The melting of the iceberg

If it were a mountain... the status of women would be an iceberg

Consider, for example, women’s access to public space. On the surface, such access is a fact of life in the countries around the Mediterranean. But an iceberg is not just a mountain with more of its mass under water than on land. If it were a mountain... the status of women would be an iceberg.

Women’s icebergs thus need to be melted for women to be able to adapt to melting glaciers.

The NAIF gala was held on 15 May 2014 under the Cabaret Sauvage marquee, which was graciously offered to us by Meziane Aatache. In order to attract as large an audience as possible, our sponsor, Souad Massi (singer-songwriter) was at our side along with other artists who all donated their talents to this evening dedicated to the women of Syria: Lori Al Ameen, Clionne, HK, Noma Omran, and Noura. The journalist Audrey Pulvar and the writer and humorist Souad Belhaddad co-founder of the Syrian Women’s Network on Conflict in Syria and its consequences, not only for Syrian women, but women around the world. It supports and accompanies women activists involved in the media to organize themselves and gather in “Media-Centers” in Syria to learn how to write articles and produce reports.

The funds raised were donated to two Syrian women’s associations. The first runs several shelters for female victims of domestic violence. Three of these shelters are now located in the middle of a war zone due to the advances of ‘Islamic’ troops (also known as ISIS) and must be urgently relocated. The funds donated will enable the association to move these shelters to more secure areas. The second association, Salélia source, works at several different levels, producing feminist magazine publishing articles on women’s rights, the conflict in Syria and its consequences, not only for Syrian women, but women around the world.

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The Mediterranean Women’s Fund established a partnership with France Culture, a French radio station, for Charlotte Bienaimé’s show Nasawyat, which features news on Egyptian, Tunisian, Moroccan, and Algerian young feminists.

One may listen to recorded programs in French at http://www.franceculture.fr/emission-nasawyat
http://www.medwomensfund.org/en/News_Region.html

One fatal consequence is that in the case of disasters, 4 out of 5 victims are women because their lack of knowledge of the outside world renders them particularly vulnerable. 

Q
http://medwomensfund.org/fr/Gala_2014.html

The melting of the iceberg

Natural disasters, 4 out of 5 victims are women because their lack of knowledge of the outside world renders them particularly vulnerable.
DEFEND SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

Koós Gay and Lesbian Cultural Research and Solidarity Association was founded in 2009 in Ankara to help and support gay, bisexual and trans individuals encountering problems in spheres such as family, education, employment, housing, law, human rights, mental health, sexual health, psychology-psychotherapy, and access to goods and services. It carries out its work through three main programs: Human Rights, Health and Violence Against Women, and Feminist Movements. Its mission is based on its belief that sexual and reproductive rights are basic human rights and that their realization contributes to the overall well-being of individuals and society.

In March, we also closed the final chapter of the Grundriss Project by hosting our European partner centers at a meeting entitled, “Discourse on the situation of Mediterranean women in the Catalan context” has three lines of intervention: psychological support, social work, and the general public with the emphasis on women as a vulnerable group; LGBTIQ population.

Our training in France gathered a total of 33 participants, of which 10 followed all three sessions, 11, two, and 12 one. The participating women aged between 18 and 35 from 16 different towns (of which 10 are located outside Paris and Montpellier). Most were members of associations (15 different associations, including 8 feminist associations).

What they said about the training:

“I was deeply moved, not simply as an activist. The training allowed me to take radical decisions in my life. The impact was extremely strong. I thought I was just coming for a training in activism, but in the end, it allowed me to find things in my life that I never would have found otherwise.”

“The most beautiful thing about the training is how we grew individually while creating magnificent ties between all of the participants. We are real in these trainings. We are not in the mode, “I represent this or that organization”. We humanly revealed ourselves. This was what created such strong and solid ties.”

“I had lost confidence in good will and I no longer was sure that it was possible to trust in it, but in fact, one can.”

“What was shared in this training, what we learned, was a great surprise. It was, in fact, a huge event in my life.”

“I did not expect this material. It was both a source of ecstasy and terror. From both a personal and professional point of view. It brought about tremendous self-questioning. This is very great.”

MEET AND CREATE NETWORKS

The Feminist Coalition for Equality and Democracy, coordinated by Fondation Yito and gathering associations from Morocco, Algeria, Mali, Sudan, and Tunisia and partner European associations, was created in 2013 in Qurzait, Morocco. It aims to unify the strategies and actions of the feminist movement in Middle Eastern and African countries in order to constitute a pressure group and develop local, regional and international actions targeting institution and decision makers in response to threats to women’s rights.

Working sessions of the Coalition organized in Algiers, then in Málaga in Morocco, made it possible to finalize the charter and adopt a strategy and action program which takes into account the political and social context of each country. At the end of the Midelt meeting in August, a press release was issued http://www.medewomensfund.org/fr/MedCoeur_ Coalition_Mena_Africa_2014.html

... AND ORGANIZED

How are Mediterranean women using the media to defend their rights in response to discrimination, sexual harassment, and digital violence?

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DIE NEUSTANDS DER MEDITERRANE. SHORES

Since the beginning of the year, we have supported some fifteen initiatives of groups working to...

Women’s Room Center for Sexual Rights, founded in Zagreb in 2002 aims to empower women and raise awareness of institutions and the public about sexual violence and sexual health and violence through education, research and public work. Women’s Room provides direct and indirect assistance and support to victims of sexual violence: women survivors of different forms of violence, especially sexual violence, people with disabilities, and transgender persons, and the general public with the emphasis on women as a vulnerable group; LGBTIQ population. Institutional support enables the organization to be sustainable by funding salaries, office costs and the honoraria for external experts working at the Center.

Mujeres Pa'lante Association, founded in Barcelona, seeks to improve the empowerment of migrant women and to promote equal rights in society to achieve a better cohesion in Spanish society through the integration of migrant women. Its project, “Empowerment of Latin American women for their active participation in the Catalan context” has three lines of intervention: psychological support, social work assistance, and training in immigration law for migrant women. Institutional support is needed to cover two areas in particular: the compensation of the two project coordinators and the rent of the site where activities are conducted.

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Defend Sexual and Reproductive Rights

Koós Gay and Lesbian Cultural Research and Solidarity Association was founded in 2009 in Ankara to help and support gay, bisexual and trans individuals encountering problems in spheres such as family, education, employment, housing, law, human rights, mental health, sexual health, psychology-psychotherapy, and access to goods and services. It carries out its work through three main programs: Human Rights, Health and Violence Against Women, and Feminist Movements. Its mission is based on its belief that sexual and reproductive rights are basic human rights and that their realization contributes to the overall well-being of individuals and society.

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**DEFEND SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS**

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**COMBAT VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**

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**STRENGTHEN WOMEN AND ORGANIZATIONS CAPACITIES**

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**MEET AND CREATE NETWORKS**

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Working sessions of the Coalition organized in Algiers, then in Mabda in Morocco, made it possible to finalize the charter and adopt a strategy and action program which takes into account the political and social context of each country. At the end of the Mabda meeting in August, a press release was issued: http://www.medwomensfund.org/en/Feminist_Coalition_Men_Africa_2014.html

**... AND ORGANIZED**

**THE LAST TWO SESSIONS OF THE FEMINIST TRAINING IN COLLECTIVE INTELLIGENCE:**

In March, we also closed the final chapter of the Grundtvig Project by hosting our European partners in order to gather them, discuss and coordinate our next steps in this program entitled, “Using traditional and innovative, community based and digital tools to combat violence against women.”

It was, in fact, a huge event in my life.”

“I did not expect this material. It was both a source of ecstasy and terror. From both a personal and professional point of view. It brought about trepidation and joy.”

“B.A.R.E. be active be emancipated was created in 1994 with the aim to promote and protect women’s human rights. Today it is focused on gender equality and equal opportunities for all genders in all spheres of social life. Its Counseling Center for Prevention and Eradication of Gender Based Violence has been active for over nineteen years. Institutional support enables the Counseling Centre to continue to provide women in need with free legal advice or legal representation, free psychological support, and any kind of personal assistance to find a way out of violence and/or social exclusion. B.A.B.E. try to bridge gaps in the existing (imperfect) social service structure, especially in those areas of social concern which are economically lagging far behind the rest of the country, to work simultaneously on prevention, protection and punishment of gender based violence.

**WHAT THEY SAID ABOUT THE TRAINING:**

“I was deeply moved, not only as an activist. The training allowed me to take radical decisions in my life. I thought the training was extremely strong. I thought I was just coming for a training in activism, but in the end, it allowed me to find things in my life that I never would have found otherwise.”

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**And do not forget! If you wish to provide support, see in the list of donations available on our site: www.medwomensfund.org}
The melting of the iceberg

If it were a mountain... the status of women would be an iceberg

Consider, for example, women’s access to public space. On the surface, such access is a fact of life in the countries around the Mediterranean: women are seen in (nearly) all public spaces. And, by constantly denouncing the sexual harassment which women often experience in public spaces, their governments have begun to react over the past few years, enacting laws to punish harassment as in Egypt last June, and as is being discussed increasingly in Algeria and Morocco. If you believe what you see – the visible part of the iceberg – the problem of women’s access to public space is in the process of being resolved and soon will no longer need much attention.

However, if you consider that the distinguishing feature of an iceberg is that what is visible above the surface is considerably smaller than what lies beneath, the time has come to understand the invisible part of the problem and invest real resources into resolving it. The task at present is to lift the implicit and pervasive prohibition on women to freely circulate and act outside the four walls of their homes.

A recent survey shows how women in France carry a mental map of where they need to go and the spots along the way that they should avoid, and they feel that the street is not a place in which they can linger. This is particularly striking (economic, social, political, cultural). It supports and accompanies women activists and the spots along the way that they should avoid, and they feel that the street is not a place in which they can linger. This is particularly striking (economic, social, political, cultural). It supports and accompanies women activists who have gained the confidence and knowledge, networks, and landmarks that they need to promote gender equality throughout all those countries in the Mediterranean region.

Women’s associations cannot consider taking long-term actions if they are not strong enough.

How can 5000 euros grant help an association to operate?

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 in 2008, women from North Africa and Southern Europe have taken the initiative to create this Mediterranean Women’s Fund whose aim is to help with improving women’s condition and promote gender equality throughout all those countries in the Mediterranean region.

WHAT DO WE NEED A MEDITERRANEAN WOMEN’S FUND?

Belonging to the same cultural area, under the influence of three monotheistic religions, women in 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.

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Les femmes de la Méditerranée ont besoin de vous !

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□ PAR CHÈQUE
à l’ordre de : Fonds pour Femmes en Méditerranée
5 rue marceau - 34000 Montpellier France

□ PAR VIREMENT BANCAIRE
Crédit coopératif, Montpellier France - Compte 42559 00034 41020011495-42
IBAN FR : 76 4255 9000 3441 0200 1149 542

Le Fonds pour les Femmes en Méditerranée est une association reconnue d’intérêt général. Sur présentation du reçu qui vous sera envoyé avant la fin décembre, vous pouvez bénéficier d’une réduction d’impôt égale à 66% des versements pris en compte dans la limite de 20% du revenu imposable.

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D’avance, un grand merci pour votre soutien et votre générosité