mutilations génitales féminines (MGF). La campagne menée contre les MGF a permis de faire d'énormes progrès ces dix dernières années. Aujourd'hui, grâce à une meilleure information, de plus en plus de filles ne se laissent plus faire, des parents protègent leurs filles des MGF et des exciseuses renoncent à leur activité. La campagne contre les MGF est un modèle de transformation sociale, et nous saluons les activistes remarquables qui ont eu la clairvoyance et le courage d'aller parler aux exciseuses. Egalité Maintenant travaille maintenant à développer ce pouvoir de transformation pour susciter une prise de conscience dans le monde entier. Plus nous élargirons notre présence, plus vite nous parviendrons, avec votre aide, à éliminer les violences et les discriminations dont les femmes sont victimes.

RESUMEN

En 2004, Igualdad Ya convocó la primera reunión internacional de antiguas circuncidadoras, nueve mujeres de seis países africanos que han dejado los cuchillos y actualmente trabajan para poner fin a la mutilación genital femenina (MGF). La campaña contra la MGF ha realizado un tremendo avance a lo largo de la pasada década. La educación ha llevado cada vez a más niñas a oponerse a la MGF, a más padres a proteger a sus hijas contra ella y a más circuncidadoras a abandonar la práctica. La campaña contra la MGF es un modelo de transformación social y elogiamos a los destacados activistas que han tenido la idea y el valor de contactar con las mujeres que ejecutan la MGF. Igualdad Ya está trabajando para utilizar este poder de transformación, para realizar una reivindicación de la conciencia que llegue a todo el mundo. Cuanto mayor sea nuestro alcance y con su ayuda, antes podremos poner fin a la violencia y a la discriminación contra la mujer.

ملخص

في عام 2004، عقدت المساواة الآن الاجتماع الدولي الأول للخاتنات السابقات، وهن تسع نساء من ستة بلدان أفريقية تخلين عن مشارطهن ويعملن الآن من أجل القضاء على تشويه الأعضاء التناسلية للأنثى (ختان الإناث). وقد أحرزت حملة مكافحة ختان الإناث تقدماً عظيماً على مدى العقد الماضي. ويدفع التعليم الفتيات بدرجة متزايدة إلى مقاومة الختان، والآباء والأمهات إلى حماية بناتهن منه، والخاتنات إلى الكف عن عمليات البتر. وتعد حملة مكافحة ختان الإناث نموذجاً للتحول الاجتماعي، ونحن نثني على النشطاء الممتازين الذين توافرت لهم الرؤية والشجاعة اللازمتان لإرشاد النساء اللواتي يجرين عمليات الختان. وتعكف المساواة الآن حالياً على تسخير طاقة التحول هذه، وعلى التوجه بنداء إلى الضمير في أنحاء العالم. وكلما اتسع نطاق عملنا وحظينا بمساعدتكم، كلما أمكن لنا القضاء على العنف والتمييز ضد المرأة في وقت أقرب.

Holding Governments Accountable for Sex Discriminatory Laws

At the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, government delegates adopted the Beijing Platform for Action in which they pledged to "revoke any remaining laws that discriminate on the basis of sex and remove gender bias in the administration of justice." In 1999, in preparation for the fifth anniversary of the Beijing Conference and the scheduled review of the implementation of the Platform for Action, Equality Now published *Words and Deeds: Holding Governments Accountable in the Beijing +5 Review Process,* a report highlighting a representative sampling of discriminatory laws in forty-five countries around the world and launched a campaign calling on governments to rescind these laws in accordance with the commitment made in the Beijing Platform for Action. At the June 2000 Special Session of the UN General Assembly convened to review implementation of the Platform for Action, governments pledged in the Outcome Document they adopted to review domestic legislation "with a view to striving to remove discriminatory provisions as soon as possible, preferably by 2005..."

At the March 2004 session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), Equality Now launched its Beijing +10 campaign with an updated report, *Words and Deeds: Holding Governments Accountable in the Beijing +10 Review Process,* in preparation for the Beijing +10 review scheduled for the March 2005 session of the CSW. In its report, Equality Now welcomed the significant legal reforms that had been made in some of the countries highlighted in its initial report, including in The Bahamas, Costa Rica, France, Jordan, Mexico, Morocco, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Switzerland, Turkey, Venezuela and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia—Republic of Serbia. However, a large majority of the discriminatory laws cited by Equality Now in its initial report are still in force. The updated report includes these laws as well as other laws that perpetuate legal discrimination with regard to personal status, economic status, marital status and violence against women. Sixteen governments were represented at the launch of

Panel of speakers at Equality Now's Beijing +10 Campaign Launch, March 2004. Left to right: Professor Celita Alamilla, Counselor for the Mexican National Mechanism for Women, Taina Bien-Aimé, Jessica Neuwirth (Executive Director and President of Equality Now, respectively), and Christine Brautigam, Chief of the Women's Rights Unit at the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women.

"The Division for the Advancement of Women greatly appreciates the high caliber of the work of Equality Now. This innovative organization has consistently supported United Nations activities in the field of women's human rights. Since its Beijing +5 campaign, Equality Now has worked tirelessly to encourage Governments to review and revoke laws that discriminate against women."
Carolyn Hannan, Director, United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women

Equality Now's Beijing +10 campaign, where the Mexican Government presented a review of its law reform efforts, which included the amendment of the discriminatory law that had been highlighted in Equality Now's 1999 initial report.

In 2004 Equality Now attended regional Beijing +10 preparatory conferences in Mexico City, Bangkok, Addis Ababa, and Geneva to highlight the upcoming target date of 2005 established at the Beijing +5 review for the elimination of sex discriminatory laws and to call for the creation of a CSW Special Rapporteur for the Elimination of Laws that Discriminate against Women at the Beijing +10 review. In 2004 Equality Now also filed a formal complaint with the CSW against the forty countries included in its report through a little known and rarely used communications procedure of the CSW (see LAW Project, page 20). The complaint was pending as of year-end.

Law is the most formal expression of government policy. A government that allows discriminatory laws to remain in force endorses and promotes inequality. Equality Now continues to call on all governments to repeal sex discriminatory laws as a demonstration of their commitment to implement the Beijing Platform for Action. These laws include:

■ *Laws restricting women's rights in marriage and divorce and laws requiring wife obedience.* For example, in Yemen, the law explicitly provides that wives must be available to their husbands for sex and that they cannot leave the marital home without permission (The Personal Status Act No. 20, Article 40).

■ *Laws restricting the personal status of women including suffrage, the right to transfer citizenship, the right to give evidence, and the right to travel.* For example, in Pakistan, a woman's word is worth half of a man's as evidence in a court of law and to prove that she has been raped, she has to have at least four Muslim adult male witnesses (The Offences of Zina [Enforcement of Hudood], Ordinance, 1979, Section 8).

■ *Laws restricting women's right to property and laws restricting women's employment rights.* For example, in Bolivia, women can only work during the day, except in the fields of nursing and domestic service (The General Labor Law, Chapter VI. The Work of Women and Minors, Article 6). In the United Kingdom, women are legally barred from service in the Royal Marines (Revised Employment Policy for Women in the Army—Effect on the Royal Marines).

■ *Laws allowing rapists exemption from punishment through marriage, laws condoning marital rape and domestic violence, "honor" killings and state-sanctioned violence.* For example, in Nigeria, husbands are permitted by law to use physical violence to "chastise" their wives as long as it does not result in grievous harm (The Penal Code of Northern Nigeria, Section 55).

SOMMAIRE

En 1995, les états se sont engagés, dans le cadre du Programme d'action de Pékin, à abroger les lois discriminatoires à l'égard des femmes. Ils ont renouvelé leur promesse en 2000 lors de la conférence-bilan Pékin +5 et ont fixé l'année 2005 comme date butoir pour sa mise en œuvre. En mars 2004, Egalité Maintenant a lancé sa campagne Pékin +10 contre les lois discriminatoires en produisant un rapport actualisé qui met en évidence des lois de ce type encore en vigueur dans quarante pays du monde. Egalité Maintenant s'est félicitée des importantes réformes juridiques ayant été adoptées dans certains des pays qu'elle avait signalés dans son rapport de 1999 sur les lois discriminatoires. Toutefois, un grand nombre des lois qu'elle citait dans son premier rapport sont toujours en vigueur. Aujourd'hui, Egalité Maintenant demande la nomination d'un Rapporteur spécial sur les lois discriminatoires à l'égard des femmes à l'occasion de la conférence-bilan Pékin +10 qui aura lieu en mars 2005.

RESUMEN

En 1995, los gobiernos se comprometieron en la Plataforma de Acción de Beijing a derogar las leyes que discriminan a la mujer. En el año 2000, renovaron este compromiso en el proceso de evaluación Beijing +5 y fijaron como fecha objetivo el año 2005 para su implantación. En marzo de 2004, Igualdad Ya lanzó su campaña Beijing +10 contra las leyes discriminatorias con un informe actualizado en el que se destacan las leyes de ese tipo de cuarenta países del mundo. Igualdad Ya agradeció las significativas reformas jurídicas que se han llevado a cabo en algunos de los países destacados en su informe de 1999 sobre leyes discriminatorias. No obstante, muchas de las leyes discriminatorias citadas por Igualdad Ya en su informe inicial siguen todavía en vigor. Igualdad Ya reivindica la creación de un Relator Especial sobre las leyes que discriminan contra la mujer en el proceso de evaluación Beijing +10 que tendrá lugar en marzo de 2005.

ملخص

في عام 1995، تعهدت الحكومات في منهاج عمل بيجين بإلغاء القوانين التي تميز ضد المرأة. وجددت هذا التعهد في عام 2000، وذلك في استعراض بيجين +5، وحددت عام 2005 موعداً مستهدفاً لتنفيذ منهاج العمل. وفي مارس/آذار 2004، بدأت المساواة الآن حملتها الخاصة باستعراض بيجين +10 لمناهضة القوانين التمييزية، وذلك بإصدار تقرير مستكمل يسلط الأضواء على هذه القوانين في أربعين بلداً في أرجاء العالم. وأعربت المساواة الآن عن ترحيبها بالإصلاحات القانونية الهامة التي سبق الاضطلاع بها في بعض البلاد وجرى التنويه بها في تقرير المنظمة لعام 1999 عن القوانين التمييزية. بيد أن الكثير من القوانين التمييزية التي أشارت إليها المساواة الآن في تقريرها الأول لا تزال سارية. وتدعو المساواة الآن حالياً خلال استعراض بيجين +10 الذي سيجري في مارس/آذار 2005 إلى إنشاء وظيفة مقرر خاص معني بالقوانين التي تميز ضد المرأة.

LETTERS FROM THE CAMPAIGN

Responses from Governments

In the draft of the new Romanian Civil Code that was adopted by the Senate and will be sent for adoption to the Chamber of Deputies, we included, also, the provisions regarding the family matters, in such way that, after the entering into force of the new Civil Code, the Family Code in force will be abrogated. The draft of the new Civil Code was elaborated in order to harmonize the legislation in force with the new social, juridical and economical realities.

Ionel Didea
Department of Law Drafting
Studies and Documentation
Ministry of Justice
ROMANIA

The Australian Government is continuing to consider women's employment in frontline combat positions and is currently undertaking a major body of work to review Australian Defence Force (ADF) job roles. This includes a consultancy project to examine gender neutral competency standards for all categories of employment, with a view to removing any barriers to employment…The Act now refers solely to 'combat duties'. Since 1992, ADF policy has enabled women to serve in all units, except six job categories-infantry, armour, combat engineers, artillery, airforce defence guards and navy mine clearance divers. Currently, women work on frontline units such as ships, submarines and aircraft. Women in frontline units carry arms for use in self-defence, but not in combat. This is a complex cultural and social issue…Australia remains committed to achievement of gender equality and international agreements on women's equality.

Kerry Flanagan
Office of the Status of Women
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
AUSTRALIA

Polygamous marriages are permissible in Tanzania but subject to fulfillment of conditions laid down in section 11 of the law of marriage. This provision requires that before conversion to polygamy, husband and wife must make a declaration that each of their own free will, consent to the conversion…Therefore women are given an option whether to enter into such kind of a union or not...The government respects the right to freedom of religion. Therefore any attempt to prohibit polygamous marriages will be a violation of people's rights. We do believe with time, people will decide on their own to abandon polygamous marriages after weighing the pros and cons of this rite.

Joyce C.N. Karanabo
Permanent Mission of the United Republic of Tanzania to the United Nations
TANZANIA

I would like to assure you that Haiti's authorities are committed to Gender Equality. In fact, it will be recalled that the Minister for the Condition of Women of Haiti stated in her intervention at the 3rd Committee of the United Nations on October 14th 2004: "There has been a concerted effort to promote the fundamental rights of women and gender mainstreaming in an attempt to enhance women's role in society. The Ministry of the Condition of Women is presently amending or repealing the articles in the Haitian penal code that discriminate against

Equality Now Program Officer Caroline Osero-Ageng'o and Gertrude Mongela, Speaker of the Pan-African Parliament, at the regional Beijing +10 preparatory conference in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, October 2004.

women. These amendments will be submitted to the approval of the Parliament which unfortunately is not functional." As general elections will be held in Haiti in 2005 and a new government will be installed in 2006, it is hoped this matter will be taken up by the new Parliament once it is operational.

Léo Méores
Chargé d'Affaires
Permanent Mission of the Republic of Haiti to the United Nations
HAITI

As the lead government agency mandated to ensure the implementation of the commitments to the Beijing Platform for Action and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), we are aware of the limitations and gaps of existing laws whose impact to women is discriminatory…We believe that it is very important to immediately enact a separate and distinct legal measure that would respond to the multifaceted concerns related to prostitution…This would start with the decriminalization of prostituted persons. The desired effect of such legal reform is that women and children should no longer be arrested or fined like criminals (ESCAP, 1991: 57). "Decriminalization of prostituted persons should go hand in hand with the apprehension and prosecution of agents, recruiters, traffickers, pimps, procurers, establishment owners, customers and others who derive sexual gratification, financial gain and advancement or any other benefits from the prostitution of others (PPGD, 1995 Chapter 18 p. 312)."

Myrna T. Yao
Chairperson
National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women
Office of the President
THE PHILIPPINES

The former articles 558 and 599 which exempted perpetrators of abduction and rape from criminal responsibility upon marriage are now deleted and amended under new article 590 to be punishable whether or not the victim consents for marriage…The new penal code will come into force once the president of the republic affixes his signature and it is published in the official gazette. The president's power in this regard is just a constitutional formality. We hope, therefore, the law will come into force in the coming few months.

Abdurahim Ahmed
Assistant Attorney General
ETHIOPIA

We have given our report on Hudood Ordinances and have recommended to the Government of Pakistan for the repeal of the said laws as they are discriminatory and not even in accordance with the Islamic injunctions…The National Commission on the Status of Women has been created as a watch body to review all government policies, rules, regulations, laws and recommend any changes by repeal/amendment and new legislation if found discriminatory or adversely affecting women's status.

Justice Majida Razvi
National Commission on the Status of Women
PAKISTAN

En materia de régimen patrimonial del matrimonio, existe un Proyecto de Ley que modifica el Código Civil y otras leyes complementarias y establece un nuevo régimen patrimonial que sustituye a la sociedad conyugal, otorgando a la mujer y al marido iguales derechos y obligaciones...La tramitación de este proyecto ha sido lenta, ya que la moción fue ingresada en octubre de 1995, permaneciendo en primer trámite constitucional en la Cámara de Diputados y en su análisis en la Comisión de Familia. En la actualidad se ha logrado reactivar su tramitación, siendo aprobado en general por dicha Cámara e iniciando su análisis en la Comisión de Constitución, Legislación y Justicia.

María de la Luz Silva Donoso
Jefa, Departamento de Relaciones Internacionales y Cooperación
Servicio Nacional de la Mujer
CHILE

Following your letter of 6 August 2004 relating to article 74 of the Civil Status Registration of Cameroon, I wish to inform you that a new Family Code is under preparation and will soon come into force, thus abrogating the 1981 instrument. Cameroon remains attached to ensuring equality among all its citizens, irrespective of sex.

Edgar Alain Mebe Ngo'o
Director of The Civil Cabinet
CAMEROON

Carolyn Hannan, Director, United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women.

MALI

Calling for a Law Against Female Genital Mutilation

Fanta Camara

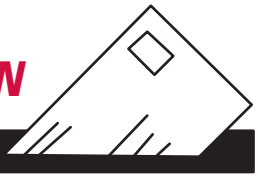
In July 2004, Equality Now launched a campaign calling for the enactment of a law against FGM in Mali. Women's Action 25.1 highlights the case of Fanta Camara, who was subjected to FGM at the age of five. In the course of the mutilation her urethra was damaged, as a consequence of which she became incontinent. According to Fanta's doctor, her growth has been retarded by repeated infections of her genitals. She is now 12 years old, but does not look her age. She has had to drop out of school because her fellow pupils could not bear the smell of her incontinence. The same community that required her, in accordance with tradition, to undergo the process now shuns her.

Fanta's case is not an isolated one in Mali. FGM is practiced in all parts of Mali with a prevalence rate of 94% according to the country's second Demographic and Health Survey of 1996. The practice is performed not only by traditional circumcisers but also by midwives and retired medical personnel on girls below the age of 10 years with some as young as three months old. There is no law in Mali prohibiting FGM. Non-governmental organizations, including the Malian Association for Monitoring and Orientation on Traditional Practices (AMSOPT) and the Association for the Advancement and the Defense of the Rights of Women (APDF), have been carrying out awareness-raising campaigns on the dangers of FGM. They believe that a national law against FGM must be enacted urgently in order to ensure that the life and health of thousands of women and girls are protected from the harmful effects of FGM. Both organizations are grantees of Equality Now's Fund for Grassroots Activism to End FGM (see page 16).

Although APDF and AMSOPT have long been campaigning for the criminalization of FGM, efforts for passage of a law against FGM have been unsuccessful to date, despite the fact that Article 1 of Mali's Constitution provides for the right of all citizens to integrity of person and protection from cruelty and inhumane and degrading treatment. In 2002 the former president of Mali, Alpha Oumar Konaré, tabled a bill to criminalize FGM without success. APDF and AMSOPT believe such a law would now have a greater chance of passing as awareness levels in the country about the dangers of FGM are higher. In addition to criminalizing FGM with deterrent penalties, the proposed law would provide for education and outreach to relevant communities on the dangers of FGM. Equality Now's campaign highlights the damaging health consequences of FGM, as illustrated by the suffering of Fanta Camara, and calls on the government of Mali to pass a law against FGM as a matter of urgent priority.

> "I came to realize that the harms of FGM were not the result of evil spirits, but were a consequence of the procedure itself."
> **Mariam Bagayoko, former circumciser, Mali**

LETTERS FROM THE CAMPAIGN



Mali has the obligation under international law to eradicate FGM and to end discrimination against women and girls. I beg you and urge you with all my heart to support the passage of a law against FGM, so that it will be completely abolished in your country.

Mariano Guim
Barcelona, SPAIN

The Suglo N-Nya Biahegu Women's Association wish to urge you to support the introduction and passage of a law against FGM as a matter of urgency…We are aware that Mali has an obligation under international law, as well as its own constitution to eradicate FGM and to end discrimination against women and girls. We therefore encourage you to do everything in your capacity to make this a reality. We want to urge you to take measures and support efforts to educate practicing communities on the harmful effects of FGM.

Sulemana Comfort
Community Co-Coordinator
Suglo N-Nya Biahegu Association
Tamale, GHANA

Please do your job and pass legislation against FGM. You are required to protect your citizens and eradicate FGM under international law and your own Constitution.

Rosemary Sullivan
Pigeon Hill, Quebec, CANADA

I am writing to you on behalf of the National Association of Women Lawyers (NAWL), the oldest association of women lawyers and judges in the United States…NAWL strongly supports the call of Malian women for a national law which would criminalize the practice of FGM…While some communities in Mali have already ceased to use this practice, there is strong need for a national law because many communities in Mali still mutilate women and because FGM practitioners from countries that have criminalized FGM (such as Burkina Faso, Senegal, and Guinea-Conakry) use Mali as a safe haven in which to mutilate women from their own countries…FGM is a practice which harms the health of countless children and which discriminates against women…We therefore strongly urge you to support the introduction and passage of a national law to criminalize FGM and take all measures necessary to educate the public about the harmful nature of this practice.

Eva Herzer
Chair, International Law Committee
National Association of Women Lawyers
Chicago, Illinois USA

We all belong to the same global society and all share the agony for the good and progress of our peoples. We fight hard ending any form of discrimination against women and girls…We urge you, Mr. President, please take measures and support social efforts for the education of the female population of your country's communities. The education of girls is the best investment for your country and it will facilitate your work. Hoping that FGM will soon be disappeared from your beautiful country.

Litsa Gyftopoulou
President
Social Aid of Hellas
Athens, GREECE

As the representative of an international NGO that provides social service to women and girls, I am writing to express my profound concern about the practice of female genital mutilation occurring in Mali. I urge you, as a matter of urgent priority, to support the introduction and passage of a law against FGM in Mali. Mali is obligated under international law, as well as its own Constitution, to eradicate FGM and to end discrimination against women and girls. By enacting a law against FGM, you will promote and protect the health and rights of women and girls in Mali, while serving as an example to other countries around the world.

Clare Nolan
Sisters of the Good Shepherd
New York, NY USA

SOMMAIRE

En juillet 2004, Egalité Maintenant a lancé une campagne en faveur du vote d'une loi contre les MGF au Mali. L'Action Femmes attire l'attention sur le cas de Fanta Camara, excisée à l'âge de cinq ans. Son urètre ayant été endommagé lors de l'intervention, elle est devenue incontinente et sa croissance a été retardée par des infections à répétition. Les MGF sont pratiquées dans toutes les régions du Mali avec un taux de prévalence de 94 %. Pour les organisations non gouvernementales, il importe qu'une loi nationale interdisant les MGF soit votée pour protéger la vie et la santé de milliers de femmes et de fillettes. La campagne d'Egalité Maintenant appelle le gouvernement malien à adopter d'urgence une loi prohibant les MGF.

RESUMEN

En julio de 2004, Igualdad Ya lanzó una campaña para reivindicar la promulgación de una ley contra la MGF en Mali. La Acción Mujeres pone de relieve el caso de Fanta Camara, que fue sometida a la MGF a la edad de cinco años. Durante el transcurso de su mutilación le dañaron la uretra, lo que le provocó incontinencia urinaria y reiteradas infecciones que retrasaron su crecimiento. La MGF se practica en Mali de forma generalizada, con una tasa de prevalencia del 94%. Las organizaciones no gubernamentales creen que debe aprobarse una ley nacional contra la MGF para proteger la vida y la salud de miles de mujeres y niñas contra sus dañinos efectos. La campaña de Igualdad Ya insta al gobierno de Mali a que apruebe una ley contra la MGF como tema urgente prioritario.

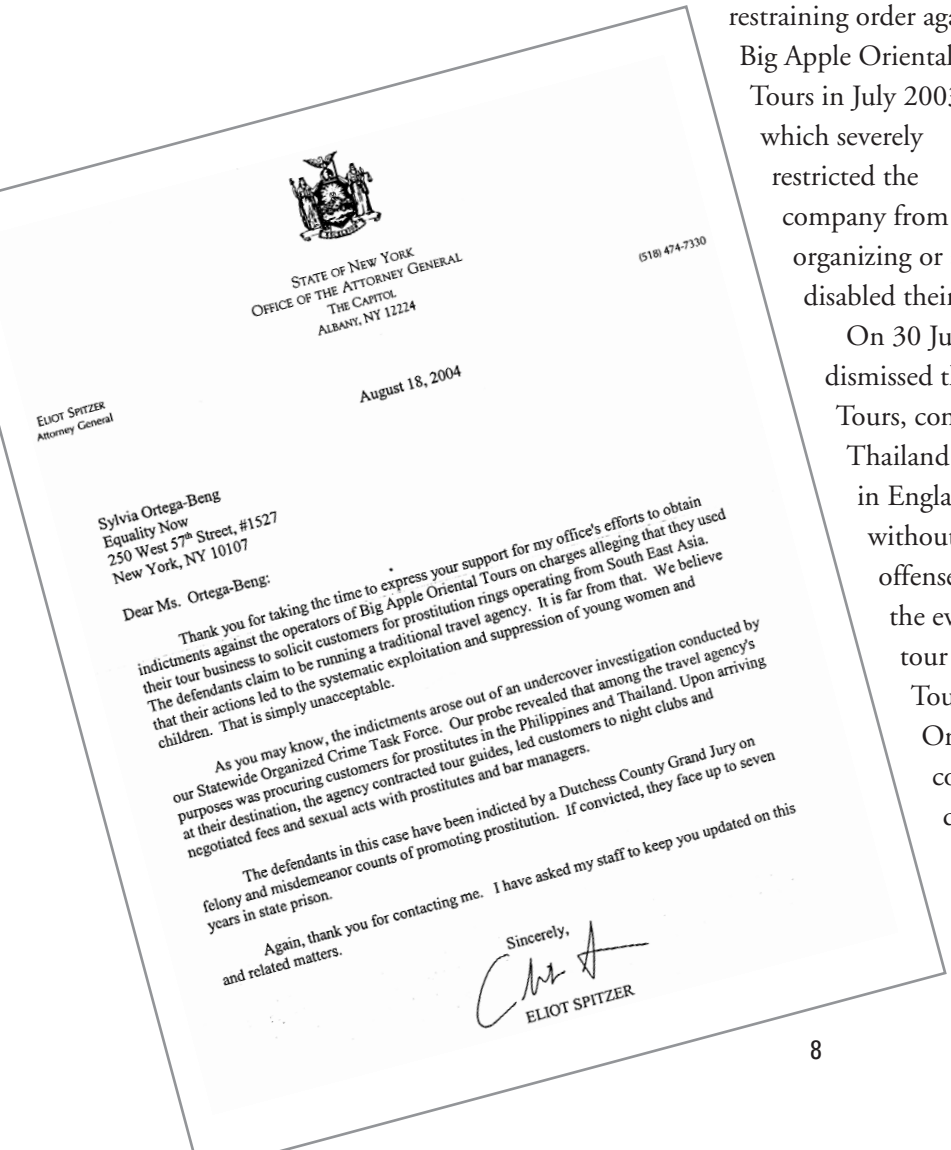
ملخص

في يولية/تموز 2004، شنت المساواة الآن حملة للمطالبة بسن قانون لمكافحة ختان الإناث في مالي. وتسلط نشرة *العمل النسائي* الأضواء على حالة فانتا كاماراء التي أجري لها ختان الإناث في سن الخامسة. وفي أثناء عملية التشويه تعرض حالبها للتلف، وأصيبت من جراء ذلك بسلس البول، وأعيق نموها بفعل الإصابة المتكررة بالأمراض. ويمارس ختان الإناث في جميع أنحاء مالي حيث تبلغ نسبة انتشاره 94 في المائة. وترى المنظمات غير الحكومية أن من الضروري سنّ قانون وطني لمكافحة ختان الإناث حماية لأرواح الاف النساء والفتيات وصحتهن من آثاره الضارة. وتهيب حملة المساواة الآن بحكومة مالي أن تصدر على سبيل الأولوية العاجلة قانوناً لمكافحة ختان الإناث.

Big Apple Oriental Tour Operators Indicted for Promoting Prostitution

On 27 February 2004, following a year-long investigation by the New York State Attorney General, Norman Barabash and Douglas Allen—the owner/operators of Big Apple Oriental Tours—were indicted by a grand jury for promoting prostitution, in violation of Section 230.25 of the Penal Law of the State of New York. This indictment is the culmination of a seven-year campaign by Equality Now to stop the activities of Big Apple Oriental Tours, an agency in New York operating sex tours to the Philippines and Thailand. The criminal indictment follows an unprecedented civil case against Big Apple Oriental Tours initiated by New York State Attorney General Eliot Spitzer, leading to a temporary restraining order against Big Apple Oriental Tours in July 2003, which severely restricted the company from organizing or advertising any future tours and effectively disabled their website.

> "By analogy, if a travel agent advertises or tells prospective customers that Ireland is a good place to play golf, that England is a good place to see castles and Spain is a good place to attend bullfights, that does not mean that the agent is advancing any of those activities. It simply means that the agent is trying to make money by booking tours for customers who are pursuing their own particular interests in the places to which they intend to travel."
>
> **From the decision of Judge Gerald V. Hayes, in which he likens women to tourist attractions**



STATE OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
THE CAPITOL
ALBANY, NY 12224

(518) 474-7330

ELIOT SPITZER
Attorney General

August 18, 2004

Sylvia Ortega-Beng
Equality Now
250 West 57th Street, #1527
New York, NY 10107

Dear Ms. Ortega-Beng:

Thank you for taking the time to express your support for my office's efforts to obtain indictments against the operators of Big Apple Oriental Tours on charges alleging that they used their tour business to solicit customers for prostitution rings operating from South East Asia. The defendants claim to be running a traditional travel agency. It is far from that. We believe that their actions led to the systematic exploitation and suppression of young women and children. That is simply unacceptable.

As you may know, the indictments arose out of an undercover investigation conducted by our Statewide Organized Crime Task Force. Our probe revealed that among the travel agency's purposes was procuring customers for prostitutes in the Philippines and Thailand. Upon arriving at their destination, the agency contracted tour guides, led customers to night clubs and negotiated fees and sexual acts with prostitutes and bar managers.

The defendants in this case have been indicted by a Dutchess County Grand Jury on felony and misdemeanor counts of promoting prostitution. If convicted, they face up to seven years in state prison.

Again, thank you for contacting me. I have asked my staff to keep you updated on this and related matters.

Sincerely,

ELIOT SPITZER

On 30 July 2004, however, Judge Gerald V. Hayes dismissed the indictment against Big Apple Oriental Tours, comparing the promotion of sex tourism in Thailand with the promotion of golf in Ireland, castles in England, or bullfights in Spain as tourist activities, without distinguishing prostitution as a criminal offense, unlike golf or bullfights. Moreover, despite the evidence recounted by the judge himself, that the tour guides were included in the Big Apple Oriental Tours package and that they were paid by Big Apple Oriental Tours, he concluded that there was no competent evidence that the defendants "had any direct connection at all to any such [prostitution] business or enterprise." His decision is currently on appeal.

In 1996, Equality Now launched its Women's Action campaign calling for the

prosecution of Big Apple Oriental Tours, which advertised at the time a twelve-day trip to the Philippines for $2,195, which included transportation, airfare, hotel room and the ability of the sex tourist to "select your companion upon arrival in Angeles City." Big Apple further advertised, "you are not obligated to remain with the same companion. You may select a different companion at any time during your stay." Despite a prolonged letter-writing campaign, direct dialogue and public pressure, the Queens District Attorney failed to bring charges against the owner/operators of Big Apple Oriental Tours. In 2000, Equality Now held a press conference in which Congressional Representative Carolyn Maloney, together with Gloria Steinem, called publicly on the District Attorney to shut down Big Apple Oriental Tours. Subsequently, Equality Now, with support from Gloria Steinem and the New York Women's Agenda—an umbrella federation of women's organizations in New York of which Equality Now is a member—approached New York State Attorney General Eliot Spitzer, who launched his own investigation, which led to the civil injunction in 2003 and the criminal charges brought in 2004 against Norman Barabash and Douglas Allen of Big Apple Oriental Tours.

Sex tourism is a form of exploitation that preys on sex inequality and contributes to the demand for trafficking of women. It is a human rights violation. Big Apple Oriental Tours is not the only operator of sex tours in the U.S., and holding its operators criminally accountable will be an important step in recognition of the need to take action to stop the illegal activities of sex tour companies and address the severe impact they have in promoting violence and discrimination against women around the world.

Equality Now will continue to campaign for the prosecution of Big Apple Oriental Tours and other sex tour operators who profit from the commercial sexual exploitation of women.

SOMMAIRE

Le 27 février 2004, Norman Barabash et Douglas Allen, propriétaire/exploitants de Big Apple Oriental Tours, ont été mis en examen par un jury d'accusation pour promotion de la prostitution en violation des lois de l'Etat de New York. Cette mise en examen est l'aboutissement de sept années d'une campagne conduite par Egalité Maintenant pour faire cesser les activités de la compagnie, qui proposait des séjours de tourisme sexuel aux Philippines et en Thaïlande. Cette action pénale fait suite à une instruction civile menée par le procureur général de l'Etat de New York, Eliot Spitzer, et à l'ordonnance temporaire délivrée en juillet 2003, qui impose des restrictions sévères aux futurs séjours organisés par la compagnie et a désactivé son site Web. Cependant, un juge a rejeté la mise en examen le 30 juillet 2004, et sa décision est actuellement en appel. Egalité Maintenant poursuit sa campagne pour que des poursuites judiciaires soient engagées contre le propriétaire/exploitants de Big Apple Oriental Tours.

RESUMEN

El 27 de febrero de 2004, Norman Barabash y Douglas Allen, el propietario y los operadores de Big Apple Oriental Tours, fueron acusados por un jurado de acusación por promover la prostitución, violando la ley del estado de Nueva York. Dicha acusación fue la culminación de una campaña de siete años por parte de Igualdad Ya para detener las actividades de esta empresa, que organizaba viajes de turismo sexual a Filipinas y Tailandia. La acusación penal se produce tras una causa civil sin precedentes iniciada por el Procurador General del Estado de Nueva York, Eliot Spitzer, que se derivó en una orden de restricción temporal en julio de 2003, la cual restringe severamente la organización o la publicidad de cualquier futuro viaje por parte de la empresa y desactivó eficazmente su sitio Web. Sin embargo, el 30 de julio de 2004, un juez desestimó la acusación penal, decisión que ha sido apelada. Igualdad Ya seguirá haciendo campaña en pro del enjuiciamiento del propietario y los operadores de Big Apple Oriental Tours.

ملخص

في 27 فبراير/شباط 2004، أصدرت هيئة المحلفين الكبرى قرارا بتوجيه الاتهام إلى كل من نورمان باراباش ودوجلاس ألن، وهما مالكا شركة بيج آبل أورينتال تورز للرحلات ومديراها، لقيامهما بالترويج للبغاء في انتهاك لقوانين ولاية نيويورك. ويمثل هذا الاتهام تتويجاً لحملة تشنها المساواة الآن منذ سبعة أعوام لوقف أنشطة هذه الشركة، التي كانت تنظم رحلات للسياحة الجنسية إلى كل من الفلبين وتايلند. ويصدر هذا الاتهام الجنائي في أعقاب قضية مدنية رفعها المحامي العام لولاية نيويورك إليوت سبيتزر، ترتب عليها صدور أمر تقييد مؤقت في يولية/تموز 2003، فرض قيوداً شديدة على قيام الشركة في المستقبل بتنظيم أي رحلات أو الإعلان عنها وأبطل فعلياً موقعها على الويب. غير أن أحد القضاة في 30 يولية/تموز 2004 رفض هذا الاتهام الجنائي. ويجري حالياً الطعن في قراره. وستواصل المساواة الآن حملتها من أجل الملاحقة القضائية لصاحبي/مديري شركة بيج أبل أورينتال تورز.

Legislation Passed in Hawaii to End Sex Tourism

In March 2004, Equality Now launched a Women's Action campaign supporting the passage of legislation criminalizing the activities of sex tour operators in the state of Hawaii. Equality Now called on Hawaii State legislators to support the legislation, noting that sex tourism is a human rights violation and contributes to the trafficking of women and girls. Equality Now also supported passage of the Act by giving written and oral testimony delivered by local group Girl Fest/Safe Zone Foundation at both Hawaii State Senate and House Committee hearings.

On 19 May 2004, in an unprecedented move to combat sex tourism, the Hawaii State legislature passed HB 2020, which the Lt. Governor signed into law as Act 82. The Act makes it a felony offense, with a sentence of up to five years in prison, to sell or offer to sell travel services for the purpose of engaging in prostitution, and it authorizes suspension or revocation of a travel agency registration for engaging in these acts. Hawaii is the first state to specifically criminalize the activities of sex tour operators.

Q: Is it true I could have sex with two girls at the same time?
A: Definitely YES!! That's the difference between spending $75.00 to $150.00, and having a FANTASTIC time!!! You can have as many as you can fit in your room.
From Frequently Asked Questions on Video Travel's Ultimate Asian Sex Tour website

Equality Now issued a Women's Action Update in May 2004 to inform Women's Action Network members of the campaign's success and also to commend the Hawaii state legislature for protecting the rights of women by passing the new law, which recognizes the link between sex tourism and trafficking. It states that:

> *Prostitution and related activities, which are inherently harmful and dehumanizing, contribute to the trafficking in persons, as does sex tourism. The low status of women in many parts of the world has led to a burgeoning of the trafficking industry. Discouraging sex tourism, which is an estimated $1,000,000,000-per-year business worldwide, is key to reducing the demand for sex trafficking…The purpose of this Act is to promote and protect the human rights of women and girls exploited by sex tourists…In so doing, the legislature forcefully declares Hawaii's unequivocal opposition to any form of sex tourism, whether it is child sex tourism or sex tourism involving adults.*

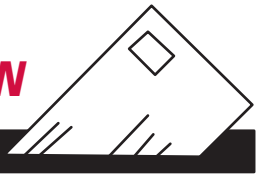
Equality Now's ongoing campaign against sex tourism, and one sex tour operation in Hawaii in particular, inspired the introduction and passage of the new legislation. Video Travel, a sex tour company based in Honolulu, Hawaii, owned by Melvin Hamaguchi, was until very recently operating under license from the Hawaii Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs. Every May and November, Mr. Hamaguchi led sex tourists on his Ultimate Asian Sex Tour to Thailand, which he described as "The Sex Capital of The World!!" For upwards of $2,395 per trip, Mr. Hamaguchi promised to "personally be your guide throughout your stay in Thailand" and provided his customers direct access to women in prostitution. Mr. Hamaguchi's activities constituted promotion of prostitution in violation of Hawaii penal law.

Kathryn Xian, "Non-Executive" Director of Safe Zone Foundation.

In August 2002, Equality Now filed a complaint with the Regulated Industries Complaints Office (RICO) of the State of Hawaii Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs, requesting that Mr. Hamaguchi's travel agency license be revoked on the basis that he was an "unfit person" to hold a license or be registered as a travel agent. No action was taken, but in April 2004 Mr. Hamaguchi agreed to the voluntary revocation of his license on other grounds, thereby forfeiting his ability to operate legally as a travel agent in Hawaii.

Equality Now hopes the passage of Act 82 in Hawaii will inspire state legislation nationwide explicitly mandating the prosecution of sex tour operators.

LETTERS FROM THE CAMPAIGN



Many of these children will end their enforced "careers" in death, either when they are in their twenties and "too old," or when they contract AIDS and are murdered or discarded with no medical care by their pimps or madams...Where men will not constrain themselves, the law needs to do so, to prevent international child abuse of those whose cries are unheard, because unseen.

Sue Liang
Honolulu, Hawaii USA

We express our deepest sorrow in connection with the sex tour operated by persons like Melvin Hamaguchi which encourage prostitution...We appreciate the Hawaii State Legislature for considering legislation which would specifically make the promotion of travel for the purpose of prostitution a felony crime and grounds for denial or revocation of a travel agent's license...The legislation forcefully declares Hawaii's unequivocal opposition to any form of sex tourism, protecting women as well as girls from the harm of prostitution.

Emdadul Haque
Secretary
Murshidabad Samaj Kalyan Samity
Panchnantala, INDIA

I am a Filipino woman who wishes to express interest and support the State of Hawaii's proposed legislation prohibiting sex tourism. I believe that such legislative proposal is critical to addressing the abuses and discrimination being experienced by women all over the world. Asian countries have been the target destinations of sex tourism operators, with Hawaii said to be becoming a hub of these operators. A case in point is that of the Honolulu-based Video Travel owned by Mr. Melvin Hamaguchi...People who engage in this sleazy business do not only insult the honor and dignity of their fellow citizens, they are criminals who prey on the social economic vulnerabilities of women and girls, most of them from the impoverished Asian countries... Please act on the passage of this legislative proposal with urgency and compassion. Thank you.

Irene Daguno
Manila, THE PHILIPPINES

Sex tourism contributes to the trafficking of women and girls and in many cases is a form of sexual slavery. While legal provisions already exist in Hawaii to enable prosecution of sex tour operators like Mr. Hamaguchi, this legislation will make it easier to commence both civil and criminal actions to shut down sex tour operator activity in Hawaii and could serve as a model for future state and federal sex tour legislation. Passage of this proposed legislation would represent an important advance in promoting human rights for women and girls.

Donna Grant
Rochester, NY USA

I feel sickened and disgusted by the way some men portray women in their publications, websites and activities like "sex tours." I am so thankful that there are groups like Equality Now wanting to bring people that promote these tours down. I wrote a song called "women aren't meat" that is available in my mp3 website.

Miguel Rivero
Los Angeles, CA USA

"I wanted to thank you and your organization for your support, particularly in providing testimony, for legislation that resulted in the passage of Act 82. I have received email messages and letters from throughout the world expressing gratitude for Act 82. It's gratifying to know that in some small way we have taken action to stop the victimization of women."
Marilyn Lee
State Representative, Hawaii

SOMMAIRE

En mars 2004, Egalité Maintenant a lancé une campagne appelant les législateurs de l'État de Hawaï à promouvoir une loi réprimant les activités des voyagistes de Hawaï qui proposent des séjours de tourisme sexuel et reconnaissant le tourisme sexuel comme une violation des droits humains contribuant à la traite des femmes et des fillettes. Le projet de loi a été présenté suite aux efforts menés par Egalité Maintenant pour mettre fin aux activités de Video Travel, un opérateur de tourisme sexuel basé à Honolulu. Le 19 mai 2004, le Parlement de Hawaï a voté une loi qui fait de la vente de voyages aux fins de prostitution un crime grave (*felony*), passible d'une peine d'emprisonnement pouvant aller jusqu'à cinq ans, et qui autorise la suspension ou la révocation de la licence d'un voyagiste. Hawaï est le premier Etat à interdire les activités des opérateurs de tourisme sexuel.

RESUMEN

En marzo de 2004, Igualdad Ya lanzó una campaña solicitando a los legisladores del estado de Hawai que apoyen a una legislación que criminalice las actividades de los turoperadores sexuales en ese estado y reconozca el turismo sexual como una violación de los derechos humanos que contribuye al tráfico de mujeres y niñas. Igualdad Ya inspiró a la introducción de dicha legislación con sus esfuerzos para poner fin a las actividades de Video Travel, una empresa de turismo sexual con sede en Honolulu. El 19 de mayo de 2004, el poder legislativo del estado de Hawai aprobó una ley que convierte la venta de servicios de viaje con el fin de contratar servicios de prostitución en un delito grave para el que pueden dictarse sentencias de hasta cinco años de prisión y autoriza la suspensión o revocación de la licencia de una agencia de viajes. Hawai es el primer estado que criminaliza específicamente las actividades de los turoperadores sexuales.

ملخص

في مارس/أذار 2004، شنت المساواة الآن حملة تدعو المشرعين في ولاية هاواي إلى تأييد قانون يجرّم أنشطة منظمي رحلات الجنس في هاواي ويعترف بأن سياحة الجنس تمثل انتهاكاً لحقوق الإنسان يسهم في الاتجار بالنساء والفتيات. واستُلهمت في استحداث هذا التشريع الجهود التي بذلتها المساواة الآن لوقف أنشطة فيديو ترافل، وهي شركة لسياحة الجنس مقرها هونولولو. وفي 19 مايو/أيار 2004، أصدرت الهيئة التشريعية لولاية هاواي قانوناً يجعل من بيع خدمات الرحلات بغرض ممارسة البغاء جناية يعاقب عليها بالسجن لمدة تصل إلى خمس سنوات، ويأذن بوقف أو إلغاء تسجيل وكالات السفر لهذا السبب. وتعدّ هاواي أول ولاية تجرّم أنشطة منظمي رحلات الجنس على وجه التحديد.

Ethiopia: Abduction and Rape

Woineshet Zebene Negash

In March 2002, Equality Now launched a Women's Action campaign against abduction and rape in Ethiopia, highlighting and calling for justice in the case of Woineshet Zebene Negash, a young woman who was abducted, raped and forced into marriage by her abductor. In July 2003, the perpetrator, Aberew Jemma Negussie, was sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment without parole for her abduction and rape, and his four accomplices were each sentenced to 8 years' imprisonment without parole. However, in December 2003, a High Court reversed the decision of the lower court on appeal and released the five perpetrators from prison. Woineshet did not know of the appeal hearing, nor was she given the opportunity to be present. Prosecutor Mr. Asrat Tolcha, who was present, advocated that the guilty verdict be reversed.

The Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association is pursuing a further appeal in the case on Woineshet's behalf, although the defendants have been set free. In November 2004, Equality Now issued a Women's Action Update calling on the authorities to allow the appeal and ensure that the rule of law is appropriately applied. A hearing on the appeal was scheduled for 5 January 2005.

In some regions of Ethiopia, abduction is an old cultural practice used to take a girl as a wife by force. Typically, the girl is abducted by a group of young men. She is then raped by the man who wants to marry her, and the family often then consents to the marriage because a girl who has lost her virginity would be socially unacceptable for marriage to another man. Once married, the man is exempt from punishment for the crimes of abduction and rape. In July 2004, the Ethiopian Parliament adopted a new Penal Code that removes this marital exemption. The new Code will come into force once the final text has been signed into law by the President. Equality Now will continue its campaign until justice is secured in Woineshet's case and the men who were convicted for violating her are held accountable.

Uganda: Exclusion of Women from Land Ownership—The "Lost Clause"

On 18 March 2004, Ugandan President Museveni signed the Land (Amendment) Act into law, giving spouses security of occupancy on family land and the right to reasonably withhold consent on a sale or other transaction that would affect their rights to the family land. In Uganda, women make up 80% of the agricultural labor force, but only 7% of all women own land. In August 2000, Equality Now launched a campaign calling for an amendment to the Ugandan Land Act 1998 that would provide for co-ownership of land between spouses. A similar provision had previously been passed by Parliament but was left out of the final 1998 Act as a consequence of technical revisions. Equality Now's campaign highlighted the case of Mariam Namayanja Kabeere, who was divorced by her husband and who was under threat of eviction from her home of 38 years. The Uganda Land Alliance, Uganda Women Network and other local women's groups, together with Equality Now and members of its Women's Action Network,

lobbied intensively for the reinstatement of the spousal co-ownership clause omitted from the Land Act 1998, known as the "lost clause."

Although the Land (Amendment) Act is an important advance for Ugandan women, security of occupancy falls considerably short of the spousal co-ownership provided for in the "lost clause." Under the current provisions, security of occupancy is dependent on an existing spousal relationship and terminates on divorce or death of the husband. It therefore continues to leave divorced and widowed women and their children particularly vulnerable. Equality Now has called on the Ugandan government to continue with reforms that would ensure the equal rights of men and women in Uganda in land ownership.

Afghanistan: Access to Justice for Women

Three years since the formal end of the war and the removal of the Taliban from power, the situation in Afghanistan continues to threaten the safety, security, and human rights of Afghan citizens, particularly Afghan women. In December 2004, Equality Now issued a Women's Action Update calling for the removal of Fazul Hadi Shinwari, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, for his demonstrated lack of commitment to the right to sex equality. Justice Shinwari has made several attempts to ban women from singing and dancing in public and has stated that a woman cannot travel for more than three days without a *mahram* (a husband or a male relative). He has also stated that adulterers should be stoned to death. During the campaign for the presidential elections in October 2004, Mr. Shinwari attempted to have a candidate removed from the ballot for suggesting that women and men should have equal rights in marriage and divorce. Equality Now's campaign calls on Afghan President Hamid Karzai to ensure the appointment of judges who will uphold all the provisions of Afghanistan's Constitution, including its provision on equality between men and women.

LETTERS FROM THE CAMPAIGN

I know that you believe strongly in basic human rights, including the rights of women. I was therefore very surprised and disturbed to hear that Chief Justice Shinwari and other members of your country's Supreme Court have repeatedly undermined the legal rights of Afghan women... I respectfully urge you to remove Chief Justice Shinwari from office, along with any other justices and judges who have shown similar contempt for women's rights.

David Perry
Carlisle, PA, USA

Response from the Government

As you might be aware, Afghanistan has taken several important steps in restoring gender equality: the new Constitution of Afghanistan offers equal rights to women; the Constitution also mandates that twenty-five percent of the lower House consist of women; in March, 2003, Afghanistan ratified the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW); most recently, President Karzai appointed a nine-member electoral commission, which is comprised of three women. Noting the above achievement and realizing the existing challenges, the government of Afghanistan is fully committed to continue its reform in most of its crucial sectors, including the judicial branch.

Said Tayeb Jawad
Afghan Ambassador to the United States

SOMMAIRE

En décembre 2003, un tribunal a annulé la sentence contre Aberew Jemma Negussie, condamné à 10 ans de prison pour l'enlèvement et le viol de Woineshet Zebene Negash, une affaire mise en exergue par Egalité Maintenant dans le cadre de sa campagne contre le viol et l'enlèvement en Ethiopie. La décision est en appel. Un nouveau Code pénal adopté en juillet 2004 supprime l'exonération dont bénéficiaient les auteurs de ces crimes lorsqu'ils épousaient leur victime. En mars 2004, la nouvelle loi foncière (*Land Amendment Act*) est entrée en vigueur en Ouganda, donnant aux épouses la sécurité d'occupation des terres familiales. Du progrès, mais moins significatif que la propriété conjointe réclamée. En décembre 2004, Egalité Maintenant a publié une mise à jour de sa campagne sur l'Afghanistan, appelant à la révocation du président de la Cour suprême, Fazul Hadi Shinwari, au motif qu'il s'est plusieurs fois exprimé publiquement contre l'égalité des sexes, un droit pourtant inscrit dans la Constitution afghane.

RESUMEN

En diciembre de 2003, un Alto Tribunal revocó la condena de Aberew Jemma Negussie, sentenciado a diez años de prisión por el secuestro y violación de Woineshet Zebene Negash, un caso puesto de relieve en la campaña de Igualdad Ya contra la violación y el secuestro en Etiopía. Actualmente, existe una apelación pendiente. Un nuevo Código Penal aprobado en julio de 2004 deroga la exención marital de la pena por estos delitos. En marzo de 2004, entró en vigor en Uganda la Ley (Enmienda) de la tierra, que concede a los cónyuges la seguridad de ocupación de la tierra familiar, un importante avance, aunque inferior a la copropiedad por la que ha estado luchando Igualdad Ya. En diciembre de 2004, Igualdad Ya publicó una actualización de su campaña sobre Afganistán, que reivindicaba el despido del Presidente del Tribunal Supremo Fazul Hadi Shinwari por su demostrada falta de compromiso con el derecho a la igualdad de sexos, un derecho expuesto en la Constitución afgana.

ملخص

في ديسمبر/كانون الأول 2003، ألغت إحدى المحاكم العليا قرار إدانة أبيريو جيما نيجوسي، الذي حُكم عليه بالسجن لمدة 10 سنوات لقيامه باختطاف وانيشيت زيبيني نيجاش واغتصابها، وهي قضية سُلطت عليها الأضواء في حملة المساواة الآن لمكافحة الاغتصاب والاختطاف في إثيوبيا. ولم يتم البت بعد في الاستئناف المقدم لقرار المحكمة. ويلغي قانون جديد للعقوبات اعتُمد في يولية/تموز 2004 الاستثناء من العقوبة على هذه الجرائم في حالة الزواج. وفي مارس/أذار 2004، بدأ نفاذ (تعديل) قانون الأرض في أوغندا، بما يعطي الزوجين حق الحيازة للأرض المملوكة للأسرة، الأمر الذي يمثل تقدماً هاماً ولكنه يقل عن اشتراك الزوجين في الملكية على النحو الذي تدعو إليه المساواة الآن. وفي ديسمبر/كانون الأول 2004، أصدرت المساواة الآن ملحقاً في حملتها بشأن أفغانستان، تطالب فيه بفصل قاضي المحكمة العليا فضل هادي شينواري من منصبه لما أظهره من عدم الالتزام بحق المساواة بين الجنسين، وهو من الحقوق المنصوص عليها في دستور أفغانستان.

The Struggle for Women's Suffrage in Kuwait

In January 2001 Equality Now launched a Women's Action campaign calling on the Government of Kuwait to grant women the right to vote and stand for election. Kuwait was the one remaining country in the world where only men have the right to vote. The last legislative proposal put to a vote on the issue of women's suffrage, in 1999, was defeated by a narrow margin of 32-30. In October 2003, the Kuwaiti government presented a bill to Parliament that would allow women to vote in municipal elections only. As of year end, this bill was pending. Equality Now continues to campaign for the equal right of women to vote in all elections and stand for election to public office in Kuwait.

Enforcement of the Law Against Female Genital Mutilation in Tanzania

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is prohibited by law in Tanzania, but the law is not effectively enforced and the practice openly continues. In June 2001 Equality Now launched a Women's Action campaign calling on the Tanzanian government to take more effective steps to end the practice of FGM through education as well as enforcement of the law. The action highlights the case of three sisters, aged 13 and 14 at the time, who ran away from their father in a desperate effort to save themselves from the practice of FGM. Rather than protect the girls, the police turned the girls over to their father, who had them circumcised the next day and married within a month, one as a third wife. The Women's Action campaign calls on the authorities to hold circumcisers accountable for breaking the law and to investigate and bring appropriate disciplinary action against the policemen involved in this incident. In May 2004, Equality Now convened a meeting of

Tanzanian Police Commissioner Laurean Tibasana, Coordinator of Women Wake-Up Fatma Towif, and Equality Now Africa Regional Director Faiza Jama Mohamed.

national NGOs in Tanzania to discuss the government's failure to enforce the 1998 law against FGM and strategize on efforts to end FGM. Recognition emerged from the meeting of the value of collective action and the strength in working collaboratively, and the Tanzanian NGO activists formed a national coalition to intensify the campaign against FGM and to call collectively on the government to play a greater role in the eradication of FGM. Equality Now continues to call for enforcement of the law against FGM in Tanzania.

The Role of the U.S. Military in the Growth of the Commercial Sex Industry

In June 2003, Equality Now launched a Women's Action campaign calling on the United States government to institute and strictly enforce a zero-tolerance policy prohibiting the commercial sexual exploitation of women by U.S. military forces around the world, highlighting the situation in South Korea. In 2002, Fox Television broadcast an undercover investigative report documenting the participation of U.S. military forces stationed in South Korea in the commercial sex industry. The report highlighted the role of U.S. military "Courtesy Patrol" officers stationed in bars near the base to ensure safe access of troops to local brothels. These officers acknowledged on hidden camera that most of the women in these brothels were trafficked from Russia and the Philippines, that their passports had been taken from them, and that they were not free to leave.

Following an exchange of correspondence with Equality Now and its Women's Action Network, in September 2004 the Department of Defense Joint Service Committee on Military Justice published a proposed change to the Manual for Courts-Martial, amending its interpretation of Article 134 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice to specifically prohibit solicitation of prostitution. Equality Now submitted comments in support of the proposed amendment. If adopted, it is expected to come into force in 2005. Local organizations in South Korea are actively campaigning against the commercial sex industry and addressing the needs of women in prostitution for rehabilitation and alternative income. In September 2004, new anti-prostitution legislation came into force in South Korea, more than doubling the penalties for brothel owners who confine women and force them into prostitution.

Accountability for War Crimes in the Former Yugoslavia

Equality Now continues to campaign for the arrest of Radovan Karadzic, leader of the Bosnian Serbs, and Ratko Mladic, commander of the Bosnian Serb army, both of whom were indicted by the ICTY in 1995 for genocide and crimes against humanity, including rape and sexual assault. ICTY Prosecutor Carla Del Ponte has increased public pressure on Serbian authorities to facilitate these arrests, and the United States Senate has also put pressure on Serbian authorities through its discussion of conditionality for financial aid to Serbia. Nevertheless, searches for Karadzic and Mladic continue to be unsuccessful. Equality Now has been campaigning for the arrest and prosecution of war criminals in the former Yugoslavia since 1993.

SOMMAIRE

Egalité Maintenant continue de réclamer le droit de vote pour les femmes du Koweït. Un projet de loi a été présenté au Parlement koweïtien, qui autoriserait les femmes à voter uniquement lors des élections municipales. Egalité Maintenant poursuit sa campagne pour mise en application d'une loi contre les MGF en Tanzanie et a organisé en mai 2004 une réunion d'organisations nationales en vue de créer une coalition contre les MGF. Egalité Maintenant appelle encore et toujours le gouvernement des Etats-Unis à instaurer une politique interdisant l'exploitation sexuelle commerciale des femmes par le personnel militaire américain autour du monde. En septembre 2004, le ministère de la Défense a publié un projet d'amendement à sa réglementation visant à l'interdiction d'appel à des services de prostitution. Egalité Maintenant continue de militer pour l'arrestation de Radovan Karadzic et Ratko Mladic, tous deux inculpés en 1995 pour génocide et crimes contre l'humanité, y compris pour viol et agression sexuelle.

RESUMEN

Igualdad Ya sigue haciendo campaña por el sufragio femenino en Kuwait, donde se encuentra un proyecto de ley en el Parlamento que permitiría a la mujer votar únicamente en las elecciones municipales. Igualdad Ya sigue exigiendo la aplicación de la ley contra la MGF en Tanzania y convocó una reunión en mayo de 2004, facilitando la formación de una coalición de organizaciones nacionales para trabajar colectivamente para erradicar la MGF. Igualdad Ya sigue exigiendo al gobierno de Estados Unidos que instituya una política que prohíba la explotación sexual comercial de la mujer por parte de las fuerzas militares estadounidenses en todo el mundo. En septiembre de 2004, el Ministerio de Defensa publicó una propuesta de enmienda a sus regulaciones para prohibir específicamente la incitación a la prostitución. Igualdad Ya sigue haciendo campaña para que se detenga a Radovan Karadzic y Ratko Mladic, ambos procesados en 1995 por genocidio y crímenes de lesa humanidad, incluida la violación y la agresión sexual.

ملخص

تواصل المساواة الآن حملتها من أجل تمتع المرأة بحق التصويت في الكويت، حيث قدم مشروع قانون إلى البرلمان ما زال ينتظر البت فيه ويقتصر على السماح للمرأة بالتصويت في الانتخابات البلدية فحسب. كما تواصل المساواة الآن شن حملة لإنفاذ قانون مكافحة ختان الإناث في تنزانيا وعقدت في مايو/أيار 2004 اجتماعاً مهّد الطريق أمام تكوين ائتلاف من المنظمات الوطنية للعمل بشكل جماعي من أجل القضاء على ختان الإناث. وتواصل المساواة الآن دعوتها حكومة الولايات المتحدة إلى اعتماد سياسة تحظر الاستغلال الجنسي التجاري للمرأة من قبل القوات العسكرية التابعة للولايات المتحدة في أنحاء العالم. وفي سبتمبر/أيلول 2004، نشرت وزارة الدفاع تعديلاً مقترحاً للوائحها يحظر تحديداً التحريض على البغاء. وتواصل المساواة الآن حملتها للقبض على رادوفان كارادجيتش وراتكو ملاديتش، وكلاهما وجه إليه الاتهام في عام 1995 بارتكاب جريمة الإبادة الجماعية وجرائم ضد الإنسانية، بما في ذلك الاغتصاب والاعتداء الجنسي.

Fund for Grassroots Activism to End FGM

The 2004 meeting of Equality Now's Fund for Grassroots Activism to End FGM (FGM Fund) brought together nine former circumcisers from six African countries, the first international gathering of former circumcisers. At this historic event, women from Djibouti, Gambia, Guinea-Conakry, Kenya, Mali, and Tanzania shared with each other and with the FGM Fund grantees their experiences of transformation from circumcisers into activists now working to end the harmful practice of FGM. The grassroots organizations from ten African countries who participated in the meeting stressed the need for laws against FGM in countries that still do not have such laws and the need for effective law enforcement where anti-FGM laws exist. In reviewing the progress of the campaign against FGM to date, the FGM Fund grantees noted that over the years the work of non-governmental organizations had steadily increased public awareness of the dangers of FGM, and that many more people, women and men, are now speaking out against the practice. Concern over lack of resources was expressed, and the grantees urged Equality Now to help them secure multi-year funding to facilitate more long-term strategic planning.

Testimony from Former Circumcisers

Introduction by Efua Dorkenoo: In June 2004, I had the opportunity to attend the third annual meeting of the Fund for Grassroots Activism to End Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), which was hosted by Equality Now in Nairobi, Kenya. This meeting was unique in that it added a new perspective to the FGM campaign as nine former traditional female genital excisors from six African countries joined the FGM Fund grantees to share their experiences in their journey from "laying down their knives" into becoming anti-FGM activists. The testimonies of the ex-traditional excisors confirm my beliefs that they too are victims of society.

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Genital mutilation

By Tina Rosenberg

Africa's daughters

Mariam Bagayoko was a powerful and respected person in Bamako, the capital of Mali. Now she is shunned and criticized by many of her neighbors. Bagayoko used to perform what the West has come to know as female genital mutilation, a practice inflicted on more than 90 percent of girls in Mali.

In 1988, she began to get visits, sometimes twice a week, from Kadidia Sidibe, the director of a Bamako women's group opposed to the practice. At first, Bagayoko hid when her visitor approached. But after seven years, Sidibe's photos and videos of mutilated girls with serious health problems finally persuaded her to stop.

Today she runs a group of former circumcisers, as they are called in

Even in some places where it is illegal, medical personnel perform circumcisions in government hospitals. The only solution is to change attitudes on the village level, and that's where people like Bagayoko come in. About 15 percent of those who undergo genital mutilation, mainly women in the Horn of Africa, suffer the most dangerous version, infibulation.

Isnino Shuriye, who was also at the Nairobi meeting, performed infibulations among the Somali community in northern Kenya. She would cut off the clitoris and all the labia of 7-year-old girls. She would sew up the girls to be totally smooth, with a pencil eraser-sized opening for menses and urine. Each girl's legs were bound together for weeks so scars could form. Shuriye used no anesthetic.

All types of female circumcision have huge psychological and physical dangers. Some girls bleed to death during the operation, or die shortly after. But for infibulated women, the dangers are even greater. Many infibulated women suffer constant infections and other health problems because urine and blood back up. Their husbands must bring a knife to their wedding night to cut them open. Childbirth often is fatal for infibulated women and their babies, and

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Late Edition

Genital Cutting Shows Signs of Losing Favor in Africa

By MARK LACEY

NAIROBI, Kenya, June 7 — Isnino Shuriye still remembers the pride she felt years ago when she leaned over each of her three daughters, knife in hand, and sliced into their genitals.

Each time, as the blood started to flow, she quickly dropped the knife and picked up a needle and thread. Quickly, expertly, she sewed her daughters' vaginas almost shut.

"I was full of pride," she recalled recently. "I felt like I was doing the right thing in the eyes of God. I was preparing them for marriage by sealing their vaginas."

Now she feels like a butcher, a sinner, a mother who harmed her own flesh and blood, not to mention the thousands of other girls she says she circumcised in the last quarter-century as part of a traditional rite still common in Africa.

Slowly, genital cutting is losing favor. Parliaments are passing laws forbidding the practice, which causes widespread death and disfigurement. Girls are fleeing their homes to keep their vaginas intact.

nity and earned a good income, more than her husband did as a camel herder before he died of tuberculosis.

She said she had no use for those people who came around denouncing her way of life.

But the opponents were a determined lot. They knew that Ms. Shuriye was one of the longest-serving genital cutters around and that she held sway over the community. If only she could be converted, they figured, others would certainly follow.

Ms. Shuriye, a frail but feisty grandmother who wraps her head in colorful scarves, was rather set in her ways. Again and again she refused to hear their arguments.

"It was so difficult to change her mind," said Sophia Abdi Noor, the founder of Womankind Kenya, which works with the ethnic Somalis who live in Kenya's rugged North Eastern Province and has attracted local supporters throughout the region. "We knew she was respected, and we wanted her on our side."

Finally, the anti-cutting advocates tried a different tack. They

had cut.

That is when Ms. Shuriye turned from a cutter to an active opponent. She began making house calls on the girls who had gone under her knife. Many of them were women now. She explained her conversion and pleaded for their forgiveness. She cried each time, she said.

Most offered their blessings. A few saw opportunity in Ms. Shuriye's suffering and demanded the camels, which she did not have. And Ms. Shuriye was able to persuade a small number of the women in her tiny village of Ijara to join the cause.

Laws are not enough to stop the

A woman who cut her daughters is now a foe of the practice.

cutting. People in the community denounce her to her face, she said. Imams who still endorse genital cutting smear her name in some mosques.

With Ms. Shuriye's help, Womankind Kenya has managed to persuade 12 other genital cutters to denounce the practice. Of those, only about half are regarded as committed opponents. "Some of them, we suspect, are doing it in secret," said Ms. Abdi Noor, who has yet to persuade her own mother to give up cutting. "We hear rumors about them."

But everybody knows where Ms. Shuriye now stands. She is so vocal that she was recently invited here to the Kenyan capital for an international conference for reformed genital cutters organized by Equality Now, an international women's rights group based in New York. There were cutters from Tanzania Somalia, Mali and Guinea, among other places.

Mariam Bagayoko, Mali (invited by AMSOPT): At twenty-five, I began assisting other traditional excisors in Bamako, the capital city of Mali. I am a descendant of a long line of circumcisers, and there is a familial obligation to join the practice. My aunt taught me how to excise. Aside from family obligations, I had my own motivations for joining the practice; the secrecy of the ritual stimulated my curiosity. At thirty, I began doing the cutting. I would cut off part of the clitoris. The girls I would cut were between seven and forty days old. The first time I heard criticism of FGM was when I had a friend visiting from France. She noticed that my daughter would scream when she urinated. When I explained that this was because she was circumcised, my friend was shocked. I had always thought that the harms of circumcision were a result of evil spirits. It was not until that moment that I thought to question the practice. Through discourse, films and consulting doctors, I came to realize that the harms of FGM were not the result of evil spirits, but were a consequence of the procedure itself. I remembered the hemorrhages, tetanus and difficulty in childbirth that I witnessed in my own daughters. After twenty-five years of performing circumcisions, I stopped. My colleagues and I stopped as a group. To compensate for our loss in income, we have started an association that makes soap and dyes clothing to earn money. We sensitize customers on the harms of FGM.

Agnes Pareyio, Director of the Tasaru Ntomonok Initiative, speaking with a reporter during the 2004 meeting of Equality Now's Fund for Grassroots Activism to End FGM.

Isnino Shuriye, Kenya (invited by Womankind): I began helping my mother in circumcisions at a young age, and when she passed away I took over the job. I was a very famous person in the district as I was the most influential circumciser. I made a lot of money. Womankind used to come to my house and tried to tell me about the social and health effects of FGM. They very much wanted to convince me because they knew I was the most influential circumciser in the region. They came four times to my house and each time I chased them off of my property. Then Womankind brought fifteen clerics to my house. They have authority in our society and our religion, so I couldn't turn them away. The clerics told me that cutting off a woman's genitals is just as bad as cutting off any other body part, like a finger or an arm. I was supposed to pay eighty camels to each girl that I circumcised. I've circumcised so many girls and I knew that I couldn't pay that amount. I asked if there was anything else I could do for God to forgive my sins and they said that I must go to each girl that I circumcised and ask for forgiveness. And if the girls were no longer alive I must ask for forgiveness from God. I have not touched a girl in two years. Women still come to my house to have their daughters circumcised but now I chase them off of my property.

SOMMAIRE

La réunion 2004 du Fonds d'aide aux organisations activistes locales luttant pour mettre fin aux MGF (Fonds anti-MGF), créé par Egalité Maintenant, a rassemblé pour la première fois dans le monde neuf anciennes exciseuses de six pays africains. Lors de cet événement historique, ces femmes ont échangé leurs expériences et relaté aux bénéficiaires du Fonds leur parcours d'exciseuses converties en militantes anti-MGF. Les organisations locales de dix pays africains présentes à la réunion ont souligné la nécessité de promulguer des lois interdisant les MGF dans les pays qui n'en disposent pas encore, et de faire appliquer effectivement ces lois là où elles existent. Les bénéficiaires ont constaté que, grâce au travail réalisé par les organisations non gouvernementales, le public est mieux informé des dangers des MGF, et qu'aujourd'hui beaucoup plus de gens s'expriment ouvertement contre cette pratique.

RESUMEN

La reunión de 2004 del Fondo para el Activismo de Base para Poner Fin a la MGF (Fondo MGF) de Igualdad Ya convocó a nueve ex circuncidadoras de seis países africanos, el primer encuentro internacional de ex circuncidadoras. En este histórico acontecimiento, las mujeres compartieron entre sí y con los donatarios del Fondo MGF sus experiencias de transformación de circuncidadoras en activistas que actualmente trabajan para poner fin a la dañina práctica de la MGF. Las organizaciones de base de diez países africanos que participaron en la reunión hicieron hincapié en la necesidad de leyes contra la MGF en países que siguen sin contar con una legislación de ese tipo y la necesidad de una aplicación eficaz de la misma donde tal legislación sí existe. Los donatarios observaron que la labor de las organizaciones no gubernamentales había incrementado la concienciación pública sobre los peligros de la MGF y que actualmente hay mucha más gente hablando en contra de tal práctica.

ملخص

ضم الاجتماع الذي عقده في عام 2004 صندوق المساواة الآن للنشطاء من القاعدة الشعبية للقضاء على ختان الإناث (صندوق ختان الإناث) تسع خاتنات سابقات تنحدرن من ستة بلدان أفريقية، وذلك في أول تجمع دولي للخاتنات السابقات. وفي هذا الحدث التاريخي، تبادلت النساء مع بعضهن البعض ومع الحاصلات على منح صندوق ختان الإناث تجاربهن بشأن التحول من خاتنات إلى ناشطات تعملن الآن من أجل القضاء على ممارسة الختان الضارة. وشددت المنظمات الشعبية التي شاركت في الاجتماع من عشرة بلدان أفريقية على ضرورة سن قوانين لمكافحة ختان الإناث في البلدان التي تخلو من هذه القوانين، وضرورة الفعالية في إنفاذ قوانين مناهضة ختان الإناث حيثما توجد. وأشارت الحاصلات على منح الصندوق إلى أن الأعمال التي تقوم بها المنظمات غير الحكومية قد أذكت الوعي العام بأخطار ختان الإناث، وإلى أن زيادة كبيرة قد طرأت على عدد الأشخاص الذين يجاهرون الآن بانتقاد هذه الممارسة.

2004 GRANTEES OF THE FUND FOR GRASSROOTS ACTIVISM TO END FGM

DJIBOUTI

■ *Union Nationale des Femmes Djiboutiennes.* UNFD aims to sensitize the Djibouti population, especially those living in rural areas, on the dangers of FGM. UNFD instructs trainers who then educate the rest of the community. UNFD imparts skills to ex-circumcisers and engages in literacy enhancement activities as a means of fighting FGM, noting that ignorance greatly contributes to the continuation of the practice. UNFD also works with and trains youth to reach out to their peer group with messages to end the practice.

EGYPT

■ *Centre for Egyptian Women's Legal Assistance Foundation.* CEWLA aims to develop and promote the concept of legal and judicial assistance for women by advocating for the elimination of all discriminatory laws against women. CEWLA also works to provide women with different skills through legal, social and literacy classes to enable them to participate more fully in society. CEWLA disseminates anti-FGM messages through the use of art and plays.

ERITREA

■ *National Union of Eritrean Youth and Students.* The targets of NUEYS' program are high school students in the Gash Barka region. The program aims to strengthen the capacity of anti-FGM clubs to address the problem of FGM and other harmful practices through drama and puppetry shows. The clubs are trained on the dangers of FGM, and use ongoing activities such as sports and tutorial classes to attract more members.

ETHIOPIA

■ *Hundee Oromo Grassroots Development Initiative.* Hundee's project aims to contribute to the national efforts to eliminate harmful traditional practices. The issue of FGM is addressed through joint workshops and community conferences where the root causes of the practice are discussed. This process culminated in the establishment of new rules under traditional law banning harmful and obsolete traditional practices including FGM.

THE GAMBIA

■ *The Gambia Committee on Traditional Practices.* Working to create awareness on harmful traditional practices in The Gambia, GAMCOTRAP develops booklets, leaflets and stickers on FGM, as well as messages for radio broadcast and for use in interpersonal communication. Training programs are conducted to enhance the local capacity to end FGM with a focus on health workers. GAMCOTRAP also works with fathers' clubs to advocate against FGM at the village level.

GHANA

■ *Ghanaian Association for Women's Welfare.* GAWW works to create awareness on harmful traditional practices and their effects on the health of women and children. GAWW also educates the public and especially women on the effects of harmful traditional practices and reports cases of FGM to the authorities so that offenders are brought to justice.

GUINEA

■ *Cellule de Coordination sur les Pratiques Traditionnelles Affectant la Santé des Femmes et des Enfants.* Building upon its media outreach strategy,

Former circumcisers participating in the meeting of the Fund for Grassroots Activism to End FGM.

CPTAFE creates awareness on the negative effects of harmful traditional practices. CPTAFE targets the school children and youth and organizes competitions around the theme of FGM. The group also manages an FGM help line.

KENYA

■ *Tasaru Ntomonok Initiative.* TNI is engaged in community awareness-raising against FGM using workshops and seminars for community leaders, circumcisers, youth, and women to inform them about the dangers of FGM. TNI also provides shelter and safety to girls who have escaped their families to avoid FGM. TNI integrates the concept of Alternative Rites of Passage in response to the cultural dimension of the practice of FGM where girls still undergo the training required by culture but do not get cut. TNI also worked on the passage of the Children Act 2001 that specifically prohibits FGM.

■ *Marakwet Girls And Women Project* . Marakwet Girls and Women Project aims to contribute to the elimination of FGM and early marriages in the Marakwet community. Its other objectives are to sensitize the various stakeholders on the problem of FGM and to build their capacity in fighting FGM.

■ *Rural Women Peace Link.* RWPL works at bridging diversities on the issue of FGM and to this end, held a meeting between the parents and 23 girls that had run away from home to escape FGM with a view to reconciling the parties.

■ *Womankind Kenya.* Womankind Kenya focuses on community empowerment and uses theatre groups and role modeling by the girls from Umulkheir Rescue Centre in its awareness campaigns against FGM. Womankind also uses community mobilization for anti-FGM forums and campaigns, and organizes district workshops for community leaders, religious leaders and women group leaders.

MALI

■ *Association Malienne pour le Suivi et l'Orientation des Pratiques Traditionnelles.* AMSOPT began work with Parliamentarians in order to complement awareness creation at the community level, to safeguard the community laws already passed and to consolidate the efforts towards the passing of an anti-FGM law in Mali. AMSOPT continues with awareness-raising activities amongst the circumcisers and involves them in the alternative income-generating activities.

■ *Association pour le Progrès et la Défense des Droits des Femmes.* APDF raises awareness through community-based committees in Koulikoro, Kolokani and Dioila. The committees ensure adherence to the resolutions made at sensitization forums, intended to lead to the total abandonment of FGM. The resolutions promote community involvement, advocacy initiatives for an anti-FGM law, alternative sources of income for circumcisers, and the involvement of media and religious leaders in the fight against FGM.

SENEGAL

■ *TOSTAN.* TOSTAN provides human rights education, life skills and models of social development in various communities. Programs include Community Management Committees, enrollment of girls in schools, and providing information on reproductive health. As a result of increased awareness, many villages have committed to total abandonment of the practice of FGC.

SOMALIA

■ *Galkayo Education Centre for Peace and Development.* GECPD aims to strengthen women's capacity to seek, defend and advocate for their fundamental rights, and to promote education for girls, women and the community at large for social reconstruction and the peaceful rebuilding of Somalia. GECPD held an FGM Special Program that ran for 6 months training young girls on what FGM is, how it started and its effects on women's health. GECPD also trains women for outreach work on FGM and the effects of domestic violence, trains participants on health education and holds workshops to facilitate gender dialogue. They also hold seminars for senior women on the effects of FGM.

■ *Women Inter Action Group.* WIAG works to mobilize women to take part in the rehabilitation and development of Somaliland, and targeting women and girls as those most affected by FGM, engages traditional birth attendants through awareness creation, training and group discussions. WIAG identifies core groups from the community for training in advocacy against FGM, provides networking facilitation for them, and monitors their progress in spreading messages against FGM.

SUDAN

■ *AZZA Women Association.* The work of AWA targets poor women with a view to empowering them to improve their situation. AWA undertakes campaigns, workshops and social mobilization on the dangers of FGM in order to create awareness about the harmful effects of the practice.

TANZANIA

■ *Legal and Human Rights Centre.* Following the acquittal of a father who forcibly had his three daughters circumcised, LHRC has continued to sensitize law enforcement officers on the provisions of the Sexual Offences Special Provision Act 1998, as well as the dangers of FGM. LHRC has also involved the media so as to enlarge its reach on the dangers of FGM.

■ *Network Against Female Genital Mutilation.* NAFGEM continues to educate and sensitize at least 50 girls and boys in every school in the Kilimanjaro region of Tanzania in its aim to empower as many children as possible to say NO to FGM. NAFGEM provides space for children to express opposition to FGM and to present their ideas on FGM during demonstrations. NAFGEM encourages schools to sustain children's interest in the campaign.

Awaken: A Voice for the Eradication of FGM

Awaken was created by Equality Now in 1997 to support organizations and individual activists working to end female genital mutilation (FGM). The publication is a forum for information and discussion to promote better understanding and a more effective strategy for the eradication of this harmful traditional practice. *Awaken* is published in English, Arabic and French to promote its accessibility to grassroots activists in communities where FGM is practiced, and it is distributed free of charge to groups and individuals in these communities. Equality Now continually receives letters from groups working in practicing communities, in which they indicate the usefulness of *Awaken* and express their gratitude for the publication.

News highlighted in Awaken *in 2004*

Burkina Faso : The initial reports released by the National Committee to Combat the Practice of Circumcision (CNLPE), reflect that FGM is now almost non-existent in some parts of Burkina Faso. In Sanguie province, the prevalence rate has fallen from 51% to just 1%. In Ziro province, the prevalence rate has fallen from 77% to 2%, and in Mohoun from 75.2% to 3.1%.

Ethiopia: Following a sensitization program, some 350 circumcisers in the Gonder region decided to stop performing [FGM]. They will be supported with loans to create other means of livelihood for themselves.

France: Acclaimed Senegalese film director Ousmane Sembene is using film as a medium to promote the eradication of FGM in the recently released "Moolade." Sembene predicts and hopes that "Moolade" will stir debate in Africa. "I make militant films," he said, "and this one will serve as a basis to bring men and women together to talk." Sembene will travel by truck through the countrysides of Mali, Senegal, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast and Guinea-Bissau to bring "Moolade" to remote village communities. The first ladies of Senegal, Burkina Faso and Mali are planning to make official presentations of the film.

Ghana: A court in Bawku East district sent Abampoaka Mbawini, a 70-year-old native of Yelogu, to jail for five years. Her crime was the genital mutilation of seven girls in Yelogu. The police reported that a tip-off that Mbawini was performing FGM took them to the house of one of the girls she had cut, a 16-year-old. Judge Jacob Boon gave her a five-year jail sentence despite her elderly age. He said the sentence should deter other practitioners from performing the outmoded custom and that the law would not deal leniently with perpetrators.

USA: Motivated by the circumcision of a local 2-year-old allegedly by her Ethiopian father, who has since been charged with cruelty to children, senators in the State of Georgia proposed legislation that would have made FGM a crime punishable by up to 20 years' imprisonment. State representatives infuriated the Bill's original sponsors, however, when they added an amendment at the last minute to ban genital piercing, which would apply only to women, and not men.

SOMMAIRE

En 2004, le Fonds anti-MGF d'aide aux organisations activistes locales a accordé des subventions à 19 organisations de 13 pays–Djibouti, Egypte, Erythrée, Ethiopie, Gambie, Ghana, Guinée-Conakry, Kenya, Mali, Sénégal, Somalie/Somaliland, Soudan et Tanzanie. Les projets menés par ces organisations vont des ateliers d'information des populations locales et des programmes de radio, aux clubs scolaires pour les jeunes et aux foyers d'accueil pour les jeunes filles tentant d'échapper aux MGF. *L'Eveil* est une publication créée en 1997 par Egalité Maintenant pour servir de forum aux organisations et aux activistes isolés qui œuvrent pour l'éradication des MGF. Elle propose des informations et des débats destinés à mieux faire comprendre les enjeux de cette campagne et améliorer les stratégies employées. On y trouve des articles présentant des actions prises, des nouvelles du monde entier, ainsi qu'une liste de sources d'information concernant les MGF. Des extraits de *L'Eveil,* publié en anglais, arabe et français, sont présentés sur cette page.

RESUMEN

En 2004, el Fondo para el Activismo de Base para Poner Fin a la MGF concedió subvenciones a 19 organizaciones de 13 países (Djibouti, Egipto, Eritrea, Etiopía, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Conakry, Kenia, Mali, Senegal, Somalia/Somaliland, Sudán y Tanzania). Los proyectos de los donatarios iban de los talleres educativos para la comunidad y los programas de radio a los clubs escolares para jóvenes y los refugios para niñas que quieren huir de MGF. *Awaken* (Despertar) es una publicación creada en 1997 por Igualdad Ya como foro para las organizaciones y los activistas individuales que trabajan para poner fin a la MGF, brindando información y discusión para promover un mejor entendimiento y una estrategia más efectiva para la erradicación de la MGF. Contiene artículos de fondo que resaltan el activismo, noticias de alrededor del mundo relacionadas con la MGF, y un listado de recursos. En esta página, hay fragmentos de *Awaken,* que se publica en inglés, árabe y francés.

ملخص

في عام 2004، قدم صندوق النشطاء من القاعدة الشعبية للقضاء على ختان الإناث منحاً لـ 19 منظمة في 13 بلداً، هي إثيوبيا وإريتريا وتنزانيا وجيبوتي والسنغال والسودان والصومال/صوماليلاند وغامبيا وغانا وغينيا-كوناكري وكينيا ومالي ومصر. وتراوحت مشاريع الحاصلات على المنح بين عقد حلقات العمل التثقيفية للمجتمع المحلي وتقديم البرامج الإذاعية للأندية المدرسية للشباب وإيجاد ملاجئ لإيواء الفتيات اللواتي تحاولن الهرب من الختان. وقد أصدرت المساواة الآن في عام 1997 نشرة هي *اليقظة* لتكون بمثابة محفل للعاملين على وقف ختان الإناث من المنظمات وفرادى النشطاء، يوفر لهم المعلومات ويفسح مجال المناقشة تعزيزاً لفهم أفضل وللأخذ باستراتيجية أكثر فعالية لاستئصال شأفة ختان الإناث. وهي تشمل مقالات رئيسية لإبراز أعمال النشطاء، وأنباء من أنحاء العالم فيما يتعلق بختان الإناث، وقائمة بالموارد المتاحة. وترد في هذه الصفحة مقتطفات من *اليقظة*، وهي تنشر بالإنجليزية والعربية والفرنسية.

Using Law to Promote Sex Equality

Banner from Mexico saying "No more violence against women."

The Lawyers' Alliance for Women (LAW) Project was established in 2001, following Equality Now's international meeting of women lawyers, in an effort to bring together theoretical concepts and practical realities, and to strategize innovative ways of using the law to promote sex equality.

Abduction, Rape and Murder of Women in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico

In 2004, the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (the CEDAW Committee) issued a report on its inquiry into the pattern of abduction, rape and murder of women in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico. The CEDAW Committee undertook the inquiry based on a formal request submitted in October 2002 by Equality Now's LAW Project and Casa Amiga, a rape crisis center in Ciudad Juárez that has been documenting and protesting this violence and the failure of the Mexican Government to address it effectively. The Mexican Commission for the Defense and Promotion of Human Rights subsequently joined as a co-petitioner in this initiative.

Over 300 women have been murdered in or near Ciudad Juárez in the past ten years. More than 300 women have disappeared and remain missing. Many of the women killed were abducted, raped, and tortured. Concern exists that although some official steps have been taken to investigate some of the murders, these investigations have not led to credible arrests, prosecutions and convictions. There have also been disturbing signs that suggest in some cases that officials may be actively obstructing efforts to bring the perpetrators to justice or may even be complicit in the commission of these crimes. There is evidence that suspects have been framed and tortured into making false confessions. The CEDAW Committee's inquiry report raised these concerns and made a series of recommendations to the Mexican Government to address them, as well as a request for an update by year-end on the implementation of these recommendations.

■ In July 2004, The LAW Project presented a concept paper to the CEDAW Committee on the interpretation of Article 2 of the Convention, the undertaking by governments to "pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating discrimination against women." The LAW Project urged the Committee to

> "At its twenty-eighth session (January 2003)...the Committee concluded that the information provided by Equality Now and Casa Amiga was reliable and that it contained substantiated indications of grave or systematic violations of rights set forth in the Convention...At its twenty-ninth session (July 2003), after having examined all the information submitted by the Government and taking into account the supplementary information provided by Casa Amiga, Equality Now and the Mexican Commission for the Defence and Promotion of Human Rights, the Committee decided to conduct a confidential inquiry under article 8 (2) of the Optional Protocol."
>
> **UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women report on its investigation**

ensure that effective implementation of this undertaking be measured by more than the laws and policies put in place by governments, that it be measured by the actual reality experienced by women and girls around the world.

■ In November 2004, The LAW Project prepared a response to the Consultation Paper on Prostitution circulated for comment by the Home Office of the United Kingdom. The response urged the United Kingdom to combat prostitution as a violation of the human rights of women by decriminalizing those engaged in prostitution, while strengthening criminal laws against those who buy, pimp, and traffic them, thereby recognizing prostitution as a form of gender-based exploitation and addressing it as such.

■ Also in 2004, in conjunction with Equality Now's Beijing +10 campaign against discriminatory laws (see page 2), the LAW Project filed a complaint with the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, pursuant to its communications procedure, against the forty countries whose sex discriminatory laws are highlighted in the Beijing +10 report. The complaint was pending as of year-end.

Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa

In 2004, Equality Now's Africa Regional Office spearheaded a coalition effort to push for the ratification of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa. Together with Oxfam GB, FEMNET and FAHAMU, Equality Now targeted government officials in the 30 countries that had signed the Protocol. By year-end the coalition for ratification had grown to include sixteen organizations.

The Protocol, adopted in July 2003 by the African Union, sets forth explicitly, for the first time in international law, the reproductive right of women to abortion when pregnancy results from rape or incest or when the continuation of pregnancy endangers the health or life of the mother. In another first, the Protocol explicitly calls for the legal prohibition of female genital mutilation. Other provisions in the Protocol include the right not to be subjected to forced or unwanted sex, a prohibition on the abuse of women in advertising and pornography and many other progressive provisions including in the areas of political and economic representation.

Fifteen countries must ratify the Protocol for it to come into force. At year-end 2004, seven countries—Comoros, Libya, Lesotho, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda and South Africa—had ratified the Protocol.

Equality Now Africa Regional Director Faiza Jama Mohamed, Rotimi Sankore, the Coordinator of Credo for Freedom of Expression and Associated Rights, and Gertrude Mongela, Speaker of the Pan-African Parliament, at the Third African Union Summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, July 2004.

SOMMAIRE

En 2004, le Comité de la CEDAW a publié son rapport d'enquête sur les affaires d'enlèvements, de viols et de meurtres de femmes dans la ville de Ciudad Juárez, au Mexique, enquête demandée par le Projet LAW d'Egalité Maintenant, Casa Amiga, et la Commission mexicaine pour la défense et la promotion des droits humains. Le Projet LAW a présenté au Comité de la CEDAW un document de réflexion sur l'interprétation de l'article 2 de la Convention, dans lequel les états s'engagent à éliminer toute discrimination à l'égard des femmes. Le Projet LAW a également rédigé une réponse au Document de consultation sur la prostitution diffusé par le ministère britannique de l'Intérieur. En 2004, le Bureau régional d'Afrique d'Egalité Maintenant a conduit une campagne collective de soutien à la ratification du Protocole à la Charte africaine des droits de l'homme et des peuples relatif aux droits de la femme en Afrique. A la fin de l'année, sept pays avaient ratifié le Protocole.

RESUMEN

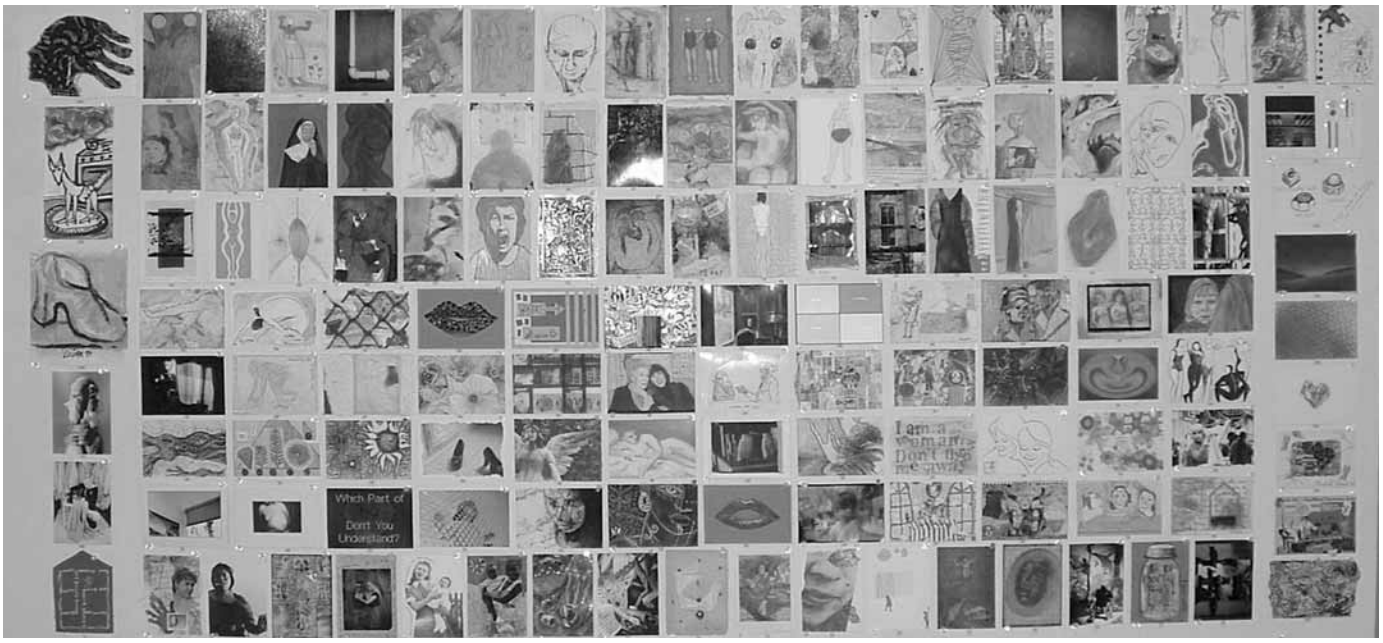
En 2004, el Comité CEDAW publicó un informe sobre su investigación del patrón de secuestro, violación y asesinato de mujeres de Ciudad Juárez, México, una investigación solicitada por el Proyecto LAW de Igualdad Ya, Casa Amiga y la Comisión Mexicana de Defensa y Promoción de los Derechos Humanos. El Proyecto LAW presentó un documento conceptual al Comité CEDAW sobre la interpretación del Artículo 2 de la Convención, el compromiso por parte de los gobiernos para eliminar la discriminación contra la mujer. El Proyecto LAW preparó asimismo una respuesta al Documento de consulta sobre la prostitución distribuido por el Ministerio de Interior del Reino Unido para solicitar observaciones. En 2004, la Oficina Regional de África de Igualdad Ya lideró un esfuerzo de coalición para instar a la ratificación del Protocolo a la Carta Africana de Derechos Humanos y de los Pueblos sobre los Derechos de la Mujer en África. Al final del año, siete países habían ratificado el Protocolo.

ملخص

في عام 2004، أصدرت اللجنة المعنية بالقضاء على التمييز ضد المرأة تقريراً عن التحقيق الذي أجرته بشأن النمط المنتظم من اختطاف النساء واغتصابهن وقتلهن في سيوداد خواريس، بالمكسيك، وهو تحقيق طالب به مشروع تحالف المحاميات التابع للمساواة الآن، وكاسا أميغا، واللجنة المكسيكية للدفاع عن حقوق الإنسان وتعزيزها. وقدم مشروع المحاميات ورقة مفاهيمية إلى اللجنة المعنية بالقضاء على التمييز ضد المرأة عن تفسير المادة 2 من الاتفاقية، وهي المتعلقة بتعهد الحكومات بالقضاء على التمييز ضد المرأة. كما أعد مشروع المحاميات رداً على ورقة الاستشارة بشأن البغاء التي قامت بتعميمها وزارة الداخلية في المملكة المتحدة التماساً للتعليق عليها. وفي عام 2004، تصدّر مكتب المساواة الآن الإقليمي لأفريقيا تحالفاً للحث على التصديق على بروتوكول الميثاق الأفريقي لحقوق الإنسان والشعوب بشأن حقوق المرأة في أفريقيا. وبحلول نهاية العام، كانت ستة بلدان قد صدقت على هذا البروتوكول.

Building the Movement

DIALOGUE: Above, participants at a Dialogue on Women's Rights organized by Equality Now, 1–3 October 2004. Front row, left to right: Jacqui Hunt, Deborah Taylor Ashford, Faiza Jama Mohamed, Jane Fonda, Susana Chiarotti, Robin Morgan. Middle row, left to right: Amanda Sullivan, Donna Seid, Yukiko Tsunoda, Taina Bien-Aimé, Maha Abu-Dayyeh Shamas, Jessica Neuwirth. Back row, left to right: Navi Pillay, Felice Gaer, Nancy Ruth, Meaza Ashenafi, Colette De Troy, Karen Plafker, Beth Atcheson, Adrienne Gombos, Gloria Neuwirth. Below, left to right: Catharine MacKinnon, Maha Abu-Dayyeh Shamas, Colette De Troy and Yukiko Tsunoda.



ART: Wall of art works donated by women artists for an Equality Now benefit organized by Marcia Yerman at the Locus Media Gallery, 8 March 2004.

FILM: Gloria Steinem and Arthur Manson at a screening of *The Manchurian Candidate,* a benefit for Equality Now hosted by Paramount in New York, 29 July 2004.

TELEVISION: Left to right: Sarah Jones, Meryl Streep and Marisa Tomei during the filming of a public service announcement produced by Lifetime Television for Equality Now, 20 October 2004.

FORUM: Gloria Steinem and Arthur Ochs Sulzberger, Jr. at a luncheon discussion on Women, Media and the Law, hosted by Bertelsmann, Inc. on 3 December 2004.

DRAMA: Cast of a benefit reading for Equality Now of Frank Christopher's *Hold the Turkey, Pass the Stuffing,* a play about domestic violence, at Smoke Jazz Club, 8 August 2004.

PROTEST: Taina Bien-Aimé, Jessica Neuwirth and Jacqui Hunt at the March for Women's Lives in Washington, DC, 25 April 2004.

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Marlyn Tadros
ARABIC

Wafaa Wahba
ARABIC

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Clockwise from bottom left: Michelle Pallak; Cindy Lunsford; Maia Goodell and Lakshmi Anantnarayan at the March for Women's Lives; Amanda Sullivan.

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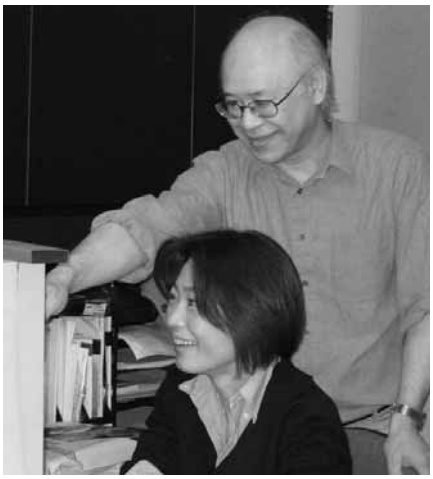
Above, left to right: Jessica Neuwirth, Sarah Jones and Meryl Streep during the filming of a public service announcement produced by Lifetime Television for Equality Now.

Right, Members of the Equality Now Board of Directors, left to right: Taina Bien-Aimé, Jacqui Hunt, Colette De Troy, Sapana Pradhan-Malla, Maha Abu-Dayyeh Shamas, Jessica Neuwirth and Yukiko Tsunoda.

Below, left to right: Kaoru Yoshimitsu (seated) and Shoji Masuzawa; Jane Fonda and Robin Morgan at the Equality Now Dialogue on Women's Rights; Bethany Hurley and Mary Whitmore.



WORLDWIDE SUPPORT

The Friends of Equality Now

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Meryl Streep
Rose Styron
Masuda Sultan
Arthur Ochs Sulzberger, Jr.
Ann Syauta
Maria Regina Tavares da Silva
Caroline Tetschner
Senator Nadine Thomas
Sava & Roger Thomas
Tides Foundation
Marisa Tomei
Uganda Land Alliance
Uganda Women Network
UNIFEM
United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women
United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)
Urgent Action Fund
V-Day
Claudia Velasco
Claire von Schilling
Meredith Wagner
Mary Wandia
Janet Warnke
Emily Wax
Weil, Gotshal & Manges
Clemens Wennekes
The Westport Fund
Thomas Whitman
Jonathan Willens and Julia Beardwood
Susan Willens
Kori Wilson
Debra Winston-Levin
Margaret Wollner
Women in Law and Development in Africa
Women's EDGE
Joanne Woodward
Kathryn Xian
Marcia Yerman
Ariana Yiannios
Liz Young
Rowena Young
June Zeitlin

Helen Bernstein

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

	2004 *As of 12/31*	2003 *As of 12/31*
ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	$ 929,082	$997,689
Investments	613,370	411,040
Contributions and grants receivable	714,104	375,151
Prepaid expenses	20,691	15,648
Property and equipment, net	24,861	28,274
Other assets	29,257	31,116
Total assets	$2,331,365	$1,858,918
LIABILITIES		
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	$ 116,375	$ 99,637
Funds held for others	5,000	—
Total liabilities	$ 121,375	$ 99,637
NET ASSETS		
Unrestricted	$1,413,956	$1,099,762
Temporarily restricted	796,034	659,519
Total net assets	$2,209,990	$1,759,281
Total liabilities and net assets	$2,331,365	$1,858,918

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS	2004	2003
PUBLIC SUPPORT AND REVENUE		
Contributions and grants		
Foundations	$ 931,460	$1,087,758
Individual donors	304,564	152,165
Corporations	125,550	63,415
Special events, net	85,016	21,670
Donated goods and services	156,489	101,594
Investment income	7,798	15,239
Net realized losses on investments	(640)	(74)
Other income	1,540	1,900
Public support and revenue before net assets released from restrictions	1,611,777	1,443,667
Net assets released from restrictions	644,519	71,655
Total public support and revenue	2,256,296	1,515,322
EXPENSES		
Program services	1,618,526	1,301,676
Supporting services		
Management and general	193,135	194,649
Fundraising	130,441	89,663
Total supporting services	323,576	284,312
Total expenses	1,942,102	1,585,988
Increase (decrease) in unrestricted net assets	314,194	(70,666)
TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS		
Contributions	781,034	659,519
Net assets released from restrictions	(644,519)	(71,655)
Increase in temporarily restricted net assets	136,515	587,864
Total increase in temporarily restricted and unrestricted net assets	450,709	517,198
Net assets: January 1	1,759,281	1,242,083
Net assets: December 31	$2,209,990	1,759,281

Copies of the complete, audited reports may be obtained from Equality Now or from the State of New York, Department of Law, Office of Charities Registration, The Capitol, Albany, NY 12223.

Foundation and Corporate Support

Equality Now wishes to acknowledge and thank the following foundations and corporations for their support:

- Bydale Foundation
- Claire's Stores
- Dreitzer Foundation
- Fonda Family Foundation
- Ford Foundation (Africa)
- Global Fund for Women
- Jana Foundation
- Banky LaRocque Foundation
- Moriah Fund
- Nancy's Very Own Foundation
- NOVIB
- Oxfam GB
- Pond Foundation
- Tides Foundation
- Ruth Turner Fund
- Working Assets

EQUALITY NOW was founded in 1992 to work for the protection and promotion of the human rights of women around the world. Working with national women's rights organizations and individual activists, Equality Now documents violence and discrimination against women, and adds an international action overlay to support their efforts to advance equality rights and defend individual women who are suffering abuse. Through its Women's Action Network, Equality Now distributes information about these human rights violations to concerned groups and individuals around the world, along with recommended actions for protesting them. Issues of urgent concern to Equality Now include rape, domestic violence, reproductive rights, trafficking of women, female genital mutilation, and the denial of equal access to economic opportunity and political participation.

EGALITE MAINTENANT a été fondée en 1992 afin de travailler pour la protection et la promotion des droits humains de la femme dans le monde entier. Travaillant avec des organisations nationales qui se consacrent aux droits de la femme et avec des activistes individuels, Egalité Maintenant documente la violence et la discrimination contre les femmes, en ajoutant un élément d'action internationale pour soutenir les efforts de ces organisations et activistes pour avancer les droits égaux et pour défendre des femmes individuelles maltraitées. Au moyen du Réseau Action Femmes, Egalité Maintenant transmet des renseignements sur ces violations des droits humains aux groupes et aux individus intéressés partout dans le monde, avec des actions recommandées pour protester contre ces violations. Les problèmes urgents auxquels s'intéresse Egalité Maintenant comprennent: le viol, la violence familiale, les droits de reproduction, la traite des femmes, les mutilations génitales féminines, le manque d'accès à la parité économique, et l'accès égal à la participation politique.

IGUALDAD YA fue fundada en 1992 con el propósito de trabajar a favor de la protección y promoción de los derechos humanos de las mujeres en todo el mundo. Trabajando junto a organizaciones nacionales de derechos de mujeres y con activistas individuales, Igualdad Ya documenta casos de violencia y discriminación contra las mujeres y agrega un componente de acción internacional para apoyar sus esfuerzos para avanzar los derechos de igualdad y defender casos individuales de mujeres que sufren abusos. A través de su Red de Acción Mujeres, Igualdad Ya disemina información acerca de estas violaciones de derechos humanos entre grupos e individuos interesados en todo el mundo, junto con recomendaciones de acciones para protestar estos casos. Los temas de preocupación urgentes para Igualdad Ya incluyen la violación sexual, la violencia doméstica, los derechos reproductivos, el tráfico de mujeres, la mutilación genital femenina y la denegación del acceso igualitario a las oportunidades económicas y la participación política.

المساواة الآن منظمة تأسست في عام 1992 للعمل من أجل حماية حقوق الإنسان الخاصة بالمرأة وتعزيز هذه الحقوق في أنحاء العالم. وبالتعاون مع المنظمات الوطنية لحقوق المرأة ومع فرادى النشطاء، تقوم المساواة الآن بتوثيق أعمال العنف والتمييز المرتكبة ضد المرأة، وتضيف إلى ذلك بعداً من العمل الدولي لمؤازرة الجهود المبذولة للنهوض بالحقوق المتعلقة بالمساواة والدفاع عن فرادى النساء اللواتي يتعرضن للإيذاء. وتقوم المساواة الآن من خلال شبكتها للعمل النسائي بتوزيع المعلومات عن هذه الانتهاكات لحقوق الإنسان على المعنيين بها من الجماعات والأفراد حول العالم، مع التوصية بالإجراءات الواجب اتخاذها للاحتجاج عليها. وتهتم المساواة الآن بصفة عاجلة بمسائل من بينها الاغتصاب، والعنف الأسري، والحقوق الإنجابية، والاتجار بالنساء، وتشويه الأعضاء التناسلية للأنثى (ختان الإناث)، والحرمان من التمتع على قدم المساواة بالفرص الاقتصادية والمشاركة السياسية.