



**THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SOCIAL BEHAVIOR CHANGE COMMUNICATIONS  
(SBCC) IN CHANGING SOCIAL ATTITUDES ON EQUAL RIGHTS TO PROPERTY  
FOR WOMEN – THE CASE OF KOSOVO**

**MERITA LIMANI, DON CUIZON, DRITON ZEQRIRI**

USAID Property Rights Program, Kosovo

merita.limani@prpkos.com.com

don.cuizon@tetrattech.com

driton.zeqiri@prpkos.com

**Paper prepared for presentation at the  
“2018 WORLD BANK CONFERENCE ON LAND AND POVERTY”  
The World Bank - Washington DC, March 19-23, 2018**

***DISCLAIMER***

*The authors' views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.*

*Copyright 2018 by author(s). All rights reserved. Readers may make verbatim copies of this document for non-commercial purposes by any means, provided that this copyright notice appears on all such copies*

*The authors contributed equally to this paper.*



# Land Governance in an Interconnected World

ANNUAL WORLD BANK CONFERENCE ON LAND AND POVERTY  
WASHINGTON DC, MARCH 19-23, 2018



## Abstract

*The society in Kosovo is considered patriarchal and patrilineal, where property inheritance is traditionally transferred to men (Joireman, 2015). Even though the laws on Gender Equality and Law on Inheritance are considered egalitarian, the social norms continue to encourage patriarchal values that exclude women from property inheritance.*

*This paper will address the social context and norms related to property inheritance. It will discuss how it has negatively affected women's ability to inherit and own property, and will describe interventions implemented under the USAID-funded Property Rights Program (PRP), namely a multi-channel Social and Behavior Change Communications (SBCC) campaign, with the aim of countering these negative effects. The application of an SBCC methodology to encourage change in beliefs, attitudes and behavior on women freely exercising their property rights in practice will be the focus of this paper.*

*To influence social change, often an SBCC strategy (hereinafter campaign) is considered to be effective in achieving a desired change on social determinants that often shape human interaction. Such determinants may include knowledge, attitudes, norms and cultural practices. PRP's SBCC campaign was designed with the aim to encourage change in beliefs, attitudes and behaviors so that women are seen as capable stewards of property, valued economic actors, and benefiting from tenure security. A comprehensive SBCC campaign using television and radio public service announcements, billboards, opinion-editorial pieces in the written media, and an active social media presence is already showing positive desired change in social norms, namely changes in social attitudes and behaviors for equal property rights for women. PRP's latest research [Mid-Term National Survey on Property Rights in Kosovo, July 2017] indicates an increase of affirmative attitude toward equality in property rights between men and women, from 64% (Baseline, 2015) to 73% (Mid-term, 2017).*

## Key Words:

**Gender Equality; Women's Property Rights; Social Behavior Change Communication (SBCC); Patriarchal/Patrilineal Society.**

## **1. Introduction**

*(Merita Limani)*

Kosovo is situated in South-Eastern Europe, bordering Albania on the southwest, Montenegro on the northwest, Serbia on the northeast and Macedonia on the south. The country covers a total territorial area of 10905.25 km<sup>2</sup> with a population of approximately 1.8 million. Under its Constitution, Kosovo is a parliamentary republic, with a multiethnic population, with Albanians comprising the majority (90%), and the remaining 10% of the population composed of ethnic Serbs, Bosniaks, Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians (RAE), Turks and Gorani (Kosovo Agency of Statistics, 2017).

The country declared independence from Serbia in 2008 and is recognized as an independent country by 116 out of 193 United Nations members and by 23 out of 28 European Union members. Kosovo is seeking to enter the European Union and signed the Stabilization Association Agreement with the EU in October 2015.

The unemployment rate in Kosovo is the highest in the region, at 36.6% (Kosovo Agency of Statistics, 2015). This widespread unemployment and inactivity, especially among women and youth, leave an ample amount of human potential unused (UNDP, 2016).

Kosovo has been ruled by many regimes: by the Roman and Byzantine empires through the 7th century and by the Serbian empire during the medieval period. In 1389, Ottoman forces prevailed at the Battle of Kosovo, beginning five centuries of Ottoman rule. Later, the country was ruled by the Kingdom of Yugoslavia until 1941 and with the dissolution of Yugoslavia, Kosovo came under Serbia's control until 1999. All these regimes have left their mark on the property rights setting in the Western Balkans, including Kosovo. While the origins and heritage of land tenure and property rights in Kosovo are rather checkered owing to these frequent political changes characterizing Kosovo's history, one element has been consistent throughout, i.e., the dominant role of men in matters of property as opposed to their female counterparts. This paper will discuss this issue in more detail, the tools employed to preserve this male dominance (including, but not limited to discrimination occurring both in the open under previous regimes, and in the grey areas of otherwise well-intentioned current generation egalitarian laws) in the context of inheritance – probably the most common method of property transfer in Kosovo. The treatment of women as less than equal to men in matters of property has had ample time to become engrained as a social norm in Kosovo and has been incorporated into the local culture and traditions. However, integration into the EU will require that society changes its ways in this regard. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has included this issue among the challenges to be addressed in

Kosovo, and has mandated the Property Rights Program to play a major role. These interventions are characterized throughout the paper as a social behavior change communications campaign (SBCC).

## **2. Kosovo's Gender Equality Context**

*(Merita Limani)*

The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women defines gender equality as:

...the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Further, gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men. (UN Women, n.d.)

Under the Kosovo Constitution, adopted in 2008, gender equality is to be protected by the state (Parliament of Kosovo, 2008). This provides the legal basis for the introduction and regulation of the principles of gender equality in Kosovo and establishes gender equality as a fundamental constitutional right. Article 15 of the Constitution provides that the state must guarantee equality between women and men and develop equal opportunity policies. The Constitution also prohibits all forms of discrimination, including gender-based discrimination. Gender equality is regulated by the Law on Gender Equality (No. 05/L-020), which provides for equal opportunity for all citizens of Kosovo regardless of gender.

Kosovo has further deepened its commitment to gender equality by signing important documents and binding international standards which guarantee the equality of men and women and prohibit discrimination based on gender such as the European Convention on Human Rights and the Convention of the United Nations on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (Constitution, Article 22, 2008).

Early instances of gender-responsive legislation in the Kosovo territory can be traced to the early 1900s after the official end of Ottoman rule and transition into Serbian rule under the Serbian civil code. However, it is challenging to make a standalone observation of attitudes and behaviors with respect to gender, or to make much of any linkages with the adoption of the Serbian civil code or socialist ideals under the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, because the legislation concerning property (e.g., inheritance, registration, etc.) during the 20<sup>th</sup> century in the territory were influenced more by complex ethnic, religious, and ideological agendas rather than any spirited attempt for true gender equality. Some

women did avail themselves of the law during this time in order to obtain property in their name. But they were certainly more the exception than the rule.

While a more comprehensive legal framework and mechanisms supporting gender equality were developed in the post-conflict period, in reality women still do not enjoy the same rights as men. This disparity is evident in many spheres of social and economic life, including unequal opportunities in the economy, politics, education and participation in culture and media. The unemployment rate for women is very high: 36.6%; and only 13% of businesses are owned by women (Kosovo Agency of Statistics, 2015). Lack of property ownership among women further contributes to this economic disparity. A national survey conducted by the Property Rights Program in 2017 indicated that approximately 20% of women in Kosovo own property, among which 7.8% is property inherited from their birth families (USAID, Property Rights Program, 2017).

Ownership and control of property is seen as a contributing factor in altering the balance of power in gender relations. As observed globally, when steps are taken in affirmation of women's rights to property and to effective access to property ownership, women gain a measure of economic autonomy. In the household, community or in wider political society, ownership of property enhances the bargaining power of women and improves their voice and access to decision-making (Domino, 2013).

### **3. Women's Property Rights in Kosovo – Past and Present**

*(Merita Limani)*

#### **3.1 The Influence of Culture and Traditions**

The society in Kosovo is considered patriarchal in which the role of the male as the primary authority figure is central to social organization. Men hold authority over women, children, and property. This culture of patriarchy, especially regarding patrilineal property inheritance is a result of many factors. However, these factors were born out of ancient tradition and were relatively independent from foreign influence. While throughout history, the territory had been ruled by different regimes, leaving traces of their cultures which influenced to some degree the way society functioned; certain values from the Ottoman Empire and Yugoslavia were not entirely compatible with the ancient culture and customs of the growing Albanian majority in this territory.

Among the ancient practices that remained, particularly from the Ottoman Empire was the patriarchal social system, where men were the decision makers and providers who worked and managed their familial land and property. The role of women was concentrated in tending to the home and taking care of their children and elders. It was accepted practice for land and property to descend along a purely

patrilineal line with little regard for female heirs, who were relegated to simple house tasks and not treated as qualified to contribute in serious matters of estate. This practice was widespread and accepted, and unfortunately systematized the discrimination of women for generations.

This culture of patriarchy in the Kosovo territory was further influenced by a customary legal code called Kanun of Lekë Dukagjini (hereinafter Kanun), which was in operation in northern Albania and Kosovo (Gjeqovi, 2003). Anthropological scholar, Berit Backer, in his paper “Behind Stone Walls: Changing household organization among the Albanians of Kosova.” credits the Kanun as one of the bases of gender-based discrimination within the Albanian population during this time. This particular legal tradition had completely excluded women from property inheritance. The Kanun, states, “In the event of the inheritor being female, then a man must be sought up to the 12th remove so that this property is not left to a woman.” (Co-author’s translation.) It was viewed that leaving property to women meant transferring it outside of the lineage. Extraordinary circumstances, such as when the family patriarch dies with no male heirs, would have to take place in order for a woman to assume responsibility over property. In northern Albania, an unmarried daughter could assume the role of a man in order to keep the property within the family. This required that they take an oath of celibacy. Such a woman would then be considered a man with all the benefits afforded to men (Bilefsky, Dan, 2008). And, she could inherit her family’s property and take part in community decision-making.

With the adoption of the 1974 Yugoslav Constitution, Kosovo was recognized as an Autonomous Province allowing it to have its own administration, assembly, and judiciary; as well as having a membership in the collective presidency and the Yugoslav parliament, in which it held veto power (Dodd, July 1998). Legal professional and university lecturer, Egzonis Hajdari describes the legal treatment of property inheritance during the socialist Yugoslav period:

...in 1955, in former Yugoslavia was issued the Law on Inheritance, which was applied in Kosovo also. By constitutional amendments of the former Yugoslavia Constitution of 1963, Kosovo acquires the right to legislate. Within the acquired competencies, on 30 December 1974, Kosovo issues its first Law on Inheritance. The aim of this law was to regulate on legal and sustainable basis issues referring legacy. This law and its amends of 1979 have guaranteed full equality of women with man to inheritance. (Hajdari, 2014)

He, asserts a de jure versus de facto circumstance, which persists today, where women largely did not avail themselves of their inheritance right under the 1974 law.

Even today, when discussing the property inheritance rights of women, people in Kosovo, particularly of the older generation, often cite rather disparaging sayings common in the Albanian

vernacular derived by positions taken from customary tradition. Dashurije Salihu, a mid-fifties Kosovar woman stated in a discussion with one of this paper's co-authors: "It has always been this way — when a girl was born, we were always told that girls are born in a stranger's house and die in their own home." What this means is that a daughter is not seen to be an inherent part of the family, because she will leave it to join her husband's family when she gets married (and her husband will have absolute authority over her).

More than five centuries of customary legal tradition have made male favoritism somewhat of a standard for social behavior in everyday Kosovo life today. While this archaic system has yielded way – especially during the time of Yugoslavia – to a more recognizable statutory system; the beliefs and behaviors have outlasted the relatively new constitution<sup>1</sup> and body of legislation that are in stark contrast to these traditions, particularly with respect to the treatment of women. Matters of familial property are still being decided in extra-legal settings, and are therefore subject to the systematized patriarchy and male favoritism that those settings excuse or even foster, all to the disadvantage of women. Those decisions are then pre-determined and codified in the statutory system when rightful female heirs are obligated to follow the customary practice and to renounce their inheritance right in favor of their brothers (USAID, Property Rights Program, 2017).

### **3.2 Legislation Regulating Women's Property Rights**

Safeguarding property rights for women is a matter not only of human rights and gender equality; it is a fundamental principle that underlies a woman's right to engage in economic activity. This section discusses the country's legislation that regulates property rights in the context of women.

Article 46 of the Constitution guarantees equal rights to property for women and men in Kosovo. There are three important laws protecting women's property rights in Kosovo: the Law on Gender Equality in Kosovo (No. 05/L-020), the Law on Inheritance in Kosovo (Law No.2004/26), and the Family Law (Nr.2004/32).

Article 1 of the Law on Gender Equality guarantees, protects and promotes equality between genders as a basic value for the democratic development of society. This law guarantees equal opportunity and equal treatment in public and private areas of social life, including political and public life, employment, education, health, economy, social benefits, sport and culture and other areas. This law creates a good legal basis to develop new by-laws that strengthen gender equality in property rights and other sectors – for example, the Administrative Instruction on Special Measures for Registration of Joint

---

<sup>1</sup> Kosovo is celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> year of independence in 2018.

Immovable Property, which support the joint registration of marital property (Agency for Gender Equality, Kosovo, 2016).

The Family Law protects the rights of women in marriage, providing for joint ownership of property acquired during the marriage, and the division of property after divorce.

Article 3 of the Inheritance Law provides that “all physical persons under the same conditions are equal in inheritance.” Referring to gender specifically, Article 12.1 states, “The spousal right to inheritance is equal to the rights of the children and male and female children are equal under the law.” The estate must be divided equally for all legal heirs of the deceased. However, this is not applied in practice in Kosovo, where there is a prevailing belief that a spouse does not actually have a claim to any family property bequeathed to the deceased spouse by his or her parents or family; that property goes to the children alone or to the siblings of the deceased.<sup>2</sup> Also, the equal division of an inheritance estate among children is another problem since families often favor male heirs to inherit their property. Owing to the cultural norms and traditions described above, female heirs are often pressured to renounce their rightful share of the estate in favor of their brothers. That is why the ability to make an official renouncement<sup>3</sup> under Article 130.1 of the Inheritance Law is critical and has had the greatest impact on women’s property rights in Kosovo. While heirs may have legitimate reasons to use this legal provision, for example due to prohibitively high tax implications of the property, the ability to renounce is often misused against female heirs in Kosovo. Recently, the Government of Kosovo has adopted a National Strategy on Property Rights, which provides a clear vision and action plan on how to address property rights issues, including the rights of women.<sup>4</sup>

It is evident that the implementation of this well-intentioned legislation will continue to be challenged in practice due to social behavior steeped in centuries of patriarchal culture and customary legal tradition. However, Kosovo is beginning to witness some progress in behavior change in conjunction with major Western-backed legislative and judicial initiatives to create an even more fair and transparent legal regime for property rights USAID, through a social behavior change communications approach, is thoughtfully working to create an enabling social environment in order for the improved property rights framework in Kosovo to succeed.

---

<sup>2</sup> The Baseline National Study on Property Rights – research undertaken by USAID Property Rights Program will be explained further in Section 5 of this paper.

<sup>3</sup> While the term renouncement is used in the cited article in the Law on Inheritance, it is used interchangeably in this paper with the term renunciation.

<sup>4</sup> The National Strategy on Property Rights is a major government policy-making strategy document developed and coordinated by USAID’s Property Rights Program and the Kosovo Ministry of Justice. [http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/National\\_Strategy\\_and\\_Annexes\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/National_Strategy_and_Annexes_ENG.pdf)

#### **4. Social Behavior Change Communication Campaign**

*(Don Cuizon)*

Considering the country context presented above, and how dynamic it is expected to become in the coming years as the legislative and judicial reforms envisaged in Kosovo's National Strategy on Property Rights take shape, a public information campaign was needed – and one that was both targeted and authentic in its delivery. However, because many of these reforms run counter to current social and familial norms in Kosovo, generic advertisements and a website about the NSPR seemed insufficient to achieving the goal of greater gender equality in formal property ownership. It was evident to the Property Rights Program that genuine behavior change was needed to convince policymakers to create the enabling environment for more egalitarian property rights, but also to support women as they seek to exercise their rights to property ownership in practice.

Social behavior change communications (SBCC) campaigns have enjoyed widespread success in the international development field, specifically in their application to matters of public health and family planning. It has been used with great effect in response to disease outbreaks, most notably the Ebola and Zika viruses ("Health Communication Capacity Collaborative Project"). SBCC has familiar appearances in numerous tobacco cessation and HIV prevention efforts across the world. However, its history in being applied to matters of civil rights and civic duty seems less prominent. On the other hand, a government SBCC campaign on women's equal property rights in Kosovo sets a goal not too unlike that of public health initiatives. While a behavior change campaign to promote healthy living habits such as diet and exercise is motivated, in part, by the government's desire to curb healthcare costs and preserve the capacity of the healthcare system; a behavior change campaign to promote women's fair and equitable ability to exercise their property rights and to encourage formal property ownership generally is motivated, in part, by the government's desire to curb the problem of informal property ownership from growing – with women often being the victims of that informality.

While a basic tenet of advertising is that one should know one's audience, SBCC is unique in that it requires a deeper understanding of why their audience behaves as they do. Advertising by a soft drink company concerns itself mainly with the taste appeal of the drink and the reasons for which people choose to buy that drink instead of a different brand. SBCC recognizes that the targeted behaviors are often rooted in community traditions or social norms. This is not to completely trivialize soft drink advertising, as the question of why people drink a soft drink that is detrimental to their health [i.e., is irrational] merits exploration, albeit in a different forum.

The Property Rights Program completed a number of research works that have provided a basic understanding of audience of its eventual SBCC campaign. In 2015, PRP commissioned a report, “Gender, Property, and Economic Opportunity in Kosovo,” which revealed in part that there is an obvious gap between Kosovo’s legal, procedural, and administrative regime on property rights and the courts’ actual practice; and also between the requirements of the law in force, on the one hand, and, on the other, the cultural attitudes that prevent women and girls from exercising their inheritance rights, as well as other rights (Joireman, 2015). PRP also conducted a baseline national survey in order to “gain insights into public opinions on property rights, women’s right to inherit, and satisfaction with court services on resolving property disputes” (USAID, Property Rights Program, 2015). (Further discussion of this and a subsequent survey is presented below.) One other major PRP research work informing this SBCC campaign is worth mentioning: “Informality in the Land Sector: The Issue of Delayed Inheritance in Kosovo” which was written to “critically assess provisions in the legal framework governing uncontested inheritance claims and the registration of property rights to identify potential options for making these improvements.” The paper also assesses “the practice of both courts and notaries to identify and propose potential approaches for strengthening due process safeguards to ensure that all potential heirs, and especially women, can fully exercise their rights to inherit property” (Keefe, 2016, p. iii). Personal statements through in-person interviews both in support of these research works and through the normal course of PRP implementation of activities have been invaluable for engineering the SBCC. A multitude of operators in this space, including judges, legal officers, cadastral employees, notaries, civil society organizations, and ordinary citizens from a wide array of social and geographical backgrounds have been consulted in order to make the campaign as relevant, accurate, and authentic as possible.

PRP brought on an outside communications consultant to study and refine the objective of the desired SBCC campaign and to determine which communication channels were available and effective in Kosovo. The consultant’s major deliverable was the development of the project’s SBCC Implementation Plan. As part of that plan, the consultant also guided project staff in determining three target audiences, for which focus groups were to be conducted in order to determine the messages specific to those target audiences. The three Primary Target Audiences chosen for the three separate campaign messages were:

1. Married or widowed women with brothers, ages 18 to 45;
2. Married men with sisters and/or daughters, ages 18 to 45; and
3. Parents of adult children; ages 45 to 65 (with daughters).

Secondary Audiences included institutional and high level stakeholders, media, and youth activists/law students. Target messages chosen with extensive research with the focus groups were as follows:

- Institutional/Elite Stakeholders: Campaign Tagline: *Kosovars for equal property rights.*
- Women’s Key Message: *Retain your and your family’s inheritance. It’s your right!*
- Men’s Key Message: *We support women’s property rights because it’s right for our families!*
- Parent’s Key Message: *We support our daughter’s right to inherit just like our son. How about you?*

This campaign implementation plan would establish its position as being supportive of behavior and respect of women’s property decision-making and rights by parents, brothers, and husbands. It would promote the idea that women’s property rights are something to be advocated by respected members of the community, which would mean the vocalizing of support of women’s property rights, and also assisting women to act out those rights in a concrete way (e.g., accessing the court, notary or legal advisor). The plan also would establish the marketing mix for the campaign, namely using high-concept advertising and promotion through mass media products (e.g., television, radio, and billboards) with high production values and tailored to each target audience’s unique preferences and barriers/benefits to target behaviors. It also proposed the use of selected public figures when feasible, as well as exploring a number of broadcasting applications to take advantage of Kosovo’s high mobile phone penetration (e.g., call-in programs, SMS messaging, an information hotline) (Williams, 2015).

As for branding and marking, the SBCC implementation plan made this quite clear. PRP had the good fortune of adopting a brand and logo prepared several months prior by another donor program supporting a short-term activity to encourage joint registration of spousal property. When that other program ended, PRP remained available to take on this activity and expand it into the multi-year in-depth SBCC campaign it is known as today. The campaign is tri-lingual in Albanian, Serbian, and English – translating into English as *For Our Common Good*.<sup>5</sup>

The campaign began production of its first public service announcement (PSA) in the fall of 2015, with an official campaign reboot event to launch this first PSA in December 2015. A local media and public relations agency was subcontracted through an open and competitive Request for Proposals procurement process.<sup>6</sup> Because the creative and production workflow (e.g., storyboarding, script writing, etc.) is not necessarily different or unique in SBCC as compared to regular product advertising, this paper will not go into great detail on this topic. It is worth mentioning that, over time, PRP learned the value of having the right resources on the creative team. Not only did PRP need a public relations (PR) partner

---

<sup>5</sup> In Albanian: *Për të mirën tonë*. In Serbian: *Za naše dobro*.

<sup>6</sup> Subsequent seasonal sub-campaigns would be further competed through the RFP process as PRP learned more about the qualities it felt that a public relations agency would need in order to produce this unique style of PSA.

which had the connections with select high profile persons in Kosovo society, but it also greatly benefitted from a PR partner who understood the property rights challenges on a human level in order to make more authentic products. It is the authenticity that an effective SBCC campaign brings that stands the best chance to convince the audience that this desired behavior change is sensible and is already happening in their society.

On the other hand, PRP's particular campaign has been taking strides over time in tempering its appeal to common sense in its messaging. Research, such as the one conducted by Kelly and Barker (Kelly & Barker, 2016), demonstrates six common errors made in attempts to change health behavior that having inadvertently eschewed lessons learned from psychological and sociological studies. The most paramount of the six errors is the assumption that, in PRP's case, a woman's ability in Kosovo to assert her lawful right to determine and exercise decisions over property to which she has claim is an obvious and unobjectionable position based on conventional "Western" standards. The thoughtful study PRP had engaged in its inception year as described above on the cultural context, role of customary law, and so on, gives credence to PRP's attempt to bring a message on changing behavior that is simple and direct while recognizing that the cause of this patriarchal behavior is deeply rooted in the culture and prevailing religion; is multi-generational; and is contributed to by both men and women. In short, the campaign's message is a manifestation of an alternative behavior – one that has societal and economic benefits for a country which is in dire need of every available economic contributor, both male and female. In the personal experiences of the authors of this paper, there does not seem to exist in Kosovo any sort of assumption that society should just accept the message without question and get on with changing this archaic behavior. Change in this regard must not be forced or pushed at an uncomfortable speed for risk of fracturing the social fabric and losing support for the cause.

Now, a brief description on the creative content of the initial PSA and its evolution in subsequent seasonal sub-campaigns. *For Our Common Good* had the good fortune from its inception of being supported by the Kosovo Office of the President. Then-president Atifete Jahjaga was the first female president of the Republic of Kosovo, and was a strong, symbolic figure for a campaign on gender equality. She would appear in the first PSA alongside other noted and respected personalities in society, including a female owner of a national television broadcasting network, the then-Minister of Justice, and a young female judo athlete.<sup>7</sup> The PSA was presented at the campaign's launch event in December 2015 with remarks given by the President, U.S. Ambassador, and Minister of Justice. It would go on to be aired on national and local television networks and posted online on USAID's YouTube page and the *For Our*

---

<sup>7</sup> During a time where Kosovo female judo athletes were receiving relatively high media coverage for their success in international competitions – Majlinda Kelmendi would go on to win Kosovo's first Olympic gold medal 8 months after the first PSA.

*Common Good* Facebook page. Feedback from the PSA was overwhelmingly positive in its empowering message delivered by the star-studded line-up.

Spring 2016 brought the next round of PSAs to market. PRP partnered with a different PR agency who would go on to propose an interview format for the new content. Whereas the use of notable figures in society in the first PSA captured the initial interest of viewers, this next round would show average citizens responding on-camera to interview questions. Fathers were asked if they would give some of their own properties to their daughters. Sisters and brothers were asked what one would do for the other, to demonstrate that a daughter requesting her share of inherited property is not equivalent of her taking a share away from a brother. In parallel to these products were news feature stories. Much different than PSAs, these products were about three minutes in length showing actual cases where women were benefitting economically through property ownership or where husbands co-ventured a new business together which required them to jointly register their immovable property. These products were organized around the three target audiences identified in the SBCC implementation plan. These spots were also recorded for use on the radio. The Serbian products<sup>8</sup> were voiced by native Serbian speakers and was received well by that community, who appreciated the extra effort. Serbian actors would go on to be used for the campaign's third round of on-air products.

Before the subsequent round in Spring 2017, billboards were developed in the gap months where the *For Our Common Good* visual identity was reinforced, using on the billboards the images of the citizens appearing in the PSAs, thus supporting them as public figures in their own right. Typical grassroots roundtable discussions with the SBCC target audiences supplemented the broadcast campaign. However, great interest was shown in the campaign when it opened a new channel into the Kosovo youth. On-the-ground activities held both within and outside the capital city and in suburban and rural communities targeting primary and secondary school children were conducted during this gap period as well. In the Yugoslav tradition, a puppet theater show was commissioned by PRP and was shown to several primary schools in the capital city, Pristina. Drawing events were sponsored by PRP to encourage primary school children to draw pictures on the topic of "Home and Family."<sup>9</sup> Fine arts were utilized even further with PRP's commissioning of a forum theater performance on gender equality and property inheritance. The post-performance question and answer session between the performers and the audience proved a particularly effective forum for discussion. PRP understands the Kosovo youth to be in a formative period of their lives where the preferred behavior desired can be introduced as a sensible

---

<sup>8</sup> The campaign would go on to expand to the Roma community in the following year.

<sup>9</sup> These drawings would go on to be showcased on more billboards during the gap months before the next on-air campaign.

alternative to the traditional attitudes that prevailed in their families. At this point, the SBCC approach was organically becoming a multi-channel long-run campaign which was on the way to building up trust among its target audiences.

In an effort to remain “fresh” and cutting-edge, the spring 2017 brought a new round of television and radio PSAs. Focus group data indicated that audiences are particularly receptive to messages transmitted through existing television series with devoted audiences. While an interesting idea to pursue in the future, it requires more time and resources to prepare. Instead, PRP would go on to produce a live acted PSA that would air during the commercial breaks of popular programs. Different versions of the PSA were created (according to the three target audiences) which dramatized a different story about the same family from the perspective of different family members. An elderly father was contemplating the writing of a will. In another version, his grown daughter is given the opportunity to be presented the will and vows to treat her own children equally with respect to property as her father had done. Scenes of the multi-generational household evoked strong relatability among viewers’ informal feedback to PRP, where even the depicted home itself looked extraordinarily authentic – neither overtly rural nor overtly fancy or wealthy. Furthermore, this was the first opportunity where PRP could produce entirely separate versions of this PSA concept for the Serbian minority audience using actual Serbian actors.<sup>10</sup>

At this point, about 18 months of on-air and on-the-ground programming was implemented under the *For Our Common Good* rubric.<sup>11</sup> And between Spring and Summer 2017, a mid-term national survey was conducted by PRP in order to determine whether the SBCC approach was having any statistically significant effect on changing attitudes and behaviors with respect to gender and property rights. The later section of this paper will detail the monitoring and evaluation approach and findings. But, broadly speaking, *For Our Common Good* is moving the needle in the right direction with respect to people’s increased knowledge of their property rights, their desire to support a more egalitarian attitude towards those rights, and women’s active efforts to assert their rights in the courts.

## **5. Public Opinion Polls on Property Rights in Kosovo:**

### **A correlation between attitudes and practices in public opinion polls of society in transition regarding women’s property rights**

*(Driton Zeqiri)*

---

<sup>10</sup> Far too often in the Kosovo broadcast market are PSAs developed with mere subtitles in Serbian almost as an afterthought.

<sup>11</sup> *For Our Common Good* has more than 100 products across television, radio, billboards, and printed products so far.

The Property Rights Program has conducted two major surveys<sup>12</sup> within the last three years in an effort to gather data on the Kosovo people's

- current perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors towards property ownership, registration, and women's rights to inherit property;
- knowledge of the property rights regime in Kosovo;
- level of satisfaction with the judicial system, specifically courts, in resolving property [inheritance] disputes; and
- exposure to PRP's communications products.

The first survey (baseline) was performed in 2015 and followed up by a mid-term survey in 2017.

These surveys cover the entire Kosovo territory, with a representative sample of 1,251 respondents using probability sampling techniques. The sampling has been designed to reach a 95% confidence level with a confidence interval of  $\pm 3\%$ .

The most recent mid-term survey indicates that approximately 76% of the Kosovo population aged 18 and above have been exposed to at least one outreach activity or media product from PRP's SBCC campaign. Specifically, the TV PSAs have to date reached around 53% of the population. Printed brochure products have reached 35% of the population, with radio products reaching around 24% of the population. Eighteen percent of the population has been reached through social media, and around 16% through billboards. In-person small group discussion engagements have so far reached around 6% of the population.

The mid-term survey indicates that outreach activities via the SBCC campaign have had direct impact on increasing people's knowledge of property rights, implying a positive correlation between exposure to outreach activities and products and an increase in knowledge. The percentage of people who have a basic knowledge of their property rights has increased from 27% in 2015 to 51% in 2017.

When broken down by gender, the percentage of women who know their rights has increased from 14% to 37% (a 165% increase from 2015 to 2017) while the percentage of men who know their rights has increased from 40% to 65% (a 63% increase from 2015 to 2017). The higher rate of increase in women's knowledge of property rights can be explained by the fact that the SBCC campaign's main target demographic is women living in Kosovo who do not exercise their rights to property.

---

<sup>12</sup> All statistics presented in this article are derived from surveys done by USAID Property Rights Program in Kosovo. Author has been granted full access to the survey database to be able to perform statistical analyses.

The mid-term survey also shows that the change in knowledge has directly impacted the change in attitudes. Statistical tests indicate a direct positive correlation between the change in the knowledge of property rights and the change in attitudes toward women having the same rights to property as men. The percentage of people with an affirmative attitude toward equality in property rights between women and men has increased from 64% in 2015 to 73% in 2017.

When broken down by gender, the percentage of men with an affirmative attitude toward the equal property rights of women and men has increased from 56% in 2015 to 72% in 2017, an increase of 16%. The percentage of women with an affirmative attitude toward the equal property rights of women and men has increased from 70% in 2015 to 75% in 2017, an increase of 5%.

Studies from these two surveys is also indicating that a change in knowledge and attitudes has even triggered a change of practices. Specifically, the survey findings show that within the past two years, the number of women that have inherited property has nearly doubled, increasing from a mere 3.8% of women in 2015 to 7.5% in 2017.

Another compelling finding which is confirming the social activism of women around this issue is the percentage of women filing inheritance claims. This has seen a ten-fold increase from 0.3% in 2015 to 3.0% in 2017. This increased social activism on the part of women is contributing to a “tipping of the scale” in the other direction. As more women inherit or file an inheritance claim, it is hoped that this reduces to some degree social pressure that other women currently feel to renounce their property rights.

A preliminary analysis seems to indicate that the variables “women inheriting” and “women filing an inheritance claim” are dependent on the variable “increased knowledge,” suggesting that with the increase in knowledge, one could reasonably expect an increase in the percentage of women filing inheritance claims and inheriting. This affirms a sound logic that with the introduction of PRP’s SBCC intervention, the desired action is occurring more frequently than when there was no such intervention. However, to be methodologically and statistically correct we must emphasize the role that intervening variables could have had in the correlation between the above variables, which at this stage of research is not yet scientifically tested or explored.

Theoretically, in every society, it is natural and inevitable for customs and cultural practices to change. Views, beliefs, ideas, customs, and cultural practices are all social constructs and are ultimately products of human consciousness. Customs arise from the need of society to regulate the interactions between people and to create social stability. However, as a society develops, some customs and cultural practices will lose their previous function and will be replaced with others. There is no doubt that the custom of having only male heirs inherit property has lost whatever social function it might have had in

the past. Any attempt to preserve such a custom in the current social context leads to the phenomenon of “dual consciousness”,<sup>13</sup> where an individual holds beliefs and views that are mutually contradictory.

The statistical analysis described above and elucidated further in the official reports from these two surveys shows a positive trend toward favorable social terrain for equal property rights between men and women and transforming these new values into accepted social custom.

No matter from which theoretical framework we use to interpret the above findings, all theories of social change (evolutionary or revolutionary) would lead to a similar interpretation, i.e., that we have strong scientific evidence that Kosovo is experiencing social change with elements of social movement.

Considering that there is a change in attitudes and practices of people that is triggered by an increase in knowledge and awareness, and further supported by the activism of civil society organizations who serve as trusted facilitators, and with the government publicly stating their willingness to support equal gender rights to property, it can be concluded that all the elements for social change on this subject exist in Kosovo and are working in an interrelated manner.

## **6. Conclusion and Way Forward**

*(Don Cuizon)*

The determination to use an SBCC approach to intervene into the lack of support and access that women in Kosovo face in exercising their property rights in practice was born out of a study of present and past social behavior and norms, and how current behavior in this regard can be traced to previous practice. Such a historical study – going back several centuries and identifying a customary system that, while officially something of the past, has a recognizable grasp on behavior in the present – is remarkably useful in designing a winnable strategy for social behavior change.

Kelly and Barker make a similar observation with respect to SBCC for public health. This is greatly relevant in SBCC for civil and human rights applications as well. They suggest that this *a posteriori* study “acknowledges complexity and the fact that in the social, political and economic worlds, the ability to predict very accurately and other than in the most short-term of circumstances is very limited, but that understanding preceding conditions in the form of patterns and practices is usually a useful way of thinking about what might be done to change things.”

To that end, there is much room to delve even deeper. A study into the practical reasons that patrilineal inheritance was selected centuries ago over a more egalitarian approach is one possible line of

---

<sup>13</sup> A term used to describe the world-view of people who simultaneously hold two apparently inconsistent sets of beliefs. John Scott and Gordon Marshall, *A Dictionary of Sociology*, Oxford University Press, 2009.

inquiry. Assuming there were dissenting viewpoints at that time, how have they grown in volume and numbers in more recent decades? What can explain the openness, albeit limited, in this society to certain Western values that perhaps did not exist during customary times? The equivalence of women with property for a significant period of history is certain to produce, at a minimum, grievances, and perhaps even very serious traumas as the layers of the onion are peeled back as this society marches toward realizing gender equality as a human right.

SBCC can and should take into account all of the available behavioral and sociological studies on past generations in the Kosovo territory to better understand this society's psychology today. From there, the campaign can correct course and become even more effective at reaching the most unconvinced members of society. As mentioned previously, the importance of trust distinguishes SBCC from ordinary short-run advertisements. SBCC attempts to form a compact between itself and the audience. Recognizing and understanding the risk – taking an action in defiance of traditional family values that the SBCC ultimately is suggesting -- only makes more clear the necessity for this bond.

This trust also comes with the campaign's continued ability to remain unwaveringly authentic and dedicated to its mission. Successful social movements have often been led by members of the injured party themselves. While it is helpful to broadcast PSA products that show examples of women who have filed an inheritance claim and prevailed in obtaining their rightful share, or a widow winning a court case that affirms her right to the marital home and not to be evicted from it; this campaign could only benefit from the increased participation of those who are still fighting to realize their right. Grassroots outreach is vital and should not be overlooked, conceding to a temptation to create another media product with the false expectation that it penetrate fully into the viewing market. Anyone in favor of the cause should be supported and feel accepted to join the campaign so as to not let it be a government or foreign donor initiative alone. It is hard to argue with the sustainability with this approach.

The campaign must also continue to strive to do no harm. It would be imprudent to approach the message and the cause as if it were simply common sense. This paper has characterized the infringement of women's property rights as a matter of, not law, but of the implementation of law, the behaviors of those sworn to enforce the law, and the behaviors of society at large. So long as there is a gap between the spirit of the prevailing law and the attitudes and behavior of certain citizens, great care should be taken to not alienate those people further. To that end, the campaign could also improve its content by micro-targeting its audiences. No two people are exactly the same. Education, living conditions, economic conditions, etc., all contribute to the receptivity of the message. Some demographic groups will require more convincing than others. This SBCC campaign's authenticity could only stand to benefit from gaining a deeper understanding of its micro-audiences.

Monitoring and evaluating the campaign’s effectiveness through continued national surveys is paramount to keeping it relevant and cost efficient. But, any desires to use the data as a tool for prediction of future behavior – particularly at a national population level – should be tempered. An in-depth understanding of micro-audiences will easily illustrate the multitude and intensity of external variables that these demographic groups experience, which can alter their receptivity to the message and the likelihood of they will change their behavior. It would be extremely challenging for the surveys to account for these variables. In short, the campaign’s performance data can illustrate useful trends. Those trends could be repackaged into new PSA content to further encourage the crowd of skeptics that this movement’s tide is rising. But, the data should not be used necessarily to predict where society will be five or ten (or more) years from now.

Lastly, SBCC is not a silver bullet intervention for this issue. Gender discrimination with respect to property in Kosovo is in part due to widespread informality of ownership.<sup>14</sup> While this paper demonstrates that the body of laws touching upon gender equality are strong and comport with European standards, a whole host of other legislative acts in their current state create a confusing and prohibitive property rights regime in Kosovo. Public policy actions on the part of the Government are urgently needed and elucidated in great detail in the National Strategy on Property Rights. This SBCC campaign is but one tool in a broader multi-channel reform movement to create a legal framework governing property rights that works for Kosovo and all of its inhabitants, regardless of ethnicity or gender.

---

<sup>14</sup> An in-depth and well-researched study about informal land ownership in Kosovo can be found in another paper being presented at the 2018 World Bank Conference on Land and Poverty, entitled “Redesigning Procedures to Encourage Legal Recognition of Informal Relations to Property: The Case of ‘Informal Inheritance’ in Kosovo’s Intergenerational Context.”

## References

- Agency for Gender Equality, Kosovo. (2016). Administrative Instruction on Special Measures for Registration of Joint Immovable Property on behalf of both spouses. Retrieved from ([http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/Udhezim\\_Administrativ\\_\(qrk\)\\_nr\\_03-2016\\_per\\_masat\\_e\\_vecanta\\_per\\_regjistri.pdf](http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/Udhezim_Administrativ_(qrk)_nr_03-2016_per_masat_e_vecanta_per_regjistri.pdf))
- Backer, B. (2003). Behind stone walls: changing household organization among the Albanians of Kosovo. Retrieved from [http://www.esiweb.org/pdf/kosovo\\_%20backer\\_behind\\_stone\\_walls.pdf](http://www.esiweb.org/pdf/kosovo_%20backer_behind_stone_walls.pdf)
- Bilefsky, Dan. (2008). Sworn to virginity and living as men in Albania. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/06/23/world/europe/23iht-virgins.4.13927949.html>
- Dodd, T. Y. (July 1998). Kosovo. House of Commons Library, UK. Retrieved from <http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/RP98-73/RP98-73.pdf>
- Domino, P. (2013). Property rights and development: Property rights and social, political and economic empowerment. Retrieved from <https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/8508.pdf>
- Gjeqovi, S. (2003). Kanun of Lekë Dukagjini. Retrieved from <http://agrbes.freehostia.com/KanuniiLekeDukagjinit.pdf>
- Government of Kosovo. (2017). National Strategy on Property Rights. Retrieved from [http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/National\\_Strategy\\_and\\_Annexes\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/National_Strategy_and_Annexes_ENG.pdf)
- Hajdari, Egzonis (2014). Women Participation to Inheritance in Kosovo. Retrieved from <http://euacademic.org/UploadArticle/1007.pdf>
- Health Communication Capacity Collaborative Project. (n.d.). Retrieved January 25, 2018, from <https://healthcommcapacity.org/>
- Joireman, S. (2015). Gender, Property, and Economic Opportunity(Rep.). USAID Property Rights Program in Kosovo.
- Keefe, J. (2016). *Informality in the Land Sector: The Issue of Delayed Inheritance in Kosovo* (p. iii, Rep.). USAID Property Rights Program in Kosovo.
- Kelly, M. P., & Barker, M. (2016). Why is changing health-related behaviour so difficult? *Elsevier, 136*(July), 109-116. Retrieved January 29, 2018, from <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0033350616300178>.
- Kosovo Agency of Statistics. (2017). Statistical Yearbook of Republic of Kosovo.
- Kosovo Agency of Statistics. (2015). Results of the Kosovo 2015 labor force survey. Retrieved from <http://ask.rks-gov.net/media/1687/results-of-the-kosovo-2015-labour-force-survey.pdf>
- Kosovo Agency of Statistics. (2015). Women and Men in Kosovo. Retrieved from <http://ask.rks-gov.net/media/2582/women-and-men-ang-2014-2015.pdf>
- Kosovo, R. o. (2008). Constitution, Article 22. Retrieved from [http://www.kuvendikosoves.org/common/docs/Constitution\\_of\\_the\\_Republic\\_of\\_Kosovo\\_with\\_amend.I-XXV\\_2017.pdf](http://www.kuvendikosoves.org/common/docs/Constitution_of_the_Republic_of_Kosovo_with_amend.I-XXV_2017.pdf)

- Parliament of Kosovo. (2008). Constitution. Retrieved from [http://www.kuvendikosoves.org/common/docs/Constitution\\_of\\_the\\_Republic\\_of\\_Kosovo\\_with\\_amend.I-XXV\\_2017.pdf](http://www.kuvendikosoves.org/common/docs/Constitution_of_the_Republic_of_Kosovo_with_amend.I-XXV_2017.pdf)
- Parliament of Kosovo. (n.d.). Law on Gender Equality in Kosovo, No.05/L-020. Retrieved from <http://www.assembly-kosova.org/common/docs/ligjet/05-L-020%20a.pdf>
- UN Women. (n.d.). United Nations Women, Gender Mainstreaming-Concepts and Definitions. Retrieved from <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/conceptsanddefinitions.htm/>.
- UNDP. (2016). Human Development Report 2016. Retrieved from [http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/human\\_development\\_report\\_2016.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/human_development_report_2016.pdf)
- USAID, Property Rights Program. (2015). National Baseline Survey for Property Rights in Kosovo. Retrieved from <http://www.advocacy-center.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/1.-National-Baseline-Survey-for-Property-Rights-in-Kosovo.pdf>
- USAID Property Rights Program. (2015). Quarterly Report October. Retrieved from [https://usaidlandtenure.net/wpcontent/uploads/2017/05/USAID\\_Land\\_Tenure\\_PRP\\_Quarterly\\_Report\\_October-December-2015.pdf](https://usaidlandtenure.net/wpcontent/uploads/2017/05/USAID_Land_Tenure_PRP_Quarterly_Report_October-December-2015.pdf)
- USAID, Property Rights Program. (2017). Midterm National Survey on Property Rights in Kosovo. Retrieved from [http://www.advocacy-center.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/ENG\\_Presentation\\_Kosovo-PRP-MidTerm-Survey\\_July-11-2017\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.advocacy-center.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/ENG_Presentation_Kosovo-PRP-MidTerm-Survey_July-11-2017_FINAL.pdf)
- Williams, V. (2015). *For Our Common Good Campaign Implementation Plan* (Rep.). USAID Property Rights Program in Kosovo.