

A woman in silhouette stands on a balcony, looking out at a cloudy sky. She is wearing a dark hoodie and has her hair tied up. Her right hand rests on the balcony railing. Several potted plants are visible on the balcony, including a red pot with a small plant and a larger green plant in the foreground. The scene is dimly lit, suggesting dusk or dawn.

DOCUMENTARY

BEYOND SILENCE

Fighting violence against women and girls in Albania



LOGLINE

'Beyond Silence' is a story of vulnerability and resistance telling the stories of Lorina and Mejreme, two courageous survivors of domestic violence, who decide to shatter the silence in Albania and defy the traditional mindset considering gender-based violence a private matter, finding hope and empowerment through a network fighting for change in the country.





DESCRIPTION

DURATION: 37'

FORMAT: Digital, Color

CATEGORY: Documentary

COUNTRY OF PRODUCTION: Albania

PRODUCTION DATE: Aug 2024

LANGUAGE: Albanian, English

SUBTITLES: English, Spanish, French, German, Bosnian

CREDITS

A documentary by

IAMANEH Switzerland, Woman to Woman, Counselling Line for Women and Girls, Swiss Tropical Public Health Institute

Funded by

UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women.

Produced by

JUT MEDIA

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HAPPINESS

ISA

CHOICE

Happy Birthday
Princess Lalen!



LONG SYNOPSIS

'Beyond Silence' is a documentary about Lorina and Mejreme, two courageous Albanian women survivors of gender-based violence. Lorina, a polyglot and joyful former university student, and Mejreme, a tireless and tenacious worker, dreamed of raising a happy family but ended up facing the same horror: gender-based violence.

Years of mistreatment physical and psychological abuse, worsened during the pandemic, pushed them to doubt their own perception of reality. Trapped in a spiral of violence, which is rooted in the conservative Albanian mentality, and normalized by a system that by default considers it a private problem, they almost suffered the ultimate sacrifice: losing their own lives.

In their most vulnerable hour, the leading women's organizations in the country and some public servants willing to break with the old mentality complicit with the abuse of women came to their aid.

But the night is always darkest before dawn.

Lorina and Mejreme, hand in hand with Doris, a psychologist at CWLG, and Blerta, a WtW lawyer, and their devoted colleagues, begin a delicate and successful healing process through therapeutic sessions and legal actions to reencounter themselves and recover their freedom.

The lack of economic independence, lack of understanding of their environment, and lack of support from some institutions, such as those of justice, reverberates in Lorina and Mejreme's struggle to empower themselves, reunite with their children, and flourish again.

In parallel, women's organizations, supported by international cooperation, work tirelessly with critical public system actors willing to overcome historical resistance and involve their institutions in the fight against gender violence.

Doctors like Dr. Besnik and nurse Brunilda Tanushi are aiming for an institutional change that would prevent gender-based violence instead of facilitating it.

But for Lorina and Mejreme, the nightmare is not over yet. Engulfed in an unequal struggle, Lorina defends herself in court against the legal offensive of her husband, who has managed to convince a judge to take her away from her children and turn her case of gender-based violence into a real estate dispute.

For Mejreme, the coming of summer hides a real threat. Her ex-husband, sentenced to two years in prison for attempting to murder her in the presence of their son, is about to be released and return home. An informal cleaning worker, she does not have the means to afford to move to a safe home.

'Beyond Silence' shows how adequate access to information, assistance, and protection improves the lives of women surviving gender-based violence like Lorina and Mejreme, increasing their confidence in the system and also demonstrating how the commitment of civil society and the implication of public servants, is a game changer to break with the culture of violence, building the foundations for a society free of violence.



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