

# 2019

## Annual Report



UNITED NATIONS  
UNIVERSITY

**UNU-GEST**

Gender Equality Studies  
and Training Programme



UNIVERSITY OF ICELAND

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Postgraduate diploma programme in international gender studies .....	3
2.1 The selection process for 2019 fellows.....	3
2.1.1 Open call .....	4
2.1.2 Erasmus+ grant scheme.....	4
2.1.3 Partnership with National Union of Disabled Persons in Uganda (NUDIPU) .....	5
2.1.4 Partnership with UN Women in Mozambique.....	5
2.1.5 UNDP in Afghanistan .....	5
2.2 The academic programme 2019.....	6
2.2.1 Syllabi and course descriptions.....	6
2.2.2 Gender Scene in Iceland – Field visits .....	23
2.2.3 Visit to the President of Iceland .....	24
2.2.4 Graduation .....	25
2.3 Selection of 2020 fellows.....	25
3. Short courses .....	26
3.1 Teaching gender to youth.....	26
3.2 Gender and climate change in Uganda .....	27
3.3 Gender and climate change in Malawi.....	28
4. Research and projects .....	28
4.1 UNU-GEST Ph.D. and post-doctoral scholarship programme.....	28
4.1.1 Women’s participation in fish value chain and value chain governance in Malawi .....	29
4.2 Partnership projects .....	29
4.2.1 Women and girls’ effective participation in peace, security and recovery in Mozambique.....	29
5. Knowledge transmission and transnational dialogue .....	29
5.1 Conferences, events, presentations, lectures and seminars.....	30
5.1.1 UNU-GEST/RIKK lecture series 2019 .....	30
5.1.2 Seminar on Women, Business and the Law – Launch of the New World Bank Report 2019 .....	31
5.1.3 The Bystander Moment: Transforming Rape Culture at its Roots.....	31
5.1.4 African Peacekeeping Training Centres: Socialisation as a Tool for Peace?.....	31
5.1.5 Conference on Men and Masculinities in Mozambique .....	31
5.1.6 CSW63 Side event .....	32
5.1.7 Opening the (Gender) Blinds: Conference on Gender and Substance Use.....	32
5.1.8 NORA 2019 Conference: Border Regimes, Territorial Discourse & Feminist Politics .....	33
5.1.9 ReNEW Summer School .....	33
5.1.10 Citizenship and Conflicts in a Globalized World: From States to Streets .....	33
5.1.11 SOGIE Refugee Workshop.....	34
5.1.12 #MeToo: Moving Forward .....	34
5.1.13 The Imagine Forum: Women for Peace .....	35
5.1.15 Gender, South Africa and Southern Theory.....	35
5.1.16 Reykjavik Global Forum: Women Leaders .....	35
5.1.17 10-Year Anniversary New Challenges, Opportunities and Collaborations .....	36
5.3 International collaboration networks .....	37
5.3.1 Nordic Women Mediators (NWM).....	37
5.4 Communication .....	38
5.4.1 Website and social media .....	38
5.4.2 Iceland outreach programme.....	38
5.5 UNU-GEST alumni network.....	39
5.5.1 Alumni meeting in Mozambique .....	40
5.5.2 Alumni meeting in Malawi .....	40
5.5.3 Alumni meeting in Uganda .....	40
5.5.4 Alumni meeting in Bosnia & Herzegovina.....	40
6. Management, personnel and finance .....	40
6.1 Transitioning from UNU to GRÓ, UNESCO category 2 centre.....	40
6.2 Personnel .....	41
6.3 Academic Institutional Partnerships.....	44
6.3.1 Partnership with the University of Iceland .....	44
6.3.2 Erasmus+ grant scheme .....	46
6.3.3 GEMMA Erasmus Mundus community .....	47

## 1. Introduction

The GEST programme celebrated its 10-year anniversary in 2019. After having successfully completed a four-year pilot phase, it joined the United Nations University network in 2013. As of January 2020, it transitioned from the United Nations University (UNU) to a Category 2 Centre under the auspices of UNESCO.

In this annual report, UNU-GEST presents activities consistent with the programme's strategy of using a multidisciplinary approach to promote gender equality and social justice in low/middle income, conflict and post-conflict countries by: firstly, strengthening the capacity of professionals and organizations; secondly, creating a platform for knowledge transfer; and thirdly, promoting high-quality, collaborative, and policy-relevant research.

## 2. Postgraduate diploma programme in international gender studies

UNU-GEST's core activity is an annual 20-week postgraduate diploma programme in international gender studies, that runs from January to May. The programme aims to enhance individuals' understanding of the structures that need to be in place to advance gender equality and social justice. The programme encourages GEST fellows to use critical thinking skills and to acquire essential analytical tools for understanding gender equality issues and their impact on social development and public policy.

The main objectives of the programme are to develop:

- capacity of professionals and junior researchers as well as organizations working in the field of advancing gender equality in low/middle income, conflict and post-conflict societies
- understanding of critical concepts and theory, contemporary debates and comparative perspectives in gender equality studies, and how they apply to different cultures and circumstances and are intersected by ethnicity, sexuality, religion, race, class etc.
- skills in gender analysis and in the dissemination of knowledge about gender equality methods
- the capacity to engage in critical and transnational dialogue on gender equality issues
- skills to organize and manage projects, focusing on gender equality
- a sense of how the meanings of core concepts and practices are changed through transnational dialogues

### 2.1 The selection process for 2019 fellows

The target group for the UNU-GEST postgraduate diploma programme was made up of junior professionals and researchers, working on gender issues for government ministries and agencies, civil society organizations and educational or research institutes in low/middle income countries, conflict and post-conflict societies.

The selection of the fellows was based on the following criteria. Candidates shall:

1. have a university degree
2. have at least two years of relevant experience and a track record in gender equality work
3. have a good command of English (speaking, reading and writing skills)

Fellows were selected based on their application and an extensive interview in which the candidates were required to:

- explain their work and their role at their respective institutes or organizations
- discuss and identify gender equality issues in their field of work
- demonstrate in-depth understanding of their professional mandate and how it relates to gender equality
- outline how they think the UNU-GEST diploma programme would increase their capacities in their field of work in the future, and how it would benefit their institute/organization

The selection process was based on an open call, input by collaborative universities through the Erasmus+ grant scheme, and predetermined partnership agreements.

Twenty-three fellows, seven men and sixteen women, from thirteen countries, were selected to participate in the 2019 programme.

Country	Number of fellows	Funding source
Afghanistan	1	UNDP/Erasmus+/UNU-GEST
Bosnia & Herzegovina	1	Erasmus+/UNU-GEST
Ethiopia	1	UNU-GEST
Ghana	2	Erasmus+/UNU-GEST
India	1	UNU-GEST
Kenya	1	UNU-GEST
Kosovo	2	Erasmus+/UNU-GEST
Malawi	3	UNU-GEST
Mozambique	3	UN Women/UNU-GEST
Nigeria	1	Erasmus+/UNU-GEST
Palestine West Bank	2	Erasmus+/UNU-GEST
Palestine Gaza	1	UNU-GEST
Serbia	2	Erasmus+/UNU-GEST
Uganda	1	Equality Fund/UNU-GEST
Uganda	1	UNU-GEST

### 2.1.1 Open call

An open call was issued via social media and disseminated among partners of UNU-GEST and the GEST alumni. Candidates were nominated by professionals within institutions, organizations or universities. The nominations were submitted via electronic form on the UNU-GEST website. In 2018, over 100 nominations were received through the open call process for the spring semester 2019. Based on thorough screening and interviews, eight candidates were selected through the open call; five of them were from the UNU-GEST's core collaborative countries: Uganda, Malawi, and Palestine; and two from new partner countries: Kenya and India.

### 2.1.2 Erasmus+ grant scheme

For the second year in a row, a number of candidates were selected through the Erasmus+ grant scheme. These fellows were pursuing their master's degree in gender studies or related

disciplines in UNU-GEST's Erasmus+ partner universities in several countries, and were to be able to transfer 30 ECTS credits from the UNU-GEST diploma programme towards the completion of their degree at their home university. For each university, a separate call was issued, with a tailored handout. As the Erasmus+ grants were only partial grants that covered airfare and a part of the living allowance, UNU-GEST supplemented the grants to reach full fellowships for the candidates.

The partners in collaborative universities received applications from students, pre-screened them and prepared a short list of qualified candidates for final selection by the UNU-GEST. The selection was based on the same criteria as the UNU-GEST open call, where involvement with grassroots organizations and extra-curricular activities to promote gender equality constituted an advantage for the candidates.

Eleven candidates were selected through the Erasmus+ grant scheme for the spring semester of 2019. These included two fellows from Ghana University, one fellow from Lagos State University in Nigeria, two fellows from Birzeit University in Palestine, one from the University of Sarajevo in Bosnia & Herzegovina, two from Singidunum University in Belgrade, Serbia, two from Prishtina University in Kosovo and one fellow from Kabul University in Afghanistan.

#### 2.1.3 Partnership with National Union of Disabled Persons in Uganda (NUDIPU)

In 2018, UNU-GEST received funding from the Equality Fund provided by the Ministry of Welfare in Iceland to support two candidates nominated by National Union of Disabled Persons in Uganda to participate in the UNU-GEST postgraduate diploma programme. Four people were nominated by NUDIPU of whom two were selected to participate in the UNU-GEST programme. Of the two people, one asked for her acceptance to be postponed until the spring 2020.

#### 2.1.4 Partnership with UN Women in Mozambique

In 2017, UNU-GEST became partner in a UN Women Mozambique-led project, "Promoting women and girls' effective participation in peace, security and recovery in Mozambique," working with UN Women in Mozambique and Eduardo Mondlane University (UEM) in Maputo, Mozambique (see further details in 4.2.1). The UNU-GEST's role in this project is to contribute to the governance and education on women peace and security in Mozambique by training six Mozambican experts in international gender studies. Three experts participated in 2018, and another three participants were selected to participate in 2019: one was nominated by the Mondlane University, and two by the Ministry of Interior.

#### 2.1.5 UNDP in Afghanistan

UNU-GEST has collaborated with the UNDP country office in Afghanistan to support the newly established Gender and Women's Studies programme at Kabul University. In 2017, UNU-GEST invited a fellow from the first cohort of the master's programme to attend the postgraduate diploma programme in 2018 which UNDP and UNU-GEST co-funded. In 2019, the collaboration continued with co-financing from the Erasmus+ grant scheme while UNDP continued their facilitation of selecting the nominees. One fellow was selected by the UNU-GEST to participate in the 2019 UNU-GEST programme.



*The GEST cohort 2019 consisted of 23 fellows from 13 countries (two fellows are missing from the photo).*

## 2.2 The academic programme 2019

The annual postgraduate diploma programme (30 ECTS) in international gender studies took place at the University of Iceland from January to end of May 2019. The curriculum in UNU-GEST's diploma in international gender studies incorporates an interdisciplinary approach on a variety of topics with the aim of enhancing understanding of the political, economic and social structures needed to promote gender equality and advance women's empowerment.

### 2.2.1 Syllabi and course descriptions

The programme was divided into seven teaching modules, including a final assignment. Of the seven modules, five were compulsory while the fellows could select between either Gender, health and education or the newly developed module Gender, labour and migration. Thirteen attended the Gender, health and education module while ten fellows attended Gender, labour and migration. Each module corresponded to five ECTS credits resulting in a postgraduate degree of 30 ECTS credits upon completion of the programme.

#### 2.2.1.1 International gender studies: theories and concepts

The purpose of this module was to introduce fellows to basic theories and concepts in gender studies in order to develop transnational understandings of established feminist theoretical traditions as well as more recent feminist conceptualizing of global gender politics. Through a combination of readings, lectures and in-depth class discussion, fellows were expected to consider how unjust politics and constructions of gender and sexuality might be changed through transnational transfers and dialogues. Fellows explored gender equality/justice for suppressed minority and oppressed groups from historical, intersectional, trans-national, and human rights perspectives. Discussion centred on how the issues, ideas, and debates engaged in by feminist theorists play out in specific contexts, particularly the contexts of "developing" nations, post-colonial, and conflict/post-conflict societies. The fellows were encouraged to

think about and mentally map the differences (ethnic, racial, class, etc.) that matter in the societies and organizations they come from; and to reflect on the significance of these internal social differences and political struggles as viewed from global and transnational feminist theoretical perspectives. They were also asked to consider and apply the transnational feminist theoretical concepts from the readings to the gender justice movements they were already familiar with as well as those they learned about from their peers; and in particular, to consider the roles played by civil institutions, NGOs, leaders, grassroots organizers, and advocates for women and sexual minorities. Through close, critical reading and intensive dialogue with one another, fellows were encouraged to develop theoretically informed views and transnational feminist perspectives.

**Module coordinator:** Dr. Jón Ingvar Kjaran, assistant professor at the School of Education, University of Iceland and head of research development at the UNU-GEST programme

**Other lecturers:** Dr. Giti Chandra, Dr. Thomas Brorsen Smidt, Dr. Jelisaveta Blagojevic, Dr. Zilka Spahić Šiljak, and Dr. Henri Myrntinen

### Learning outcomes

After the successful completion of this module fellows were expected to be able to:

- demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between culture, sex and gender
- understand how public institutions and cultural symbol systems are gendered, often in unequal or unjust ways
- understand and recognize specific theoretical approaches to gender equality and justice
- outline how feminist theory and concepts specifically relate or do not relate to “developing” and conflict/post-conflict societies
- understand how gendered positions are intersected by race, class, sexuality, religion, ethnicity etc. differently across the globe
- conceptualize theoretically informed transnational strategies aimed at empowering women and minority groups in public decision making and private life

#### 2.2.1.2 Gender and development: tools and strategies

This module aimed at introducing methods and provide fellows with tools and skills to conduct gender-sensitive analyses of social and cultural conditions, information and policies, and to participate in developing gender-responsive policies. The goal was to introduce methods and provide the fellows with skills and gender-sensitive techniques for successful stocktaking, monitoring and evaluation, planning and implementation of programme and project initiatives to advance gender equality. A special emphasis was on gender mainstreaming, project management, economic literacy and gender responsive budgeting.

**Module coordinator:** Milica Minić, project manager at UNU-GEST

**Other lecturers:** Dr. Suzanne Clisby, Dr. Elisabeth Klatzer, Tryggvi Hallgrímsson, Hjálmar Sigmarsson, Þórður Kristinsson, and Sólrún María Ólafsdóttir

### Learning outcomes:

After the successful completion of this module fellows were expected to:

- be familiar with the key concepts and terminology commonly used in gender and development studies

- understand the connections and contestations between feminist theory and development, and critically engage with relevant scholarship
- be able to conduct an intersectional analysis of a chosen policy, and provide argumentation and evidence for analysis
- be able to use practical tools for mainstreaming gender equality into policy, programme and project interventions as well as for monitoring and evaluation
- understand evidence-based advocacy and strategy development
- apply the knowledge of gender responsive budgeting and have the ability to identify gaps between policies and budget allocations
- use gender responsive budgeting as a planning strategy
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### 2.2.1.3 Gender, violence and security

The aim of the course was to increase the fellows' ability to understand, discuss, and convey knowledge of gender dimensions of security, especially with regard to international legal obligations, UNSC resolutions, security sector reform and emergency operations, but also in the context of sexual harassment and violence at the workplace, policies, and legal structures. It examined the concept of human security versus national security and the role of women in conflicts, peace processes and post-conflict reconstruction, as well as gender-based violence and sexual violence, both as a tactic of warfare as well as a presence in the everyday lives of women and non-binary gendered people. National Action Plans were of special focus.

**Module coordinator:** Dr. Giti Chandra, senior researcher at UNU-GEST

**Other lecturers:** Prof. Cynthia Enloe, Dr. Vinita Chandra, Dr. Marsha Henry, and Flora Tietgen

### Learning outcomes

After the successful completion of this module fellows were expected to:

- be able to understand and explain the links between gender and security
- have the ability to outline positions and roles of women in conflicts, peace processes and post-conflict reconstruction
- have the capacity to analyse and demonstrate key issues and possible solutions related to gender and security in their home countries
- be able to think up strategies for empowering women in conflicts, and increasing their involvement in peace processes and post-conflict reconstruction
- understand how gender-based violence and sexual violence are used as tactics of warfare
- define workplace harassment and understand how it can be recognised, both as individual cases and a tool for systematic oppression
- analyse legal options and policies that govern and structure issues and cases of sexual harassment
- understand the making of national action plans and learn how to critically analyse such plans of individual countries



#### 2.2.1.4 Gender, health and education (elective)

The purpose of this module was to introduce fellows to literature and case studies on gender relations and norms, and resulting behaviours, which affect physical and mental health and bodily integrity. The module explored how gender differences and inequalities result in unequal health status and access to health care. The module looked at gender-based violence (GBV) within the framework of human rights and how unequal power relations contribute to GBV and the resulting physical, mental and economic consequences. A variety of strategies to address diverse health challenges were introduced and discussed including a workshop introducing community mobilisation interventions through a participatory appraisal methodology. Moreover, in this module different approaches to the question of how gender is learned and performed in educational institutions were explored.

**Module coordinator:** Dr. Jón Ingvar Kjaran, assistant professor at the School of Education, University of Iceland and head of research development at the UNU-GEST programme

**Other lecturers:** Dr. Sisa Ngabaza, Dr. Flemming Konradsen, Dr. Brynja E. Halldórsdóttir, Kristín Pálsdóttir and Katrín Ólafsdóttir

#### Learning outcomes

After the successful completion of this module fellows were expected to be able to:

- identify the main theories and research about gender and education in social, cultural and political contexts
- use critical education, feminist and intersectionality approaches as analytical tools for addressing the complexity of education systems
- outline the relationship between social positioning (in terms of e.g. gender, sexuality, class, ethnicity, and disability) and access to education
- analyse policy documents and public discussion on education and gender from a critical perspective
- understand the link between gender, health, and well-being and ill-health
- understand a human rights-based and gender-responsive approach to policies and programmes for health
- understand the gendered aspects of violence and be familiar with its various manifestations
- utilise a range of participatory learning frameworks (PLA) for the purposes of gathering information on social contexts and determinants of health for service planning

As a part of this module, the fellows visited Bjarkarhlíð centre for survivors of violence, the National University Hospital's Emergency Clinic, providing service for victims of sexual assault and Konukot, a women's shelter operated by the Icelandic Red Cross.



2019 fellows visiting Konukot

### 2.2.1.5 Gender, labour and migration (elective)

This module introduced students to the concepts connected to various types of migration. Fellows were to be provided with fuller view of migration as it intersects with labour and gender by looking at international agreements and treaties, national laws and policies, and local responses to migration. The module also covered global economic imbalances that lead to migration, as well as migration due to conflict and environmental degradation. How migration differentially impacts men and women was also discussed in light of current theories, research, and agreements. Concepts and theories of comparative law was discussed as they relate to migration, jurisdiction, gender, and labour. Finally, the course covered immigration enforcement and its economic impact on migrant men and women.

**Module coordinator:** Dr. Jón Ingvar Kjaran, assistant professor at the School of Education, University of Iceland and head of research development at the UNU-GEST programme

**Other lecturers:** Dr. Mukul Mangalik, Randi Stebbins, Claudie Ashonie Wilson, Kirstín Flygenring, Shauna Olney, Eva Harðardóttir, and Linda Sólveigar Guðmundsdóttir.

#### Learning outcomes

After the successful completion of this module fellows were expected to be able to:

- identify the main theories and research about gender, labour and migration
- use theories in comparative law, gender and migration, and labour and economics
- understand the three levels of influence on migration and migrants – international, national, and local
- analyse policy documents and public discussion about gender, labour, and migration from a critical perspective
- understand the different motivation for and impact of migration on men and women
- understand how global economic imbalances influence migration
- utilise a range of tools to critically analyse global, national, and local migration policies and their impact on women and men

As a part of this module, the students were invited to participate in an Equal Pay International Coalition (EPIC) technical meeting which took place at Harpa, Reykjavík 2-3 April hosted by the Prime Minister's Office and Ministry of Social Affairs of Iceland in Partnership with the Nordic Council of Ministers and the International Labour Organization (ILO). The EPIC meeting was attended by 70-80 experts, both international and local, and had the overall aim of identifying how pay gaps between women and men can be analysed in broader contexts of inequality, including looking at women's limited access to paid employment, especially in emerging and low-income countries, and the unequal division of unpaid work within households in all economic contexts.



*2019 fellows participating in the EPIC meeting*

The fellows were also invited to attend the second day of the ILO conference: Future of Work on the 5 April, which also took place at Harpa and was hosted by the ILO and the Nordic Council of Ministers. The conference Future of Work included presentations about gender equality at work and economic growth and addressed the importance of inclusive labour market policies, decent working conditions, and job quality and was concluded by a session which discussed the measures to be taken to achieve equal pay and reviewed the contribution of new generation of policies and legislation in the Nordic countries, and their experiences in attempting to convert their commitments to actual changes on the ground.

#### 2.2.1.6 Gender, environment and climate change

This module examined the role of gender in sustainable development, environment and natural resource management. The focus was on the transformative potential of gender equality to advance environmental sustainability and on gender perspectives with respect to resilience, vulnerability, mitigation, and adaptation to global environmental change.

**Module coordinator:** Dr. Irma Erlingsdóttir, associate professor at the School of Humanities, University of Iceland and director of the UNU-GEST programme

**Other lecturers:** Dr. Joni Seager, Dr. Jón Geir Pétursson, and Dr. Auður Ingólfssdóttir

#### Learning outcomes

After the successful completion of this module fellows were expected to have obtained:

- understanding of core environmental concerns at the global and local levels and of the extent to which these are gendered and culture-specific
- understanding of, and the ability to, explain important links involving gender, development, globalisation, capitalism, corporatism, and environment
- ability to discuss complex issues in relation to gender and climate change, sustainable development, and natural resource management
- ability to discuss the links between gender equality and the impact of climate change, biodiversity, and other key global environmental challenge
- ability to do gender analyses for environmental impact assessment and projects in relation to environmental issues such as climate change and natural resource management
- capacity to design and implement projects for the promotion of environmental concern at public and community levels
- familiarity with major global treaties and charters of the environment and a critical understanding of their applicability in different contexts



*At Skógafoss as 2019 fellows participated in the four-day Iona field trip along the south coast of Iceland*

A large component of this module was a four-day field visit to the southeast of Iceland during the first week of May. The field visit provided the UNU-GEST fellows with an opportunity to see the direct impact of climate change on Icelandic nature. Védís Ólafsdóttir, UNU-GEST project manager, accompanied the fellows on the visit which included presentations at Nýheimar knowledge centre by Kristín Hermannsdóttir, a

meteorologist and the director of the South East Iceland Nature Research Center; glaciologist Snævarr Guðmundsson; and Hulda Laxdal Hauksdóttir, project manager for ADVENT. The fellows also visited the Vatnajökull visitor centre in Höfn, where Steinunn Hödd Harðardóttir, assistant park manager, shared with the fellows how the Vatnajökull National Park contributes to knowledge sharing of the effects of climate change.

The fellows visited the nearby glaciers Fláajökull and Heinabergsjökull where Sigurður Ragnarsson, a geologist and a glacier guide from the area, guided them around, sharing with them information about the glaciers and the impact of climate change. The fellows also visited the farm Hoffell, located by glacier Hoffellsjökull, where they were introduced to the history and nature of the area.



*Hiking up to Fláajökull with Sigurður Ragnarsson, as a part of the module Gender, Environment and Climate Change*

#### 2.2.1.7 Final assignment

Fellows worked on a project or an essay on a topic of their choice throughout the duration of the programme under the supervision of expert advisors. The purpose of the final project was for fellows to reflect on some of the theories, methods, and skills studied during the programme. The topic should be integrative, related to the content of the programme, and have relevance for gender equality issues in the fellow's home country. The assignment may be an essay addressing a specific gender problem and identifying strategies and suggestions to counter it, a project proposal that outlines all the necessary steps and activities needed to solve a problem and implement a project, or a research proposal, or other forms in consultation with module coordinator and the fellow's advisor(s). Each fellow was assigned a final assignment supervisor, who is an expert in the field in which the fellow is writing. Supervisors worked with respective fellows to offer directions on the final assignment throughout the semester. By the end of the semester, the fellows presented the design and findings of their assignments at an open seminar organized by UNU-GEST. As a part of the final assignment module, fellows also attended sessions in academic writing, reference systems for literature review and research, introduction to the university library, professional development, and on professional presentation delivery.

**Module coordinator:** Dr. Giti Chandra, senior researcher at UNU-GEST

**Academic staff contributing to this module:** Dr. Randi Stebbins and lecturers from the National Library, Writing Centre at the School of Humanities, and other University of Iceland departments.

#### Learning outcomes

After successful completion of this module, fellows were expected to be able to:

- apply a variety of theoretical frameworks and practical instruments for critical gender sensitive inquiry to their chosen topic, its social context, and policy environment

- collect and critically examine the information and data necessary for analysing their chosen topic
- identify strategies to address the gender issues discussed in the final assignment
- work effectively as independent and self-motivated learners
- reference an extensive range of literature and utilise it in the development of analysis and discussion of ideas
- effectively communicate the main findings of the final assignment
- write a coherent, critically reflexive assignment

The fellows completed 23 final assignments of which six final assignments received an honorary mention at the graduation. Quoting Hassan Waddimba's words at the graduation, the final assignments demonstrated the following emphasis within gender equality:

We are committed to engaging in policy advocacy and education to strengthen institutions to combat sexual and intimate partner violence in Ghana, Malawi, and Mozambique; and to increase access to specialized services for survivors of sexual and intimate partner violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Nigeria. We are determined to engage community structures in Malawi to bring an end to child marriage; and demand for gender responsive programming in the criminal justice systems of Mozambique, Palestine, and Serbia. We want to give a voice to the forgotten contribution of women in the pre-war social movements of Kosovo. We have explored avenues for expanding opportunities and wealth for women in agriculture in Ghana, and Kenya; and want to empower female youth with disabilities in Uganda to overcome multiple marginalization. It is in our understanding that we cannot achieve the change we want without women in power. We therefore want to increase political participation of women in Afghanistan and Uganda. And in Ethiopia, we will seek to empower women in politics to turn their numbers into gender responsive legislations and public policies.

- Hassan Waddimba, UNU-GEST fellow 2019, UNU-GEST graduation 21 May 2019

### Aishwarya Sehgal (India)



**Title:** Girls' Education in North India: Entitlement, Morality, or Both?

**Supervisor:** Susan Elizabeth Gollifer

This essay explores an alternate principle/framework of morality that can be used by government school teachers to make the Right to Education more effective as a legal construct in North India. By tracing the roots of Hinduism to the Vedic period it becomes clear that the true essence of Hinduism is a religion that promotes gender equality and girls' right to education. A demonstration of how Indian culture has changed over time because of invasions by the Aryans, the Mughals and the British in the Northern part of India shows how Vedic Hinduism has been misinterpreted to suit the needs of those in power. The result is a perverted culture that perpetuates gender-based discrimination and poses socio-cultural constraints to girls' education in a way that makes it difficult for them to exercise their fundamental right to education. A systematic gender analysis of the Right to Education Act in India shows its limitations and an argument is made for the need to make it more gender sensitive.

### Aramadhan Issiko (Uganda)



**Title:** Engaging Young Women and Girls in Political Participation in Uganda

**Supervisor:** Dr. Jón Ingvar Kjarran

The purpose of this project is to increase the political participation of young women (18 to 35 years old) and girls (16 to 18 years old) in the coming elections (2021) and post-elections period in Uganda. These young women and girls will be the next breed of transformational women leaders in Uganda. Promoting their political participation will help young women to take effective action on issues that matter to them as an effort to addressing gender inequality. According to Plan International, 2018 (Girl's Report), it is important for political participation to start in the early years of a girl's life. These are the most formative years in a woman's life during which girls and young women build confidence in themselves and their voices and learn to take up their rights to actively engage in social and political life. It is also the most vulnerable time, where many instances of exploitation and harmful practices such as child marriage and female genital mutilation occur. The project will also harmonize the government's understanding and relationship with young women as important agents in the development of Uganda in the Twenty First Century.

### Fátima António De Deus (Mozambique)



**Title:** Creating Policy Guidelines and Sexual Harassment and Gender Sensitization Committees in Schools

**Supervisor:** Dr. Giti Chandra

This project stems from the need to define proactive and preventive actions aimed at reducing the growing wave of sexual harassment and gender-based violence that has been observed in schools in Mozambique. There is a vulnerability of students abused by teachers or even other students, due to the complicity and consent of the employees and of the school board. The prevention and combating of gender-based violence is one of the priorities of the Mozambican government. This project aims to create policy guidelines and the creation of sexual harassment committees and gender sensitization, in order to train and educate school communities to combat gender-based violence in Mozambican schools, with a view to defining actions to respond to the growing and serious wave of sexual harassment and gender-based violence in schools, as well as promote, valorise and protect the rights of girls and thus create an environment of peace and social security.

### Gabriel Oladipupo Ogbeyemi (Nigeria)



**Title:** Socio-Economic Correlates of Multiple Sexual Partnerships and the Coping Strategies Among Female Students in South-Western Nigeria

**Supervisor:** Yvonne K. Fulbright

Relationship patterns among students in higher institutions in Nigeria have changed drastically, affecting the values placed on sex. Cohabitation, open relations and friends with benefits (fwb) are some of the changes that have been observed in the relationship patterns among students, leading to an increase in sexually transmitted infections (STIs). In a bid to fulfil some of the Sustainable Development

Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations, this thesis will address six of these goals. It will strive to address the goals of (1) reducing poverty, (2) eliminating hunger, (3) improving good health and well-being, (4) providing quality education, (5) closing the gender parity gap, and (6) reducing inequality. This study will consider the nexus between economy and females' access to financial resources in the context of multiple sexual partnership. Furthermore, this study will look into the role that hegemonic masculinity and patriarchy play in multiple sexual partnerships in Nigeria.

#### Godfred Baah-Dwase (Ghana)



**Title:** Reduction of Intimate Partner Violence Through Advocacy and Education

**Supervisor:** Randi W. Stebbins

Domestic and intimate partner violence remains one of the major causes of non-participation by women in public life. It inhibits their capacity to contribute their resources to the benefit of society. In 2007, the Domestic Violence Act was signed into law in Ghana. Under this law, the role of the survivor of domestic violence in the criminal proceedings is to serve as a witness against the perpetrator as according to Section 8 of the Domestic Violence Act. After the prosecution, little or no service is given to the survivor of violence. This situation exposes the survivor to ridicule from her environment, meaning, she will get no satisfaction by leading someone's father, brother, uncle, or son, a breadwinner, to jail. The purpose of this project is to bring these women together and train them to be advocates in their communities at the Aowin Municipal Assembly in the Western Region of Ghana in five years. It will minimize the incidence of domestic and intimate partner violence through the creation of advocates from the survivors and the community.

#### Hassan Waddimba (Uganda)



**Title:** Strengthening Employment and Social Entrepreneurship Skills for Female Youth with Disabilities in Order to Overcome Multiple Marginalization in Central Uganda

**Supervisor:** Milica Minić

This 2-year pilot project proposal seeks to undertake interventions to uplift the social status of female youth with disabilities in central Uganda, and thus increase their recognition as contributing and valuable members of their communities. The project recognizes that there are various factors upon which social status is constructed, among which is education, employment or entrepreneurship. Female youth with disabilities in Uganda, however, face multiple marginalizations arising from their gender, age and disabilities. Due to challenges that impede their access to education, they lack the skills to directly access employment in the open labour market. And due to other economic reasons, they are unable to establish their own start-ups. This coupled with societal beliefs and misconceptions about the potentials of female youth with disabilities has rendered the latter to have the lowest ranking in society. This project will thus seek to establish a pilot Center for Employment and Social Entrepreneurship to build the capacity of female youth with disabilities in Uganda to compete for employment and entrepreneurship opportunities.

### Imeldina Eduardo Matimbe Rego (Mozambique)



**Title:** Female Dignity and Leadership: A Strategy for Promoting Women in Police Organizations

**Supervisor:** Eyrún Eypórsdóttir

The main objective of this analysis is to promote women within the police organization of Mozambique. In order to achieve the main objective, principles of human dignity are identified; the history of human dignity in Mozambique is presented; the factors that destroy the dignity of policewomen are identified; ethics principles that can promote women's dignity in police organizations are suggested; strategies to develop women's dignity are established. This will allow the researcher to suggest gender aware strategies to promote women and to support female dignity. Through a qualitative investigation, a reflection will be made based on modern theories of dignity and leadership; in order to give more consistency to the research, some documents such as Human Rights Universal Declaration, and the Mozambican Constitution will also be taken into consideration.

### Irma Šiljak (Bosnia and Herzegovina)



**Title:** Relationship Between Women's NGOs and Government Institutions: Impact on Access to Specialized Services for Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence

**Supervisor:** Hildur Fjóla Antonsdóttir

Violence against women as a worldwide phenomenon is one of the burning issues in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Many responses have been developed both by the government structures and women's nongovernmental organizations in order to tackle the issue of intimate partner violence as one of the most common forms of violence against women. This paper specifically examines the relationship between government institutions and women's NGOs in the field of intimate partner violence in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The aim is to better the existing relationship between the government structures and women's NGOs and to produce new critical knowledge on the impacts of this relationship on access to specialized services for survivors of intimate partner violence. The existing relationships are examined in terms of cooperation and financial allocations for the issue of intimate partner violence.

### Jeta Rexha (Kosovo)



**Title:** Identity and Geography: The Impact of the Albanian Diaspora in Post-War Kosovo

**Supervisor:** Dr. Valur Ingimundarson

This essay is about the effects of recent mass migration of Kosovar Albanians and changing local perceptions about the role played by the diaspora in post-war Kosovo. It seeks to illuminate the changes that Kosovo has gone through as a result of the diaspora's temporary seasonal influx during the summer of months. In the first decade of the Twenty-First Century, the diaspora was seen as a modernizing force as well as a symbol of culture preservation. It will be argued that this positive notion has been increasingly challenged in the last few years. This paper aims to look deeper into why the



attitude of locals has shifted from being welcoming to a more reserved one in relation to its ethnoscape.

#### Kondwani Macdonald Mhone (Malawi)



**Title:** Engagement of Local Councils and Community Structures in Eradicating Child Marriage

**Supervisors:** Milica Minić

Child marriage remains an issue in Malawi as its prevalence remains one of the highest in the world. Evidence points to girls being affected disproportionately with one out of six girls married off before the age of 15, compared to one out of nine boys married before the age of 18. The problem has led to multiple negative outcomes for the girls: dropping out of school, teen pregnancies and health complications, including death. Despite its interventions, Malawi has registered an insignificant decrease in child marriage in recent years. The main cause is understood to be the lack of sustainability and coordination of the projects and programs as a result of the exclusion of some key actors in the course of implementation. This project aims to strengthen the structures and ensure that the district councils and community leaders are accountable for the issue. This will create an environment with active urgency on the issue. The project will use the approach of raising awareness in communities and empowering the girls and communities to take part in ending child marriage. As its main objective, it will ensure that the district councils have bylaws on child marriage and that the development plans include specific and realistic interventions to end child marriage.

#### Lensa Biyena Geleta (Ethiopia)



**Title:** Making Gender Matter in Ethiopian Politics

**Supervisor:** Dr. Jón Ingvar Kjaran

This project recognizes the recent developments across the world, including in Ethiopia, that have resulted in the rise in the number of women actively participating in politics. First as voters, and later as candidates and elected leaders. The project further recognizes that the existence of elected representatives of women in political spaces with the power to make decisions has not effectively resulted in the expected gender-sensitive public policies, budgets and legislation. The project attributes this to the limited awareness of the elected women leaders of the gender issues in communities; the non-existence of platforms for women in communities to engage with their leaders; and the absence of opportunities for stakeholder collaborations on advancing gender issues through political representation. The project thus proposes to address this gap by piloting a series of interventions in Addis Ababa, over 3 years, aimed at building the capacity of representatives of women in parliament and political parties on gender; building the capacity of women in communities to regularly and effectively engage with their representatives; and establishing networks for collaboration amongst civil society organizations, parliamentarians, political parties, and women in communities.

### Marta Bojović (Serbia)



**Title:** The Sounds of Silence: A Small-Scale Scoping Study on Self-Censorship Among Female Serbian Bloggers

**Supervisor:** Dr. Thomas Brorsen Smidt

This research is conceived of as a small scoping study that explores the relationship between online hate speech and the tendency of Serbian female bloggers to self-censor. In the first part of the essay, the problems of defining hate speech and determining the difference between online and offline hate speech are considered, and the question as to whether hate speech should be protected as free speech is addressed. In order to explore the connection between hate speech and self-censorship, both thematic and critical discourse analysis is used to analyse data from a survey conducted with nine bloggers. Research results showed that the hate speech instances against them were the result of emotional states of the perpetrators, and as such, they were expected to be the carriers of emotional labour. The results also proved that even though the bloggers use self-censorship as a means of protecting themselves, they still receive hate comments. Although they expressed unwillingness to attach the label of victims onto them, they still recognized the importance of tackling the problem hate speech. The findings of this work provide new possibilities for future research on this topic.

### Mirna Nazeer Hussain Ansari (Palestine)



**Title:** Juvenile Delinquency and Masculinity: The Need for Gender-responsive Programming in Juvenile Correctional Institutions in Palestine

**Supervisor:** Védís Ólafsdóttir

Juvenile reoffending is a costly and perplexing social problem in Palestine. Palestinian boys are brought up in a system that encourages hegemonic forms of masculinities involving competition, hierarchy, stoicism, sexism, and homophobia. These tendencies are reinforced through institutional and interpersonal mechanisms and through the experience of living under Israeli military occupation. This paper discusses the importance of redefining and reconstructing masculinity in the Palestinian juvenile correction centres. This paper discusses how youth identities, and specifically their gendered selves, are maintained or disrupted while in the juvenile correctional treatment programs in Palestine. The specific analysis will include assessing the need for a gendered responsive program in the Palestinian context. The discussion seeks to open an angle of conversation concerning the significance of masculinities in juvenile delinquency centres in Palestine. The paper poses an alternative lens through which to examine whether the juvenile system in Palestine fulfils its charge of therapeutic rehabilitation in order to prevent future involvement in crime and, if not, how we can implement a gender-responsive program to help improve the current system.

### Najla'a A. M. Attaallah (Palestine/Gaza)



**Title:** Towards the Implementation of Effective Gender Mainstreaming in UNRWA Infrastructure Projects

**Supervisor:** Magnea Marinósdóttir

The project proposes a systematic model of United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) infrastructure projects to make them more rights-based and gender responsive. The project aims to: 1) institutionalize gender and human rights (HRs) analysis and mainstreaming within the infrastructure department, 2) build the capacity of the staff to conduct gender and

HRs analysis and mainstream the findings into the design of infrastructure project to make them human rights and gender responsive.

The project is therefore divided into three parts. First, developing a gender and HRs mainstreaming guideline for the infrastructure department with a focus on education facilities, and reviewing all policies for this purpose such as the bidding process from gender and HRs perspective. Second, capacity building for the staff, and third, application of skills where the staff will develop rehabilitation designs for school buildings in Gaza strip from gender and HRs perspective.

### Rayma Titia Amélia Rajá (Mozambique)



**Title:** Providing Gender Equality Education in the Work Sector at Eduardo Mondlane University EMU

**Supervisor:** Brynja Elisabeth Halldórsdóttir

The project calls for action and engagement with gender equality issues and women's rights at Eduardo Mondlane University (UEM) in Mozambique, following the perceived lack of knowledge of women's rights and policies against sexual harassment at the institution. Indeed, the project's main objective is to provide gender equality education at the workplace at the UEM in order to promote knowledge on gender

equality and women's rights, as a means of reducing cases of sexual harassment and, consequently, school dropout. To attain its goals, the project will implement short courses on gender issues, women's rights, sexuality and sexual harassment throughout the UEM. It is expected that the aforementioned activities will raise awareness of gender issues in the UEM academic community. The project also proposes strategies to tackle sexual harassment, including the creation of a unit where girls and women can report incidents of harassment, and the establishment of a gender and anti-sexual harassment policy aimed at safeguarding women's rights at UEM.

### Rita Berisha (Kosovo)



**Title:** The Forgotten Contribution of Women in Two Pre-war Social Movements in Kosovo

**Supervisor:** Dr. Valur Ingimundarson

While Kosovar Albanian peaceful resistance in Kosovo has a long history, it has been marginalized in many ways, because of the emphasis on the 1990s armed struggle and wars in the ex-Yugoslavia. After the 1981 protests in Kosovo, the Illegalja movement – an underground protest movement led by Albanian students and intellectuals – continued

protest actions. The counter-measures of the authorities led to the imprisonment of many members, who were not freed until the early 1990s. From the Illegalja political prisoners emerged the idea of blood feud reconciliation as a necessity to stop the so-called eye for an eye law, which had a long tradition in Kosovo. This essay focuses on the crucial role of women in both movements, which has largely been suppressed because men have taken the credit for their activities. The topic is explored from the perspective of history and collective memory to show how women have been erased from master narratives. The predominant mode of remembering in independent Kosovo has to do with the Kosovo War, which mostly brackets out the period preceding it. Women's experiences and expectations are studied through interviews and newspapers and photos of statues of men in Prishtina are used to amplify scholarly works, giving an insight into what "should" be remembered and which part of history is neglected.

### Saja M. I Majdoubeh (Palestine)



**Title:** Requiem for Women's Subordination? Children's Right to Not Wear Religious Symbols

**Supervisor:** Auður Tinna Aðalbjarnardóttir

This research paper assumes that there is a right for children not to wear religious symbols and considers this right as a *prima facie* right, since it affects the autonomy and dignity of the individual. Thus it takes a more daring approach than that of the traditional human rights mechanisms. This assumption is based on the right of children to religious freedom. The paper shines a light on the connection between

children's enjoyment of religious freedom and women's subordination in a world in which religion, human rights and gender equality have never coexisted comfortably. It examines the role of the European Court of Human Rights in promoting the rights of children and the termination of women's subordination who have been indoctrinated to practice as subordinators from their childhood. The paper concludes that the ECtHR, like parents and states; is a part of the patriarchal system and avoids to make efforts to demolish it, even at the expense of human rights.

### Sanja Dojkić (Serbia)



**Title:** Body, Dignity, Imprisonment: The Invisible Women of County Jail in Belgrade

**Supervisors:** Guðrún Kristinsdóttir and Margrét Valdimarsdóttir

The increase of women in jails and prisons is a global trend. But even with that fact, prison and jail authorities fail to meet the specific needs of female detainees, because women remain a minority in these institutions. The fact is that some of the difficult experiences in jail are closely connected to the gender of the detainee. Women offenders are multitudinously marginalized – first, because of the mere fact that they

are women, with accompanying identities such as class, race and sexuality, and second, as people who broke the law. Women in County Jail in Belgrade are especially vulnerable because of the inhumane conditions they are put into for a (non-) specific amount of time, that affect their health, bodily integrity and self-perception. Not only are they vulnerable, but they are completely invisible to the public eye. Neglecting the issues of these women is a form of discrimination.

### Suhaila Mubariz Qaderi (Afghanistan)



**Title:** Women's Political Participation in Afghanistan

**Supervisor:** Rósa Guðrún Erlingsdóttir

This final assignment aims at discussing the numerous reasons why Afghan women do not use their votes in their own favour, leaving it to others to use their votes, either directly or by their name. After the Taliban collapsed in 2001, the new Afghan constitution contained specific provisions that ensured women have equal human rights, including the rights to education and work, in addition to determining the quota for women's representatives in the Afghan parliament, the Jirga. Women in Afghanistan meet the challenges faced by their constitution, for the purpose of administering and serving their country at all national and temporary levels. Although women have got political rights in Afghanistan, the culture is, especially in the municipalities, still largely patriarchal and indifferent to the role of liberal women in these communities. Additionally, women's abilities to exercise their rights are hindered by a depressingly low level of awareness. This assignment and the article that will result from it, focus on this problematic situation in the hope of contributing to the discussion on who in fact has the decision to vote, become a candidate or even a parliamentary representative of the people in Afghanistan.

### Thelma Aretha Kaliu (Malawi)



**Title:** Beyond Limits: Reducing the Prevalence of Sexual and Intimate Partner Violence in Institutions of Higher Learning in Malawi

**Supervisor:** Guðrún Sif Friðriksdóttir

*Beyond Limits* is a project designed to reduce the prevalence of sexual and intimate partner violence. The project targets private and public institutions of higher learning in Lilongwe city, Malawi. The project aims to empower young women of ages between 18-24 to lead and advocate for changes in attitudes and practices that perpetuate violence in these institutions. The project will empower young women to be analytical, courageous and to be activist to seek their rights and protection. Through training and mentorship, young women will be able to realize their self-worth and potential beyond the limitations set for them. Consequently, tolerance to violence will be reduced. With adequate capacity building, young women will establish youth groups to advocate against violence against women and to promote gender equality in universities. This project will promote collective action to increase accountability of university management in responding to GBV cases. It is with this background that the project shall influence changes in negative attitudes, behaviour and practices that perpetuate sexual and intimate partner violence.

### Valarie Jepkemoi Chemweno (Kenya)



**Title:** Contract Farming and Food Security Nexus: A Gender Perspective of the Avocado Sector in Kenya

**Supervisor:** Kirstín Flygenring

Contract farming (CF) is slowly gaining ground in Kenya, with the government urging farmers to dive deep, without thinking of its implications on the food security of the country. In Kenya, farmers are urged and almost coerced into the growing of avocado, and to abandon the farming of staple food crops with the promise that it will fetch better prices and higher incomes. While previous studies have shown the improved income for smallholder farmers who take part in contract farming, gender relations within contract farming schemes have largely been neglected. While contract farming is seen to be beneficial for the farmers who engage in it, the implications of ignoring one gender are dire and can lead to severe consequences like food insecurity in a country. This study seeks to make a connection between the complex interplay between food production and gender and how women are continually being kept out of modern supply chain systems like contract farming and suffering food insecurity in the process. This paper follows up on a gendered value chain analysis commonly done in the Global South Countries.

### Valens Mphezu (Malawi)



**Title:** Women Agri-Entrepreneurs in Malawi: Improving the Livelihoods of Rural Women

**Supervisor:** Dr. Erla Hín Hjálmarsdóttir

In Malawi, almost 92% of female-headed households live in rural areas and depend on subsistence agriculture for their daily livelihood. This proposal is for a project which aims to transform the livelihood of female-headed households in Chipande EPA in Blantyre District, Malawi, from living in ultra-poverty to having sustainable incomes and ensuring achievement of food security in their households. This is achieved by improved agricultural production, access to markets, and improved household intra-relationships. The goal is to economically empower 1,000 female-headed households through a range of activities, such as improved agricultural practices, use of new technologies, provision of inputs and development of agri-entrepreneur knowledge and skills. Further, actions will be taken to enhance access to markets, to include the construction of community market shelters, the establishment of a community-based transport system, and the formalization of farmer-buyer contracts. Improved household intra-relationships are essential for the project, as is a collaboration between household members to achieve the common goals and address gender imbalances. Household gender relations will be improved through the implementation of a household approach.

### Yagah Nakoja Batu (Ghana)



**Title:** Female Farmers' Access to Agricultural Information – Proposal for a PhD Research Project

**Supervisor:** Karl Benediktsson

In Ghana, female farmers have unequal access to agricultural information. This has not been given due recognition, despite the fact that female farmers dominate agriculture. Currently, it is not known how different categories of female farmers in Ghana access agricultural information and the challenges they encounter. It will be difficult to really prove how beneficial gender equality projects are. This proposed PhD research, therefore, aims to fill this gap in the literature by investigating whether widowed and married female farmers in the Pru District of Ghana have equal access to agricultural information or whether there are differences in this regard. It is important to note that removing inequalities between women increases their collective power to bridge the existing inequalities between women and men. The proposed research will employ a mixed method approach to research by using both quantitative and qualitative methods to investigate the identified research problem.

#### 2.2.2 Gender Scene in Iceland – Field visits

Parallel to the academic programme, the UNU-GEST programme organized an extra curriculum course referred to as Gender Scene in Iceland which consisted of lectures and field visits that provided the UNU-GEST fellows with insights to Icelandic history, political and legal institutions, and community based organizations. In 2019, the fellows received lectures from Kristín Ástgeirsdóttir on the history of the Icelandic women's movements; Freyja Haraldsdóttir on feminist disability activist movement of Tabú; and Kristbjörg Fjóra Hrólfsdóttir, the gender equality officer at the Reykjavík police. The fellows visited institutions such as Samtökin 78 (NGO dedicated to the rights and interests of LGBTQI+ people in Iceland) and Stígamót (education and counselling centre for survivors of sexual abuse and violence), the Supreme Court of Iceland, as well as the National Parliament of Iceland, Alþingi where they met the former Minister for Social Affairs and Equality, Mr. Þorsteinn Víglundsson.



*The 2019 cohort at the Supreme Court in Iceland*



*At Alþingi where the 2019 cohort met with Þorsteinn Víglundsson, former Minister for Social Affairs and Equality.*

### 2.2.3 Visit to the President of Iceland

At the beginning of April, the 2019 cohort of the UNU-GEST programme had the honour of being received by the President of Iceland, Mr. Guðni Th. Jóhannesson, at the presidential residence Bessastaðir. The president opened the event with a welcoming speech after which three fellows spoke. Gabriel Oladipupo Ogbeyemi, from Nigeria, spoke of the purpose of the GEST programme and the diversity of expertise present in the 2019 cohort. Next to speak was Suhaila Mubariz Qaderi, from Afghanistan. Suhaila related her main reasons for joining the GEST programme; inequality in many areas of society despite full equality by law and, in particular, the paucity of women in positions of power. She noted that when women hold positions of leadership and participate equally with men in policy and decision making, equality in many other aspects of life will follow. Finally, Rita Berisha, from Kosovo, gave an example of the final assignments fellows were currently working on by describing her research into the roles and largely hidden history of women in ethnic Albanians' protest and human rights movements during the latter half of the 20th century, giving those present a glimpse into the history of Kosovo.



*The 2019 cohort, with four GEST staff members, visited Mr. Guðni Th. Jóhannesson at the presidential residence Bessastaðir*



### 2.2.4 Graduation

The 2019 graduation ceremony was held in Askja at the University of Iceland on 21 May 2019. Dr. Irma Erlingsdóttir, Director of UNU-GEST, gave the opening address. She was followed by Mr. Sturla Sigurjónsson, Permanent Secretary of State at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Dr. Jón Atli Benediktsson, Rector of the University of Iceland. Ms. Vigdís Finnbogadóttir, the patron of the UNU-GEST programme and the former President of Iceland, presented the Vigdís Finnbogadóttir Award of Excellence for the best final assignment to Najla'a Attaallah from Gaza Palestine. The award assignment was a project proposal: "Towards the Implementation of Effective Gender Mainstreaming in UNRWA Infrastructure Projects". Hassan Waddimba from Uganda, spoke on behalf of the graduating fellows and said that they had learned that "despite the differences we have in ethnicity, religion, orientation, or social status, our struggles in this world are similar". He added that "we start by changing ourselves, and then the world around us".



*Ms. Vigdís Finnbogadóttir with Najla'a Attaallah who received the Vigdís Finnbogadóttir Award of Excellence*



*The 2019 GEST cohort with the Director of GEST, Rector of University of Iceland and Ms. Vigdís Finnbogadóttir, the patron of the programme.*

### 2.3 Selection of 2020 fellows

Selection for the spring term 2020 took place from April through September 2019. GEST received 122 nominations from civil societies, governments and universities from 24 countries. Of the 122 nominations, 64 individuals were interviewed, 34 via Zoom and 30 in person during GEST's mission to Malawi and Uganda. Based on these interviews, GEST selected 25 qualified candidates from 14 countries to participate in the 2020 programme, and waitlisted 14 more. Six candidates were ultimately unable to join the programme for a variety of reasons: personal, academic and visa-related. Only one waitlisted candidate was able to be offered a place early enough to complete the residence permit and visa process. This left the 2020 cohort at 20 fellows. Twelve of these fellows were selected through the open call, five through the Erasmus+ Grant Scheme, one of whom was later moved to the open call

category, one seat was reserved for nominated candidates from the NUDIPU (see 2.1.3) and one seat was partly funded by the Icelandic Red Cross and reserved for an expert in the Malawi Red Cross. For the first time, the GEST programme accepted nominations from the Arctic with earmarked funding, with priority given to candidates who identified as indigenous. After a lengthy search, a candidate from Yakutia in Russia was identified.

Country	Number of fellows	Funding source
Afghanistan	1	Erasmus+/GEST
Cameroon	1	GEST
Ghana	1	Erasmus+/GEST
Malawi	3	GEST
Malawi	1	Icelandic Red Cross/GEST
Mozambique	1	GEST
Nigeria	1	Erasmus+/GEST
Nigeria	1	GEST
Palestine	1	GEST
Russia	1	Arctic
Sri Lanka	2	GEST
South Africa	1	GEST
Uganda	3	GEST
Uganda	1	Equality Fund/GEST
Uganda	1	Erasmus+/GEST

### 3. Short courses

The UNU-GEST programme offers a variety of short courses based on demand in partner countries. The courses are in fields where Iceland has significant competitive capacity with respect to gender and are designed for targeted participants, often district level officials. In 2019, two short courses took place in Malawi and Uganda, with a total of over 120 participants.

#### 3.1 Teaching gender to youth

The short course Teaching gender to youth was conducted in Mangochi, Malawi 15-19 April 2019 in partnership with the Embassy of Iceland in Malawi. The course was piloted in 2018 in Iceland with the objective of providing know-how and critical understanding on how to advocate and develop curricula for teaching gender equality at the secondary school level. The course was tailored to the needs of teachers, researchers, curriculum developers, educational administrators, and policy makers.

The main objectives of the course were to offer tools on how to develop curricula for gender studies at secondary school level that would include discussions of identity and privilege, gender roles and stereotypes, healthy relationships, and the spectrum of violence; to examine strategies for advocating and generating support for gender reform at high school level, both on the macro level (policy makers and curriculum developers), and on the micro level (in schools – teachers and key mediators); and to identify strategies to ensure student participation and support the student body in self-organizing as agents of change. In addition,

the training encompassed discussions on strategies to multiply and upscale pilot programmes and create networks of gender studies programmes at secondary school level.



*Participants and instructors at the short course Teaching Gender to Youth, in Mangochi Malawi.*

The training was delivered by Þórður Kristinsson and Kristín Ragnarsdóttir to a group of 56 participants.

### **3.2 Gender and climate change in Uganda**

In 2019, UNU-GEST, in partnership with the Ugandan Government; Climate Change Department and the School of Women and Gender Studies at Makerere University in Kampala with the support of the Icelandic Foreign Ministry, conducted a short training course on Gender and climate change in two locations in Uganda, Mbale and Mbarara.

In late 2018, UNU-GEST set in motion a revision of its training manual on Gender and climate change from 2013 in collaboration with a Course Development Team (CDT), which consisted of members who participated in the development of the content in 2013. The revision was completed in the beginning of June 2019 and the first training was conducted in Mbale town, Uganda 10-14 June 2019. The training was attended by 30 specialists from Karamoja region, Bududa and Mbale, representing different sectors within district local governments, and representatives of CSOs.

The second training took place in the South Western Region, Mbarara during the last week of September 2019 and was also attended by representatives from different sectors within district local governments and representatives of CSOs.



*Participants and instructors at the short course Gender and Climate Change at Mbale in Uganda.*

The trainings were led by the CDT consisted of Beatrice Mukasa, a specialist in gender and climate change, Lawrence Aribo and Bob Natifu from Uganda Meteorology Authority and Uganda Climate Change Department at the Ministry of Water and Environment, and Maria Nandago, a GEST coordinator.

### **3.3 Gender and climate change in Malawi**

During GEST's mission to Malawi in late August 2019, GEST's project manager explored the interest and need among potential partners to develop a short course on gender and climate change in Malawi. Representatives of Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR), Ministry of Gender, Children and Disabilities as well as Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Environment all expressed their interests in participating in the development of the course as well as a need for such a course on the local level.

## **4. Research and projects**

The objective of the UNU-GEST research programme is to influence policy and debate regarding gender equality by conducting policy-based research and by disseminating research findings and outputs in peer-reviewed papers published in academic journals, conference papers and other publications as well as to policymakers. It also aims to build research and teaching capacity within partner academic institutions in developing countries and influence policy making in the field of gender equality within partner countries and institutions. UNU-GEST's strategic research programme is based on three interrelated and interdisciplinary research themes, addressing gender equality and social justice at its core: I. Sustainability; II. Human security; and III. Societal transitions. UNU-GEST fosters close collaboration with academic institutions and researchers in developing countries.

### **4.1 UNU-GEST Ph.D. and post-doctoral scholarship programme**

In 2018, UNU-GEST launched a doctoral and post-doctoral fellowship programme. The doctoral programme targets young researchers from developing and conflict/post-conflict countries, conducting policy-based research within the context of UNU-GEST research

priorities. The post-doctoral programme engages emerging scholars who work towards establishing research clusters in partnership with universities and research institutes in UNU-GEST partner countries.

#### 4.1.1 Women's participation in fish value chain and value chain governance in Malawi



In 2019, GEST alumna Chikondi Lydia Manyungwa of Malawi became the UNU-GEST's first doctoral grant recipient, thereby launching the GEST Ph.D. Scholarship Programme. Ms. Manyungwa is pursuing a Ph.D. degree with the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences at the University of the Western Cape in South Africa and is a specialist at Malawi's Department of Fisheries. Her doctoral research centres on the Malawian fish value chain and utilizes gender transformative approaches to analyse the factors that influence women's participation in the fish value chain and value chain governance, and women's and men's perceptions and experiences in value chain processes. In

November 2019, she published an article entitled "Women's engagement in and outcomes from small-scale fisheries value chains in Malawi: effects of social relations" in the journal *Maritime Studies*.

#### 4.2 Partnership projects

##### 4.2.1 Women and girls' effective participation in peace, security and recovery in Mozambique

In 2017, UNU-GEST became a partner in the UN Women Mozambique-led project, "Promoting women and girls' effective participation in peace, security and recovery in Mozambique," working with UN Women in Mozambique and Eduardo Mondlane University (UEM) in Maputo, Mozambique. The objective of the project is to contribute to the governance and education on women peace and security in Mozambique. The UNU-GEST's main role is to include stakeholders in its academic programme, with an expected outcome of six Mozambican experts completing a post-graduate diplomas from UNU-GEST with an emphasis on women peace and security and gender mainstreaming. Three Mozambican fellows completed the programme in 2018, and another three in 2019. UNU-GEST also supports research efforts in a scoping study carried out by UEM in 2018. The project runs from 2017 to 2020.

#### 5. Knowledge transmission and transnational dialogue

UNU-GEST organizes conferences, seminars and workshops for special events or around specific themes and topics as a part of its mission of knowledge transmission and transnational dialogue. The overall objective is to provide participants with access to an international platform to generate and recreate a transnational dialogue within gender equality thus providing an opportunity for participants to develop their capacity in addressing gender equality issues in their work, communities or even at country level.

## 5.1 Conferences, events, presentations, lectures and seminars

### 5.1.1 UNU-GEST/RIKK lecture series 2019

In collaboration with RIKK - Institute for Gender, Equality and Difference, University of Iceland, UNU-GEST has for the past five years run a public lecture series during the spring semester, where experts from various fields contribute to the gender equality dialogue. The range of topics spans public health, development, economy, feminist scholarship, gender-based violence, history, literature etc. In the spring semester 2019, the theme of the UNU-



GEST/RIKK lecture series was gender, health and trauma. The lecture series is intended to reach a wide audience in Iceland. This spring, seven lectures addressed a broad range of topics within the theme. They contributed to the academic dialogue in Iceland with free admission for the entire university and local communities.

In spring 2019 the following Icelandic and international lecturers/scholars presented:

- Edda Björk Þórðardóttir, postdoctoral researcher, Faculty of Medicine, University of Iceland: "Trauma and its Health-related Effects," 10 January 2019.
- Henri Myrntinen, PhD in gender studies: "Broadening the Scope: The Benefits and Risks of Integrating Masculinities and LGBTIQ Perspectives into Women, Peace and Security," 24 January 2019.
- Zilka Spahić Šiljak, PhD in gender studies: "Victim or Survivor? Choosing Identity and Being Acknowledged after Wartime Sexual Violence," 7 February 2019.
- Marsha Henry, interim director of the Centre for Women, Peace and Security and associate professor in the Department of Gender Studies at the London School of Economics and Political Science: "Reflections on Gender and Transformative Wellbeing in Postconflict Contexts: The Political Economy of Sexual Violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Liberia," 21 February 2019.
- Nanna Hlín Halldórsdóttir, PhD in philosophy: "Do you take vitamin D? Health, neoliberalism and individualisation of responsibility," 7 March 2019.
- Dagný Kristjánsdóttir, professor in Icelandic contemporary literature: "'There Was a Child in the Valley ...'. On Children in Pain and more in the Works of Steinunn Sigurðardóttir," 21 March 2019.
- Bryndís Björk Ásgeirsdóttir, associate professor in psychology and Rannveig Sigurvinsdóttir, assistant professor in psychology: "Trauma, Mental Health and Social Context," 4 April 2019.
- Gunnþórunn Guðmundsdóttir, professor in literature: "Inheriting Memories: Trauma and Biographical Writing," 2 May 2019.

### 5.1.2 Seminar on Women, Business and the Law – Launch of the New World Bank Report 2019

UNU-GEST fellow Kondwani Mhone took part in the Seminar on Women, Business and the Law – Launch of the new World Bank report 2019 at Hilton Reykjavík Nordica. The seminar was hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Iceland in partnership with the World Bank. The main findings of the new Women, Business and the Law (WBL) study report for 2019 were introduced and discussed in global and local context. The UNU-GEST fellow, Kondwani Mhone, participated in a panel focused on local initiatives for gender equality and was joined by presenters from the public and private sectors in Iceland.



### 5.1.3 The Bystander Moment: Transforming Rape Culture at its Roots

On March 8, International Women’s Day, UNU-GEST hosted a movie screening in Háskólabíó. The Bystander Moment tells the story of the innovative bystander approach to prevent sexual harassment and abuse, developed by activist and writer Jackson Katz and his colleagues.

### 5.1.4 African Peacekeeping Training Centres: Socialisation as a Tool for Peace?

Anna Flaspöler, researcher at EDDA Center of Excellence and UNU-GEST, discussed her research and her new book: “African Peacekeeping Training Centres: Socialisation as a Tool for Peace?” at Veröld at the University of Iceland on the 11 March. The analysis is based on two contrasting case studies, from Ghana and South Africa.

### 5.1.5 Conference on Men and Masculinities in Mozambique

In February 2019, UNU-GEST staff members Anna Guðrún Aradóttir and Thomas Brorsen Smidt visited Mozambique where they attended the conference Men, Masculinities and Gender Equality in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean: Inter-regional dialogues. The conference was organised by UNESCO and HOPEM. At the conference, Thomas Brorsen Smidt presented the experiences of UNU-GEST in teaching masculinity studies to men from all over the world and argued for the continued importance of facilitating South-South collaborations on gender equality as part of the global effort to engage men and boys.



### 5.1.6 CSW63 Side event

#### Women at the Table! Transformative Change - Women Shaping the Agenda of Peace

In partnership with the Nordic Women Mediator Network in Iceland (see 5.3.1) UNU-GEST organized a side event to the 63<sup>rd</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women: Women at the Table! Transformative Change - Women Shaping the Agenda of Peace in New York on 13 March 2019. The side event was supported by the Office of the Prime Minister and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Iceland. The panellists included women from Iceland, Northern Ireland, Kosovo, and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) who shared their experiences of meaningful participation of women shaping the political and peace agendas. The event was moderated by Dr. Sarah Taylor from the International Peace Institute. At the event, panellists discussed how to create conditions for women to shape their agenda by means of consolidating their perspectives, interests and demands into a clear mandate of unified positions, and how women – while backed and supported from a broad coalition of women – can deliver as a unified front with the aim of influencing peace agreements, transitional justice and the political agenda.



### 5.1.7 Opening the (Gender) Blinds: Conference on Gender and Substance Use

UNU-GEST in partnership with RIKK, the Root and the Gender Equality Agency of Iceland hosted a two-day conference 28 February - 1 March on gender and substance use: Opening the (Gender) Blinds, Towards an Inclusive Gender-Based View of Trauma and Addiction.



Until recently, the role and centrality of gender in relation to addiction has been largely under-theorised and overlooked, especially in dominant biomedical and criminal justice models. There is, however, growing recognition of the need to increase awareness and expand the knowledge base of gender issues in studies of addiction, trauma, and treatment.



### 5.1.8 NORA 2019 Conference: Border Regimes, Territorial Discourse & Feminist Politics



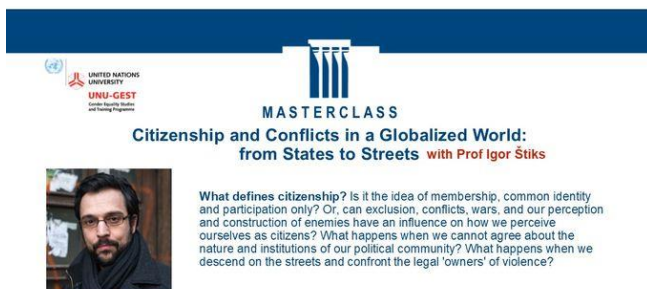
The NORA (Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research) conference 2019 took place at the University of Iceland 22-24 May 2019. The conference was co-hosted by UNU-GEST, RIKK – Institute for gender, equality and difference, and the EDDA research centre. The conference included over 250 presentations as well as five keynote presentations. The conference focused on critical feminist cross-disciplinary research and activities relying on contemporary and/or historical perspectives

as well as the theme of material and symbolic borders in a period of nationalist revival, putting forward questions on the return to territoriality; the construction of new political, cultural and social boundaries; the shaping of border regimes gendering relations; the boundaries affecting work for social justice and equality as well as intersectional, gender, queer and feminist research, and how feminist resistance can be organized against paternalistic modes that reinstate and reinforce relations of inequality.

### 5.1.9 ReNEW Summer School

ReNEW (Reimagining Norden in an Evolving World) is a research hub established in 2018 to enhance cooperation to develop new and path-breaking excellence in research about the Nordic region. One of ReNEW's activities during the five-year duration of the project is to organize annual summer schools. UNU-GEST hosted the first ReNEW summer school in May 2019, in collaboration with the EDDA research center, the Icelandic ReNEW project leader. Fourteen students from Sweden, Finland, Poland, Denmark and Iceland attended the ReNEW Summer School 2019 at the University of Iceland. The overall topic of the summer school was Nordic trends in gender studies and the main target group were PhD students and advanced MA students. Experts within the field introduced students to four separate but interlinked pillars of current Nordic gender research: Intersectionality, migration and labour markets, post-colonialism, as well as trans issues and queer theory. The summer school programme concluded with students attending the NORA Conference: Border Regimes, Territorial Discourses and Feminist Politics.

### 5.1.10 Citizenship and Conflicts in a Globalized World: From States to Streets



On 4-6 July, Professor Igor Štiks, a writer and an academic, conducted a masterclass on Citizenship and Conflicts in a Globalized World: From States to Streets. The masterclass was organized in collaboration between UNU-GEST, the Faculty of Media and Communications in Belgrade and the

Center for Comparative Conflict Studies Belgrade and took place at the University of Iceland. In the masterclass, professor Štiks addressed some of the questions about citizenship: What defines citizenship? Is it the idea of membership, common identity and participation only? Or,

can exclusion, conflicts, wars, and our perception and construction of enemies have an influence on how we perceive ourselves as citizens? What happens when we cannot agree about the nature and institutions of our political community? What happens when we descend on the streets and confront the legal ‘owners’ of violence? The masterclass was dedicated to general theories of citizenship, the struggles over citizens’ rights, political conflicts, and social inequalities. After examining legal and political uses and misuses of citizenship related to status and rights of individuals, the masterclass distinguished further between active and activist citizenship and how citizens can shape their political communities and respond to global challenges. The case of the Balkans—and especially of Yugoslavia and the post-Yugoslav states—offers a valuable insight into the fine mechanics and repeating glitches of modern politics, applicable to multinational states in the European Union and beyond.

#### 5.1.11 SOGIE Refugee Workshop

In the autumn of 2018, a research project on refugee claims related to sexual orientation, gender identity and expression (SOGIE) was initiated at UNU-GEST in collaboration with Nordic and UK partners. On 11-12 October 2019, the GEST programme launched a two-day workshop at the Nordic House in Reykjavík with the goal of strengthening Nordic scholarly communities in a way that will address challenges of SOGIE asylum and integration at an intra-Nordic level. The workshop brought together experts from all of the Scandinavian countries to discuss the prospects of collaborating on research related to SOGIE asylum and integration processes. Lively discussions on the mapping of existing data, analysing relevant policies, and carrying out in-depth interviews with different stakeholder groups took place. At the end of the workshop, a range of different research collaborations across the Nordic region were established, including the official launch of The Queer Refugee Research Network, or QUEEN. The workshop was supported by the Nordic Council of Ministers and ReNEW.

#### 5.1.12 #MeToo: Moving Forward

The conference #MeToo: Moving Forward took place in Harpa, Reykjavík on 17-19 September. The conference was a part of the Icelandic Presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers in 2019 and was organized in collaboration with RIKK – Institute for Gender, Equality and Difference at the University of Iceland. Speakers included Angela Davis, Cynthia Enloe, Roxane Gay, Liz Kelly and Gary Barker. GEST staff who spoke at the conference, included Dr. Irma Erlingsdóttir, the director of UNU-GEST; Dr. Giti Chandra, senior researcher; Dr. Thomas Brorsen, project manager; and Dr. Jón Ingvar Kjarran, head of research.



### 5.1.13 The Imagine Forum: Women for Peace

UNU-GEST co-hosted the conference “The Imagine Forum: Women for Peace” alongside Höfði Reykjavík Peace Centre on October 10, 2019. Speakers included Madeleine Rees, Secretary General of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF); Aya Mohammed Abdulla, UNHCR supporter; Fawzia Koofi, Afghan politician and women’s rights activist; Mariam Safi, Founding Director of the Organization for Policy Research and Development Studies (DROPS); Bronagh Hinds, co-founder of the Northern Ireland Women’s Coalition and founder of the DemocraShe; Aiko Holvikivi, researcher at the Centre for Women, Peace and Security, London School of Economics and Political Science; Zinat Pirzadeh, Iranian/Swedish award-winning comedian and author; and T Ortiz, human rights activist, anti-trafficking and exploitation coordinator at Baltimore Child Abuse Center and Founder of TalkWithT.com. UNU-GEST was especially excited about the speaker Harriet Adong, executive director of the Foundation for Integrated Rural development in Uganda (FIRD) and GEST alumna.



### 5.1.14 Gender Equality: A key for economic and social development in Europe and beyond

The Icelandic Ministry for Foreign Affairs, in partnership with the Comisao Para a Cidadania e a Igualdade de Género (Portugese Equality Ombud), the Norwegian Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud and the EEA Grants Financial Mechanisms Office (FMO) hosted a conference in Reykjavík 31 October - 1 November on best practices in the field of gender equality. UNU-GEST participation in the conference was twofold, Dr. Irma Erlingsdóttir was invited to present the programme and lessons learned, and UNU-GEST project managers participated in a session for potential partner matching.

### 5.1.15 Gender, South Africa and Southern Theory

On 11 November, the GEST programme hosted prominent South African gender and masculinities scholar Dr. Robert Morrell from the University of Cape Town. The author and editor of 10 books, over 100 journal articles and book chapters, he is one of the most cited scholars in his field. Dr. Morrell gave a lecture in which he traced the origins of feminism in South African history and followed the course of gender politics to the present, connecting this history to southern theory.

### 5.1.16 Reykjavík Global Forum: Women Leaders

The annual international conference Reykjavík Global Forum: Women Leaders took place in Reykjavík 18-19 November. Women leaders from around the globe visited Iceland to participate in discussions and share ideas on how to further advance societal change. The UNU-GEST contributed to two events related to the Reykjavík Global Forum: a formal session of Leader Talks in Harpa, as the Icelandic operational partner of Nordic Women Mediators in partnership with the Icelandic Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Iceland, and at a side event organized by the Vigdís Finnbogadóttir Institute, where Dr. Irma Erlingsdóttir, director of

UNU-GEST, participated in a panel on Women, Leadership and the Sustainability of Languages and Cultures.

The LeadersTalks session in Harpa was titled The Women, Peace and Security agenda - a platform for transformative change, and focused on the UN Security Council Resolution on Women, Peace and Security (WPS). Almost 20 years after its adoption, women continue to be excluded from formal peace processes and continue to face inequality and violence. The session explored the mobilisation and strategic action to create change and sustain transformative WPS gains.



Dr. Irma Erlingsdóttir, the Director of UNU-GEST, participated in a side event on Women, Leadership and the Sustainability of Languages and Cultures, hosted by the Vigdís



Finnbogadóttir Institute at Veröld, House of Vigdís at the University of Iceland. The panel was made up of Ms. Vigdís Finnbogadóttir, former President of Iceland, Ms. Katrín Jakobsdóttir, the Icelandic Prime Minister, Ms. Dalia Grybauskaitė, former President of Lithuania and Chair Emerita of the Council of Women World Leaders, and Ms. Julia Gillard, former Prime Minister of Australia. The panel discussion included endangered languages as well as the importance and power of languages, especially languages spoken by small populations.

### 5.1.17 10-Year Anniversary New Challenges, Opportunities and Collaborations

The GEST programme celebrated its 10-year anniversary at the Kenya Institute for Curriculum Development (KICD) Nairobi in collaboration with the UNESCO Management of Social Transformations Programme (MOST) and the Kenya National Commission for UNESCO (KNATCOM). In a three-day seminar 16-18 December, eleven former GEST fellows from Uganda, Malawi, Mozambique and Palestine presented their current work in gender equality in their home countries and contributed to a discussion on GEST alumni strategy. Moreover, several international scholars and experts presented their research in the fields of higher education, masculinity studies and climate change, so as to set the agenda for GEST's future priorities. The seminar was attended by local participants from UNESCO partner organizations in Nairobi, Kenya.



*GEST alumni, GEST staff, UNESCO staff, contributors and partners at the 10-year Anniversary in Nairobi, Kenya.*

### 5.3 International collaboration networks

#### 5.3.1 Nordic Women Mediators (NWM)

## **NORDIC WOMEN MEDIATORS** ICELAND

UNU-GEST coordinates the Icelandic Network of the Nordic Mediators (NWM) in close collaboration with the Icelandic

Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The NWM network was launched in Oslo in November 2015. The NWM is a network of women from five Nordic countries with professional expertise relevant to conflict mediation, peacebuilding and negotiations. The professionals share a commitment to sustaining peace through inclusive and meaningful participation of women in all phases of peace processes. Facilitating access and providing networking opportunities with mediating and peacebuilding actors globally, NWM is a collaborative forum and network, building on national women mediators' networks in all of the five Nordic countries.

The Nordic Women Mediators Network in Iceland is a network of 12-16 women which meets every 4-6 weeks. The network organizes events and meetings, and in 2019 the network co-organized a side event at CSW63 (5.1.5) and a side event at Reykjavík Global Forum (5.1.14). The Nordic Women Mediators annual meeting took place in Oslo, Norway 9-10 May 2019. The meeting was thematic, where Afghanistan, Libya



*Rasha Jarhum from Yemen, Marian Safi from Afghanistan, Rida Al Tubuly from Libya contributed to an open panel at the opening event at NWM annual meeting*

and Yemen were country cases, focusing on lessons learned and ways forward. The meeting was opened with a public event: Turning the Tables: Women's multiple roles in peace processes where Marian Safi from Afghanistan, Rida Al Tubuly from Libya and Rasha Jarhum from Yemen shared their experiences and challenges in bringing women to the negotiation tables. Védís Ólafsdóttir, UNU-GEST project manager attended the meeting with two Icelandic network members, Silja Bára Ómarsdóttir and Guðrún Sif Friðriksdóttir, and a representative from the Icelandic Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ólöf Hrefna Kristjánsdóttir.

## 5.4 Communication

### 5.4.1 Website and social media

UNU-GEST uses mainly its website, [www.gest.unu.edu](http://www.gest.unu.edu), and social media accounts via Facebook and Twitter to foster dialogue and for the dissemination and exchange of knowledge. Through these media UNU-GEST shares news about its programme and activities. UNU-GEST's newsletter is published electronically on the website each year.

### 5.4.2 Iceland outreach programme

In 2019, as in previous years, the UNU-GEST engaged with a number of local partners to enhance understanding among the Icelandic local community about the UNU-GEST mandate and its impact on gender equality in a global context. The Iceland outreach efforts serve a threefold purpose:

- to empower the fellows and serve as a good exercise in public speaking, gender advocacy and outreach
- allow the fellows to better connect to the Icelandic society and its people
- increase the visibility of UNU-GEST within Iceland

In 2019, selected fellows visited Icelandic upper secondary schools (students aged 16-19 years old) and presented the UNU-GEST post graduate programme and their personal motivation for gender equality. Sanja Dojkic, Rayma Raja and Issiko Aramadhan, visited the secondary school Fjölbautarskólinn við Ármúla (FÁ) in Reykjavík where they met students who are currently enrolled in gender studies. Gabriel Ogbeyemi, Najla'a Atallah and Imeldina Matimbe Rego visited the secondary school Kvennaskólinn í Reykjavík. The lecture was open to all students in the school and was well attended. Najla'a Attallah also visited Ingunnarskóli, where she met students in 9th and 10th grade from Iceland, the UK and Denmark who were participating in an Erasmus exchange programme focusing on refugees.



For the first time, UNU-GEST fellows travelled to both Akureyri and Ísafjörður to share their experiences within the field of gender equality. Lensa Geleta from Ethiopia and Valens Mphezu from Malawi gave a lecture at the University of Akureyri, in partnership with the Directorate of Equality. The lecture was well received. They also briefed the students in the secondary school Menntaskólinn á Akureyri about gender in the context of Ethiopia and Malawi. The

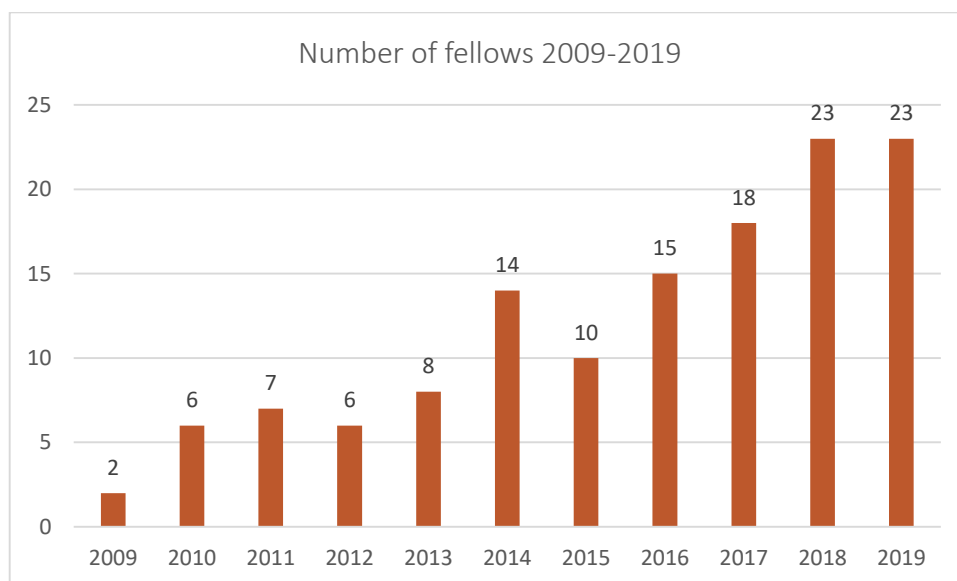
presentation was open to both students and teachers. Lastly, they visited the Icelandic Arctic Cooperation Network.

The Multi-Cultural Information Centre in Ísafjörður and the University Centre in Ísafjörður welcomed UNU-GEST fellows Irma Šiljak and Hassan Waddimba. Irma and Hassan shared their experiences from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Uganda at the University Centre and at the secondary school Menntaskólinn á Ísafirði (MÍ).



### 5.5 UNU-GEST alumni network

UNU-GEST aims to establish a sustainable network of alumni as a platform for past and future fellows to exchange knowledge, resources and project ideas for advancement of gender equality in different areas of expertise in their home countries and globally. The UNU-GEST alumni network is intended to encourage past fellows to sustain contact between peers, alumni and those joining the programme as future cohorts. Beyond this, the network hopes to involve alumni with current UNU-GEST projects, act as a bridge for academic integration with partner organizations and promote progression towards working for equality in gender-based fields.



Since its establishment in 2009, 132 fellows have graduated from the GEST and UNU-GEST postgraduate programmes from 22 countries. The majority of GEST alumni are located in Iceland's longstanding partner countries: Palestine, Malawi, Uganda, and Mozambique. In these locations, alumni country charters have been established. In 2019, UNU-GEST staff hosted three alumni charter meetings and one alumni gathering, where alumni's charters activities were discussed.

### 5.5.1 Alumni meeting in Mozambique



Anna Guðrún Aradóttir and Thomas Brorsen Smidt, GEST project managers, conducted an alumni network meeting in Mozambique on 28 February 2019.

### 5.5.2 Alumni meeting in Malawi



Guðrún Eysteinsdóttir, GEST's operations manager, and Védís Ólafsdóttir, project manager at GEST, co-hosted an alumni meeting with the Icelandic embassy in Malawi on 30 August 2019. The meeting was attended by 12 alumni who were introduced to the newest developments within the GEST programme. They also discussed potential cooperation within their network.

### 5.5.3 Alumni meeting in Uganda



Guðrún Eysteinsdóttir, GEST's operations manager and Védís Ólafsdóttir, project manager at GEST, co-hosted an alumni meeting with the Icelandic embassy in Uganda on 6 September 2019. The meeting was attended by 18 alumni, who discussed the structure of the alumni chapter in Uganda.

### 5.5.4 Alumni meeting in Bosnia & Herzegovina

During a GEST staff Erasmus+ visit to Sarajevo in Bosnia & Herzegovina, the GEST staff hosted a meeting with the Bosnian GEST alumni. It is a small alumni chapter, with three of four alumni attending the meeting.

## 6. Management, personnel and finance

### 6.1 Transitioning from UNU to GRÓ, UNESCO category 2 centre

After six years of collaboration, the United Nations University and the GEST programme parted ways in December 2019. The GEST programme joined the other three Icelandic former UNU programmes, Fisheries Training Programme, Geothermal Training Programme and Land Restoration Training Programme to form GRÓ - Centre for Capacity Development, Sustainable Use of Natural Resources and Societal Change under the auspices of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Culture Organization (UNESCO).



The Icelandic Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Director-General of UNESCO signed an agreement in December 2019, to form the UNESCO category 2 centre GRÓ, operational as of 1 January 2020.



The new category 2 centre, GRÓ in collaboration with the programmes' host institutions will continue to run the GEST, FTP, GTP and LRT training and scholarship programmes in 2020 and in the coming years. Through these four joint programmes, GRÓ will aim to strengthen organisational, institutional and individual capacities by promoting gender equality, women's

empowerment and social justice, sustainable use and management of living aquatic resources, the utilisation and sustainable management of reliable and environmentally sound geothermal energy resources and the restoration of degraded land and sustainable land management.

### 6.2 Personnel



**Dr. Irma Erlingsdóttir** is the Director of UNU-GEST. She is also an Associate Professor at the University of Iceland and the head of RIKK — Institute for Gender, Equality and Difference. She holds a Ph.D. from Sorbonne University and, as a specialist in critical theory, contemporary literature and gender, she has published articles and book chapters in these fields. In 2019, Dr. Irma Erlingsdóttir was among the world's 100 most influential people in gender policy according to Apolitical, a peer-to-peer learning and policy platform for governments and other public bodies. Apolitical publishes a list of those who are considered to have excelled in the field of gender equality research, policy making and activism; the 100 most influential people in gender policy were curated from 9000 nominations from gender experts in governments and leading international organizations.





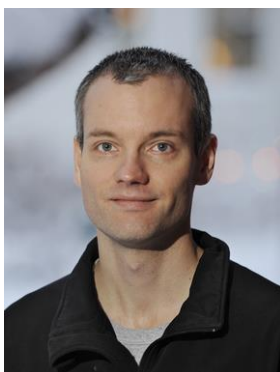
**Guðrún Eysteinsdóttir** is the operations manager of UNU-GEST and is in charge of all academic administration of the GEST fellows. Guðrún has been involved in higher education administration since 2001, having worked as a student advisor at the Icelandic Fulbright Commission, a project manager at the Institute of Public Administration and Politics at the University of Iceland, and at the UI School of Education. She holds a BA in Theatre Arts from San Francisco State University and an Ed.M degree in Higher Education from Harvard Graduate School of Education.



**Dr. Giti Chandra** has been a part-time lecturer at UNU-GEST since 2016 and is now a senior researcher in the programme. In 2018, Giti coordinated the module Gender, Security and Violence. Giti continued to lecture in the programme, and contributed to Gender, Security and Violence, Gender Theories and Concepts as well as teaching academic working methods in the UNU-GEST programme and providing academic supervision of fellow's final assignments. In 2019, Giti, together with Thomas Brorsen Smidt, project manager, developed the content for the first UNU-GEST edX online course, which will be launched in 2020. Dr. Giti Chandra was an associate professor at the Department of English at St. Stephen's College in New Delhi in India before relocating in Iceland in 2016.



**Milica Minić** is a senior project manager at UNU-GEST. In 2019, she coordinated the UNU- GEST module Gender and Development and developed the short course Teaching Gender to Youth. Milica holds an MA degree in Critical Gender Studies from the Central European University in Budapest, and an MA in Arts and Culture from the University of Utrecht. She is a specialist with over twenty years of experience in the field of gender and development, ranging from work in women's grassroots organizations and initiatives, to international development agencies and intergovernmental organizations such as UNIFEM.



**Dr. Jón Ingvar Kjaran** served as the academic coordinator and head of research for the UNU-GEST programme in 2019. During the spring semester of 2019, he was a module coordinator for the module Gender, theories and concepts; Gender, health and education; and Gender, labour and migration. He was also a final assignment supervisor. Jón Ingvar is an associate professor at the School of Education, Faculty of Diversity and Education, University of Iceland.



**Dr. Thomas Brorsen Smidt** is a project manager at the GEST programme. In 2019, Thomas contributed to the academic programme by teaching in the first module, Gender theories and concepts. Thomas has led research coordination of SOGIE refugees as well as the Renew summer school. In 2019, Thomas developed the content for UNU-GEST's first online edX course on Gender and intersectionality as well as initiating the UNU-GEST podcast. Thomas co-coordinated the GEST anniversary seminar in Kenya. Thomas graduated with a Ph.D. in Gender Studies from the University of Iceland in 2018. His research interests centre on gender in relation to higher education and work-life balance issues as well as to feminism, sexual politics, migration and queer theory. Before joining UNU-GEST, he worked as a researcher in the cross-national research project GARCIA under the 7th European Framework programme.



**Védís Ólafsdóttir** is a project manager at the GEST programme. She coordinates the short courses of Gender and climate change in Uganda and in Malawi. On behalf of the GEST programme she coordinates the Nordic Women Mediators network. Her contribution to the academic programme is through evaluations of the programme, coordination of the ERASMUS+ partnerships as well as support to the coordination of the module on Gender, environment and climate change. Védís has a BSc degree in International Business and Politics from the Copenhagen Business School, and an MA degree in Ethnology from the University of Iceland. She has worked internationally in China, Malawi and Jordan.



**Randi Stebbins** was the module coordinator for the Final Assignment in 2019 and taught in the module Gender, labour and migration. Randi is an attorney, focusing on humanitarian immigration cases for victims of domestic violence and other violent crimes. She is a co-director of the Writing Centre at the School of Education, University of Iceland.



**Anna Guðrún Aradóttir**, project assistant, left UNU-GEST in early 2019 to pursue her career in Mozambique. Anna Guðrún holds an MA degree in Global Studies from the University of Gothenburg and a BA degree in Anthropology from the University of Iceland.



**Flora Tietgen**, programme assistant, left the UNU-GEST in May 2019, to pursue Ph.D. research and studies at the University of Iceland School of Education. Flora has a MA degree in Political and Social Sciences from Würzburg University in Germany.



**Elín Björk Jóhannsdóttir** re-joined the UNU-GEST and its sister institutions RIKK, Institute for Gender, Equality and Difference and EDDA Research Center, as a project manager in June 2019. She had previously worked with the institutions in 2016. Elín holds an MA degree in Comparative Literature which she also studies at a PhD-level at Stony Brook University in the US, where she also worked as a teaching assistant and an undergraduate instructor.



**Nikkita Hamar Patterson** joined the UNU-GEST as a programme assistant in September 2019. Nikkita is an Icelandic-American doctorate student in English at the University of Iceland. Her background includes a BFA in Film and Video from the University of the Arts in Philadelphia (USA) and an MA in Literature, Culture and Media from The University of Iceland in Reykjavik. Her ongoing PhD research focuses on the expansion of the study of extreme cinema. Nikkita is also a sessional teacher at the University of Iceland, teaching in both the English and film studies department.

### 6.3 Academic Institutional Partnerships

Collaborative institutes and partners, research networks, academics and the general public are key stakeholders and audiences for academic programmes and research at UNU-GEST.

#### 6.3.1 Partnership with the University of Iceland

Since the establishment of the GEST programme, the University of Iceland (UI) has actively contributed to the development of the programme with direct financial support, administrative support, academic expertise and collaborative research institutes.

##### Direct financial support

- **Matching funds and grants:** The University of Iceland provides matching funds for all six teaching modules delivered by the UNU-GEST programme (completed credits). In addition, the UI provides matching funds for research associated with the programme.

- **Accommodation:** UNU-GEST fellows are guaranteed accommodation in student housing on campus as part of an agreement between GEST and the Icelandic Student Services (Félagsstofnun stúdenta) at a cost of ISK 70,000–90,000 per student per month, which is well below market rent in Reykjavík. Furthermore, GEST has access to university-owned apartments for its international guest lecturers and rooms at Radisson Hotel Saga via a contractual arrangement between the university and the hotel. This arrangement offers a highly convenient location and a cost-effective means of housing guest lecturers who play an integral role in the academic programme. These venues of accommodation allow inclusion of guest faculty to be part of the programme, while also participating in the academic life of the university and in the vibrant cultural and social offerings of Reykjavík.
- **Infrastructure:** GEST has access to the university's vast range of facilities for both faculty and students to hold classes, conferences, talks and symposiums. The university also offers students spaces for a whole range of activities – from the use of the gym to its cafes and canteens as well as a broad spectrum of social events and entertainment. The chance to be a part of an international university environment is also important to students who come from countries which have totally different socio-cultural, political and geographical features. To be a part of the university offers students from Africa, South-East Asia, West Asia, and Eastern Europe, an important, interactive social experience.

#### **Administrative support**

- The GEST programme is fully integrated into the University of Iceland's administrative structure, including accounting, human resources management, IT support and other services. It is, thus, part of the university like any other academic programme.
- GEST students do not only have access to the university infrastructure but also to its system of services, personnel and rights designed to ensure their well-being during their studies. This is particularly important to the enforcement of equal rights, non-discrimination and zero tolerance for sexual harassment and abuse. In addition, GEST students with disabilities would not be easily able to have the same level of accessibility and support elsewhere.

#### **Academic expertise**

GEST, which is part of the School of Humanities, has established interdisciplinary ties with all five schools of the University and/or different departments and faculties within them (the School of Humanities, the School of Social Sciences, the School of Education, the School of Engineering and Natural Sciences, and the School of Health Sciences). Prominent scholars, working in different departments at all the five UI schools have contributed greatly to the programme, e.g. through the development of specific modules (the School of Education and the School of Health Science). Gender specialists and/or professors specialized in equality research based at the School of Social Sciences and the School of Natural Sciences are also among UNU-GEST teachers and supervisors. The university has a large portfolio of externally funded research projects, including EU and Nordic projects, many of which are of benefit to the academic environment of GEST and associated scholars.

#### **RIKK & EDDA**

The primary Icelandic collaborative institutes in research and research formation in 2019 are the EDDA Research Centre and RIKK – Institute for Gender, Equality and Difference at the University of Iceland. Established in 1991, RIKK has been instrumental in promoting research



with a gender focus and discussions about gender related issues. The institute has from the outset been an interdisciplinary institution where scholars from the social sciences, natural sciences, health sciences and the humanities join forces. The University of Iceland is also the host institution of EDDA, an interdisciplinary centre in critical contemporary research, with emphasis on (in)equality and difference. Through its academic activities, EDDA's goal is to influence public policy and societal debates, especially in the fields of gender equality; social policies; participatory democracy; and foreign, security and development policies. Since its establishment, the GEST programme has had formal collaboration with both RIKK and EDDA. GEST collaborates with RIKK and EDDA in a number of workshops, publications, and knowledge sharing, for example with a public lecture series during the spring semester of 2019, where experts from various fields contributed to the gender equality dialogue. The range of topics spans public health, development, economy, feminist scholarship, gender-based violence, history, literature, climate change etc.

### 6.3.2 Erasmus+ grant scheme

The Erasmus+ grant scheme has become a major source of co-financing of fellows and visiting scholars for UNU-GEST. UNU-GEST collaborates with various universities with the aim to establish academic partnership to promote inter-cultural exchange of knowledge and provide students with the opportunity to be exposed to a community in Iceland which is at the global forefront of gender equality. The Erasmus+ programme further facilitates staff mobility to strengthen academic collaboration and research efforts.

In 2019, UNU-GEST had an inter-institutional agreement with the following Universities:

- Makerere University, Uganda
- Lagos State University, Nigeria
- The University of Ghana
- Manouba University, Tunisia
- University of Montenegro
- Singidunum University, Serbia (the Faculty of Media and Communications and the Center for Comparative Conflict Studies)
- The University of Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina (Center for Interdisciplinary Studies)
- Lebanese American University
- Kabul University, Afghanistan
- The University of Pristina, Kosovo
- Birzeit University, Palestine

In October 2019, two of the GEST staff attended an Erasmus+ workshop in Stockholm, to familiarize themselves with partner and funding opportunities within the Erasmus+ framework. Furthermore, seven GEST staff were funded by Erasmus+ staff mobility, to visit GEST's partner in Sarajevo, Bosnia & Herzegovina in October 2019. This was an occasion for the GEST staff to familiarize themselves with their partner in Sarajevo, as well as Bosnia & Herzegovina's history and cultural context.

### 6.3.3 GEMMA Erasmus Mundus community



In July, the GEST programme became part of the GEMMA Erasmus Mundus community. GEMMA is an Erasmus Mundus Master's Degree in Women's and Gender Studies. It is a programme of excellence geared towards high quality academic education and professional competencies for personnel working or intending to work in the areas of Women's Studies, Gender Studies and Equal Opportunities worldwide, supported by the European Commission. UNU-GEST is the first Nordic associated partner.