Welcome to our 2019 Impact Report, each year Equality Now measures the impact that your support has had on reaching our shared goal of equality for women and girls. And every year, we are reminded that without you, our successes would have been impossible.

As human rights lawyers, we recognize the critical role that the law plays in shaping all aspects of cultural, societal, and political life. Thus, in order to achieve enduring equality for all women and girls, these values must be embedded into the law. This is at the heart of our work. However, it is not enough to have good laws on the books. They must be implemented properly, which is why an active civil society that holds governments accountable is so important.

With you by our side, we continue in our mission to achieve enduring equality for women and girls.

In solidarity

Yasmeen Hassan
Global Executive Director

As human rights lawyers, we recognize the critical role that the law plays in shaping all aspects of cultural, societal, and political life.
This year, you helped Equality Now and our partners dismantle discriminatory laws. From protecting girls in Tanzania from child marriage, to safeguarding girls’ education in Sierra Leone; from demanding Russia acknowledge that domestic violence is crime, to bringing the United States one giant step closer to constitutional equality, 2019 was a year of defining legal victories for women’s rights.

**2019 HIGHLIGHTS**

**Equality Now Focus Areas**
- Ending Harmful Practices
- Ending Sexual Violence
- Ending Sex Trafficking
- Achieving Legal Equality

**Our International Team of Lawyers:**
- Provided expert support for **15** litigation cases challenging gender discriminatory laws
- Submitted **46** expert submissions to the UN and regional bodies advocating for law and policy reform across all of our focus areas
- Published and contributed to **18** reports on the issue of gender equality

**As Part of Our Commitment to Working with Partners Around the World We:**
- Worked in tandem with **86 partners** across **55 countries**
- Amplified the voices of **166 women and girls**
- Held 142 convenings and workshops to identify issues and create collaborative solutions
- Worked with or trained **3,041 officials** and civil society actors, including activists, judges, police, and media

**Delivering Enduring Equality for Women and Girls:**
- Across 53 campaigns and The Generosity of Girls Fund, our team of lawyers and experts have:
  - **Helped 13,556 women and girls and many others through legal change**
  - Reached over **1 billion readers through media and social media**
  - Activated our **250,000 strong digital activist base to call for change**
WHAT WE’VE ACCOMPLISHED TOGETHER:

AFRICA: PROTECTING THE EDUCATION RIGHTS OF GIRLS IN SIERRA LEONE

In December, we won our case before the Economic Community of West African States Court, which challenged the legality of Sierra Leone’s ban that prevented pregnant school girls from attending school. This precedent setting decision, will allow thousands of young girls who had been previously denied an education to have the opportunity to continue their schooling. Together with our partners, we will be working to make sure that the Government upholds this ruling and implements policies which protect school girls from sexual violence.

AFRICA: PREVENTING CHILD MARRIAGE IN TANZANIA

In October 2019 the Tanzania Court of Appeal upheld the High Court’s 2016 decision that found that inequality between the minimum ages of marriage for boys and girls to be unconstitutional. Equality Now was an essential advocate in this case. Thanks to the ruling girls in Tanzania remain protected from the harmful practice of child marriage.

Equality Now continues to work with civil society organizations and the government in Tanzania to ensure the necessary reforms and policy changes are initiated so that girls are able to enjoy their education, rights and freedoms. A child is not a wife. No exceptions.
**EURASIA: CHALLENGING ROADBLOCKS TO JUSTICE IN EURASIA**

In January 2019 Equality Now published, *Roadblocks to Justice: How the Law Is Failing Survivors of Sexual Violence in Eurasia*. The report analysed the laws and practices on sexual violence in the 15 countries of the former Soviet Union. Following the publication of the report and sustained advocacy by local activists, Kazakhstan amended its laws to remove the exemption from penalty for a perpetrator of rape if they reconcile with the victim, and Ukraine amended its legal definition of rape from requiring use of force, threats and proof of resistance by the victim, to one that is based on consent, in accordance with international human rights standards. Equality Now is supporting the proper implementation of sexual violence laws in Georgia in line with international and regional standards. We are proud to support a growing women’s rights movement which is breaking new ground in challenging the pervasiveness and tolerance of sexual violence in the region.

**LATIN AND CENTRAL AMERICA: BOLIVIA JUSTICE FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN BOLIVIA**

For 17 years we’ve worked with rape and incest survivor, Brisa D’Angulo, to help her get justice for the crimes committed against her. Equality Now contributed to official interventions in early 2019 which have helped accelerate Brisa’s case, which now has a hearing date at the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACHR) and generated a commitment from the court to address sexual violence against adolescent girls.

**SOUTH ASIA: INDIA CALLING FOR URGENT ACTION TO END SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN INDIA**

During 2019 we’ve provided expert media comment on high-profile sexual violence cases and criminal justice proceedings. We co-sponsored a petition which received 200,000 signatures, demanding the government protect the witnesses and lawyers in the case of the abduction, rape, and murder of an eight year-old from Kathua. The case result was positive with conviction of most of the accused.
GLOBAL: REPEALING SEX DISCRIMINATORY LAWS AROUND THE WORLD

Every five years, Equality Now publishes our Words & Deeds report, highlighting sex discriminatory laws of countries that adopted the Beijing Platform for Action in 1995. The issue of discriminatory laws was elevated on the world stage by UN Women’s “Equality in law for women and girls by 2030: A multistakeholder strategy for accelerated action,” launched together at Commission on the Status of Women. In 2019, various governments amended or repealed sex discriminatory laws, including:

**Japan:** The age of marriage for girls was raised to 18 and a 100 day waiting period for remarriage for divorced/widowed women was removed.

**Singapore:** Marital rape is now prohibited, however there remains an exception for sexual activity with minors under 16 who “consent.”

**Democratic Republic of Congo:** A husband no longer has the right to manage his wife’s property and the wife can appear in civil court without husband’s authorization.

**Guinea:** A husband no longer has the right to determine place of residence; or to object to the separate profession of his wife.

NORTH AMERICA: CLOSING THE GENDER EQUALITY GAP IN THE US CONSTITUTION

Currently, women are not guaranteed equal rights in the US Constitution. Drafted in 1923, women’s rights activists have been campaigning for nearly 100 years to get the Equal Rights Amendment added to the Constitution, which would prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex. Standing side by side with ERA organizers around the country, we ramped up our advocacy to help Virginia become the 38th and final state required to ratify the ERA. This goal was accomplished in January of this year, and we are continuing to fight for the ERA until it is adopted into the US Constitution!

INTERNATIONAL AWARD WINNING WORK

The Government of Finland awarded Equality Now the International Gender Equality Prize on Monday 2 December 2019. The prize, which has only been awarded once before, was presented for our work in changing discriminatory laws and practices around the world. In 2017, the Government of Finland’s International Gender Equality Prize was awarded to German Chancellor Angela Merkel.
THANK YOU TO ALL THE PARTNERS AND DONORS THAT WE HAVE THE PLEASURE OF WORKING WITH. TOGETHER WE ARE STRONGER.

Abolish 153
Africa Nationality Coalition
Ana Correa
Apne Aap
Arab Women Organization
Association des Femmes Avocates 
Défenseures des Droits Humains
Association Mauritanienne des Droits de l'Homme
AU Women Gender and Development Directorate
Baghdad Women Association
Bahrain Women Union
BECA
Beirut Association for Social Development
CATW
Centre for Accountability and Rule of Law
CEWLA
Child Dignity Forum
CLADEM
CLADEM Argentina
CLADEM Paraguay
Committee for Follow Up on Women's Issues
Coordinadora por los derechos de infancia y adolescencia
Council of Europe, Georgia Office
County government of Makueni
CUBE
Defence for Children International – Sierra Leone
Embrace Dignity
Equal Rights Amendment Coalition
European Human Rights Advocacy Center
European Women's Lobby
Every Child Protected Against Trafficking
Forum Against Harmful Practices
Forum for African Women Educationists of Zambia
Girl Child network
Girls Power Initiative
Global Campaign for Equal Nationality Rights
GRACELAND
Haart Kenya
Hope Beyond Transitional Center
Human Rights Research Center, Armenia
Illaramatak Community Concerns
Institute for Human Rights and Development in Africa/Association des femmes avocates défenseures des droits humains
Jan Sahas
Joy for Children
Kisumu Medical and Education Trust
Kuwaiti Women without Limits
L’Association Malienne pour le Suivi et l’Orientation des Pratiques Traditionnelles
Lebanese Council to Resist Violence Against Woman
Life Bloom International
Marie Collins Foundation
Msichana Initiative
Musawah
Najdeh Association
Network Against Female Genital Mutilation
Office for Human Rights and Democracy in the Organisation for Cooperation and Security in Europe
Pathfinder Initiatives
PSGR Krishnammal College for Women
Public Movement Nemolchi Kazakhstan
Questionnes de Femme
Ruhama
Rural Education and Economic Enhancement Program
Sauti ya Wanawake-Pwani
Sexual Assault Crisis Center, Armenia
Solidarity for African Women’s Rights network
Sudanese Organization for Research and Development
Swabhiman Society
Tanzania Women Lawyers Association
Tasaru Ntomonok Initiative
The Lebanese Democratic Women’s Gathering RDFL
The New Woman Foundation
Trace Kenya
UN Women
Unchained at Last
Voix de Femmes
WeProtect Global Alliance
WILDAF - BENIN
WOCON
Women Against Violence and Exploitation in Society
Women and Law in Southern Africa
Women Solidarity Inc
Women’s Aid
Women’s Perspectives, Ukraine
Women's Partnership for Justice and Peace
World Hope International

Impact Report 2019 7