

POST

**2011** was a year full of great joy and high hopes. Around the entire Mediterranean, people rose up against human and virtual dictators to take back control over their lives. These are the kind of moments where one rediscovers oneself and others, moments of recognition and intensity, moments where it appears that a more just and happier world is possible – like, for example, in Egypt, where during the first weeks of the revolution women experienced the joy of circulating in public without being sexually harassed...

Many women involved themselves in these movements for change, often among the first to do so: in Tunisia, Egypt, Morocco, Syria, Spain, Italy, and Greece... But when some succeeded in felling the idols, and daily life resumed, the good old system of domination men over women, rich over poor, instantly fell back into place, and disguised under a veneer of change it relaunched its machine. However, the veneer is thin -- it does not take much to scratch the surface and reveal the raw material our societies are made of: a patriarchy in reinforced concrete.

This is why, despite the 2006-2011 action framework of Istanbul and Marrakech, which urged all governments in the region to promote equality in their countries, there are even less women than last year in the new governments of Spain, France, Tunisia, Egypt, and Morocco. The situation is such that (a first in the region!) Moroccan deputies demonstrated in the Assembly and described their new government, which does not include a single woman, as male chauvinist.

We have no choice. The return of discrimination and violence against women, fed by the economic crisis and the resurgence of the most extreme forms of conservatism, obliges us to redouble our efforts to reinforce the movement for life, for the liberty to

exist, to think, to act, to create, to laugh and to dance.

We must mobilize all possible means to transform the economic, political, and social structures that perpetuate domination and impede human beings from controlling their own lives. This is why, in addition to our unflagging support for women's rights initiatives, which we have provided together for the past three years, we intend to consolidate the activity component

begun in 2011 seeking to offer space for exchange and strategic reflection and build tools to develop collective intelligence.

And so, having presented our New Year's resolutions, we wish you all the best for 2012!

*Caroline Sakina Brac de la Perrière*

Photo competition

## AND THE 3 WINNERS OF OUR 2011 PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION ARE...

After extensive deliberation, the jury, composed of Belhadad, Malika Benameur, Pierre Yves Gimenez, Sylvie Hugues, Frédérique Jouvale, Marie-Paule Nègre and Reza, reached a verdict. The theme, "The Women, Their Revolutions", was meant to illustrate the diverse revolutionary forms women may take to affirm their rights and create new horizons. The democratic struggle underway in Tunisia and Egypt naturally received considerable attention, but some of the 300 photographs received this year also came from Algeria, Cyprus, Croatia, Spain, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine and Portugal.

***We warmly congratulate all of the candidates for the quality of their work and we are pleased to present in this letter the three winning photographs.***



**1<sup>ER</sup> PRIZE WINNER  
HAMIEDDINE BOUALI**

*Victory of Tunisia demonstration for secularism*

## IN ITS PROGRAM FOR THE 2<sup>ND</sup> SEMESTER 2011, THE MEDITERRANEAN WOMEN'S FUND SUPPORTED A DOZEN PROJECTS. THEY INVOLVED...

### AWARENESS RAISING AND INFORMATION ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS

#### AGAINST FORCED MARRIAGES



**Voice of Women** was created in 1998 by a young French woman. A victim of forced marriage as a minor, her demand for protection in a home was refused by a juvenile judge on the grounds of "respect for her culture". The association aims to fight against forced marriages, so-called honour crimes, and all other sexist violence related to the control of women's sexuality. Voice of Women is carrying out a documentary project entitled, "If fate attacks you from behind", produced from the feminist workshops of slam and karagöz. This educational documentary will accompany the screenings and debates that Voice of Women organizes in inner-city neighbourhoods under its campaign, "My heart belongs to me". This campaign aims to prevent forced marriages and so-called crimes of honour, with a perspective of non-sexist free choice in amorous relationships.

#### ...AND EARLY MARRIAGES



**The YTTO foundation**, for housing and rehabilitation to women victims of gender violence, created in 2008 has organized a "National campaign for the enforcement of the family code, against early and forced marriages". As part of this campaign, a caravan covering the villages of Kalla and Ait-Maghlif was organized over the course of ten days in July. The caravan went from door-to-door and organized medical visits and training workshops on project financial, administrative management, awareness building of the family code and legal counsel.

#### COMBATING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN



**Brod group for women's human rights** founded in 1998. Its project is called "Social Inclusion and Integration of Women Victims of Domestic Violence in the Labour Market in Brodsko posavska Country": Brod is the only non-government organization in Brodsko posavska county dealing with the issue of promotion and protection of the rights of women and children. Approximately 8000 women from whole Croatia asked for help from Brod and the problems are: domestic violence, social insecurity, not paying alimony, divorce, etc. Women exposed to domestic violence are a specific group that

are: usually psychically instable, dependent on their partners, with lack of self-confidence and belief in their own power; they are usually persons with inadequate educational level that does not allow independence; they carry a feeling of disgrace and shame to admit that they are exposed to domestic violence fearing condemnation of their surroundings. They are in particular need of specific and carefully designed approach adjusted to their particular needs that will provide them with more comprehensive support in order to help them regain self-confidence, and motivation for additional education and participation in the labour market. They are in need of various kinds of support ranging from conversation, psychological support, and legal advice, to finding a shelter in a safe house and economic empowerment in order to become independent, and thus be able to step out from the vicious circle of violence.

#### THE LIBERTY TO MOVE ABOUT FREELY WITHOUT FEAR



**HarassMap** is a volunteer initiative founded by 4 young women who were tired of being harassed and tired of complaining and wanted to take positive action. They linked up with volunteer tech partner, NiJel ([www.nijel.org](http://www.nijel.org)), and launched the HarassMap system in December 2010. HarassMap believes that the key to stopping sexual harassment is in the hands of each citizen. During the first days of the revolution, all Egyptians were proud of the fact that sexual harassment almost disappeared. And responsible for this amazing change was not the police, it was not a new law, it was citizens refusing to tolerate harassment in their own streets. HarassMap aims to encourage the return of this sense of pride in the streets and pride in traditions and values that reject harassers and their behavior as unacceptable. To achieve this they:

- Organize teams of volunteers who reach out to people in their own neighborhoods to be watchful against sexual harassment.

- Create "Safe Areas" in shops and public transportation
- Provide a safe, easy way to report sexual harassment by SMS (6067), on a website ([www.harassmap.org](http://www.harassmap.org)), by email ([report@harassmap.org](mailto:report@harassmap.org)), facebook or twitter (#harassmap)
- Send a response to each report telling victims how to access services from NGOs like legal or psychological aid, how to make a police report, self-defense and others
- Provide a space for victims to share ideas on dealing with harassment, get referrals, learn self-defense and find responses to common excuses justifying harassment
- Supporting the work of advocacy NGOs by providing them with instantly understandable data on harassment
- Supporting the work of police by pointing them to "hot spots" where they can increase their protection

#### THE CREATION OF BRIDGES BETWEEN WOMEN



**Mada al-Carmel** was established in 2000 by Palestinian academics and community leaders as the first Palestinian center for applied social research in Israel. Using theoretical and applied social research and policy analysis, Mada al-Carmel aims to enhance the human development and become a hub of knowledge and critical thinking about Palestinians in Israel, equal citizenship, and democracy. Women's issues are served by the Gender Studies Program (GSP), a dedicated program within Mada al-Carmel and the first research group devoted to Palestinian women in Israel. The GSP aims to uncover and analyze the various manifestations of oppression of Palestinian women in Israel in order to give voice to Palestinians as women, researchers, activists, and policy-makers. The project aims to build a network between female Palestinian students, victims of the fragmentation of their country.

#### POLITICAL PARTICIPATION



**"Masria horra...etkalé-mi"** (Free Egypt...express yourself) was established in 2011 by a women's collective engaged in the fields of politics and human rights. They mobilized themselves during the 2010 legislative elections to protest against electoral fraud and the instrumentalization of women's quotas by those in power at the time. Their main mission consists of keeping watch over the actual participation of women in politics and supporting

## Photo competition

women's struggle to obtain political, social and economic rights. With this perspective in mind, they organize training sessions on political, legal, media, and economic issues. They implement a strategy based on modern means of communication to enroll in networks for exchanging experiences and lobbying in Egypt as well as on regional and international levels.



**“Engagement Citoyen”** was created in the wake of the January 14<sup>th</sup> Tunisian revolution by a group of young women.

Right after this historic moment, they witnessed many signs of possible regression of women's rights: conservative public debates about how women should dress, calls to apply religion as far as marriages are concerned etc... Therefore, their main goals consist in raising women's awareness about their rights, and call them to participate massively in the elections to minimize impact of any anti-women movements. Knowing that at this critical moment in Tunisia conservative forces are calling for a pause on women rights and potential regression, this NGO has launched for example during the pre-elections period, a mass media campaign with 3 TV spots and 4 radio spots, all in local dialectal language that call women to go and vote, reminding them of their acquired rights.

## AND...

### SUPPORT WAS RENEWED FOR

**Women and their bodies** for workshops to introduce Arab women across Israel to the health guide “our bodies ourselves” translated into Arabic.

**Kayan** for its project “Developing and Institutionalizing the Grassroots Movement of Arab Women in Israel”.

**European feminist Initiative** for its project of cooperation between the feminist movements in Europe and MENA.

**Res'art** with the support of Cie Lebon for the network of women artisans.



**2<sup>ND</sup> PRIZE  
SANA SBOUAI**



**3<sup>RD</sup> PRIZE  
FABIEN LOMBARD**

To find out more about all of the projects, visit the information page of our website [www.medwomensfund.org](http://www.medwomensfund.org)

## ■ WHAT IS THE PLACE OF WOMEN IN THE SYRIAN REVOLUTION?

A special feature of this revolution is the strong presence of women in coordination committees and cultural and artistic support actions. Women also are paying a heavy price. The indefensible repression carried out by the ruling regime, which is hitting all citizens targets them also: torture, executions, rape. The Mediterranean Women's Fund, in collaboration with Souria Houria and with the support of Fatima Lalem (Deputy to the Mayor of Paris), organized a debate on November 29 at the Town Hall of the 3<sup>rd</sup> district of Paris. Over 150 people met to listen to the presentation of Samar Yazdek and to the various reports gathered by the organizing associations. The actress Fadwa Soleiman, who is deeply involved in the revolution, sent a video message for this occasion (see [www.medwomensfund.org](http://www.medwomensfund.org)).

■ **THE WOMEN'S WORLD FORUM** took place during the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF-4) in Busan, Korea, on November 26 to 28, 2011. At the close of the Forum, a policy declara-

tion calls on governments and all other development actors committed to the HLF4 and the preparation of the 2012 DCF to consider the following requirements: Any new development cooperation framework should be based on human rights, including women's rights.

1. A new equitable development cooperation system for gender equality and women's rights should be under the United Nations.
2. Development effectiveness requires democratic ownership by women and meaningful and systematic participation by civil society, especially women's and feminist organizations.
3. Promote multiple accountability systems for women's rights and gender equality, improving existing monitoring systems.
4. Financing for Development: Gender Equality and Women's Rights must go beyond mainstreaming.
5. Development cooperation to the countries in situations of fragility and conflict must acknowledge the differential and disproportional impact of armed conflict on the lives and rights of women and girls.

■ **THE PRENATAL ELIMINATION OF GIRLS IS SPREADING IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION.** In the north, while the ratio at birth nor-

mally is approximately 105 boys for every 100 girls, it has risen to 111.5 boys for every 100 girls in Albania, and to 109.7 boys for every 100 girls in Montenegro. In the south, advertisements for clinical services enabling one to choose a baby's sex during in vitro fertilization recently have appeared in the Palestinian territories.

## ■ HOW CAN GROUPS OF YOUNG GIRLS WHO ORGANIZE THEMSELVES TO DEFEND THEIR RIGHTS BE REINFORCED?

How can young people's perspectives be promoted within women's funds? These were the main questions addressed during the meeting organized to pave the way for a community of practice by the Central American Fund for Women and Mama Cash held in Amsterdam September 21 to 22. 20 participants, of which 10 were members of the International Women's Fund Network and four organizations of young girls, benefited from this first space for discussion on young girls to form a learning community.

■ **ATTENTION! SECURE ON-LINE DONATIONS NOW ARE POSSIBLE ON OUR WEBSITE [WWW.MEDWOMENSFUND.ORG!](http://WWW.MEDWOMENSFUND.ORG)**

## A FEW KEY STATISTICS CONCERNING THE FEMALE POPULATION OF SEVERAL COUNTRIES

	SPAIN	CROATIA	ALBANIA	TURKEY	LEBANON
Fertility rate	1.5 children /woman	1.5	1.5	2	1.8
Average age at marriage	29.3 years	26.2	23.3	23.4	27.4
Literacy rate*	96.9% (98.5%)	98.1% (99.5%)	94.7% (97.3%)	85.3% (96.4%)	86% (93.4%)
Literacy rate of those between 15 and 24 years*	99.6% (99.6%)	99.7% (99.6%)	99% (98.5%)	99% (99%)	99.1% (98.4%)
Employment rate	49.1% (68.5%)	46.3% (60.3%)	49.3% (70.4%)	24% (69.6 %)	22.3% (71.5%)
Representation in national parliament	34.7%	23.5%	16.4%	9.1%	3.1%

Note: figures for men are given between parentheses. \* According to the estimates of the Statistical Institute of UNESCO

Sources : ■ [www.egalite-infos.fr](http://www.egalite-infos.fr), B. Manier AFP ■ Report on Human development 2011 PNUD UNDP-POGAR ■ Arab Statistics: United Nations, World Population Prospects: The 2008 Revision, New York, 2009 ■ Unesco Institut of Statistics ■ <http://awid.org/eng/Library/Busan-Global-Women-s-Forum-Political-Statement>

## WHY DO WE NEED A MEDITERRANEAN WOMEN'S FUND?

Belonging to the same cultural area, under the influence of three monotheistic religions, women from the Mediterranean region are subjected to a common form of patriarchy and despite living in apparently very different situations, share many similar aspects of their condition.

Whether they come from the southern or the northern shores of the Mediterranean, women know that they must not only fight to obtain equality but also to strengthen their existing rights which have been obtained thanks to their tenacity and their struggles.

They act in a climate of general regression which is the effect of radical conservative movements in societies undergoing changes and they are experiencing many difficulties in finding the necessary funding for their actions at a local or regional level.

This is why two years ago women from North Africa and Southern Europe have taken the initiative to create a Mediterranean Women's Fund whose aim is to help with improving women's condition and to promote gender equality throughout all those countries in the Mediterranean region.

## NEWSLETTER FROM THE MEDITERRANEAN SHORES

Information letter from the Mediterranean Women's Fund (MedWomenFund)

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