

## CWGL focuses on role of women journalists in reporting on Gender Based Violence

3 May 2019: The Center for Women's Global Leadership (CWGL) at Rutgers University today commemorates World Press Freedom Day by applauding the work of Women Journalists around the world in reporting on gender-based violence (GbV).

"Women journalists have made a significant contribution to defending human rights through their reporting on gender-based violence throughout the years," said Krishanti Dharmaraj, Executive Director of CWGL.

The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) observatory of killed journalists recorded 101 women journalists were killed in the past 24 years. A total of 95 journalists both men and women were killed in 2018 alone according to the International Federation of Journalists.

"The threats faced by women journalists while performing their jobs are very real, and it is not limited to one geography or a single type of political space, it is widespread," said Dharmaraj.

Journalists and media workers have long been at risk for violence in the course of their work. The past few years have seen an uptick in the number of journalists and media workers who were killed, tortured, arrested or detained in as a direct result of their profession. Journalism can be a dangerous profession. Journalists and media workers often work in the midst of war zones, conflicts, and natural disasters, and can incur the wrath of the most powerful when reporting on corruption or human rights abuses.

In addition to this, women journalists across the world face violence and harassment at an astounding rate. According to the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), 1 in every 2 women journalists have suffered some form of sexual harassment, psychological abuse, online trolling, and other forms of abuse while working. They are often at greater risk of being targeted not only for their reporting, but also because of their gender, including through the threat of sexual violence.

The CWGL started consultations on the Global Journalism Initiative on gender-based violence (JIG), a platform for journalists to work with experts in gender, trauma and human rights to better report on gender-based violence.

Over 70 women journalists from over 30 countries including Mexico, Honduras, Spain, Cameroon, India, Sri Lanka, Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Indonesia, Samoa, Jordan and Syria were engaged through extensive consultations to share their perspectives on reporting on gender-based violence.

"It was clear from the consultations that women journalists from varying experiences faced specific threats due to their gender, and other intersecting identities in particular when reporting on gender-based violence," said Dharmaraj.

Studies estimate that 35 percent of women worldwide have experienced either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or sexual violence by a non-partner which does not include sexual harassment - at some point in their lives. According to the World Health Organization some national

studies show that up to 70 percent of women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence from an intimate partner in their lifetime.

“Gender-based violence continues to be an issue that hinders the full participation of women and their contribution to society, we hope that this project will not only help women journalists strengthen their trade, but also create a space for journalists to share ideas on reporting on gender-based violence.”

The Global Project which is currently underway will continue to provide a platform for women journalists and the media community to exchange ideas and work with CWGL experts in developing knowledge products to strengthen gender-based violence reporting globally.

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### **Additional Background**

The project is part of CWGL’s work towards elimination of violence and discrimination against women in the world of work globally. In light of the 100th anniversary of the International Labour Organization (ILO) – CWGL is supporting the proposed ILO instrument on Violence and Harassment against Women and Men in the World of Work, which has the potential to establish a uniform set of minimum standards that will require states, employers, unions, and other key actors to prevent, identify, and provide redress in cases of gender-based violence in the world of work.

Despite the prevalence of violence and discrimination against women in the world of work globally, none of the ILO conventions adopted in its 100 years of existence focus specifically on gender-based violence and its direct link to gender-based discrimination

CWGL recognizes the importance and opportunity for leadership in the ILO’s 100th year to ensure that everyone experiences dignity at work, in any work they decide to pursue. We also see the critical need of recognizing the value of all work, including that which is unpaid and under-paid such as women’s unpaid care and domestic work. It is crucial to ensure formal recognition of the existence and impact of domestic and intimate partner violence in a woman’s world of work. As a feminist human rights organization, we are committed to moving beyond awareness of gender-based violence, and demanding greater accountability for ending it. This instrument is one foundational step on this greater journey.

### **Note to Editors:**

For more information and to arrange interviews please refer to the following:

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Additional Resources:

<https://16dayscampaign.org/campaigns/journalist-sector-focus/>

Visit: <https://cwgl.rutgers.edu>