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Women take the lead in Beirut protests



Though rarely represented in Parliament, on the streets they participated in droves and raised their voices against the corruption of the political class – indeed, the role played by women in the “You Stink” campaign can’t be ignored. Lebanese women have been at the forefront of the protests that have taken Beirut by storm in recent weeks to force officials to find a solution to the garbage crisis. Among the campaign organizers is Farah Shaer, a director, actor and activist.

Shaer told The Daily Star that she was involved with the You Stink campaign on several levels, including organization and decision-making. “Each one of us, including myself, we take part in making decisions,” she said.

Shaer has emerged as among a core group of campaign leaders through the democratic nature of the campaign and the support she receives from her colleagues. “This isn’t a masculine campaign, I feel like I take my full rights,” she said. “During press conferences, demonstrations and protests women are in the front.”

Read more:

<http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Lebanon-News/2015/Sep-12/314938-women-take-the-lead-in-beirut-protests.ashx>

Zero to Hero: Egypt Schoolgirl Turns Anti-Corruption Icon



Softly spoken schoolgirl Mariam Malak has become an unlikely symbol of the fight against corruption in Egypt after scoring the sum total of zero in her final exams.

The 19-year-old top student, a teacher's daughter in a small village in the poor southern province of Minya, dreams of becoming a doctor like her two brothers.

In previous years she aced her exams, and had expected a similar result in her final year.

Now nicknamed the "zero schoolgirl" in the local press, Malak had scored 97 percent in her previous two years.

But Malak was shocked to find that she had been failed in her finals, and says her answers had been replaced with someone else's -- clearly not in her handwriting.

"Since the results came out I've been living a nightmare," Malak told AFP after coming to Cairo from her home in southern Egypt.

"When I was shown the so-called copy of my answers, I couldn't believe my eyes," she said.

Read more:

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/189466-zero-to-hero-egypt-schoolgirl-turns-anti-corruption-icon>

From genocide to resistance: Yazidi women fight back



Having suffered a traumatic genocide, Yazidi women on Mount Sinjar mobilize their autonomous armed and political resistance with the PKK's philosophy.

The old Kurdish saying “we have no friends but the mountains” became more relevant than ever when on August 3, 2014, the murderous Islamic State group launched what is referred to as the 73rd massacre on the Yazidis by attacking the city of Sinjar (or Shengal, in Kurdish), slaughtering thousands of people, and raping and kidnapping the women to sell them as sex slaves.

Some 10,000 Yazidis fled to the Shengal mountains in a death march in which many, especially children, died of hunger, thirst and exhaustion. This year on the same day, the Yazidis marched in the Shengal mountains again. But this time in a protest to vow that nothing will ever be the same again.

Last year, the Iraqi Kurdish *peshmerga* of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) promised the people to guarantee Shengal's safety, but ran away without warning when IS attacked, not even leaving arms behind for people to defend themselves.

Read more:

<http://www.wluml.org/news/genocide-resistance-yazidi-women-fight-back>

Syria women demand end to siege of Zabadani



No corner of Syria has been untouched by the violence that has consumed the country for the past four years. The city of Zabadani is no exception. Located close to the border with Lebanon, Zabadani is geographically strategic due to its position on the highway connecting Damascus and Beirut. Since July 2015, the Syrian army and Hezbollah have battled for control of the city against the ultraconservative Sunni Ahar a-Sham insurgent group. The people of Zabadani, meanwhile, are stuck in the middle—unable to flee the barrel bombs and left without food, shelter, or medical care.

In response, a brave group of more than 470 women have risked their lives by publicly signing a statement demanding that the parties stop the violence. They call upon the forces involved in the siege, as well as the UN, to establish a ceasefire and guarantee protection of all residents in Zabadani and neighboring areas. Despite all they've endured, these women continue to prioritize a peaceful solution, rather than military action.

Read more:

<http://www.inclusivesecurity.org/syrian-women-demand-end-to-siege-of-zabadani/>

Turkey – women are active advocates for restoring peace in Turkey



In the polyphony of voices insisting on an immediate peace process in Turkey ahead of 'Peace Day,' women's voices can be heard everywhere more insistently and more adamantly, thanks to a number of robust initiatives

At one of the darkest times in its recent history, with war brewing at home and across the border, Turkey is due to celebrate "Peace Day" twice in September. An extra World Peace Day on Sept. 1 is planned to precede the United Nations' Sept. 21 International Day of Peace - after all, this is the land of irony.

But although Turkey is time traveling back to the war-torn Turkish-Kurdish conflict of the 1990s in the southeast, cries for peace in the country have never sounded louder. Activists, journalists, academics, civil society groups - not to mention the dozens of grieving parents - are demanding peace at once in Turkey. The simple slogan "Barış Hemen Şimdi" (Peace Now) has never sounded more urgent.

In the polyphony of voices insisting on an immediate peace process, women's voices can be heard everywhere - more insistent and more adamant.

Read more:

http://www.wunrn.com/news/2015/09_15/09_07_15/09_0715_turkey.htm

GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

Despite legal restrictions, underage marriage persists in rural Egypt



Eid Albanna, an Egyptian from South Sinai, posted a photo of the engagement ceremony of his daughter Salma, 5, to her cousin Youssef, 8, on Facebook July 21. He did not expect the wave of criticism that ensued, nor was he prepared for the controversy over underage marriage the photo sparked in Egypt.

Underage marriages are still widespread in some parts of Egypt as the judicial system has failed to prevent marriage officiants from taking bribes to perform illegal unions.

On July 23, Albanna expressed his opinion to El Watan newspaper about the criticism leveled against him because of the photo, which, according to him, is tradition in Egypt. Salma's brother, Ahmed Albanna, told Youm7, "The issue is not worth all the hype. The parents have said that Youssef is Salma's, and such a thing happens a lot in Egyptian families."

Read more:

<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2015/08/egypt-underage-marriage-wedding-law-officiant-bribery.html#ixzz3lujegs7Y>

Anti-harassment campaign stirs controversy in Egypt



A Facebook campaign called “Mat3brhash” (“Don’t Give Her Attention”) stirred controversy July 19, when it attacked Egypt’s women with harsh words such as “She’s not worth it, it’s not like she’s Angelina Jolie,” angering women and men alike.

Egyptians are outraged by alleged anti-harassment campaign “Mat3brhash,” whose promoters hold women partially responsible for inviting harassment.

Many women found this campaign insulting and worried it could lead to a rise in harassment, while men feared it could affect their efforts to fight harassment. Al-Monitor conducted interviews with an array of Egyptians on the topic. The campaign’s members denied accusations of inciting harassment, arguing that their posts are an invitation for both sides to respect one another and for men to resist harassing women.

The page was created in 2011 by three young activists — Mohammed al-Naggar, Sameh Shawky and Hesham Sayed. It was dormant for a time and re-activated in 2014. It has garnered 151,953 likes as of the time of this writing.

Read more:

<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2015/08/egypt-women-anti-harassment-campaign-controversy.html#ixzz3lukOjQ5g>

After mass rape by the Islamic State, Yazidi women still struggle to break the silence



Yazidi sisters who escaped from captivity by Islamic State militants sit in a tent at Sharya refugee camp on the outskirts of Dahuk province

The first man Aniya was forced to marry was an Islamic State militant called Abu Safouan. She was 41 and he was 22, but still he bought her and her 3-year-old daughter at a slave market in Raqqa. After he had raped and abused Aniya for 20 days, he told her he was fed up with her and sold her to a 27-year-old man who called himself Abu Ali Sham.

Some of the Yazidi women sold and enslaved by Islamic State militants told Al-Monitor about their horrific experiences, including repeated rapes, but others claimed they were only forced to cook and clean for fear of being stigmatized by their conservative community.

Author Brenda Stoter Posted September 9, 2015
“He used to rape me when my daughter was outside the room. She often screamed and cried, because she knew something was wrong, but he didn’t care,” Aniya told Al-Monitor, adding, “I even refused to take showers, hoping that Abu Ali Sham would leave me alone, but he still forced himself on me, saying that if I refused he would kill me.”

Read more:

<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2015/09/yazidi-women-rape-slave-islamic-state.html#ixzz3lukXsig4>

Does the aid industry have a sexual violence problem?



In July, Megan Nobert publicly told her story of being drugged and raped by a fellow aid worker on a UN base in South Sudan.

Her case ignited discussion about the extent of sexual violence experienced by aid workers in the field, prompting conferences within the sector, online support platforms for those affected, and new research on the subject.

Now the Headington Institute, a leading organisation promoting and supporting the wellbeing of aid workers, is developing a research project to gauge the true scale of the problem and strengthen agency response.

The institute, which also provides psychosocial support training and services for aid workers, says there is a serious discrepancy between official industry figures and what its staff see in their daily work.

“We believe that humanitarians are experiencing sexual violence to a far greater extent than we know,” Chief Operating Officer Alicia Jones told IRIN. “We think it is a much bigger problem than currently recognised.”

Read more:

<http://www.irinnews.org/report/102005/does-the-aid-industry-have-a-sexual-violence-problem>

GENDER & HUMAN RIGHTS

First Saudi women register to vote

Dozens of women are expected to contest Saudi Arabia's municipal elections for the first time in the country's history.

Safinaz Abu al-Shamat and Jamal al-Saadi made history last Sunday by becoming the first Saudi women to register to vote.

For the first time in the kingdom's history, women will be able to vote, register as candidates and run for office in the municipal elections to be held on December 12. These will be the first polls since the 2011 decision by late Saudi King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz al-Saud to grant women the right to vote and run for office.

Voter registration begins on August 22, but started a week earlier in Mecca and Medina, which Shamat and Saadi call home, respectively. Candidates will be able to register beginning on August 30.

The municipal council's limited responsibilities include approving annual budgets, suggesting planning regulations, and overseeing urban and development projects.

An estimated 70 women are planning to register as candidates, and an additional 80 as campaign managers, according to local media. Neither male nor female candidates will be allowed to use pictures of themselves in campaign advertising, and on election day, there will be separate polling centres for men and women.

Read more:

<http://www.wluml.org/news/first-saudi-women-register-vote>

To veil or not to veil: Iraqi women face scrutiny over their choices



People shout slogans during a demonstration against corruption, poor services and power cuts in Baghdad, Iraq

The Najaf Nationality Directorate, south of Baghdad, refused to grant a travel permit to civil activist and Iraqi citizen Intisar Alyawi al-Mayali July 5 because she appeared unveiled in the photo attached to her passport. This incident sparked outrage and highlighted once again the conflict between secularists and the conservative current typified by Islamist groups.

Iraq's religious parties are increasingly forcing women to wear the veil through intimidation and repressive policies, to the frustration of secular progressives.

Civil activist Intisar Yassin commented on the incident to Al-Monitor, "Not granting an unveiled woman a passport is a violation of human rights by a staff member who ignores the law and constitution when processing the citizens' files." One of the main conflicts between secularists and Islamists revolves around the civil and intellectual identity of Iraqi women. There is an enormous contrast in stances on women's rights in Iraq. Although secularists point out that the Iraqi Constitution guarantees the civil rights of all citizens, Islamists have no trouble finding religious, social and moral pretexts to justify their viewpoint and actions.

Read more:

<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2015/08/iraq-women-veil-religious-secular.html#ixzz3lujuYtyg>

Syria – How the Syria Conflict Is Driving More Children to Work



Before its disastrous plunge into crisis and armed conflict, Syria was a middle-income country capable of providing a decent living for most of its people. Almost all children went to school, and literacy rates were above 90%¹.

Four and a half years into the crisis, four out of five Syrians are estimated to be living in poverty² and 7.6 million people are internally displaced³.

By the end of 2014, the unemployment rate had almost quadrupled to reach 57.7%⁴. Neighbouring countries are also suffering the consequences of what has become a regional crisis, struggling to cope with an influx of four million refugees, about half of whom are children⁵.

Children's lives have been profoundly affected by the crisis. Inside Syria, children are exposed to escalating violence and indiscriminate attacks, and the trauma they bring with them. Some have been forced to take up arms.

Read more:

http://www.wunrn.com/news/2015/08_15/08_17_15/08_1715_syria.htm

Syria - Some Mothers Seek Asylum Alone - Later to Bring Families



Fadia Al-Khatib, a mother of five, came to Germany by herself. The 44-year-old Syrian woman and her husband decided that she would seek asylum first and then apply to bring her family over. Hundreds of Syrian women are making similar decisions, risking their lives for a chance at a new life. According to an Amnesty International report issued in December 2014, Germany and Sweden together have received 96,500 new Syrian asylum applications in the last three years, representing 64 percent of all such applications in the EU.

“A quarter of the newcomers from Syria and Iraq are women who came on their own,” estimates Hacub Sahinian, a Syrian Armenian priest who spends hours each day helping Syrian families at the refugee transit camp in Friedland, Germany.

Read more:

<http://thewip.net/2015/03/19/syrian-mothers-on-their-own-we-are-all-the-same-confronting-death-and-our-destiny/>

Women's paid and unpaid work, and the colonial hangover



Woman with newborn child in post-natal ward of hospital, Sri Lanka.

At the International Association for Feminist Economics conference, social scientists, researchers and economists agree that women's work is still undervalued globally, and dogged by an enduring subconscious colonial mindset.

Women's labour is undervalued. Few could argue with that statement: the evidence is available anecdotally in our day to day lives, in the types of work available to women across the globe, and in the pay and remuneration women receive for their labour. Statistically, it's undeniable: wherever a labour market exists, a gender pay gap is evident. Speaking at the IAFFE, Nuria Molina and Kasia Staswezska pointed out that globally, the cost of the gender pay gap is \$17trillion: comparable to the combined gross domestic product of France, the United Kingdom, and Germany.

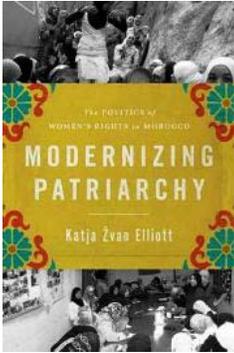
But focussing on paid labour overlooks the problem of care in attempts to widen and improve women's economic empowerment globally. Priya Raghavan argues that addressing heavy and unequal care is the only way of achieving more economic justice for women.

Read more:

https://www.opendemocracy.net/5050/dawn-foster/women%27s-paid-and-unpaid-work-and-colonial-hangover?utm_source=50.50+list&utm_campaign=70712ccf5c-RSS_5050_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_89d6c8b9eb-70712ccf5c-407822177

RESOURCES & CALLS
BOOKS & REPORTS

Morocco – Modernizing patriarchy – the politics of women’s rights in Morocco



Morocco is hailed by academics, international NGO workers, and the media as a trailblazer in women’s rights and legal reforms. The country is considered a model for other countries in the Middle East and North African region, but has Morocco made as much progress as experts and government officials claim?

In *Modernizing Patriarchy*, Katja Žvan Elliott examines why women’s rights advances are lauded in Morocco in theory but are often not recognized in reality, despite the efforts of both Islamist and secular feminists.

In Morocco, female literacy rates remain among the lowest in the region; many women are victims of gender-based violence despite legal reforms; and girls as young as twelve are still engaged to adult men, despite numerous reforms.

Read more:

http://www.wunrn.com/news/2015/09_15/09_07_15/09_0715_morocco.htm

GADN Recommendations to Measuring progress on women’s participation and leadership in the SDGs

A new publication by the UK Gender and Development Network (GADN) Women’s Participation and Leadership Working Group proposes global indicators to effectively track progress made on implementing the SDGs between now and 2030.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are the result of approximately three years of negotiations, consultations and drafting and will replace the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) when they expire at the end of this year. Governments worldwide are gearing up for the adoption of the new SDGs at a UN Summit in New York from 25th to 27th September. The goals and targets have just been agreed but the global indicators which will be used to measure progress against them have yet to finalise and won’t be adopted until March 2016.

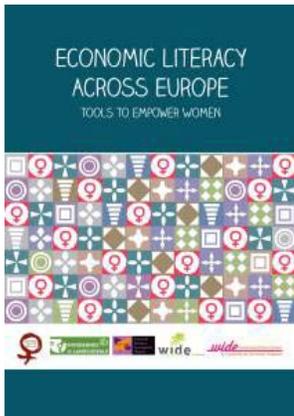
Building on the MDGs

Under the MDGs three indicators measured progress on women’s empowerment and gender equality, including one focusing on the proportion of seats held by women in national parliament.

Read more:

<http://wideplus.org/gadnetwork-recommendations-to-measuring-progress-on-womens-participation-and-leadership-in-the-sdgs/>

Tools for feminist economy literacy, by WIDE+ members



Almost two years ago five women's rights, gender and development organisations in five different countries started the Grundtvig-project "Economic Literacy across Europe: Exchange and Cooperation to Promote a Feminist Approach in Adult Education". They are all WIDE+ members and involved other member associations and individuals into the project as experts to their meetings. The associations KULU in Denmark, Le Monde selon Les Femmes in Belgium, WIDE Austria, WIDE Switzerland and WIDE-E Spain concluded their common work with a publication that showcases the different tools used to educate people on economy from a feminist perspective.

The publication uses the concept of "Economic Literacy" to strengthen the exchange in this area in order to increase the capacity of women in the field of economics. The partners had four meetings, each hosted by one of the project-partners.

Read more:

<http://wideplus.org/2015/08/10/publication-with-tools-on-enhancing-economic-literacy-by-wide-members/>

Who can fund my women's rights organizing?

Responding to one of the key demands from AWID's members and constituencies, we offer this searchable donor list to make it easier for feminist and women's rights organizations to connect with the right kind of funders.

Women's rights and feminist organizations are sparking powerful changes across the world, yet AWID's Where is the Money for Women's Rights (WITM) research consistently shows that women's rights organizing is significantly underfunded.

This tool attempts to bridge the information gap on funding sources and make it easier for women's rights and feminist organizations to find funders working in their countries, regions, or supporting issues and populations they are working with.

To search for funders, select options in any or all of the dropdown menus. You may only select a country or a region, not both.

Read more:

http://www.awid.org/fund-me?country=®ion=&type=®istered=&priority=&op=View+entire+donor+list&form_build_id=form-OaXoPcvF0e-Y-gltOo8TF0zkc1ypyZ-sFVZacWbw5HU&form_id=awid_donors_donor_list_form

Women's Insurance Market Represents Trillion-Dollar Opportunity, Report Finds



The insurance industry is expected to earn up to US\$1.7 trillion from women alone by 2030, presenting a major new opportunity for sustainable and inclusive growth, a new report released today by IFC, a member of the World Group, finds.

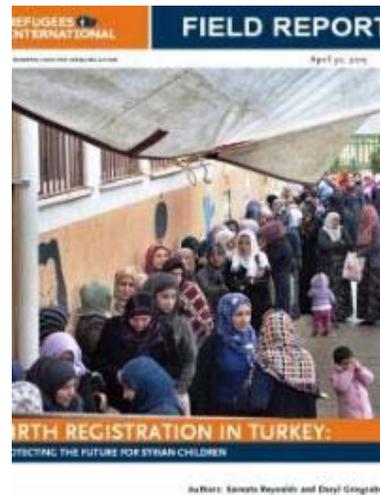
She for Shield: Insure Women to Better Protect All was co-developed by IFC, AXAGroup, and Accenture. It presents a first-of-its-kind study of the women's insurance market in the emerging economies of Brazil, China, Colombia, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Thailand, and Turkey.

The insurance industry has largely overlooked women as a consumer segment—despite significant market growth potential, the study finds. By more effectively reaching out to women, the industry could significantly increase their economic participation and further support social and economic development in emerging markets.

Read more:

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2015/09/16/womens-insurance-market-represents-trillion-dollar-opportunity-report-finds>

A Generation of Syrians Born in Exile Risk a Future of Statelessness



Doctor Nazir's pregnant wife arrived in Turkey with a one-year old and no documentation. They had fled the unbearable bombardment of their home town, Aleppo, while Dr. Nazir remained in Syria to work in an underground field hospital. Dr. Nazir had defected from the Syrian military in 2012, and was officially declared dead the same year. Because he no longer legally existed, Dr. Nazir was unable to register his 2013 marriage or the birth of his first child in Aleppo. When his second baby was born in Turkey in 2015, shortly after his wife's arrival, she could not file an application for the baby's birth certificate because Dr. Nazir remained in Syria and she had no legal proof of her marriage or her husband's birth certificate.

For Syrian babies born outside the country, acquiring a birth certificate that records the Syrian father's name is critical, because Syrian nationality law discriminates against women by only permitting children born outside the country to claim citizenship through their father. Yet, tens of thousands of Syrian births are occurring without the presence of a father because he is dead, missing or fighting.

Read more:

<http://www.statelessness.eu/blog/generation-syrians-born-exile-risk-future-statelessness>

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