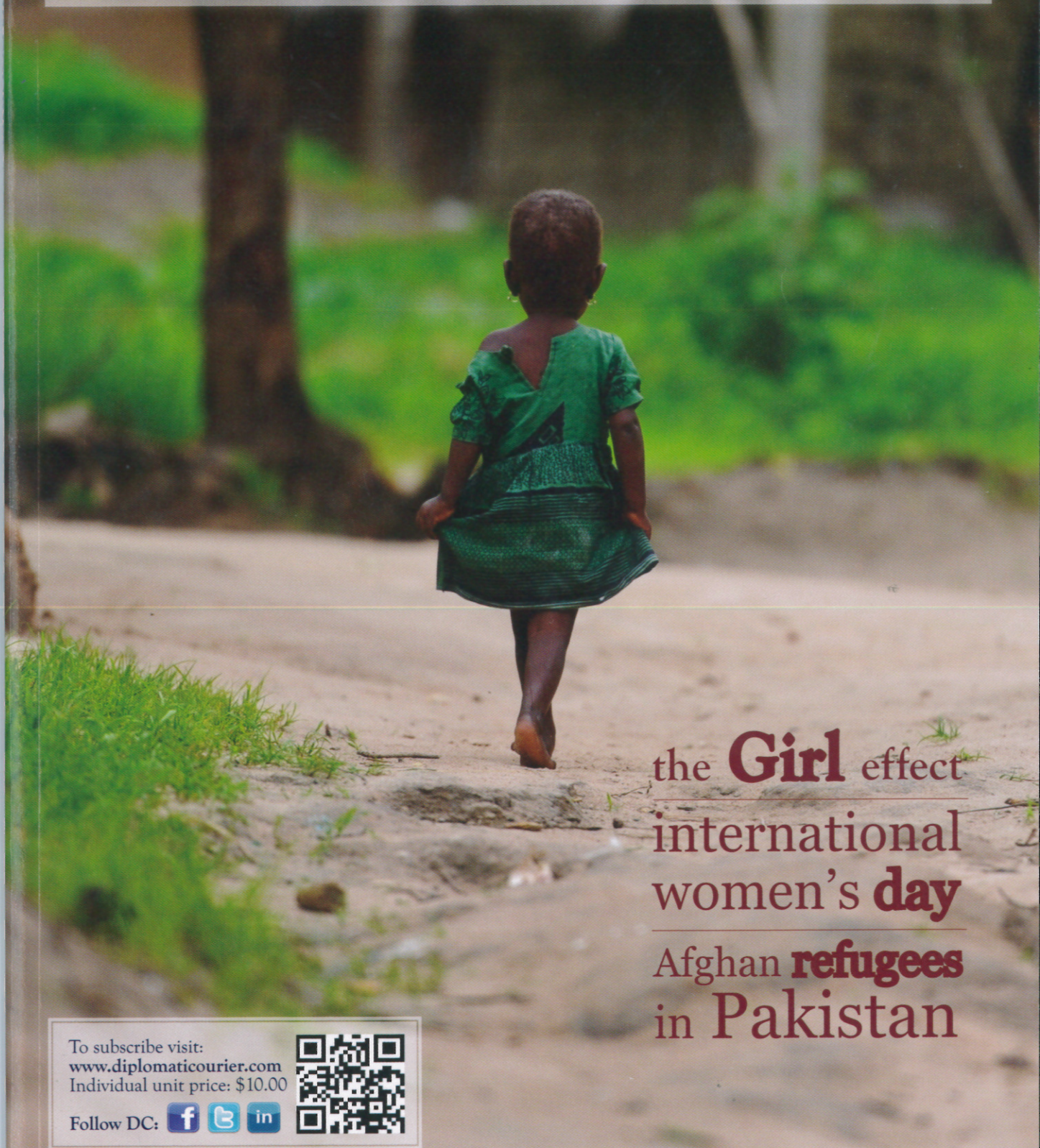




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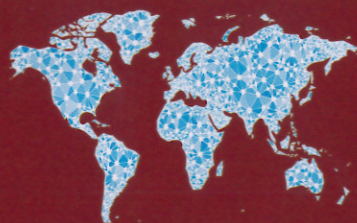
the **Girl** effect
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Across the world, female leaders must overcome gender discrimination, unequal opportunities, and traditional barriers before entering the political arena. While women represent half of the world's population, they are extremely underrepresented in leadership positions in public office, which would allow them a voice in shaping the democratic destiny of their countries while ensuring women's equality under the law. This is the impetus of the Women's Democracy Network (WDN) which was developed in 2006. A global initiative of the International Republican Institute (IRI) and primarily funded by the National Endowment for Democracy, WDN conducts programs to empower women to pursue their rightful place as leaders in the political sphere. WDN does this by connecting women to their best resources: themselves.

Mentoring is an essential part of WDN's programming as it encourages dialogue between aspiring activists and women leaders in order to learn new skills, become empowered and to help one another instead of competing with each other. WDN also holds two annual conferences: a U.S. Government Study Tour in Washington, DC and a European Union Study Tour in Brussels for its members to learn from the experiences of U.S. and European policy makers. WDN also focuses on increasing the capacity of its members through conducting targeted skills-building trainings based on the members' individual needs. All trainings are conducted on a volunteer basis by WDN's global members with expertise in the identified subject area. Trainings topics vary from how to conduct issue advocacy campaigns, to how to effectively compete for a public office, to how to democratically govern once elected.

Since WDN was established in 2006, it has expanded into 55 countries and includes 15 Country Chapters which are multi-sector, multi-partisan groups of women who coalesce to address issues facing women in their countries. These country-based partnerships with WDN are vital to increasing women's participation in politics and civil society in their countries. WDN encourages its members to take action through their sponsorship of small subgrants which assist women in carrying out their projects. The Jeane J. Kirkpatrick award, in memory of the first female U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, functions in a similar manner by awarding women who have devoted themselves to service in civil society and politics.

WDN welcomes those determined to support women in politics and civil society in their quest to achieve leadership positions which will allow them to shape the democratic future of their countries, while assuring that women's rights are upheld within their global communities. To become a member contact WDN at connect@WDN.org. To learn more about the women featured in this edition visit www.WDN.org. **DC**

| BY JESSICA HAN |



SALLY DURA

ZIMBABWE
NATIONAL COORDINATOR, MDC
WOMEN'S ASSEMBLY



**HUMAIRA
HAQMAL**

AFGHANISTAN
CHAIRWOMAN OF
THE MOVEMENT OF
AFGHAN SISTERS



ANNE ITTO

SOUTH SUDAN
DEPUTY SECRETARY
GENERAL, SOUTH-
ERN SECTOR, SUDAN
PEOPLE'S LIBERATION
MOVEMENT



**GLADYS
GONZALES**

ARGENTINA, MEMBER
OF PARLIAMENT IN
THE ARGENTINE
NATIONAL CONGRESS



MU SOCHUA

CAMBODIA
MEMBER OF
PARLIAMENT



**AGNE
ZUOKIENE**

LITHUANIA, MEMBER
OF THE SEIMAS
(PARLIAMENT)



**ANNE-STELLA
FOMUMBOD**

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COUNCILWOMAN,
CITY OF DOUALA