

COHORT OF FELLOWS



In January 2018, UNU-GEST will welcome 24 new fellows who will join the programme in Reykjavík, which is the largest cohort to date. The UNU-GEST team is looking forward to welcoming this diverse group and exchanging knowledge with them throughout the post-graduate diploma programme in international gender studies during the spring semester 2018. The young professionals who make up the 2018 cohort come from 14 countries: Afghanistan, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Burkina Faso, Kenya, Lebanon, Malawi, Montenegro, Mozambique, Nigeria, Palestine, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Tunisia and Uganda.

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Impressive results from an external evaluation of UNU-GEST

In September 2017, results from an external evaluation of the UNU programmes in Iceland were published. The evaluation was commissioned by the Icelandic Ministry for Foreign Affairs and conducted by the consultant firm Niras Indvelop, led by Cecilia M. Ljungman. The evaluation covered all of the four UNU programmes in Iceland: the Geothermal Training Programme (GTP), the Fisheries Training Programme (FTP), the Land Restoration Training Programme (LRT), in addition to UNU-GEST.

The evaluation uncovered many important findings that are useful for the strategic direction of the four programmes, but the overall findings were extremely positive. Despite being the youngest of the programmes, as UNU-GEST was only established in 2009 and launched as an UNU



institute in 2013, its work to date has generated impressive results. A survey carried by the evaluation team among alumni showed that on average 81% of the UNU-GEST survey respondents agreed strongly with the statement that they had brought new ways of thinking to their workplace since returning from Iceland. Many achievements of the former fellows were covered in the report which has been made available on the [UNU-GEST website](#).

Useful links:

- [UNU-GEST website](#)
- [June 2017 newsletter](#)
- [Overview of the post-graduate diploma programme](#)

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Gender Focused Value Chain Analysis of Aquaculture in Gaza Province, Mozambique

In this applied research project, led by Dr. Pétur Waldorff, senior researcher at UNU-GEST, the value chain for an aquaculture initiative in Gaza, rural Mozambique, will be analysed. This aquaculture initiative takes place in a geologically infertile area that has been dubbed "Terra Morta" (Land of Death) due to the earth's high salinity levels which do not allow for agricultural production. However, research has indicated that the area is ideal for Tilapia aquaculture, promising an economic use of an area that hitherto has been seen as dead, both agriculturally and economically. The project's objective is to help foster this new economic activity in the region in order to contribute to the social development of the area and empower stakeholders of the value chain in a gender equitable way. Fieldwork in Mozambique commenced in December 2017.

Staff and interns



Flora Tietgen from Germany joined UNU-GEST in January 2017 as a full-time research-intern, as a part of her M.A. studies in Political and Social Sciences at Wuerzburg University. Flora extended her stay at UNU-GEST and now holds a part-time position as a project assistant at UNU-GEST.



Irina S. Ogurtsova from Estonia joined the programme in September 2017. Her internship is a part of her master's degree in Baltic Sea Region Studies at the University of Tartu. She also holds a master's degree in Human Resource Management from the University of Iceland. She is primarily responsible for the administration for admission of new fellows, the alumni strategy and communication with UNU-GEST fellows.

EXCELENTFEM

The project "Women's Excellence in Scientific Research and Project Management" (EXCELENTFEM) was undertaken with the National University of Political Studies and Public Administration, Romania. Its goal was to promote women's excellence in scientific research and project management, and enhance research collaboration with Romanian partners. Project activities consisted of expert visits, and a collaborative workshop and an information seminar which took place in Bucharest in May 2017, attended by Erla Hlín Hjálmarsdóttir and Kirstín Flygenring from UNU-GEST. Two peer-reviewed journal articles were published as a result, "Violence, Faith, and Women in Romanian Literature" by Dr. Giti Chandra and

Sanda-Marina Bădulescu, and "Research & Development through a gender lens – the case of Romania and Iceland" by Erla Hlín Hjálmarsdóttir's and Ana-Maria Zamfir from the National Scientific Research Institute for Labour and Social Protection in Bucharest, Romania. Both articles were published in *HOLISTICA* Vol 8, Issue 2, 2017.

Promoting Women's 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's and Girls: Effective Participation in Peace, Security and Recovery in Mozambique", working closely with UN Women and Eduardo Mondlane University (UEM) in educating stakeholders in our academic programme and supporting research efforts in a scoping study carried out by UEM in 2017. The project runs from 2017-2020 and will contribute to the implementation of the National Action Plan on UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in Mozambique. The project is implemented within the framework of the UNDAF, the overarching programmatic cooperation framework between the UN and the Government of Mozambique. Dr. Pétur Waldorff, the project leader and Anna Guðrún Aradóttir, project assistant at UNU-GEST met with project partners in Mozambique in December.

Workshop Colaborativ
Collaborative Workshop

Direcții de cercetare de excelență și accesul femeilor la programe
 Lines of research excellence and women's access to programs

EXCELENTFEM EXCELENTFEM

Bucharest May 11, 2017

ACADEMIA OAMENILOR DE ȘTIINȚĂ,
Str. Splaiul Independenței, Nr. 54, Sector 5, București,
Sala Drepturilor Omului

Project founded through Bilateral Relations Programme Fund RO-IE „Research within Priority Sectors”,
EEA Financial Mechanism SEE 2009-2014, National Authority for Scientific Research and Innovation



RINGS Conference in Reykjavik

UNU-GEST in collaboration with EDDA Research Center and RIKK - Institute of Gender, Equality and Difference hosted the [RINGS](#) Conference "Feminist Resistance to the Rise of Nationalism and Populism" from the 4th to the 6th of October of 2017. The goal was to share knowledge about feminist research and to engage, critically, with the current rise of

Staff and interns



Olivia Houck is from the United States and joined the UNU-GEST programme as a part-time research intern in late August 2017. Olivia contributes to ongoing research, grant applications and editing of UNU-GEST publications. She left Iceland in late November but continues to support the programme remotely until end of January.



nationalism and populism from transnational perspectives. Presentations were given by researchers from Africa, Australia, the Caribbean, Europe and North America and tackled current burning issues such as the Post-Truth Era, Gender Equality, Gender-based Violence, Refugees, Migration, Feminism, Sexuality, Intolerance, Populism, Nationalism, Resistance and Media. The Director of UNU-GEST, Dr. Irma Erlingsdottir, gave a lecture on "The Fascist Option in a Moral Crisis: Populist Politics in Contemporary Literature". Learn more about the RINGS Conference [here](#).

SEforALL People-Centered Accelerator launch at the UN Climate Change Conference



UNU-GEST Head of Research, Erla Hlín Hjálmarsdóttir and Senior Researcher, Pétur Waldorff, attended the launch of the [SEforALL People-Centered Accelerator](#), one of the UNU-GEST partners at the [UN Climate Change Conference](#) in Bonn on the 15th of November. The People-Centered Accelerator aims to advance gender equality, social inclusion, and women's empowerment in the sustainable energy sector by enhancing clean energy access for the

poorest people who are not reached by business as usual approaches. To achieve this, the work of the Accelerator focuses on unlocking finance from private and public sources, strengthening collaboration and connections between stakeholders in the energy, gender and social justice sectors and increasing women's full participation in sustainable energy solutions.



Noélly Flor came from Brazil to join the UNU-GEST programme as a volunteer in September 2017. She primarily focused on social media, and writing news articles. An avid supporter of gender equality, Noélly intends to focus on gender in her academic studies. She intended to stay in Iceland for two months, but extended her stay until the end of 2017.

Women's Economic Forum in Reykjavík

The [Women's Economic Forum \(WEF\)](#) was held in Reykjavik on the 19th and 20th of October 2017. An associate of [ALL Ladies League](#), the WEF is a global conference that aims to foster empowering conversations and connections among women committed to foster constructive change. UNU-GEST Head of Research, Erla Hlín Hjálmarsdóttir, and Dr. Giti Chandra, an affiliated scholar at UNU-GEST, participated in panels on "Women Workforce: New Models for Engagement" and "A Sustainable World: Reducing Gender Based Violence Holds the Key."



UNU-GEST thanks all the volunteers and interns who have offered their invaluable support in 2017.



Joint workshop on Women Entrepreneurs and Sustainable Energy in Gabon

UNU-GEST partnered with [UN Environment](#), [Icelandic Ministry for Foreign Affairs](#) and the [Pan African Climate Justice Alliance](#) to develop an action framework to outline different approaches for African women energy entrepreneurs to: (i) develop and strengthen a clear and coherent enabling gender responsive policies; (ii) access finance and markets in energy sector, (ii) build technical and business skills and know-how as well as technical competencies in sustainable energy technologies; and (iii) utilize existing distribution networks and gain access to start-up and working capital. A thematic workshop, "Unlocking Opportunities for Women Entrepreneurs in Sustainable Energy": Towards Achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and AU Agenda 2063", was held under the auspices of the [2017 African Ministerial Conference on the Environment \(AMCEN\)](#) in Gabon in June 2017.



Erla Hlín Hjálmarsdóttir, UNU-GEST Head of Research attended the workshop which brought together more than 100 delegates from more than 20 countries who included representatives from governments, non-government organizations, civil societies, financiers, women entrepreneurs, multi-lateral agencies, private sectors, and Regional Economic Communities (RECs). The [Libreville outcome statement on women entrepreneurs and sustainable energy in Africa](#) was the primary output of the workshop. Actions were recommended to the African governments regarding environmentally sustainable and gender responsive energy policies, access to finance and markets for women energy entrepreneurs across the value chain, and capacity building, skills creation, and empowerment for women entrepreneurs. Joint work to follow up on the Libreville statement continues.

World Seafood Congress 2017 in Reykjavik

UNU-GEST Senior Researcher, Dr. Petur Waldorff, and Upendo Hamidu presented their research project on "Gendered Value Chain Analysis of Fish and Fish-Processing at Lake Tanganyika, Tanzania" at the [World Seafood Congress \(WSC\)](#) on September 11th. The focus of the WSC 2017 was on the growth in the Blue-Bioeconomy, practical approach and cutting edge research for market innovation, food safety and food integrity.

The UN Environment Assembly

UNU-GEST took part in launching the **African Women Energy Entrepreneurs Framework (AWEEF)** at the closing plenary session of the Science Policy Business Forum in Nairobi at the beginning of December. AWEEF is organized as a vehicle and platform to enable African women to play a role as agents of change, decision makers, and main stakeholders across the energy value chain. The framework is set up to address the challenges and barriers that hinder women's economic empowerment and implementation of innovative environmental solutions in the energy sector. Women play key roles as producers, distributors and consumers of energy in both urban and rural settings across Africa and are thus key stakeholders in the energy value chain. The AWEEF and its agenda captures how renewable energy, gender equality and economic development are interrelated.

Staff and interns



Arnhildur Lilý Karlsdóttir holds an MA degree in literature from the University of Iceland. She served as a project assistant at UNU-GEST until September 2017 when she moved with her family to a small community in the Icelandic west fjords. We wish her all the best in her future endeavors!



Anna Guðrún Aradóttir joined the UNU-GEST team in September and replaced Lily as a project assistant. She holds a BA degree in anthropology and a master's degree in global studies. Her thesis was on women's land rights in Mozambique. She was formerly an intern at the ICEIDA office in Maputo. We warmly welcome Anna to our team!





THE NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF TEENAGE CHILD BEARING IN MALAWI

BY GRACE TAKOMANA

UNU-GEST ARTICLE SERIES FOR WIKIGENDER

Read the full article here: www.wikigender.org/wiki/the-negative-impacts-of-teenage-child-bearing-in-malawi/

"The World Bank 2011 Report shows that 53% of the poorest women had started bearing children before the age of 18."



UNU-GEST ARTICLE SERIES FOR WIKIGENDER

Read the full article here: www.wikigender.org/wiki/the-physical-violence-at-some-point-in-her-life-in-jamaica/

"AT LEAST 1 IN EVERY 3 WOMEN IN JAMAICA HAS SUFFERED PHYSICAL VIOLENCE AT SOME POINT IN HER LIFE."
- CARICOM POST BEIJING PLAN OF ACTION



UNU-GEST ARTICLE SERIES FOR WIKIGENDER

Read the full article here: www.wikigender.org/wiki/womens-participation-in-transitional-justice-in-northern-uganda/

"Women's engagement in peace-building has been found to contribute to lasting peace, encourages more inclusive governance and strengthens the legitimacy of the new institutions."



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN JAMAICA

BY DEVASHIA WHYTE

WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE IN NORTHERN UGANDA

BY HARRIET ADONG

Wikigender Blogs by UNU-GEST Fellows

Wikigender University recently published a series of online articles written by UNU-GEST fellows from the class of 2017. UNU-GEST fellows had an opportunity to improve their writing skills during an academic writing seminar facilitated by the Wikigender University aimed at producing a short blog entry for the Wikigender University website on a chosen topic on gender equality-related issues around the world. As a result, several articles were selected and recently published on the website. The topics ranged from gender based violence to women's participation and climate change, and UNU-GEST used the opportunity to raise awareness via social media. Access to the articles as well as plenty of other resources on the advancement of gender equality can be found organized by topic on the [Wikigender website](#).

Laura Malinauskaite in Japan for research

In support of the research project "Steam Up!", which is a documentary and visual ethnography research project on women in the geothermal energy sector, Laura Malinauskaite, a project assistant at UNU-GEST stayed in Japan from September until November 2017. The research projects covers case studies from Iceland, Kenya, Ethiopia, New Zealand, Mexico and Japan. Its aim is to highlight the contextual differences and obstacles women face in reaching full gender equality within the sector. You can find the promotional video of the project [here](#).



During her stay in Japan, Laura traveled widely and conducted preliminary field work, scoping filming sites, attended geothermal conferences, took interviews with experts within the field and collaborated with Japanese partners. Filming in Japan will take place in February 2018. Laura's institutional home in Tokyo was the UNU Headquarters and we extend our warm gratitude to the Tokyo team for hosting her.

Social Sciences Conference Þjóðarspejillinn

The annual [Icelandic Social Science Conference](#) (Þjóðarspejillinn) is held by the University of Iceland, School of Social Sciences annually in October-November. This year, UNU-GEST organized the panel "International Development in Transition: Critical Perspectives" in which Dr. Pétur Waldorff, UNU-GEST Senior Researcher, presented "(Ad)Ventures in Development: Reflections on the Social in International Development" and UNU-GEST Head of Research, Erla Hlín Hjálmarsdóttir delivered the



Workshop: "Prevent, Protect, Participate! Women's roles in peace and security"

UNU-GEST Project Assistant, Flora Tietgen, attended the workshop in Wuerzburg, Germany between the 30th of November and 1st of December. She, along with Andrea Jonjic-Beitter and Hanna Heidi Stadler, presented their research "The role of civil society within UNSCR 1325 National Action Plans".





ALUMNI MEETINGS

Malawi

Two ALUMNI gatherings have been organised by UNU-GEST in the fall 2017. One of them took place in Malawi in November and was coordinated by UNU-GEST project manager Kristjana Sigurbjörnsdóttir. The primary aim of the meeting was the development of the Malawi ALUMNI Network and valuable inputs for formulation of ALUMNI strategy were received from Malawian fellows. During the visit, Kristjana met with various partners and strengthened collaboration with several institutions in the country such as UN Women Malawi and Lilongwe University of Agriculture & Natural Resources (LUANAR).



Mozambique

Another ALUMNI gathering took place in Mozambique in December 2017 and was coordinated by UNU-GEST senior researcher Pétur Waldorff and project assistant Anna Guðrún Aradóttir. For Mozambican fellows, this was the second ALUMNI gathering which aimed at strengthening the alumni network in Mozambique. It further served as a platform for the Mozambican alumni to share their activities and future goals for the group, as well as networking with representatives from UN Women Mozambique and Eduardo Mondlane University.



*This Girl is
on fire!*

UNDERSTANDING GENDER
THROUGH LITERATURE AND
OTHER CULTURAL TEXTS



A remote course for UNU-GEST alumni will be offered in the spring semester of 2018 taught by Dr. Giti Chandra, an associated scholar at UNU-GEST. All UNU-GEST alumni members are encouraged to sign up for the course and register through the [UNU-GEST website](http://www.unu-gest.org). Registration for the course closes on January 10 2018.

SOCIAL MEDIA SNAPSHOTS



Wamundu Muzamil (2016), an IT expert of Makerere University's Gender Studies Department in Uganda, introduced gender analysis of ICT policies into his ICT classes for students. Moreover, he has designed and introduced a new (and probably unique) Gender and IT component within a certificate course called Women's Economic Empowerment Programme. This has furthermore led him to develop a specific mobile application to support women's economic empowerment.



Mzati-Kidney Mbeko (2014) was made the National Coordinator of Women and Law in Southern Africa (WLSA) after he returned from UNU-GEST. He played a central role in the *Joint CEDAW Malawi Civil Society Organisations Shadow Report 2015*, which raised the issue of child marriage and the need for legislative action to address a legal loophole which allowed children between 15 and 18 to marry with parental consent. With the support of various partners – such as Plan International, UN Women and Ministry of Justice – WLSA under Mzati's leadership set out to raise awareness, educate, and advocate. Around the country, child protection officers, social welfare officers and school authorities were trained in child rights, child protection, and safety measures.



WLSA actively engaged in focus group discussions with affected communities. WLSA ran consultative conferences in different parts of Malawi to seek the opinions and experiences of broad cross-sections of society regarding child marriages. Female members of parliament were supported to bring constituents together and raise and discuss child marriage. These interactions helped develop and defend the case for a technical review of the constitution. The awareness-raising and advocacy work of WLSA played a critical role in building a solid constituency in Malawi against child marriage and a strong momentum for legislative change.

Chikondi Pasani (2013), who is a specialist at the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries Department in Malawi, has been selected to be a team member evaluating UNFPA's 7th Country Programme as a gender and youth expert. Chikondi is currently also undertaking a PhD alongside her work.



Joseph Kazima (2014) is an assistant director of Gender Affairs at the Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability & Social Welfare in Malawi. His department has played an active role in rolling out a comprehensive gender responsive budgeting effort in the agriculture, health, transport and education sectors. This has involved sensitizing and training public servants, ministerial directors and permanent secretaries in gender responsive budgeting principles, in particular staff at the Ministry of Finance. Moreover, he has ensured that the Malawian budget statement now integrates gender perspectives and has influenced the National Gender Policy in 2015 by bringing in the environmental perspective. Last year he managed to institute 52 new positions, District Gender Officers, across the country.



This only constitutes as a small sample of our former fellow's achievements. Read more about our alumni achievements in an [evaluation report](#), in the [alumni section on our website](#), and our next newsletter!

Note from the Director

In 2017, an external evaluation of the UNU programmes in Iceland was carried out by the Swedish consulting company NIARS Indevlop. The Gender Equality Studies and Training Programme is youngest of the four programmes, established in 2009. The others are the Geothermal Training Programme, which was launched in 1979; the Fisheries Training Programme in 1997 and the Land Restoration Programme in 2007. The evaluation was commissioned by Iceland's Ministry for Foreign Affairs to enhance accountability and learning based on an assessment of the activities and achievements of the programmes. The final report, which was published in September, was overwhelmingly positive for the all UNU programmes. It provides us with a firmer understanding of where we stand and what we have accomplished. Moreover, it will help us to focus on specific aspects of our work and make it easier to use our strengths and to adjust and review our strategic plan. According to the evaluation, the UNU-GEST intensive studies and training programme at the University of Iceland is of high quality and achieves high sustainability in terms of the benefits. Former fellows deemed the UNU-GEST programme to be both relevant and useful. The results at the country level showed that the UNU-fellows are sharing their skills and knowledge and serving as change agents. Many contributors can take credit for these encouraging results, including dedicated staff members, teachers and fellows as well as a growing number of exterior partners. Still, as Professor Cynthia Enloe, one of UNU-GEST core teachers, stresses in her newly published book, *The Big Push. Exposing and Challenging the Persistence of Patriarchy*, we all need to be continuously alert and creative if we want to play an active role in the fight against gender injustices. It is in this spirit that we look forward to welcoming our largest cohort to date in January 2018: 24 fellows from 14 countries, bringing the total number of UNU-GESTS former and current fellows to 110.

I wish you all a very happy New Year!

Dr. Irma Erlingsdóttir

