

WE SEE





Photo by Eva Rico Narvâez
femLENS workshops 2018, Torrox, Spain









Photo by Anastasia Petruk
femLENS workshops 2018, Zhytomyr, Ukraine

WE SEE

The second issue of We See magazine focuses on human trafficking, a worldwide phenomenon that encompasses sexual exploitation, forced labour, begging rings and illicit spa businesses, to name a few. World governments are reluctant to address the issue because trafficking is a very difficult crime to detect. Consequently, the role of gathering statistics, informing victims about their rights and helping them break free falls to local NGOs.

Statistics from the European Parliament reveal that there are nearly 16,000 victims in the European Union. The top five EU countries of origin for the victims are Romania, Bulgaria, the Netherlands, Hungary and Poland. Sexual exploitation is the predominant form of trafficking; 71% of victims are female, of which 20% are children.

The ongoing wars in Syria and Yemen have caused an influx of hundreds of thousands of refugees into surrounding countries, which resulted in makeshift camps being set up to accommodate the refugees. Many families were provided with food, shelter and a small income that allowed them to survive, but when the financial aid was cut, some families were forced to sell their daughters into marriages with wealthy men from the Arabian Gulf. The families were paid dowries, but the young women were usually divorced after several months or weeks and inevitably ended up as 'informal prostitutes' to support their families. These victims would be 'married' several times because of religious diktats, which would prevent them from being recognised as prostitutes.

Unfortunately, the sexual exploitation doesn't end there. The British government has cracked down on charities including Oxfam amid concerns over abuse perpetrated by their staff. Aid workers confirmed that sexual misconduct among both locals and staff were "widespread" in humanitarian agencies and called for reform.

Some modern feminists have theorised that women and girls in developing countries may be more prone to trafficking because of social norms that value them less than men and boys. In India, for example, the practise of asking the family of the bride to pay exorbitant dowries and continuing to look for money, property or cars as an ongoing debt is still present. Some families' inability to keep up with the financial demands has resulted in the deaths of women. Although the practise was outlawed by the government, it continues because there are no concrete ways of enforcing the laws.

Despite the bleak statistics, there are charities and NGOs that are playing a vital role in raising awareness and working with victims and survivors of human trafficking. We need to acknowledge the work of the charities and the volunteers that have dedicated endless hours trying to improve the lives of the people involved. They succeed in giving a voice to the most marginalised, almost invisible in our society.



Photo by Juliya Pakina
femLENS workshops 2018, Zhytomyr, Ukraine

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A CONVERSATION WITH ANETTE FUNK: 20 YEARS IN WOMEN'S RIGHTS

by Barbara Filaih



**"There
are still
countries
which do not
recognise
marital rape
as a crime."**

What kind of changes have you noticed over the years in the field?

I am working in the field of women's rights now for more than 20 years, only some of them in Germany but mostly abroad. In general, women's rights are more visible on the international agenda especially because of the SDGs but it is still a struggle not to lose ground. In regards to gender-based violence, again, the taboo of interpersonal violence is not as great any more, but it is still a struggle for individual women to actually ask for help, if that is available, since nobody likes to file a police report against their own family members. And of course the available help differs greatly from country to country. There are still countries which do not recognise marital rape as a crime.

Do you feel that migrant women are less likely to report gender-based violence?

I would imagine that in general, it is even more difficult for women, who do not speak the language of their host country and who do not have a network of friends and family to support them to actually seek help.

Have you noticed an increase in the numbers of women using services aimed at gender-based violence victims in recent years?

That I cannot say. But since society as a whole is more aware of the problem and women are becoming more knowledgeable about available help, the numbers would increase.

How does one go about making women aware of a service?

In the past, we used, for example, multimedia campaigns to make women aware of their rights.

Should organisations tailor the information to the culture of the country that they are working in?

Yes, absolutely. This starts at using a language people understand, the type of media that reaches the most, up to specific types of violence immanent in the country.

Are there services in place for women trying to get help or leave an abusive relationship?

This very much depends on the country you are talking about. And, again, even if services are available, sometimes there are not enough of them or they are too far away for women to reach them.

Do you think that there are no consequences for the men involved in gender-based violence?

I would not say that there are no consequences, but usually too little too late (after the fact), especially since prosecution in all countries in the world takes a long time, even if it happens.

Is it easy for women to make a new life for themselves and their families, or might they face being ostracised by their communities?

In general, for any survivor, it takes a long time to process and overcome the trauma, so *easy* (editor's emphasis) would never be a word that I would use. I have tremendous respect for all women who manage to extricate themselves from a violent relationship.

Do you feel that the work you do has been successful?

This is difficult to say. On the individual level for individual women, yes, there have been successes. And more and more countries do recognise the problem and have set regulations and support systems in place. But the problem is still rampant as studies all over the world show. And as long as even one woman is still being beaten by her father, brother, husband or boyfriend, the work is far from over. ■



Anette Funk at the Global Leadership Academy's Innovation LAB "Unveil the Hidden Presence: Trafficking in Women and Children", October 2018, London, England
Photo by Okky Ardy

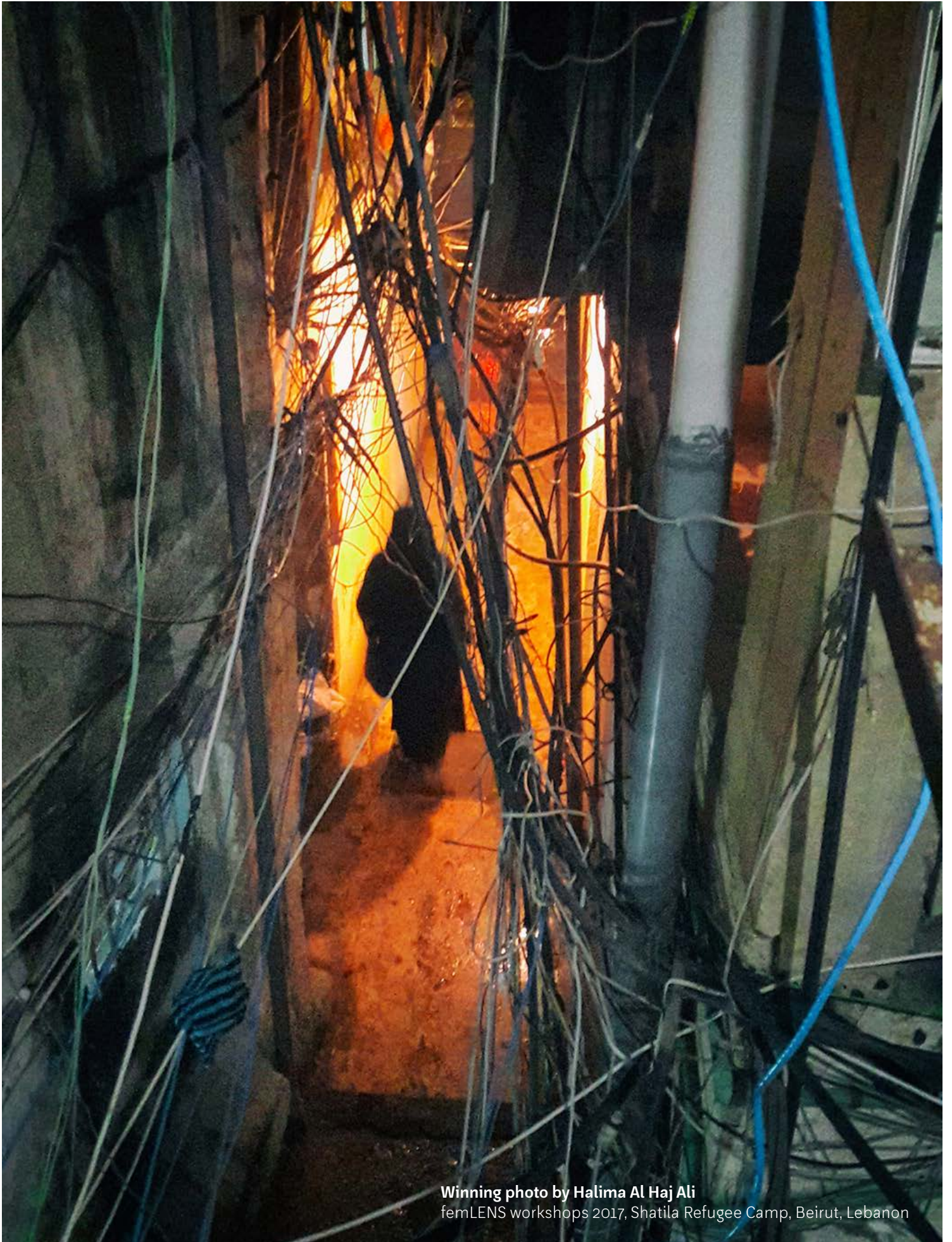
Halima Al Haj Ali, a participant of femLENS documentary photography workshops in 2017, won the top prize at the Lebanon Changemaker Photo Contest that focused on the Sustainable Development Goals. Halima, who is in her early 30s and comes from Syria, has been taking photos inside Shatila refugee camp in Beirut, Lebanon, in a very personal and intimate way. She has been living in the camp since 2012. Her photographs show narrow alleys, sky as seen through wires and street life.

Halima was a housewife back in Syria, living in a city called Kherbat Ghazala in Daraa province. “We left Syria due to the shelling that was targeting our house randomly. We decided to move to Lebanon, where I have relatives, also because I could not go to or get smuggled into any other country like Jordan.” Halima said it was very hard to settle in Shatila due to the lack of security, the weapons and drugs that are spread among the youths, and the lack of basic things such as power, which is often cut.

“I am very proud of myself for winning the competition, and certainly I will keep taking more photos on different topics. I hope that I can do photography professionally in the future and that it turns from a hobby into a profession.”

Halima’s photograph of a woman walking through an alley garlanded with wires got the top prize of \$5,000. femLENS is very proud of her achievement and of the recognition her work has received. ■





Winning photo by Halima Al Haj Ali
femLENS workshops 2017, Shatila Refugee Camp, Beirut, Lebanon





**FEATURED
PHOTOGRAPHER
SARA SERPILLI**

We See magazine aims to support and promote women photographers in print as well as online. On the following pages, Italian photographer Sara Serpilli talks about her interest in photography and a personal project, the "Macarena Project".

A CONVERSATION ABOUT PHOTOGRAPHY WITH SARA SERPILLI

by Maria Vesselko

City/Country?

Italian, but actually living in Dublin, Ireland.

What do you enjoy most about photography?

Photography is an intellectual activity, and at the same time is a physical activity. I am a very energetic person, and the fact to constantly move to frame, to change point of view might seem a very simple reason to love photography, but is for me very important. You have to be technical, artistic at the same time, to think and to do. Generally speaking, Photography allows you to deal with others, but the camera itself is big enough to "protect" you. I am a very curious/shy person, and photography is a very challenging tool for me.

Was there anything that inspired you to start making photos?

I was crazy for art since I am very little, and I liked so much Man Ray, Bragaglia from the futurist movement and many others. But if I have to be honest, the main reason I start to take pictures was probably because I loved to go around with my best friend Emy in our little town in Italy where there was nothing to do. Taking pictures was a great excuse to walk around and to transform a field in the background for our "amazing creation". I start to love to take pictures because that let me feel free and happy.

What is your favourite object/subject/topic to photograph?

Oops, very difficult question. I adore street photography but... I don't feel good enough or brave enough to do it... I still go around with the camera on my neck, but often I come back at mine and I feel very frustrated. That "failure" gave me lots of thinking... and I realised that it wasn't worth to focus on what I cannot do... so I start to think differently... I kept going to take portrait photography and street photography, but I develop first an idea, a project, and then I feel more "strong" and I am able to take the pictures. I am actually working on a project called "Conquistadores" that will be a series of portraits of immigrants that live in my same area in Dublin.

Do you feel it is important to share your vision on social media?

I don't really know... I think it is fantastic to reach people you would have never, never been able to reach before. But it is very tricky to do not fall into the "appreciation" trap that social media represent.

Who do you think is your aimed audience?

I don't have any aimed audience at all. As long as someone will enjoy or appreciate what I do, I am happy with. My work is not a political work. I have my opinions, and surely that might appear on my work, but I don't target females more than males or a specific group. The only message I have is that Art makes me believe and feel that there is still hope... there is not a specific Audience for that.

Do you like working on stories at home/in your local community?

I never thought if I like to work in my local community or not... I remember that younger my aim was to become a great photographer and to travel a lot and find great places and people to portrait... and then I realised my family was already the most fantastic subject ever and that to take good pic, you don't need to go far away.

Do you think photography could change someone's life? In what way?

Yes, I do think Art and Photography can change someone's life!! Regardless you will be a good or bad photographer, regardless you will travel or not, by doing photography you constantly train yourself to see the beauty, to create the beauty, to chase the beauty. When I use the word Beauty, I am not speaking about a lovely beach or a pretty girl (as well why not), but I am generally speaking about what makes sense to you, what makes an average street or building or tired face or whatever you identify important enough to be captured by you. You mainly train yourself to give value... this can transform everyone's life. ■



MACARENA PROJECT

by Sara Serpilli

Last year, before going to work, I used to listen to this very fun song from Los Rios... "Macarena".

I struggled to integrate into the office life, and I was trying to boost my energy with this morning ritual. From here I started to post on Facebook my images with texts where I was pretending to speak with this imaginary friend Macarena. I have created this funny alter ego to which I asked questions.

Lots of people were asking me who was Macarena... just a song, I used to reply, but little by little I realised that Macarena had taken a deeper dimension for me. Macarena

was more than a Los Rios song ... it was the funny, superficial and optimistic part of me. It was a very powerful filter to express my thoughts. Sarcasm and humour play a key role in this series of self portraits that I created for this project.

So I started this series of images by fully assuming this "double identity". My goal is to create funny pictures that touch strong topics for me as Sara, me as a woman and me as an artist.

I pose in different places of the house where I live by questioning myself about personal and feminine issues: my body and the media, my age, love, nationality and

belonging.

I revisit the imagery of the story of art with "Portrait of a Lady". Or I pose as Eve in the living room. I make fun of Lara Croft. I wrap myself in my bed linen as if I were an emperor to exasperate my Italian origins. I created a magic cube that I put on my head, and I pose with a headband with the shape of unicorn to reflect about the myth of the uniqueness of which we are more and more victim in a system that repeat us "YOU ARE UNIQUE" or "BE YOURSELF".









A GLOBAL ANTI-TRAFFICKING ALLIANCE FORMED IN KENYA

by Jekaterina Saveljeva, femLENS Founder and Workshop Facilitator

For femLENS, 2018 has been a year of learning and challenges. One of them was having the opportunity to attend an innovation LAB: Unveil the Hidden Presence - Trafficking in Women and Children, organised by the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) and the Thomson Reuters Foundation. Our participation in the LAB has made us more aware of where there is a lack of female voices. Learning about modern day slavery and trafficking has cemented our commitment to helping women and girls find means of self expression, participation in society and education.

The LAB brought together over 30 activists, journalists, researchers and policy planners in Nairobi, Kenya, in June and then again in London, Britain, in November, many of whom work or have

worked in combating human trafficking.

As a group of people from 25 different countries and continents: Croatia, South Africa, Kenya, Nepal, to name just a few, we shared experiences of working against human trafficking, supporting women's rights and ending extreme poverty. At the first meeting, we planned projects we would do together and in our separate roles over the next few months. At our second reunion, we shared our achievements and outlined further collaborations and work to be done.

FIRST MEETING - NAIROBI

Over four long days and evenings in Nairobi, we learned that there is no one profile of a potential victim and that stereotypes about "it only happens to other people" don't hold up. There's

no age or gender restriction, although research indicates that the majority of cases of trafficking are women and girls across the world. Also, we understood that although many of the laws and policies to prevent trafficking in persons are already in place, there is very little awareness about the issue at the very top, starting from governments and other officials, and going down to NGOs and the civil society. We also spent time identifying elements that constitute Trafficking in Persons (TIP) - experience shows that sometimes even the victim can't self-identify as a victim of trafficking as knowledge on the issue is still not common.

One theme that was recurring was the deep need for partnerships between law enforcement agencies and NGOs and society at large. The other big one was



An illustration by Ludovic Pujol, an illustrator based in London and femLENS Ambassador, for July 30 World Day Against Trafficking in Persons Campaign

understanding the effects of poverty on the supply chain. Last but not least was the need for the media to address the demand, instead of just focusing on supply. It is crucial to understand that TIP is a lucrative, multi-million Euro industry, thriving better now than at any other time in human history, with 40 million people thought to be in modern slavery at the present moment. The demand for human slaves is high, and we need to reflect on that as a human race.

Our collaborative work started on July 30, on World Day against Trafficking in Persons. A group of us ran a week-long online campaign with information about trafficking, dealing with awareness, stereotypes, history, information-provision and other aspects of this crime. Many articles were written, published and shared. femLENS Facebook page alone reached more than 1,000 Facebook users during the campaign. The campaign was also active on Instagram, Twitter and our website.

SECOND MEETING - LONDON

After four months, we were reunited in London. Around 10 people from the group were not able to join us in London due to visa denials by the British government, and the first day started with a mixture of joy and sadness. As the days went on, we shared achievements and challenges. A colleague who is a radio journalist in Burundi started a nation-wide discussion on human trafficking,

an issue that had previously not seen a lot of attention in Burundi. Another colleague has been able to gain permission from the government of Djibouti to build the first ever night shelter for migrants in Djibouti, after a 15-year struggle for this permission.

A colleague from Pakistan expressed her concern over the shrinking space in her country, and across the world, for civil society organisations and the crackdown on journalists and NGOs. We discussed the many complications standing in the way of ending human trafficking, including disadvantageous labour laws, unwillingness of for-profit organisations to examine their supply chains at the expense of their profits, and the lack of cooperation between governments, security agencies, NGOs and civil society came up again and again.

During these days spent together, everyone was given a chance to contemplate the direction they would like to take with their work, and guidance on how to get there. This mental and theoretical work can take years to achieve alone. Within a group of inspiring people, days feel like years, in the best possible sense.

WHAT'S NEXT

Working for months within an international group of people who are journalists, activists, NGO workers and government

representatives leaves us with a sense that there is hope, there are other people who see the world as you do.

femLENS' role in fighting TIP is very small, could be almost invisible, but if we get it right, it could be very meaningful. Empowering women through education and giving them tools for self-expression may save lives in the obvious ways but also in subtle ways. Working with survivors of human trafficking to help them visualise their internal worlds as well as interpret their lived experiences in a safe and understandable way - that is the power of photography and contribution to the fight by femLENS.

On the pages that follow, we present the photographs created by girls and women aged 14–28 during our documentary photography workshops in Zhytomyr, Ukraine, a region where, according to a 2017 report by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), 49% of its citizens are vulnerable to human trafficking. Parallel to the workshops, I researched into the reasons why there is such a high vulnerability in this region, as well as helped the participants develop photo stories which could illustrate these findings. It is the combination of facts gathered on the ground and photos created by women living in urban and rural Zhytomyr that, we hope, make this research and its findings accessible to and educative for a wider audience. ■

HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN UKRAINE: RESEARCH AND PHOTOS

In October 2018, femLENS ran a series of documentary photography workshops with girls and women living in Ukraine's rural Zhytomyr region. Based on estimations of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) mission in Ukraine, more than 230,000 Ukrainians suffered from human trafficking from 1991 to 2017. The report shows that Ukraine is one of the main countries of origin of trafficking in human beings in Europe, and working on prevention measures is an important aspect of fighting TIP globally. Another report conducted by IOM in 2017 estimated that 49% of the population of the Zhytomyr region are vulnerable to human trafficking. The vulnerability in Zhytomyr region is almost twice as high as in other regions.

Efforts are being made by local law enforcement agencies alongside NGOs. The project explores the conditions that lead to such a high level of vulnerability to trafficking, and the findings are presented alongside the photographs taken by women and girls aged 14-28 who live in the Zhytomyr region.





Photo by Bella Antonian-Shevchuk
femLENS workshops 2018, Zhytomyr, Ukraine

AWARENESS *of* **HUMAN** **TRAFFICKING**

According to the Global Slavery Index 2018, Ukraine has a 54.38/100 vulnerability to modern day trafficking. Authorities placed 40 billboards and distributed 4,000 flyers publicising the government-run Counter-Trafficking and Migrant Advice Hotline, which assists over 20,000 persons annually.

Many rural areas do not have a stable internet connection, which makes television the main source of information on all issues. However, interviewed law enforcement and NGO workers claim that television is part of the problem as TV shows often support the myths on the benefits of migration and contribute to making people vulnerable to trafficking.

A random survey was conducted in Zhytomyr, Ukraine, among women aged 14-45 about their awareness of human trafficking. They came from different backgrounds: school students, cashiers and sellers in a market, social workers and business owners.

The results were as follows:

100% have heard of what human trafficking is, and over 90% have come across information about human trafficking.

More than 60% of them have heard of cases of human trafficking in their network or community.

55% believe that it could happen to them, 18% said no, it couldn't happen to them, 9% said anything can happen, 9% said they didn't know whether it could happen or not, and another 9% said that it cannot happen, but there was no guarantee.

But 54.4% of the women said they wouldn't know what to do or whom to contact if they were personally faced with a situation of human trafficking. One woman said she would find information "through the internet", and another woman said that she knew "more or less" what to do if she found herself in a situation of human trafficking. 27% refrained from answering.

When asked if they would report a suspected trafficking case to the police, 73% of women said they would, 9% said maybe, and 18% said they didn't know.

Finally, 27% of women said that human trafficking and slavery is the same, 9% refrained from answering, and 64% said slavery and human trafficking are not the same.



Photo by Bella Antonian-Shevchuk
femLENS workshops 2018, Zhytomyr, Ukraine

TRAFFICKING *in* WOMEN *and* CHILDREN

According to Vyacheslav Pechenko, regional police chief of the Zhytomyr region, Ukrainian women experience different exploitation depending on the region of the world they are trafficked to.

Pechenko says that in the Far East and Middle East, they are most usually sexually exploited, while those trafficked to Europe usually end up in domestic slave labour as well as sexual exploitation.

Olga Makarchuk-Bolkunova, founder of Avenir, an NGO based in Zhytomyr that works against human trafficking, confirms that women experience sexual exploitation, as well as forced domestic labour and forced begging.

Boris Vezhnavevets, Deputy Chief of the Analytical Office of the Department of Organisational and Analytical Support and Response of the National Police, says that during 2017, criminal investigations sent to the court found that almost 77,000 women were victims of criminal offences across Ukraine. However, according to the calculations made by the Institute of Demography and Social Research, commissioned by the United Nations Population Fund, annually 1.1 million Ukrainian women face physical and sexual aggression in

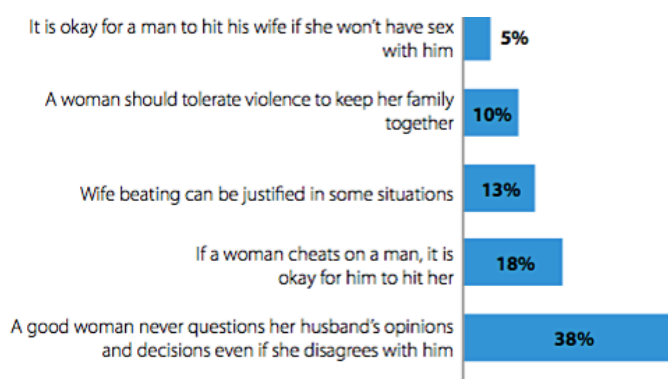
Vadim Sadovsky, head of the department for combating crimes related to trafficking in persons of the General Directorate of the National Police in the Zhytomyr region, says that women are often tricked into leaving Ukraine to go to work overseas. Traffickers tell them they will model clothes or participate in beauty pageants. Once they arrive in the destination country, they are forced to give sexual services and are often very brutally treated.

According to Sadovsky, it is harder to trick men that way as most men will only agree to regular work offers like construction, factory work or agricultural work.

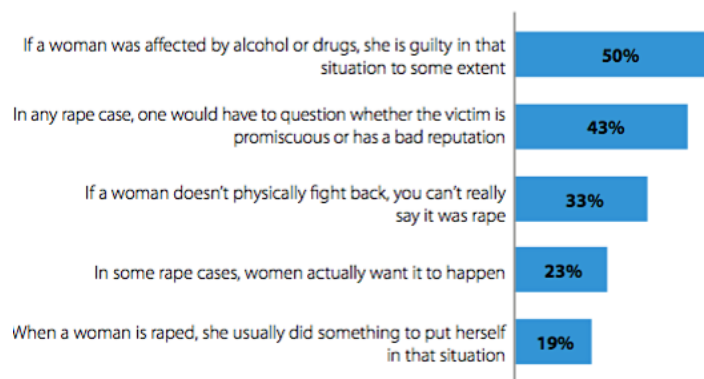
the family. And most of them are silent about it.

The figures below illustrate the attitudes of men towards violence from a 2018 study “Masculinity Today: Men’s Attitudes to Gender Stereotypes and Violence Against Women” supported by the UNFPA, United Nations Population Fund and the UK Government in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine.

Women in Ukraine experience gender-based violence long before they are trafficked.



I Attitudes to domestic violence,
% of respondents who generally agreed



. Attitudes to victims of sexual violence,
% of respondents who generally agreed with statements



The ECONOMY

Lack of economic opportunities is considered to be the main reason for people leaving Zhytomyr region to go work overseas, most commonly to Poland, the Czech Republic and Russia. Most people leaving Ukraine have no rights in the country they are going to because people are willing to work illegally, which leads to vulnerability to human trafficking. And as most workers don't have even the basic language skills to seek help or get information about their employment rights, the situation can go on for a long time.

"Wherever there is less industry, where people have no work, people will do anything to earn a living", said Vyacheslav Pechenko.

Vadim Sadovsky says that most people are aware that they are going to work illegally and that working conditions will be tough, but they are not aware of how exactly it will turn out.

Natalia Tarasenko, one of the founders of Parytet, a Zhytomyr-based development and training NGO, believes that there are opportunities at home, but people are just not willing to work hard enough. Others say that even if both adults in the family work full time, the minimum wage is not enough to have a decent standard of living.

"The employer at any moment can point to the door and say 'thank you, we don't require you any more' to a worker", said Pechenko.

For single or divorced women, the situation is even harder. Women in 2018 earned on average 20% less than men. According to State Statistics Service of Ukraine, in 2015 in the region of Donetsk, men earned 70% more than women.

The HUMAN FACTOR

Ukraine has been through many changes in the last two decades, and most people agree that the economy is in a bad state. They don't see improvements happening soon, even though they remain hopeful.

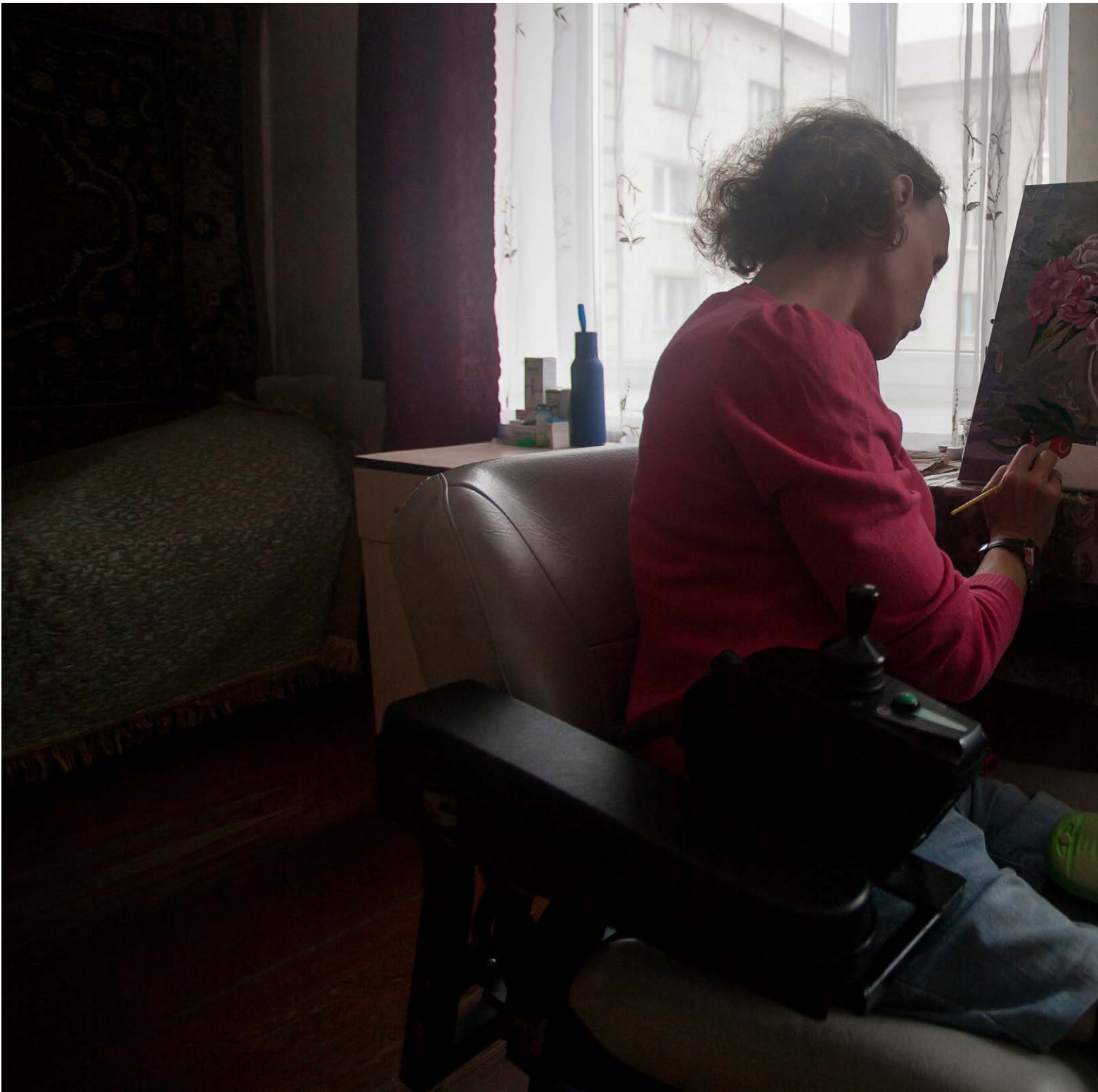
According to Vyacheslav Pechenko, human trafficking is another way for people to earn money. It is not that traffickers consider it a form of power over another person; rather some see it as another criminal activity that brings them a profit.

Olga Makarchuk-Bolkunova thinks that in the past communities were tighter, people helped each other out. "It came from somewhere outside, this idea that we need to separate ourselves, be alone, to make it. Or maybe we misunderstood it". But the consequences are high; people are vulnerable because they don't share information that could save someone from trafficking, and for those who have experienced trafficking it is hard psychologically - they find themselves alone and unable to speak with anyone about what has happened to them.

The major problem in preventing and persecuting human trafficking crimes is laws that are changing, as well as personal ties between criminals and the law enforcement. Since the new government came to power in Ukraine in 2014, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine has imposed a variety of moratoria on inspections, extending the moratoria in 2018 (Law No. 1728). This has made inspecting a private business that advertises work abroad nearly impossible for law enforcement.

Olga Makarchuk-Bolkunova also recounts a story about a trafficking that which Avenir took to a local court in Zhytomyr. They were unable to get a conviction because the judge had been heard saying about the trafficker "he's a nice guy, he fixed the roof in my house once".

Uneven laws, corruption and personal ties create situations in which people living in rural areas with limited access to internet and government information about the dangers of human trafficking are even more vulnerable to trafficking.



Marina was 27 when she found herself trafficked in Odessa, Ukraine, for the second time in her life.

“He forced me to beg for money, he beat me, took away my documents, bank cards, my phone so I couldn’t contact anyone. He would take us out every day, and we would work until evening, no matter if it was winter or summer, or raining. He held me from 2012 until 2015.

Because I was there for a long time, when a new guy in a wheelchair was brought in, he gave me a mobile phone to control him, out of trust I guess. I used the moment when his little sister went to the toilet [sic], I contacted the Women’s Consultative Centre,



Marina paints in her room in an old people's home just outside the city of Zhytomyr, Ukraine, November 2, 2018.

they helped me get out. I couldn't speak to the police as he was paying them; the police closed their eyes. It was me, a guy without legs in a wheelchair, and there was another man who watched us and worked with dogs, and an old man...

He told me that he used to sell things in a market with his brother. I kept carefully asking him about it. He said when his daughter was born, when he became a father, he needed money. He gave up the market and started doing human trafficking."

Marina's case has practically not progressed in the last two years as the persecutor in Odessa has changed and is not responsive to this case, while the trafficker is free. Marina keeps writing to Odessa, hoping one day to get a court hearing. "I just want to get justice for what he did to me", said Marina.

WOMEN TAKE PHOTOS

This year femLENS ran two workshops – in the village of Torrox, Andalusia, Spain, and in the city of Zhytomyr, Ukraine. The women and girls aged 14-64 explored their communities, families and even back yards.

femLENS works with women and girls from diverse economic and cultural backgrounds to include more female voices into the visual storytelling of the world. It is their intimate knowledge of their communities that allows them to show us something familiar in a new light or raise a topic we might have not have thought of before.

One of such stories is done by Bella Antonyan-Shevchuk in rural Zhytomyr, Ukraine. We often think of migration in terms of the benefits or disadvantages of the receiving community, the integration struggles, the cultural diversity or experiences of racism. But what happens when a community, a land, becomes empty of its residents, the people who live and work on it? In her photo essay "Hinterland", Antonyan-Shevchuk gives us an insight into the life of a woman living that reality.

Lola Deblas from Torrox, Spain, contemplates the contradictions of migration that have impacted her village. On the one hand it has brought resources so the locals have been able to improve their living conditions. On the other, migration has contributed to emptying the village centre of the locals, and the streets feel empty, "which are more deserted than during the Civil war and after 1945", Deblas states.



HINTERLAND

by Bella Antonyan-Shevchuk

For more than 10 years, there has been no man's hand in the house. The fence has fallen, the windows are broken, the roof is leaking. All the hard physical work lies on the shoulders of a woman with poor health. But she is happy that she leads a quiet and honest life.

She has no job. The social pension

is 1,300 UAH (approx. 42 Euro) a month; one has to be able to live on that. The only source of income is the household. The most profitable crop is corn - it is feed for chickens, cows and goats, cereals for the mistress, and the waste is burned for heating.

There are very few men in the village: those who have not gone

abroad to work slowly loose themselves to moonshine.

The old well with a leaking bucket is running out of water. To get 10 litres, she needs to turn the large iron crankshaft 32 times.

Empty houses of dead neighbours and bushes and grey puddles underfoot create an oppressive atmosphere.



Her hands are rough from the cold winds and hard physical work, but, like everyone, she wants to look beautiful, she manicures her nails.

The dog is a faithful friend, accompanying her everywhere in an understanding silence.

The warm stove saves her on cold evenings.





GARBAGE PARADISE

by Juliya Pakina

**“When the last tree dries and the last animal dies, you will realise that there is no other Earth for you.”
B.D. Orly**

The problem of garbage doesn't only concern large cities; villages are also in a difficult ecological situation. My village is no exception; every year we are more and more drowning in garbage.

Every year, one person in Ukraine creates 300–350 kg of household waste. It is a shame to admit that people do not understand this. The only thing that bothers residents is that the garbage should be taken out quickly and that it disappears from their yard without a trace. However, no one thinks about what happens to this garbage next and what the consequences are.

The lack of a functional legislative base, the unwillingness of people to sort garbage, the

incomplete provision of containers for separate garbage collection, the absence of waste recycling plants – all this is a vicious cycle, which every day plunges the country deeper into an environmental collapse.

The environment does not know how to talk, but it asks for help ... it is only a small village against the background of the whole country and planet, but with such small drops everything begins... What kind of land will we leave to our descendants, in what conditions will our children and the children of our children live?

John Kennedy said: “Even one person can change something, and everyone should try. The common thing between us is that we are all inhabitants of this planet. We all breathe the same air. We live for the future of our children. And we are all mortal”.

Therefore, I hope that everyone will try to make changes!







UNINHABITED ISLAND

by Anastasia Petruk

Most of the time, our yard is empty. Delivered from the company of people. Its inhabitants go their own way for the day, and strangers have no reason to enter. Therefore, it looks like an uninhabited island. But the details give us clues that life is not alien to this place.

To get into the yard, you need to pass the gate. The tall blue fence, by the way, we put together with my dad about 3 years ago, and then I had the feeling that we were the coolest with this fence.

Almost immediately overlooking the entire yard, on the left is what looks like a forest and on the right - a garden. A green path leads straight to the house. I am proud of my yard. I think it is the biggest in our village.

Four tall pines hide a car and a workshop. In warm weather, my dad repairs the car

here and also builds a garage (when he does not leave for work, which is what usually happens).

Father's almost retired "penny" stands among the pines and birches. Dad bought a new car about a year ago, so this one is hardly used anymore. So I use this car when I sit in it after school, after all, the 3G network is only in the garden, but to just stand there - well, it's very tiring and cold!

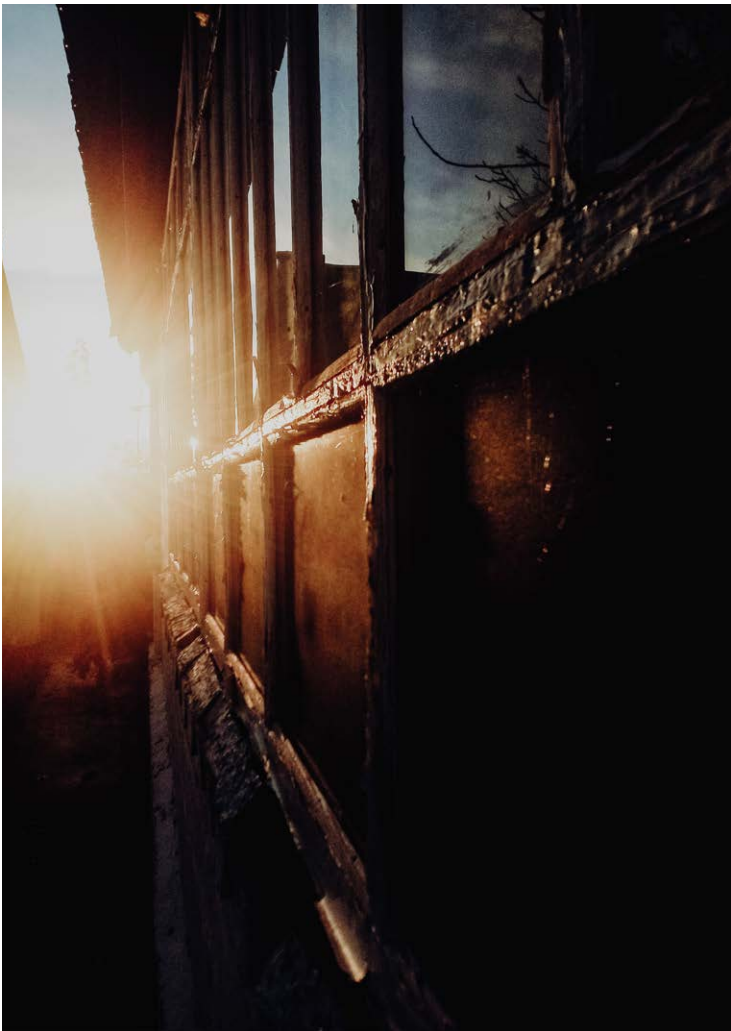
Close by is where the clothes dry. The weather is not windy, and so the clothes remain wet for a long time. And when the snow falls... You could break it. Seriously.

Strange things lying around yard surprise no one. Including my old bike (or what's left of it). This bike is truly a traveller. Somehow I, by absentmindedness, left it near the road one day, where my friends and I were playing. And what would you think? It was

stolen. Yeah, these are our people, they are... weird. I grieved a little for decency, but! After a couple of days I found it in a neighbour's yard. Without hesitation, I grabbed it and dragged it back home. Stole a stolen bike. Now it is small even for my younger sister, and most of the parts are gone.

We also have a barn. Previously, chickens lived there, but that was a long time ago. Now this is a semi-crumbling building - a regular barn where you can find everything: from firewood and corn to bicycles and a scythe.

The autumn yard has the peculiarity of changing almost every day. For example, a week ago some trees were still yellow. Three days later everything was covered with frost, and then snow fell. So the end of autumn flowed into the beginning of winter.



OLD AGE

by Kseniya Storoschuk

Why did I want to talk about old age? One day, I was next to my grandfather and grandmother thinking that I would also grow old some day, but my old age will be completely different. My generation of old people will be very different from the present, and what if they forget about this generation?

I take these photos in the hope that one day someone will take photos of me and I will be able to compare and maybe see if it's better or not.

I also asked my grandparents about what they think about life earlier and now.

Grandmother could not answer, but grandfather spoke for a long time:

"Before, of course, it was better to live. People were more fun. Youth, songs, people went to visit each other's homes. And now? Two cripples on the whole corner, and three of the youngsters that are here are trying to figure out how to escape from here... I'd be walking home, and there'd be a crowd with me, we could walk and sing songs, until the morning came. We'd go fishing together every Sunday, women also went to visit someone every evening. And now where will you see this? Someone came out from behind the door, looked around like a mouse, and quickly started rushing down the street to catch the bus."





THE TRAFFICKING & SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF WOMEN

by Dunja Bonacci Skenderović, M.A.
VaW and Trafficking in Women
Prevention Consultant and Trainer

"Women were the first to lose their jobs, and finding new jobs was impossible because of the high number of unemployed men, and any openings were consequently filled by men."

The trafficking of women for sexual exploitation is not a new phenomenon, and records show that it was happening as early as the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries. At that time it was referred to as 'white slave trafficking' or 'white slavery'. This trade in young women who were used as prostitutes in the brothels of western colonies, was likened to slavery. In 1949, the United Nations Convention for the Suppression of Human Trafficking and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others was approved in an attempt to combat trafficking.

Despite the UN Convention, up to the present day there have been four waves of trafficking of women for sexual exploitation, according to Canadian journalist Victor Malarek. The first wave happened in the 1970s and involved women from Southeast Asia. The second wave in the 1980s involved women from Africa. This was followed by the third wave involving women from Latin America. The fourth wave happened in the early 1990s, during the breakup of former communist countries in Central, Eastern and South Eastern Europe. The velocity and magnitude of this wave was astounding because only ten years earlier women from these countries would have never been thought of as victims, but suddenly they accounted for 25 percent of trafficked women. The last wave makes trafficking a global phenomenon, and no country is immune.

Nowadays, trafficking of women is one of the most lucrative forms of organised crime, which brings enormous profits, and at the same time it is a 'low risk' business. The 'merchandise' in the chain is very easy to replace and can be used to the maximum limits.

ROOT OF THE PROBLEM

The trafficking of women is a rather complex issue. There are numerous factors related to global changes in the last 30 years, along with the human desire for better living conditions, which contribute to the complexity. By observing the fourth wave of trafficking of women, one can determine two major and intertwining causes of trafficking women, namely the

social, economic and political situation in countries of Central, Eastern, and Southeast Europe and the demand for prostitutes in these countries.

With the downfall of the communist system and the emerging market economies in these countries, which took place over several years, many people found themselves in a limbo of transition which brought about numerous economic and deep tectonic social changes. Once again, women became marginalised in political and social spheres and were most affected by the transition. The transition process also brought countless reforms and collapses, such as in the health and social welfare systems. The economic transition was accompanied by the public goods privatisation process. One of the most obvious consequences of the privatisation was the loss of numerous jobs in what only recently used to be social enterprises. Women were the first to lose their jobs, and finding new jobs was impossible because of the high number of unemployed men, and any openings were consequently filled by men.

Even when women managed to secure jobs, they were usually low-paid jobs in the informal sector, hired for short periods or on a part-time basis. They were not paid well for their work and did not have any labour rights. There were other factors to consider, such as discrimination and sexual harassment in the workplace. All of this contributed further to the feminisation of poverty, which resulted in making women more vulnerable to becoming victims of trafficking.

Poverty, inequality, and the inability to find adequate employment along with the images of the rich West filled with opportunities for a better life have led to migration. However, migration is largely restricted by the immigration regulations of developed countries. Organised criminals have found a niche that allows them to make money through smuggling and human trafficking.

The trafficking of women is a result of numerous problems, including moral issues and questions that need to be answered. As mentioned before, the root of the



phenomenon pertains to the victims themselves and their socio-economic position prior to becoming victims, then the socio-economic conditions in the country of origin, then migration policies and relations concerning the demand for cheap labour in economically developed countries. However in the end, trafficking of women is a human rights problem.

TRAFFICKING CHAIN

Trafficking of women starts with the desire of women to seek better opportunities in developed countries which would enable them to find better living conditions or to escape from bad family situation and poor socio-economic conditions in their countries of origin. Women are usually aware of the risks involved, yet the objective needs caused by some of the factors (push factors),

along with the tempting prospect of high salaries abroad, at first sight, the perspective of a new life are the strong factors for them to decide on departure.

As mentioned earlier, there is huge demand for fresh women in the quickly growing and insatiable sex industry. Some men going to brothels, striptease clubs, or availing of the services of street prostitutes, or others who choose vacation destinations notorious for sex tourism, demand an unlimited access to and display of women and girls from different countries. Consequently, the ongoing demands for 'new and fresh commodity' dictates international trafficking in women for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Clients are not concerned about whether the women chose prostitution or are victims of trafficking and are forced into it, because these women are dehumanised

and are treated like merchandise used for satisfying their needs.

Recruitment is the first link in the chain of trafficking and there are several forms of recruitment. The victim is often recruited by a person she knows, such as an acquaintance, a friend or a partner. Other victims of trafficking who want to get out of prostitution agree to take on the role of the recruiter. In these scenarios, they often return home posing as rich and successful women offering well paid jobs abroad to young women who ultimately end up being trafficked.

Another way of recruiting women is through various agencies that offer employment or marriage purposes, which are advertised in the daily press. The most drastic form of the trafficking in women is abduction, although those occur rarely. One Dutch study reveals that there are

two types of abductions. The first type is abduction of attractive girls who have no reason to look for a better life outside their own country. They are approached in clubs or bars, on the street or some other public place by professional recruiters who either drug or seduce them, transfer them across the border where they are held and forced into prostitution. Another scenario includes prostitutes without family who do not intend to emigrate but are sold by their pimp and are then forced to work in the international sex industry as victims of trafficking.

People who recruit women by lying to them often will offer a well-paid job in the informal sector, but when the victims arrive at the destination, they discover that it is not the promised work they will engage in. The second type of fraud relates to women who already work in the sex industry, however at the place of destination they learn that the working conditions are not even close to the ones they had agreed to.

After recruitment, comes the second step in the chain of trade, transportation. So far, when it comes to trafficking in women, it has been the cases of trafficking across the borders of the country of origin, yet the number of cases of internal trafficking has been rising, which means that the victims do not cross the borders of the country of origin, but the country of origin is at the same time the country of destination too. In cases of trafficking of women from the East to the West, the crossing of the border may be legal or illegal and may include forgery of documents, work permits and visas.

In the majority of cases, the traffickers will take all precautions to prevent any potential resistance even before they deploy women to work. Cracking down the resistance basically means that women are beaten up, raped, gang-raped, and psychologically manipulated and threatened so that, at one point, a person would consent to anything so that the torture stops. Besides the



beating them up, there are other ways of enslavement and keeping women in the submissive state: deprivation of identification documents, freedom of movement is limited and always under surveillance, victims are often forcibly hooked on to substances and alcohol, which at the time serves the victim as

a mental escape and survival or coping mechanism to get them through the constant abuse and rape.

On the subject of trafficking of women, another very important component is debt bondage, also known as debt slavery or bonded labour. Because the women who choose to look for a job outside their



country often do not have the means to travel, their recruiter or employment agency promises them that they will see to it. The same goes for the documents and the work permits. At the destination, often when confronted with the actual truth of the work they are going to do, they are told that they would be free

as soon as they have repaid all that the trafficker had spent on them. However, this debt grows every day, and rarely are the victims of trafficking able to settle it.

However, some women do manage to escape from trafficking. In most of cases it is due to operative work of law enforcement, such as police raids in night clubs and bars. Some women managed to escape with the help of their clients, while some managed on their own. Unfortunately, usually this does not mean an end of their troubles, as they may not have documents, and it is not uncommon that trafficking victims are treated as if they were illegal migrants, thus facing deportation from the country of destination.

In 2002, the Netherlands captured and deported almost 100 illegal prostitutes, predominantly originating from the Balkans and Eastern European countries, labelling them as illegal migrants, without anyone in law enforcement addressing whether or not the women in fact had been victims of trafficking. Often, due to engagement in prostitution, trafficking victims face charges and instead of being treated as victims of a crime, they end up being additionally punished.

Even if they are identified as trafficking victims, the policies of some countries in Western Europe place conditions on the issuance of temporary residence permits or granting asylum to these women, they may stay in exchange for exposing the traffickers, appearing as witnesses in court, or both. If and when they are returned to their country of origin or their communities, they are stigmatised and denied support. Fortunately, in countries of central and eastern Europe these problems have been recognised, and programmes of assistance, protection and reintegration of trafficking victims have been established.

Trafficking of women has far-reaching psychological and physical consequences for victims. During exploitation women are forced into

unwanted sexual intercourse and are either individually or gang-raped, these women are not in a position to practice safe sex, thus many end up infected with sexually transmitted diseases, unwanted pregnancies and forced abortions, which often affects their reproductive health. The physical consequences - some acute, others chronic - invalidity and general physical decay in some cases leads to lethal outcomes. The physical and sexual abuse leave the victims with long-term mental health problems too. Many of them are affected by chronic anxiety, memory loss, dissociative personality, depression, psychosomatic disorders and illnesses, addiction, aggressive behaviour, loss of trust in others, feeling of shame or difficulties with other psychological disorders, others suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder.

IN CONCLUSION

Over the last 30 years, trafficking of women for sexual exploitation has reached an unprecedented level. It is estimated that every year between 5,000 to 150,000 women become trafficking victims in Western Europe. It is estimated that between 10,000 to 200,000 victims are being trafficked through the Balkan countries (Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, Montenegro and Turkey). The roots of trafficking of women are multiple and are complex, closely related to issues of organised crime, migration, globalisation, transition, gender inequality, feminisation of poverty, and also connected with the basic human aspiration for a better life.

The international community, state institutions and non-governmental organisations have recognised the problem, and are working on the responses, although many of the solutions are hardly enough to tackle the problem. Trafficking of women for sexual exploitation is a human rights issue and as such should be addressed if we want to come closer to solving this problem. ■

COSTA DEL SOL



In September, femLENS ran a series of documentary photography workshops with women in the village of Torrox in southern Spain. The workshops were held in the local radio station building and organised with the help of a women's association "Futuro en femenino".

The participants ranged from the ages of 46 to 64 and come from all walks of lives: a local school teacher, an actress, a gardener, a daughter of a local inventor.

We were very happy to get some feedback from the participants, one saying "I do not know about you, but I feel like I have new eyes, and I'm freaking out with my eyes!!!"

Below is some of the work produced in Torrox, which is steeped in stories and histories!



AN OLD TOWN IN THE SUN

by Lola Deblas

Close to the meticulous Andalusian village of Frigiliana, the old town of Torrox, with almost identical building regulations, shows the rule can also be as if there were no rules. The variation of the village street pavements itself resembles the varied population inhabiting the old town nowadays. About 25 years ago, northern Europeans from UK, Germany, Belgium, Ireland and Scandinavia started buying old town houses, and that has helped to keep the village standing. Tourism and a growing agricultural dedication to subtropical fruits and greenhouse production have made it possible for most of the locals to move out of their old town

homes into houses with better facilities in more modern areas. Other new neighbours to the old town are from Morocco and various Latin American countries (Paraguay, Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia...), who live in rented properties and often work in sectors that are seasonal. Having a permanent job is not that easy.

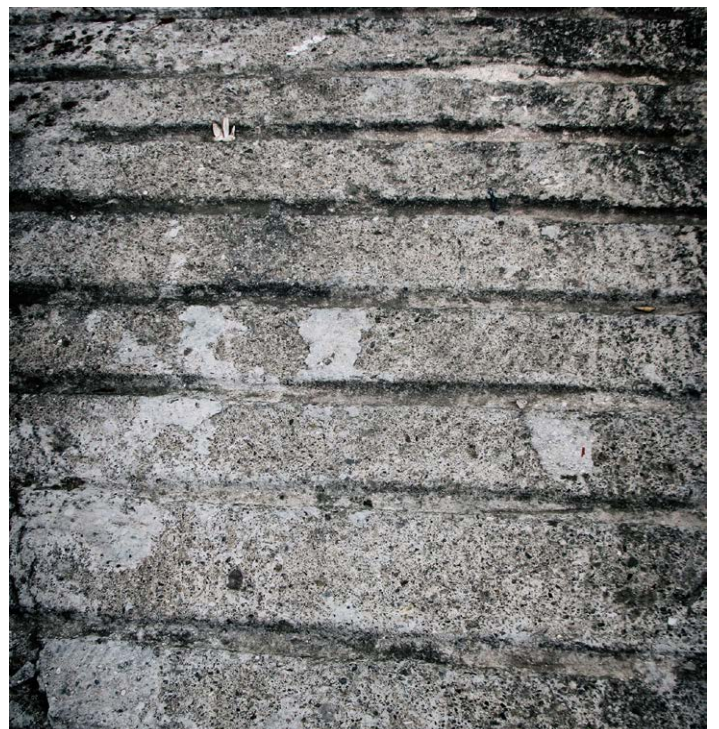
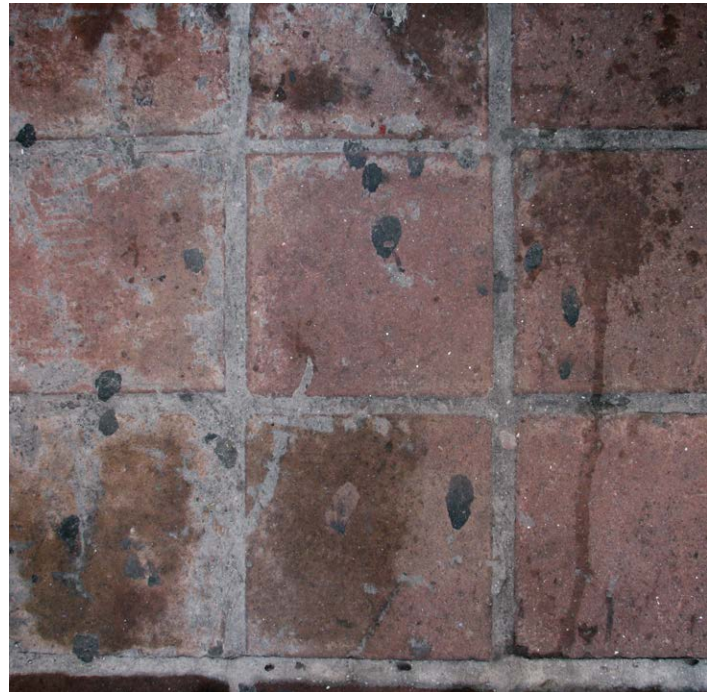
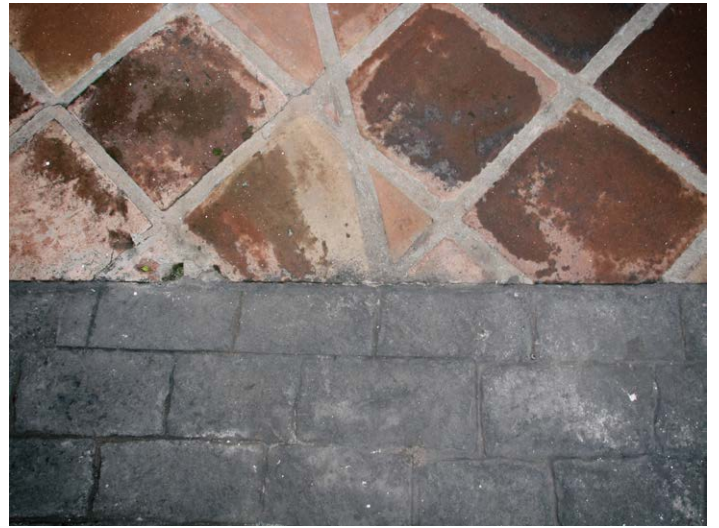
The old town is rather empty, though. Many properties are for sale, renovated, to be reformed or ruinous. You may hear a dog bark or come across cats here and there, but there are no children playing in the streets, which are more deserted than during the Civil war and after 1945, when so many neighbours had to leave in search

for a better future in Málaga, Barcelona, or even as far as Argentina due to the closure of the Cane Sugar Factory. At the time the resistance movement, very active in Torrox, was still at war in the area.

In those days of radio and cinema, the old town neighbours who managed to stay lived a tribal system that will never return. The voices of children playing were the soundtrack of the old town streets until the '80s.

There is work to do to make life smoother and create some sense of community.







WOMEN OF TORROX

by Marian Noguera



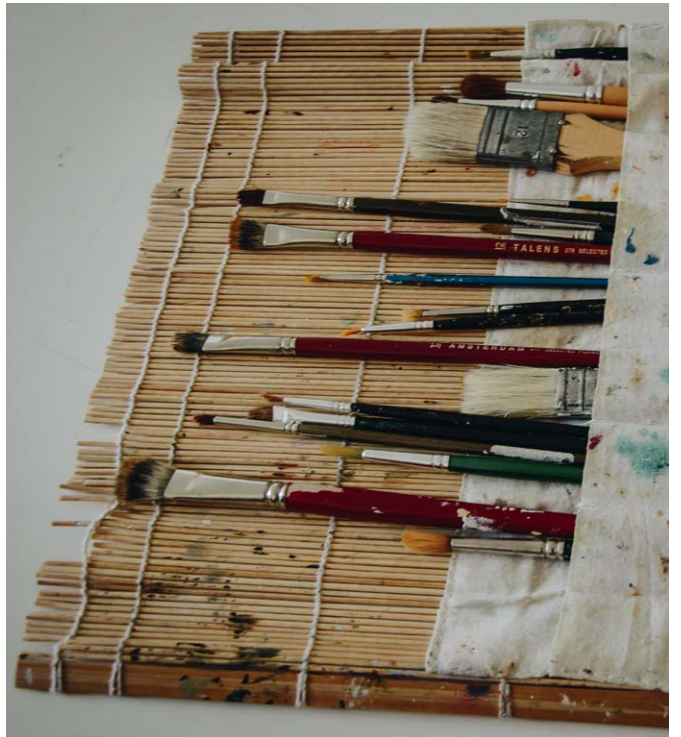




Photo by Maria Fernandez Marin
femLENS workshops 2018, Torrox, Spain

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