

OXFAM RESEARCH REPORT

SINS OF OMISSION

WOMEN'S AND LGBTI RIGHTS REPORTING
UNDER THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Women's rights and the rights of lesbians, gays, bisexuals, trans, and intersex (LGBTI) persons are human rights, but they are getting short shrift in the US government's most prominent assessments of human rights under the Trump administration. In February 2018, the media reported that State Department officials had been ordered to cut back on discussions of women's rights and issues, such as reproductive rights and violence against women, as well as on discussions of sexual and gender-based discrimination in human rights assessments. An analysis of the data suggests that this order has been heeded. Under the Trump administration, the US State Department is de-emphasizing reporting on women's rights and issues, especially in the countries that generate asylum petitions and have the greatest gender inequality.

This report includes a comparison of the 2017 State Department Country Reports on Human Rights Practices—the first iteration of reports compiled under the Trump Administration—with the 2016 and 2015 reports. The end of the report (starting on page 9) includes an update with comparisons of the 2018 reports with the 2017 and 2016 reports. The results of the comparisons of these reports are overall less stark, but the concerning trends in the reduction of attention to the rights of women and LGBTI populations have continued.

INTRODUCTION

Since 1976, the US State Department has submitted to Congress annual Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for every country receiving US development assistance, all United Nations member states, and several non-member states and territories.¹ These reports initially grew out of the Carter administration's concerns over human rights abuses by US-backed governments in Argentina, Iran, Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), South Africa, and South Korea.² Since their inception, these reports have been intended to convey that countries' human rights practices will be taken into account in the formulation of US foreign and trade policy, including development assistance.³

These documents not only represent important inputs into US policy that can help promote robust civil societies abroad, but also serve as a critically important trove of systematic data on human rights practices for use by advocates and scholars—even if the documents have been somewhat politicized in the past.⁴ In addition, these reports are go-to resources for parties in asylum cases who seek to establish the dangers asylum seekers face in their home countries, as well as for multinational firms making decisions about investments and business partnerships.⁵

The Trump administration is on record as rejecting human rights reporting—sometimes referred to as “naming and shaming”—as a central responsibility of the US government. As President Trump himself said in May 2017, “We are not here to lecture—we are not here to tell other people how to live, what to do, who to be, or how to worship.”⁶ In February 2018, *Politico* reported that State Department officials had been ordered to cut back on passages discussing women's rights and issues, such as reproductive rights and violence against women, as well as sections on racial, ethnic, and sexual and gender-based discrimination.⁷

We have analyzed the data, and this order appears to have been heeded:

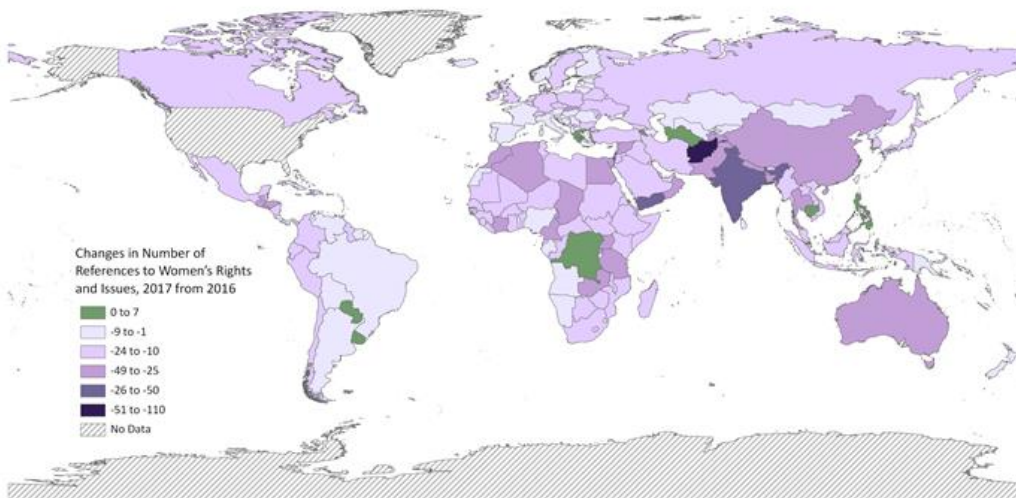
- Reporting on women's rights and issues outside the United States is down 32 percent under President Trump.
- Reporting on LGBTI rights and issues abroad is down 21 percent under President Trump.
- Countries of origin of asylum seekers to the United States have seen their reporting on women's rights and issues decline even more.
- Estimates show that countries with greater gender inequality have seen their reporting decline more.
- The section of the reports that formally addresses reproductive rights has been cut and renamed “Coercion in Population Control” under President Trump; critical data on maternal mortality and access to contraception have been eliminated.

CUTTING REPORTING ON WOMEN’S AND LGBTI RIGHTS AND ISSUES

We compiled data on women’s and LGBTI rights and issues from the 2017 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices—the first year the reports were produced under the Trump administration—and compared them with similar data for the last two years of the Obama administration.⁸ In our quantitative analysis, we looked at specific mentions of search terms related to women and LGBTI communities⁹; in our qualitative analysis, we delved into the reports and reporting on specific countries in more detail to understand how women and LGBTI issues are discussed.¹⁰ The changes are stark.

Mentions of women’s rights and issues—such as references to domestic abuse or sexual harassment—were down 32 percent in the 2017 reports relative to 2016 and 29 percent relative to 2015. For some countries the declines were very large. In the report on Afghanistan, women’s rights and issues were mentioned 195 and 201 times in 2016 and 2015, respectively. In 2017, they were mentioned only 85 times. The country with the next-largest decline in reporting was the Occupied Palestinian Territories, Israel, and the Golan Heights. Only 10 of 195 countries saw no decline or an increase in mentions of women’s rights and issues.¹¹ The changes in reporting are depicted in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Changes in the Number of References to Women’s Rights and Issues in US State Department Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, 2017 compared with 2016



Note: On average, mentions of women in these reports decreased by 32 percent in the first year of the Trump administration. Only 10 of 195 countries saw increases in mentions of women’s rights and issues in their respective reports. Map by Paige M. Roberts.

Mentions of LGBTI rights and issues—such as the criminalization of sodomy or employment discrimination based on sexual orientation—were down 21 percent relative to 2016 and 17 percent relative to 2015. The trend, however, was less

uniformly negative. Roughly 25 percent of countries saw reporting stay the same or increase. The largest decreases occurred in the reports for Romania (down 27, from 42 to 15) and Algeria (down 21, from 36 to 15), while the largest increases were in Azerbaijan and France (up 14 in each).

These top-line numbers are striking in their own right. However, we analyzed the data more closely—accounting for factors like population, world region, and economic development—and what we found was even more concerning.

More asylum seekers led to less reporting. Under the Trump administration, the State Department has cut back on discussing women’s rights and issues more for the countries that send the most asylum seekers. Country Reports on Human Rights Practices are often crucial building blocks in asylum petitions. Advocates have worried that under the Trump administration, human rights reporting would be curtailed as part of a more general strategy of deterring asylum seekers and slashing refugee resettlements. They had good reason. Holding other factors equal, every 1,000 successful asylum petitions from a sending country was associated with a decrease of one and a half mentions. That is, a country whose citizens received 4,687 grants of asylum between 2014 and 2016, like El Salvador, would see a 50 percent decrease in reporting on women’s issues and rights relative to a country with no asylum grantees.

Worse gender inequality led to less reporting. The worse a country scored on the Gender Inequality Index (GII)—a measure the United Nations uses to capture gender disparities in health, education, and employment—the bigger the decrease in reporting from 2016 to 2017. A country with a GII score of 0.05—similar to Denmark, Iceland, or Sweden—saw, on average, 3 fewer mentions of women’s rights and issues. Meanwhile, a country with a GII score of 0.5—similar to Bangladesh, Ethiopia, or Iran—saw, on average, 20 fewer mentions of women’s rights and issues. That is, reporting was slashed in precisely those countries where the status of women most lags behind that of men.

This is not just about shorter, more concise reports. Responding to initial reporting, State Department officials suggested that any changes would be made for focus and clarity. Yet the 2017 reports are not statistically significantly shorter than the 2016 reports.¹² The 2017 reports, however, contain more typos and grammatical errors, suggesting they were compiled hastily or condensed from significantly longer first drafts.

This is not about conditions improving (much) on the ground. One might hope that this decreased reporting could be chalked up to improvements in human rights conditions. Indeed, some countries have made progress: Jordan and Lebanon, for instance, repealed “marry your rapist” laws that exonerated men from rape charges if they married their victim. Tunisia did the same as part of a broader law outlawing violence against women.¹³ However, broader trends on the ground are less promising. Reports by Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch suggest that while women’s and LGBTI rights are improving for some people in particular contexts, for other people and in other contexts, they are being retrenched.

Patterns of reporting on LGBTI rights and issues were less clear. Statistical models failed to identify strong predictors of changes in mentions of LGBTI rights and issues. There has been an overall decrease in mentions of LGBTI rights and issues, but this decrease has not been significantly associated with factors like population, income levels, asylum grantees, and gender inequality.

These results all point in the same direction: under the Trump administration, the US State Department is de-emphasizing reporting on women's rights and issues, especially in the places that generate asylum petitions and have the greatest gender inequality. However, these numbers do not tell the full story: changes in tone and specific content may be even more important and suggest how the Trump administration's policy agenda is shaping these reports, which may result in a more muted and limited defense of rights.

Critically, the section of the reports formally addressing reproductive rights—titled “Reproductive Rights” under the Obama administration—was renamed “Coercion in Population Control” in the 2017 reports. This section now focuses narrowly on the presence or absence of coercive population control measures such as forced sterilization.¹⁴ For information about rates of contraceptive use and maternal mortality, the reports now direct readers to an outdated and inappropriate page on the World Health Organization website.¹⁵ This particularly egregious change minimizes fundamental information about women's health and equality.

COUNTRY EXAMPLES

A closer look at specific cases reveals additional ways that the administration's policy priorities may be shaping these reports.

Afghanistan had the largest decrease in the number of mentions of women between the 2016 and 2017 reports, from 195 to 85—a decrease of 56 percent. Although the 2001 US-led invasion initially led to increased rates of girls' education, these rates have fallen in recent years. In 2017, an estimated two-thirds of Afghan girls did not go to school. Only 37 percent of adolescent girls are literate (compared with 66 percent of adolescent boys), and one-third marry before they turn 18.¹⁶ Fighting between the Taliban and government forces continued, and there were reports of increases in cases of gender-based violence against women—including sexual harassment, acid attacks, kidnapping, and death—in areas under Taliban control.¹⁷ The 2017 report eliminated many of these specific descriptions of violence against women and neglected to include a statement—central in the 2015 and 2016 reports—suggesting that women experiencing violence in Afghanistan have turned to suicide and self-immolation in large numbers.

India also saw a large decrease in the number references to women between the 2016 and 2017 reports, from 117 to 65—a decrease of 44 percent. Alarming, in the 2017 report, a subsection on “Gender Based Sex Selection” was radically truncated to exclude details on regional trends in the male-female sex ratio that result from illegal prenatal sex selection. India did see several major improvements in laws related to women in 2017: In August, the Supreme Court banned the practice of triple *talaq* (Islamic instant divorce, or a husband's unilateral right to divorce by saying the word *talaq* three times), declaring that it was arbitrary and unconstitutional.¹⁸ It also ruled that sexual intercourse by a man with his wife, if she was under 18, would amount to rape.¹⁹ At the same time, the court weakened other protections for women related to dowries and domestic abuse,²⁰ and there continued to be many high-profile cases of rape, including gang rape, that again exposed the failures of the criminal justice system.²¹ An expert survey also named India the most dangerous country in the world for women.²²

El Salvador had a 50 percent decrease in the number of references to women between 2016 and 2017 (from 57 to 23 references), even as the numbers of immigrants and asylum seekers from the country continued to rise.²³ At the same time, the situation on the ground appears largely unchanged: As of 2015, the most recent year that data are available, women in the country had the third-highest rate of violent death for women in the world.²⁴ In the first 10 months of 2017, the Salvadoran Women's Organization for Peace registered nearly 2,000 reported cases of sexual assault.²⁵ Moreover, the country has the world's most restrictive ban on abortion; women have been imprisoned after miscarriages on charges of “aggravated homicide.”²⁶ These issues have been dramatically cut in the 2017 report, especially from the subsection on “Rape and Domestic Violence,” which no longer references the widespread rates of sexual violence, femicide, and domestic abuse—as well as the impunity with which perpetrators of these crimes operate. Moreover, the 2017 report includes less information on

how the state responded to these crimes, which may reduce pressure on the state to improve going forward.

Yemen recorded the third-largest decrease in the number of references to women between 2016 and 2017, from 105 to 50—a decrease of 52 percent. Since March 2015, the United States has supported a coalition led by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates in an armed intervention to restore the government of Yemen to power. The conflict has created one of the world's largest humanitarian crises, which has had a severe impact on the rights of women and girls.²⁷ Before the conflict Yemen ranked last out of 142 countries on the World Economic Forum's Gender Gap Index,²⁸ and the ongoing violence and resulting displacement have made the situation even worse, placing girls and women at increased risk of harassment and abuse, sexual and labor exploitation, early or forced marriage, and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).²⁹ As a result of the conflict, 1.1 million pregnant and lactating women are malnourished because they lack access to food and medical supplies.³⁰ The 2017 State Department report has dramatically truncated sections related to rape, domestic violence, sexual harassment in public, female genital mutilation and cutting, and legal and economic discrimination against women.

In **Iran**, whose isolation is a diplomatic priority for the Trump administration, the decline in mentions of women's rights between 2017 and 2016 was more modest (86 to 73—a decrease of 15 percent). The 2017 State Department report clearly outlines discrimination against women in Iran, noting that women "faced significant legal, religious, and cultural barriers to political participation," and that "if a man is found guilty of murdering his daughter, the punishment is between three and 10 years in prison rather than the normal death sentence or payment of 'diyeh' for homicide cases."³¹ The continued reporting on Iran's repression of women is consistent with a broader Trump administration policy of actively ramping up rhetoric against Iran after pulling out of the Iran nuclear deal.

The Philippines was one of 10 countries that saw an increase in references to women's rights and issues—up 2 references, or 5 percent, between 2016 and 2017. The country saw a 24 percent decrease in references to LGBTI issues (from 29 to 22 references) during the same period. Two notable changes occurred for women and LGBTI rights in 2017, which may help to explain the increases. First, the House of Representatives unanimously approved the SOGIE (Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity or Expression) Equality Act,³² which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or expression. The legislation has not progressed through the Senate. Second, President Rodrigo Duterte signed an executive order strengthening the Reproductive Health Act, which gives women greater access to family planning services.³³

CONCLUSION

The US State Department Country Reports on Human Rights Practices have been a standard for human rights reporting since the 1970s. Though far from perfect, they have illuminated human rights abuses and chronicled progress in ways the international community can scarcely do without. The reports have also helped to strengthen norms and practices related to women's and LGBTI rights and have underpinned much of the academic scholarship on these issues. These changes in reporting standards around women's rights and issues—and to a lesser extent, LGBTI issues—threaten to undermine decades of US leadership and imperil women, girls, lesbians, gays, bisexuals, and trans, queer, and intersex individuals and communities the world over. Obscuring the patterns of harm faced by these groups risks undermining the work that women's and LGBTI civil society groups are doing on the ground to challenge varied forms of gendered oppression, and moreover risks contributing to a backsliding in progress toward equal rights for all.

These sins of omission cannot go unanswered. Oxfam America joins 96 civil society groups calling on the State Department to include robust reporting on the incidence and prevalence of gender-based violence and to reverse the decision to delete the reproductive rights subsection and ensure that it is reinstated in the 2018 reports.

2018 UPDATE: CONTINUED CUTS TO REPORTING ON WOMEN'S AND LGBTI RIGHTS AND ISSUES

As a result of the blatant changes to the 2017 reports under the Trump administration, the human rights community has pushed back in several ways, including by advocating for passage of the Reproductive Rights are Human Rights Act, which would require the State Department to reinstate comprehensive reporting on reproductive rights in its annual reports and was introduced in Congress on March 7, 2019.³⁴

After the 2018 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices were released—the second iteration of reports released by the Trump administration—we employed the same methodology used for the original research to compare the 2018 Human Rights Reports to both the 2017 and 2016 reports.³⁵ We wanted to see if the Trump administration has continued to deliberately cut language on women and LGBTI populations, or if pushback by the human rights community, increased media attention, and/or congressional pressure has led to the reintroduction of any of this language. The results overall are less stark, but the concerning trends in the reduction of attention to the rights of women and LGBTI populations have continued.

Here's what we found:

Overall mentions of women's rights and issues in the 2018 reports have increased by 5 percent relative to 2017 but are still 29 percent lower from the last year of the Obama administration. This may indicate that the media attention, congressional pressure, and/or the advocacy of the human rights community has been somewhat successful in helping bring back attention to some women's issues, but the almost 30 percent discrepancy between the latest reports by the current administration and the last reports by the previous administration is still alarming. The continued diminished language on women's rights and issues is coherent with other actions that the US has taken in this space recently. For example, the US politically aligned itself with nations that have poor track records on women's rights and LGBTI issues, such as Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Malaysia, Iraq, and others during the negotiations at the 2019 United Nations (UN) Commission on the Status of Women (CSW).³⁶

Overall mentions of LGBTI rights and issues in the 2018 reports are up 14 percent relative to 2017 but are still down 10 percent from the last year of the Obama administration. Compared to women's rights and issues, improved language on LGBTI rights and issues is promising. But, the rights of LGBTI communities around the world are still in grave danger and even regressing in some places like Brunei where homosexual acts were recently declared punishable by death.³⁷ As mentioned previously, the US's efforts to uphold the rights of the LGBTI populations have been reversed in other spaces as well, including at CSW in 2019.³⁸ Specific country reports where we did identify significant increases in language on LGBTI populations include the reports on Armenia, Cyprus, and Cameroon.

Consistent with last year’s findings, countries sending more asylum seekers to the United States see larger decreases in reporting on women’s issues/rights. Under the Trump administration, the State Department has cut back on discussing women’s rights and issues to a greater extent for the countries that send the most asylum seekers to the US. This is despite the fact that the situation for women in many of these places is still very dangerous. For example, as was included in our report last year, women in El Salvador had the third-highest rate of violent death for women in the world as of 2015.³⁹ As was true last year, this could indicate a more general strategy of deterring asylum seekers, since these reports are used by parties in asylum cases to establish the dangers asylum seekers face in their home countries.⁴⁰ This continued trend is consistent with the Trump administration’s most recent actions and rhetoric around immigration.

Also consistent with last year’s findings, countries with worse gender inequality see larger decreases in reporting on women’s issues and/or rights. In other words, the worse a country scored on the Gender Inequality Index (GII)—a measure the United Nations uses to capture gender disparities in health, education, and employment—the more likely that country was to see its language on women’s rights and issues cut. This continued trend to cut language on women’s rights in countries where women face the most challenges is both counterproductive and concerning.

The “Reproductive Rights” section of each country report has not been reinstated, and the “Coercion in Population Control” sections remain. This continues to mean that issues such as maternal mortality and women’s access to reproductive services aren’t being reported on for any of the approximately 200 countries. Since reproductive rights are a fundamental part of women’s health, wellbeing, safety, and autonomy, not reporting on these issues means that a full picture of women’s rights in these countries is missing. What’s even more alarming is that the US hasn’t limited its efforts to remove attention from these important issues to the State Department reports—*Foreign Policy* has reported that US officials have attempted to eliminate references to reproductive and sexual rights in the final outcome documents of CSW.⁴¹

The 2018 reports show enhanced scrutiny of women’s issues and/or rights in the Middle East, with Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Israel and the Occupied Territories⁴² seeing the largest increases in reporting relative to 2017⁴³; Iraq saw large increases in reporting on both women’s issues and/or rights and LGBTI issues and/or rights (see table 5 in Annex 2). Because the reasons for this shift are not immediately clear, further analysis to compare the change in reporting in this region with any recent developments in the Trump administration’s Middle East foreign policy is recommended.

Once again, patterns of reporting on LGBTI rights and issues were less clear. Statistical models failed to identify strong predictors of changes in mentions of LGBTI rights and issues. There has been an overall decrease in mentions of LGBTI rights and issues, but this decrease has not been significantly associated with factors like population, income levels, asylum grantees, gender inequality, and world region.

CONCLUSION

Although the slight increase in language on women's rights and issues in the 2018 country reports compared to the first reports under the Trump administration may signal a slight move in the right direction, the claim we made last year that the current administration is de-emphasizing reporting on women's rights and issues still holds. This is particularly true when you consider the fact that language on women's reproductive rights has been deleted from the reports for two years in a row now. Additionally, the administration's attempts to impose similar removals of language in global agreements, like at the UN, underscores that the current administration no longer recognizes the importance of the fundamental rights of women and girls.

The greater increase in language on LGBTI issues is more promising, as it does show that greater attention is being paid to these issues when compared to last year. However, the large reduction in reporting on LGBTI rights and issues from 2016 seems more likely to reflect a political agenda rather than any reduction in actual rights violations.

The continued erasure of evidence on the violation of rights that women and—to a lesser extent—the LGBTI population face hinders the global community's efforts to combat many of the issues that are now being ignored in these reports. Additionally, they continue to signal that the US is no longer willing to be a leader in the human rights space. In Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's public comments at the release of the 2018 reports on March 13, 2019, he stated, "By issuing today's reports, we deploy the truth—the truth about abuses occurring around the globe—as one of the most powerful weapons in America's diplomatic arsenal."⁴⁴ However, it is clear from our analysis that the truth around women's and LGBTI rights around the globe isn't being adequately represented, and again, we declare that these sins of omission cannot continue to go unanswered.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The original report was written by Marie E. Berry and Cullen S. Hendrix at the Josef Korbel School of International Studies at the University of Denver. Original research was conducted by Camilo Moraga-Lewy. We thank Rebecca Rewald, Laura Rusu, Gawain Kripke, Marc Cohen, and Vicki Gass for contributions to the paper.

The 2018 update was written by Rebecca Rewald at Oxfam America. The quantitative analysis was conducted by Cullen Hendrix from the Josef Korbel School of International Studies at the University of Denver and the language comparisons for each country report were conducted by Camilo Moraga-Lewy.

ANNEX 1: 2017 REPORTS

This annex outlines the quantitative analysis in this report. The data on mentions of women and LGBTQI issues were collected by Camilo Moraga-Lewy based on text searches of publicly posted Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, available at <https://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/>. Keyword searches of the posted PDFs were conducted for all country reports for the years 2017, 2016, and 2015, identifying (1) the number of times “woman,” “women,” and “female” were mentioned in each report, and (2) the number of times “LGBTQI” and related terms (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transvestite, transsexual, intersex, same-sex, same sex, LGBT, homosexual) were mentioned in each report. Descriptive statistics can be found in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics, Mentions of Women’s and LGBTQI Issues/Rights in US Country Reports on Human Rights Practices

Variable	Number of Countries	Number of Mentions			
		Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Women, Change 2016–2017	195	-13.9	13.1	-110	7
Women 2017	195	29.2	19.3	4	135
Women 2016	195	43.1	27.6	8	195
Women 2015	195	41.1	28.5	4	201
LGBTQI, Change 2016–2017	195	-3.4	5.9	-27	14
LGBTQI 2017	195	13.1	8.8	0	62
LGBTQI 2016	195	16.5	9.7	0	79
LGBTQI 2015	195	15.7	8.8	0	54

Note: The data on gender inequality (the Gender Inequality Index) were taken from the 2016 *Human Development Report* Statistical Annex, Table 5.⁴⁵ The data on population and income groupings (low, lower middle, upper middle, and high) were taken from the 2017 World Development Indicators.⁴⁶ Data on asylum grantees were compiled from the 2016 Yearbook of Immigration Statistics, and values represent both affirmative and defensive petitioners.⁴⁷ Descriptive statistics for these variables can be found in Table 2.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics, Mentions of Women’s and LGBTQI Issues/Rights in US Country Reports on Human Rights Practices

Variable	Number of Countries	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Gender Inequality Index	158	0.4	0.2	0.0	0.8
Asylum Grantees	195	351.0	1,506.1	0	18,564
In Population	194	15.6	2.2	9.3	21.0

Note: Regression analysis, with robust standard errors, was used to derive the estimated effects reported in the brief. These results are robust to the inclusion/exclusion of China, a massive outlier in terms of numbers of asylum grantees. Estimates referenced in the brief are reported in Tables 3 and 4.

Table 3: Regression Estimates of Changes in Mentions of Women’s Rights and Issues

Variable	Beta	p-value
Asylum Grantees, 2014–2016	-0.002***	0.001
Gender Inequality Index, 2016	-37.511**	0.013
Income Level, 2017 ⁴⁸		
Lower-Middle	3.993	0.476
Upper-Middle	5.068	0.281
Upper	0.044	0.993
In Population, 2017	-1.428***	0.001
World Region ⁴⁹		
Africa	4.175	0.323
East Asia and Pacific	-1.504	0.634
Europe and Eurasia	-3.908	0.247
Near East	-8.282**	0.004
South and Central Asia	-13.048	0.074
Constant	21.800*	0.042

Note: $n = 157$; $F = 7.68$; $R^2 = 0.39$; *** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$.

Table 4: Regression Estimates of Changes in Mentions of LBGTQI Rights and Issues

Variable	Beta	<i>p</i> -value
Asylum Grantees, 2014–2016	-0.0001	0.348
Gender Inequality Index, 2016	4.359	0.420
Income Level, 2017 ⁵⁰		
Lower-Middle	-0.177	0.921
Upper-Middle	-0.330	0.893
Upper	2.337	0.359
In Population, 2017	0.381	0.277
World Region ⁵¹		
Africa	1.020	0.625
East Asia and Pacific	-0.885	0.650
Europe and Eurasia	-2.618	0.242
Near East	-2.528	0.192
South and Central Asia	0.870	0.708
Constant	-11.069	0.131

Note: $n = 157$; $F = 1.99$; $R^2 = 0.09$; *** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$.

ANNEX 2: 2018 REPORTS

This annex outlines the quantitative analysis in this report. The data on mentions of women and LGBTQI issues were collected by Camilo Moraga-Lewy based on text searches of publicly posted Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, available at

<https://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm#wrapper>.

Keyword searches of the posted PDFs were conducted for all country reports for the years 2018, 2017, and 2016, identifying (1) the number of times “woman,” “women,” and “female” were mentioned in each report, and (2) the number of times “LGBTI” and related terms (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transvestite, transsexual, intersex, same-sex, same sex, LGBT, homosexual) were mentioned in each report. Descriptive statistics can be found in Table 1.

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Variable	Number of Countries	Number of Mentions			
		Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Women Change 2017-2018	195	1.5	6.3	-17	34
Women, Change 2016–2017	195	-13.9	13.1	-110	7
Women 2018	195	30.7	21.3	4	165
Women 2017	195	29.2	19.3	4	135
Women 2016	195	43.1	27.6	8	195
Women 2015	195	41.1	28.5	4	201
LGBTQI, Change 2017–2018	195	1.8	4.8	-11	19
LGBTQI, Change 2016–2017	195	-3.4	5.9	-27	14
LGBTQI 2017	195	14.9	9.2	0	73
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Table 2: Descriptive Statistics, Mentions of Women’s and LGBTQI Issues/Rights in US Country Reports on Human Rights Practices

Variable	Number of Countries	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Gender Inequality Index	158	0.4	0.2	0.0	0.8
Asylum Grantees	195	351.0	1,506.1	0	18,564
In Population	194	15.6	2.2	9.3	21.0

Note: Regression analysis, with robust standard errors, was used to derive the estimated effects reported in the brief. These results are robust to the inclusion/exclusion of China, a massive outlier in terms of numbers of asylum grantees. Estimates referenced in the brief are reported in Tables 3 and 4.

Table 3: Regression Estimates of Changes in Mentions of Women’s Rights and Issues, 2018 from 2016

Variable	Beta	p-value
Asylum Grantees, 2014–2016	-0.002***	0.003
Gender Inequality Index, 2016	-38.651**	0.018
Income Level, 2017 ⁵⁵		
Lower-Middle	2.418	0.663
Upper-Middle	6.615	0.163
Upper	0.183	0.97
In Population, 2017	0.677	0.162
World Region ⁵⁶		
Africa	2.517	0.553
East Asia and Pacific	-1.971	0.516
Europe and Eurasia	-5.314	0.142
Near East	-2.364	0.563
South and Central Asia	-13.184	0.074
Constant	12.009	0.325

Note: $n = 157$; $F = 6.11$; $R^2 = 0.32$; *** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$.

Table 4: Regression Estimates of Changes in Mentions of LBGTQI Rights and Issues

Variable	Beta	<i>p</i> -value
Asylum Grantees, 2014–2016	-0.0001	0.214
Gender Inequality Index, 2016	0.519	0.921
Income Level, 2017 ⁵⁷		
Lower-Middle	-0.481	0.804
Upper-Middle	-0.714	0.752
Upper	-1.781	0.527
In Population, 2017	-0.293	0.307
World Region ⁵⁸		
Africa	-0.898	0.566
East Asia and Pacific	0.711	0.617
Europe and Eurasia	2.182	1.41
Near East	3.725	0.026*
South and Central Asia	2.343	1.29
Constant	6.493	0.369

Note: $n = 157$; $F = 1.41$; $R^2 = 0.08$; *** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$.

Table 5: Largest Positive and Negative Changes, 2018 from 2017

Change in Women's Mentions, 2018 from 2017	Country
+34	Iraq
+30	Saudi Arabia
+18	Israel & Occupied Territories
+15	Korea, Republic of
+14	Zambia
...	
-9	Equatorial Guinea
-11	Nepal
-12	Cyprus
-17	Sudan
-17	Swaziland

Change in LBGTQI Mentions, 2018 from 2017	Country
+19	Liberia
+17	Cote d'Ivoire

- +16 Malaysia
 - +14 Iraq
 - +13 Lebanon
 - ...
 - 8 Macedonia
 - 9 Azerbaijan
 - 10 El Salvador
 - 11 South Africa
 - 11 India
-

NOTES

¹ These nonmember states and territories include, for instance, Taiwan and Western Sahara.

² US State Department, "Carter's Foreign Policy," A Short History of the Department of State. <https://history.state.gov/departmenthistory/short-history/carter>. Accessed October 10, 2018.

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⁴ David L. Cingranelli and David L. Richards, "The Cingranelli and Richards (CIRI) Human Rights Data Project," *Human Rights Quarterly* 32 (2010): 401–424.

⁵ Eliot Walker, "Asylees in Wonderland: A New Procedural Perspective on America's Asylum System," *Northwestern Journal of Law and Social Policy* 2, no. 1 (2007): 1–29; Shannon Lindsey Blanton and Robert G. Blanton, "What Attracts Foreign Investors? An Examination of Human Rights and Foreign Direct Investment," *Journal of Politics* 69, no. 1 (2007): 143–155.

⁶ Donald Trump, "Speech to the Arab Islamic American Summit," May 21, 2017. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/president-trumps-speech-arab-islamic-american-summit/>. Accessed October 9, 2018.

⁷ Nahal Toosi, "State Department Report Will Trim Language on Women's Rights, Discrimination," Politico, February 21, 2018. <https://www.politico.com/story/2018/02/21/department-women-rights-abortion-420361>. Accessed September 19, 2018.

⁸ The reports, both current and archived, can be accessed at US Department of State, Human Rights Reports, <https://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/>. Accessed September 19, 2018.

⁹ See the annex for a full discussion of search methodology, data sources, and data analysis.

¹⁰ In the Human Rights Reports, these issues are discussed primarily in Section 3, "Participation of Women and Minorities;" Section 6, "Women;" and Section 7, "Acts of Violence, Discrimination, and Other Abuses Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity." Related subsections, particularly in Section 6 ("Women"), include "Rape and Domestic Violence," "Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting," "Other Harmful Traditional Practices," "Sexual Harassment," "Reproductive Rights" (which was re-named "Coercion in Population Control" in the 2017 reports), and "Discrimination."

¹¹ In ascending order (no change or more mentions): Uruguay, Cambodia, Seychelles, Paraguay, Greece, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Turkmenistan, Armenia, Philippines, Palau.

¹² Report lengths were coded for 20 randomly selected countries for 2016 and 2017. A difference-of-means test failed to reject the null hypothesis of no significant difference in mean lengths.

¹³ Lilia Blaise, "Tunisia Takes a Big Step to Protect Women from Abuse," *New York Times*, August 1, 2017. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/01/world/africa/tunisia-women-domestic-violence.html?rref=collection%2Fsectioncollection%2Fafrica>. Accessed October 14, 2018.

¹⁴ The language standardized in the 2017 reports reads, "There were no reports of coerced abortion, involuntary sterilization, or other coercive population control methods. Estimates on maternal mortality and contraceptive prevalence are available at: www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/monitoring/maternal-mortality-2015/en/." The reports note that in several cases, such as in China and North Korea, coerced abortions or sterilization measures were taken, and in places like Austria and Belarus doctors sometimes insisted that women who had disabilities or who were carrying children diagnosed with disabilities in utero pursue abortions.

¹⁵ Letter of 97 civil society organizations to Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo, October 2, 2018. https://www.reproductiverights.org/sites/crr.civactions.net/files/documents/Pompeo%20Civil%20Society%20Letter%20Human%20Rights%20Reports%2010-2-18_final%20letter.pdf

¹⁶ "I Won't Be a Doctor, and One Day You'll Be Sick: Girls' Access to Education in Afghanistan," Human Rights Watch, October 17, 2017. <https://www.hrw.org/report/2017/10/17/i-wont-be-doctor-and-one-day-youll-be-sick/girls-access-education-afghanistan>. Accessed September 20, 2018.

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- ¹⁹ “India 2017/2018,” *Amnesty International*. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/countries/asia-and-the-pacific/india/report-india/>.
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- ²¹ *Ibid.*
- ²² “The World’s Most Dangerous Countries for Women 2018,” Thomson Reuters Foundation. <http://poll2018.trust.org>. Accessed September 20, 2018.
- ²³ Maureen Meyer and Elyssa Pachico, “Fact Sheet: U.S. Immigration and Central American Asylum Seekers,” WOLA Commentary, Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA), February 1, 2018. <https://www.wola.org/analysis/fact-sheet-united-states-immigration-central-american-asylum-seekers/>. Accessed September 20, 2018.
- ²⁴ Mireille Widmer and Irene Pavesi, “A Gendered Analysis of Violent Deaths,” *Small Arms Survey Research Notes* 63 (November 2016). http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/H-Research_Notes/SAS-Research-Note-63.pdf. Accessed September 20, 2018.
- ²⁵ “Indicadores de Violencia Sexual,” Observatorio de Violencia. <http://observatoriodeviolencia.ormusa.org/violenciasexual.php>. Accessed September 20, 2018.
- ²⁶ Amnesty International, *On the Brink of Death: Violence against Women and the Abortion Ban in El Salvador* (London: Amnesty International, 2014). https://www.amnestyusa.org/files/el_salvador_report_-_on_the_brink_of_death.pdf. Accessed September 20, 2018.
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- ²⁸ Kristine Anderson, *Now Is the Time: Research on Gender Justice, Conflict and Fragility in the Middle East and North Africa—Country Synthesis Note: Yemen* (Oxford, UK, and London: Oxfam and International Alert). https://d1tn3vj7xz9fdh.cloudfront.net/s3fs-public/file_attachments/cs-yemen-gender-justice-conflict-fragility-mena-050617-en.pdf. Accessed October 14, 2018.
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³⁹ Mireille Widmer and Irene Pavesi, "A Gendered Analysis of Violent Deaths," *Small Arms Survey Research Notes* 63 (November 2016). http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/H-Research_Notes/SAS-Research-Note-63.pdf. Accessed September 20, 2018.

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⁴² At Oxfam, we use the term Occupied Palestine Territory and Israel (OPTI).

⁴³ Countries in the "Near East" world region (Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel & Occupied Territories, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Western Sahara, Yemen) saw, on average, 10 more mentions of women's issues/rights than countries in other world regions and controlling for population, income level, gender inequality, and volumes of asylum seekers.

⁴⁴ Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo, "Remarks on the Release of the 2018 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices," March 13, 2019, <https://www.state.gov/secretary/remarks/2019/03/290320.htm>.

⁴⁵ Available at United Nations Development Programme, Human Development Data (1990–2017), <http://hdr.undp.org/en/data>.

⁴⁶ Available at World Bank, World Development Indicators, <https://data.worldbank.org/products/wdi>.

⁴⁷ Tables available at US Department of Homeland Security, Yearbook of Immigration Statistics 2016, <https://www.dhs.gov/immigration-statistics/yearbook/2016/>. For some country-years, the Department of Homeland Security does not report numbers; these occur when the number of cases is small enough to identify the asylum seeker. These data were treated as missing and affect only about 1.5 percent of country cases.

⁴⁸ "Lower income" is the base category.

⁴⁹ "Western Hemisphere" is the base category.

⁵⁰ "Lower income" is the base category.

⁵¹ "Western Hemisphere" is the base category

⁵² Available at United Nations Development Programme, Human Development Data (1990–2017), <http://hdr.undp.org/en/data>.

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