



The Middle East & North Africa
"Gender and Development E-Brief"
Issue #121
June 2012

NEWS & ARTICLES

GENDER ACTIVISM

Arab states: Plan to Increase Judges' Education on Women's Rights

Algeria: A new trailblazer for women in politics

Lebanon Nation-wide Media Campaign under the slogan

"Mest'edeen Nesma' Haki" (which reads: "we are willing - and here - to listen"^[1])

Turkey: Organizations rally to stop the ban on abortion by Prime Minister Erdogan

Pétition citoyenne des femmes soulaliyates

GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

Activists face rape, one fights back in Sudan

Women Refuse To Be Silenced By Assaults in Egypt

Potential law to lower marriage age for girls in Egypt

Where Arranged Marriages Are Customary, Suicides Grow More Common

GENDER & HUMAN RIGHTS

Gender equality is more than financial in the Emirates

Egypt - Evolving Analysis of Women's Issues, Rights

Arab Women Challenged to Keep Gains of Revolutions

RESOURCES & CALLS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Women Deliver Conference 2013 - Call for Registrations

BOOKS and REPORTS

Syria Crisis by Peace Women

The MENA Gender and Development eBrief receives material from various sources for its publication. Should you wish to refer to these sources/ sites directly, the list includes publications from: AVIVA, www.aviva.org, AWID: www.awid.org, Democracy Digest: www.freedomhouse.org, Development Gateway: www.developmentgateway.org, Dignity: www.dignity.org, e-Civics: www.civics.org, Eldis: www.eldis.org, ESCWA: www.escwa.org.lb, GDB: www.developmentex.com, Global Knowledge Partnership: www.globalknowledge.org, IGTN: www.IGTN.org, ILO: www.ilo.org One World: www.oneworld.net, Siyanda: www.siyanda.org, The Daily Star: www.dailystar.com.lb, The Drum Beat: www.comminit.com, The Soul Beat: www.comminit.com, The World Bank: www.worldbank.org, UNDP: www.undp.org, Wicejilist: www.wicej.addr.com, WLP: www.learningpartnership.org; WIDE: www.wide-network.org; IRIN News:

NEWS & ARTICLES

GENDER ACTIVISM

Arab states: Plan to Increase Judges' Education on Women's Rights

Plans are underway to educate more Bahraini and Arab judges on women's social and humanitarian rights.

Arab Women Organisation (AWO) director-general Dr Wadooda Badran said efforts were being made to bridge the gap between realising women's rights and enforcing them in the Arab world. They include amending legislation, conducting awareness campaigns, sponsoring studies, speaking to young students and possibly setting up a women's studies research centre in the region.

Over the last 20 years more rational and liberal judges have come to power, but the judiciary system still needs more reforms to change the mindset of the older generation, added Dr Badran.

"Women in general today don't fight for basic rights as it is a chapter that has been long closed and the Arab world has reached an advanced stage in women's rights that has given women their rightful place amongst the society," she explained.

"On the contrary, even with the emergence of more rational judges that believe in righteousness, women's real powers were being undermined with numerous legislations.

"There is a gap between what's practised and proper rights that women have and it is because systems have not been yet updated to match the ongoing change."

Dr Badran was speaking at the closing ceremony of the Second Women's Humanitarian Rights Conference yesterday at Sofitel Bahrain Zallaq Thalassa Sea and Spa, organised by Supreme Council for Women (SCW) in co-ordination with the AWO. For more information please follow the link : <http://www.wluml.org/news/arab-states-plan-increase-judges-education-womens-rights>



Algeria: A new trailblazer for women in politics

Now that Algeria has the largest proportion of women lawmakers in the Arab world, workmen at the national assembly building have some urgent modifications to make.

While the men's washroom just outside the debating chamber is clearly marked with the silhouette of a man, there are so far no signs for the women's. On the opening session of the new parliament on May 26, two of the newly elected female members had to ask for directions to the rest-room.



"Wherever I go I see a woman in front of me. Things have changed. We're used to only seeing men," said one local journalist as he watched the opening session of parliament.

The 146 women elected to parliament last month is up from just 31 before. Women now make up 31.6 percent of the chamber, the highest share of any Arab legislature and higher than many in the West.

The sudden leap is the result of a quota mandated by President Abdelaziz Bouteflika that many skeptics - including foreign election monitors - thought would not be enforced.

Now Algeria, a Muslim energy exporter of 37 million people, is basking in its new status as a trailblazer for woman's rights.

U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton have both praised the large female contingent.

But campaigners for equality say the big question remains unanswered: how will the new women lawmakers - most of them political novices - put their positions to good use?

Under Algeria's constitution, the president has the most power, leaving only limited prerogatives to parliament. Lawmakers' functions usually extend little beyond rubber-stamping initiatives handed down from the executive branch.

Women's groups said the result was a positive, if limited, development, however.

To read the article please follow the link <http://www.wluml.org/news/algeria-new-trailblazer-women-politics>

Lebanon Nation-wide Media Campaign under the slogan

"Mest'edeen Nesma' Haki" (which reads: **"we are willing - and here - to listen"**)^[1]

"Why are you only talking to me?!... go and speak to him too!" a sentence echoed in the discourse of many women - survivors of Gender Based Violence - who have always resorted to Listening and Counseling Services (LCS). The mainstream of women organizations



have always limited LCS to women to raise their awareness, empower them, and offering them psycho-social and legal support. These services, among other strategies, aim at warding off the worsening effects of domestic violence.

While men have long been addressed as perpetrators, now they are also being addressed as "partners" in prevention. All scientific approaches nowadays refer to the importance of partnering with men as a main condition to sustain efforts of combatting violence. Many studies have argued that in associating men with violence, we should also ensure that men are part of the solution. This has also been echoed in women's need to positively include men in addressing gender-based violence.

Hence, The International Medical Corps (IMC) & ABAAD took the initiative to establish a Men Center as a space where trained professionals treat men with respect, anonymity, and confidentiality. Through their specialized support, the Centre's team provide men with ways of relieving stress, identifying triggers that can make them angry, discovering possible alternatives of control, learning new behaviours, and engaging with their loved ones in a less aggressive manner. The Men Center comes as a new approach in Lebanon, and in the Middle East, to revisit gender stereotypes. The Center also aims at changing individual men and boys' understanding of acceptable behaviors that normalize violence as an essential component in ending violence against women and girls.

International Medical Corps & ABAAD and with the support of the Arab Foundation for Freedoms and Equality are launching a nation-wide media campaign. The aim of this campaign is to enhance and promote an institutionalized referral system and to spread the word about the Men Center in the country. The slogan of the campaign is: "Mest'edeen

Nesma' Haki" which reads: "we are willing - and here - to listen". The slogan has a double meaning of "someone is speaking to you in an abusive manner".

The campaign targets men residing in Lebanon, among other communities, in an inclusive approach to engage them in combating violence against women.

The TV spot, which is an essential part of this media campaign, portrays four male figures assuming different professions. All of these men reflect different socio-economic strata. However, all of them express their emotional stress and anger in the same way, by assimilating external stimulations - transmitted from daily routine. The emotional discharge however, reflects behavioral manners that are accepted by society and often expected from men. This in turn creates a vicious circle of violence with which the victim becomes the perpetrator.

This media campaign consists of, in addition to the TV spot, a Radio Spot, bill-boards, Posters, flyers, stickers, etc...

"Partners for an equitable society, where ALL citizens enjoy their full rights, human dignity and care"

For more information about the campaign follow the link

http://www.wunrn.com/news/2012/06_12/06_11/06112_lebanon.htm

Turkey: Organizations rally to stop the ban on abortion by Prime Minister Erdogan

TO THE POLICIES OF THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE GOVERNMENT OF TURKEY THAT TARGET GENDER EQUALITY, WOMEN'S BODIES, REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS, AND SEXUALITY, OUR RESPONSE IS A RESOUNDING "NO!"

We demand that the process to ban abortion be ceased IMMEDIATELY!

Banning abortion or further limiting the duration and conditions under which it can be performed;

Violates women's human right to health and life!

Violates women's human right to make decisions about their own sexual and reproductive health and rights!

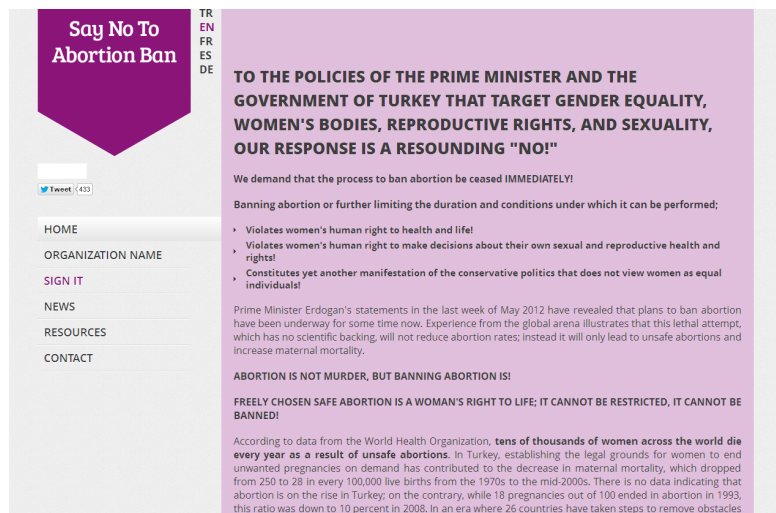
Constitutes yet another manifestation of the conservative politics that does not view women as equal individuals!

Prime Minister Erdogan's statements in the last week of May 2012 have revealed that plans to ban abortion have been underway for some time now. Experience from the global arena illustrates that this lethal attempt, which has no scientific backing, will not reduce abortion rates; instead it will only lead to unsafe abortions and increase maternal mortality.

ABORTION IS NOT MURDER, BUT BANNING ABORTION IS!

FREELY CHOSEN SAFE ABORTION IS A WOMAN'S RIGHT TO LIFE; IT CANNOT BE RESTRICTED, IT CANNOT BE BANNED!

According to data from the World Health Organization, tens of thousands of women across the world die every year as a result of unsafe abortions. In Turkey, establishing the legal grounds for women to end unwanted pregnancies on demand has contributed to the decrease in maternal mortality, which dropped from 250 to 28 in every 100,000 live births from the 1970s to the mid-2000s. There is no data indicating that abortion is on the rise in Turkey; on the contrary, while 18 pregnancies out of 100 ended in abortion in 1993, this ratio was down to 10 percent in 2008. In an era where 26 countries have taken steps to remove obstacles that hinder access to abortion between 1994 and 2011, efforts to ban or



The screenshot shows a website with a purple header that says "Say No To Abortion Ban". Below the header is a navigation menu with links for HOME, ORGANIZATION NAME, SIGN IT, NEWS, RESOURCES, and CONTACT. The main content area has a purple background and contains the following text:

TO THE POLICIES OF THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE GOVERNMENT OF TURKEY THAT TARGET GENDER EQUALITY, WOMEN'S BODIES, REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS, AND SEXUALITY, OUR RESPONSE IS A RESOUNDING "NO!"

We demand that the process to ban abortion be ceased IMMEDIATELY!

Banning abortion or further limiting the duration and conditions under which it can be performed;

- Violates women's human right to health and life!
- Violates women's human right to make decisions about their own sexual and reproductive health and rights!
- Constitutes yet another manifestation of the conservative politics that does not view women as equal individuals!

Prime Minister Erdogan's statements in the last week of May 2012 have revealed that plans to ban abortion have been underway for some time now. Experience from the global arena illustrates that this lethal attempt, which has no scientific backing, will not reduce abortion rates; instead it will only lead to unsafe abortions and increase maternal mortality.

ABORTION IS NOT MURDER, BUT BANNING ABORTION IS!

FREELY CHOSEN SAFE ABORTION IS A WOMAN'S RIGHT TO LIFE; IT CANNOT BE RESTRICTED, IT CANNOT BE BANNED!

According to data from the World Health Organization, tens of thousands of women across the world die every year as a result of unsafe abortions. In Turkey, establishing the legal grounds for women to end unwanted pregnancies on demand has contributed to the decrease in maternal mortality, which dropped from 250 to 28 in every 100,000 live births from the 1970s to the mid-2000s. There is no data indicating that abortion is on the rise in Turkey; on the contrary, while 18 pregnancies out of 100 ended in abortion in 1993, this ratio was down to 10 percent in 2008. In an era where 26 countries have taken steps to remove obstacles

restrict it in Turkey are unacceptable. Restricting the right to access safe abortion services and making them available only when required by medical conditions or instances of rape works to marginalize women's fundamental bodily and sexual rights, and reduces the enjoyment of this right to circumstances of necessity. Follow up the demand through this link <http://www.wluml.org/news/turkey-organizations-rally-stop-ban-abortion-prime-minister-erdogan>

Pétition citoyenne des femmes soulaliyates

Depuis plusieurs années, les femmes appartenant aux tribus des terres collectives (Soulaliyates) luttent pour leur reconnaissance comme des ayants droit, sur un pied d'égalité avec les hommes, à la terre. Ces mobilisations ont permis d'une part de porter cette question sur la scène publique et d'autre part d'inciter le ministère de tutelle (Ministère de l'Intérieur) à élaborer trois circulaires reconnaissant le droit des femmes aux terres collectives.



Mais entre cette reconnaissance administrative et la consécration de ce droit dans la réalité, les femmes des terres collectives rencontrent de nombreux obstacles visant à les priver de leurs droits.

Dans ce sens et prenant en compte:

- l'article 15 de la constitution qui confère aux citoyens et citoyennes le droit de présenter des pétitions aux pouvoirs publics ;
- le préambule de la Constitution interdisant toute discrimination, basée, notamment, sur le sexe ainsi que les autres dispositions relatives à l'obligation faite aux pouvoirs publics à œuvrer à la création des conditions permettant de généraliser l'effectivité de la liberté et de l'égalité des citoyens et citoyennes (art. 6), à l'égalité entre les hommes et les femmes dans tous les domaines (art. 19) et, enfin, à la lutte contre la vulnérabilité de certaines catégories de femmes (art. 34) ;
- la légitimité des demandes et mobilisations des femmes, se trouvant dans leur écrasante majorité, dans une situation de précarité sociale et économique et qui ont aujourd'hui besoin d'un grand élan de solidarité citoyenne;

Nous citoyens et citoyennes, signataires de la présente pétition, et solidaires avec les demandes légitimes et justes des femmes appartenant aux tribus des terres collectives, demandons :

- au gouvernement et au parlement de promulguer, en conformité avec la constitution, une loi spécifique, consacrant l'égalité totale entre les femmes et les hommes appartenant aux tribus des terres collectives en matière d'accès à la propriété, à l'usufruit et à l'indemnisation en cas de cession de ces terres ;
- au ministère de tutelle, en attente de cette loi spécifique, et afin que les femmes ne soient pas spoliées définitivement de leurs droits, de veiller au strict respect de l'application des trois circulaires. To check the blog and the view the petition <http://www.e-joussour.net/en/node/10995>

GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

Activists face rape, one fights back in Sudan

In many regards, Safiya Ishaq is an unremarkable 25-year-old. She is excellent at braiding hair but terrible at being on time. She studied fine arts at Khartoum University in Sudan. Not unusual for a student, Ishaq became involved with politics. She joined Girifna, a pro-democracy movement formed in 2009 on the eve of Sudan's first multiparty elections in more than two decades aimed at mobilizing citizens to vote. Conducting mass voter registration drives, it quickly evolved into a socio-political movement demanding change in Sudan.

Girifna firmly opposes the ruling NCP party, headed by Sudanese President Omar Hassan al-Bashir. Bashir, wanted by the ICC on charges that include genocide, retains social and political control by imposing a misrepresentation of Islamic law. Sudan’s notorious “public order” laws claim to guide the morality of Sudan’s citizens. In reality, the government uses them [to clamp down](#) on freedom of speech and to justify the arrest, detention, and torture—sexualized and otherwise—of many Sudanese who attempt to exercise their democratic rights. They are most notably used against women. A recent report by SIHA Network, a Kampala-based regional women’s rights organization, stated that “the repressive public order laws still remain the greatest challenge for women as an arbitrary tool to police and oppress women.”



In January 2011, inspired by the Arab Spring, activists began organizing protests in Khartoum. Ishaq attended one of the rallies. She also handed out flyers on campus, calling for democracy in Sudan. A couple weeks later, Ishaq was kidnapped by National Intelligence and Security Services (NISS) agents and taken to a house, she said. She described being tortured and gang raped multiple times. In between rapes and beatings, they told her they knew she had attended the rallies of January 30 and handed out flyers, she said. To read the article follow the link <http://www.wluml.org/news/sudan-activists-face-rape-one-fights-back>

Women Refuse To Be Silenced By Assaults in Egypt

Violence against women demonstrators in Egypt erupted again when a frenzied mob of 200 men [sexually assaulted a female protester](#) in Tahrir Square. Then, during a rally on Friday to protest the incident, about 50 women and their male allies were themselves brutalized and chased away by another mob.



Journalist Ghazala Irshad, who was on the scene Friday, says that just as small anti-harassment protest was gathering steam, the atmosphere shifted. “A few guys were like, ‘Why are you talking about this, there are more important issues to talk about?’

[Then] some guys started saying the women protesting were whores.”

Next, a phalanx of outside men overwhelmed the protective circle of male allies and cornered and groped the women. Rally organizer Sally Zohney says, “[The violence] started with individual cases of assaults against women in the march [and] then turned into beating and chasing everyone involved. Even men were badly beaten and attacked. It was very brutal.”

Participants were forced to flee for their safety.

Sadly, the violent scene is just the latest of many. Since the military took power last February, countless women—including journalists [Lara Logan](#), [Mona Eltahawy](#) and [Caroline Sinz](#), Egyptian [actor Sherihan](#) and the “[woman in the blue bra](#)”—have been groped and sexually assaulted by men in Tahrir Square. Hundreds, perhaps thousands, of other women have experienced verbal [sexual harassment](#) in a place that is supposed to symbolize freedom.

The lack of safety for women in the square [symbolizes](#), instead, just how little women have benefited from the revolution they helped create. While pre-revolutionary Egypt was notorious for street harassment—a 2008 [study](#) by the Egyptian Centre for Women’s Rights

(ECWR) found that over 80 percent of Egyptian women had experienced it-the 18-day uprising in January and February 2011 was an unprecedented moment in which women could move freely in public space. Women seized the chance to become key players in the protests. to read the article follow the link <http://www.wluml.org/news/egypt-women-refuse-be-silenced-assaults>

Potential law to lower marriage age for girls in Egypt

Early marriage often deprives girls of their right to an education

3 May 2012: Plan is deeply concerned at new proposals by the Egyptian parliament to reduce the legal age for girls to marry to 14 - just 4 years after a successful campaign increased the age limit to 18.

Early marriage can have a devastating impact on girls' lives - they are more likely to be forced out of school, live in poverty, have early pregnancies and endure health complications or die during childbirth.

Legal protection

Ayman Zadek, Plan's programme area manager in Assiut, Egypt, said: "Plan Egypt strongly promotes child rights and according to the Child Rights Convention, any person under 18 is considered a child. Plan Egypt was actively involved in the process of amending the country's Child Law in 2008, when the legal marriage age was increased to 18.

"Despite the improvements on the law, early marriage is still a widespread social phenomenon in Egypt. Plan Egypt, through its programmes and involvement in the Child Protection Network, continues to advocate against this issue."

Staggering global problem

If Egypt's parliament goes ahead with the move it will contribute to an already staggering global problem: more than 100 million girls under 18 across the world are expected to marry in the next decade.

"Exposing young girls to marriage has a very negative impact on their physical and psychological health. It reduces their chances to complete an education and negatively impacts their ability to participate at the economic and social levels," adds Zadek.

"Plan Egypt will continue to advocate for the enforcement of the current Child Law - where marriage is not allowed for any child under 18 years old."

Girls campaign

Ending child marriage around the world is a main priority of Plan's Because I am a Girl campaign, which will be launched globally on 11 October - the first International Day of the Girl Child. To know more about this issue follow the link

http://www.wunrn.com/news/2012/06_12/06_11/06112_egypt.htm

Where Arranged Marriages Are Customary, Suicides Grow More Common

With her father sitting nearby, 16-year-old Jenan Merza struggled to explain why she was lying in bed recovering from a gunshot wound.

"I didn't know the gun was loaded," she said, resting under a red-and-gold blanket in a stark room with a bare concrete floor.

A couple of moments later, after her father left the room to fix tea and coffee, she cried softly and admitted what really happened, how she had shot herself in the abdomen with her brother's Glock pistol after first trying with a Kalashnikov rifle – a weapon too long to point at herself and pull the trigger.

"I tried to kill myself," she said. "I didn't want to get married. I was forced to get engaged."



In this desolate and tradition-bound community in the northwest corner of Iraq, at the foot of a mountain range bordering Syria, Ms. Merza's reaction to the ancient custom of arranged marriage is becoming more common. Officials are alarmed by what they describe as a worsening epidemic of suicides, particularly among young women tormented by being forced to marry too young, to someone they do not love.

While reliable statistics on anything are hard to come by in Iraq, officials say there have been as many as 50 suicides this year in this city of 350,000 – at least [double the rate in the United States](#) – compared with 80 all of last year. The most common methods among women are self-immolation and gunshots.

Among the many explanations given, like poverty and madness, one is offered most frequently: access to the Internet and to satellite television, which came after the start of the war. This has given young women glimpses of a better life, unencumbered by the traditions that have constricted women for centuries to a life of obedience and child-rearing, one devoid of romance.



“The society had been closed, and now it is open to the rest of the world,” said Kheri Shingli, an official in a local political party and a writer and journalist. “They feel they are not living their life well compared to the rest of the world.”

Last year the International Organization for Migration conducted a study on the growing suicide problem in Sinjar, where mental health services do not exist, and concluded that “the marginalization of women and the view of the woman’s role as peripheral contributed to the recent suicides.” A report compiled this year by a researcher at a local health center concluded, “The way to solve this is to put an end to forced marriages.”

That will probably not happen soon. In assigning blame for the rise in suicides, many people here mentioned the Turkish soap opera “Forbidden Love.” A romantic drama of the upper class, it is a favorite program of women here, and some people say it provides an unrealistic example of the lives that could be available outside Sinjar.

Ms. Merza said she watched the show, and she admitted, “I wish I had that life,” but her anguish seems more basic. At 16, she wants to remain a child.

“I want to stay with my mom and not go back to my husband,” she said. To read the entire article follow the link http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/07/world/middleeast/more-suicides-in-iraq-region-where-arranged-marriage-is-common.html?_r=3

GENDER & HUMAN RIGHTS

Gender equality is more than financial in the Emirates

The UAE has consistently taken steps to empower women. Female workers can be seen across all sectors of the economy, from media and law to engineering and science. But while the UAE is ahead of other countries in the region in guaranteeing gender rights and equality, women's empowerment is still a work in progress.

As The National reported yesterday, Emirati women in general say they are not given enough of a say when it comes to financial matters in their families. Half of the 414 people surveyed by the Marriage Fund said decisions about paying for a home, household budgeting and matters like buying a car are made by the husband. As Ahmad Alomosh, dean of sociology at Sharjah University, put it: “This is a patriarchal society, so men would never let go of this.” That may be a common sentiment, but with the proportion of university-

educated women increasing annually in the UAE, it would seem reasonable to assume roughly half of society would disagree.

Focus on empowerment of women is essential to the development of the nation. While male students tend to drop out of schools early, to find a job and start a family, around 77 per cent of female students continue on to higher education. Women make up three of every five students in the UAE's public higher education.

Unfortunately, many female graduates never make it into the workforce for a variety of reasons. Authorities must deal with the social issues that prevent women from starting a career after graduation, including providing better infrastructure that eases mobility; in more conservative areas many women do not search for jobs outside their communities because it is difficult for them to commute. Women in those areas often have to accept jobs outside their areas of interest, typically in the public sector.

Moreover, authorities can do more to remove the negative stigma associated with women taking on more financial responsibility by clearing the way for women to assume top jobs in finance or business leadership. Young women, and stubborn husbands, need more role models.

In response to the perception that women are not financially empowered in the home, the Marriage Fund has called for Emirati women to be given better access to loans. But far more important for a nation that is seeing a rapid rise in female education rates is to empower women outside the home, and hope the result trickles in. <http://www.thenational.ae/thenationalconversation/editorial/gender-equality-is-more-than-financial>



Egypt - Evolving Analysis of Women's Issues, Rights

"I wanted to be part of the revolution, to help Egyptians gain their freedom and women gain their rights, but unlike my brother I had to argue with my parents long and hard before they eventually allowed me out for a few hours," Assam told IPS.

Assam who wants to be a journalist one day, is from a new generation of Egyptian women better educated than their mothers and grandmothers, and who believe unequivocally in equality for women despite the restrictions many families impose. She struggles with such cultural constraints but believes, like several other Egyptian women from varying backgrounds IPS spoke to, that the revolution will ultimately be good for women.

Rina El Masry, 40, is an immaculately groomed businesswoman. She is the daughter of a Coptic Christian mother and Muslim father. Like Assam she doesn't wear the hijab. "I believe the ceding of power to Egypt's interim military government was a step in the right direction for womens' rights despite the number of female parliamentarians dropping to the current two percent under the military as opposed to the 12 percent under deposed former president Hosni Mubarak," El Masry told IPS. "All democracies evolve." Under Mubarak special quotas were reserved in parliament for women. And women were given particular rights. Egyptian women, unlike many women in the rest of the Arab world, can sue for divorce without having to prove maltreatment. Egyptian women married to foreigners can pass their citizenship on to their children, which



is not the case in more socially liberal Lebanon. Egypt's females are not subject to the Sharia dress code. Divorced Egyptian women are awarded custody of their children until they are 15, as opposed to age seven for boys and nine for girls regionally. When the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) took over, the female parliamentary 64-seat quota was overturned, and constitutional amendments were formulated without the input of women.

SCAF also subjected a number of female protestors to beatings and virginity tests, while refusing to allow women to head governorates and municipalities throughout the country. The right of women to sue for divorce without having to prove maltreatment is also under review.

Mariam Kirolos, 22, is a Coptic Christian, and member of the Egyptian Feminists Union. The group has been conducting brainstorming meetings to strategise a way forward for women's rights under the new government. Kirolos agrees with El Masry that revolutionary change will ultimately benefit women.

"Despite the setbacks after SCAF took over the revolution is still ongoing. Women's voices are now being heard. We are no longer silent. Issues that have been swept under the carpet for too long are now in the public domain and being discussed by civil society," Kirolos told IPS.

While the three women from disparate backgrounds all voice hope towards equality for women becoming a reality in Egypt, all are also united in their fear of the Muslim Brotherhood and other conservative elements sweeping to power. They acknowledge that the fight ahead will not be easy.

At a mass protest by Egyptian women in Cairo shortly after Mubarak's overthrow, women were booed, shoved and told to go back home by groups of men. During parliamentary elections earlier in the year, conservative Islamists took a lion's share of the seats. Muslim Brotherhood presidential candidate Muhammad Mursi opposes women being allowed to serve in the presidency. He has called for implementation of Islamic law and, at campaign rallies, referred to Islam's holy book, the Quran, as the constitution. For more information and read the entire analysis, follow the link http://www.wunrn.com/news/2012/06_12/06_04/060412_egypt.htm

Arab Women Challenged to Keep Gains of Revolutions

When [Yemen's](#) long-term dictator Ali Abdullah Saleh tried to silence Tawakkul Karman, he called in her brother. Karman was in prison for her part at the forefront of the popular revolution against Saleh's rule, a role that earned her the Nobel peace prize. The president's warning to Karman's brother was blunt. "Saleh told him a clear message: if you don't restrain your sister, whoever disobeys me will be killed," she said. "My brother told me the day I was released from prison.



The next morning I went protesting." The threat says much about Saleh, who was finally toppled in February. But his attempt to use Karman's brother to silence her says something about Yemeni society and other countries across the Arab world where women were in the vanguard of revolutions - joining protests en masse, facing bullets and being killed - looking for more than solely political emancipation.

"The most important thing the Arab spring brought us was to give women leadership roles," said Karman. "When women become leaders of men, and men are following, when women sacrifice themselves and get killed in front of men, when they get detained for political issues and men don't feel ashamed of women who are arrested, this is a change. But is it enough to change the situation of women? The answer is: not yet." Karman was among several women who played leading roles in uprisings across the Arab world who gathered in Washington recently for a meeting of Vital Voices, a group founded in 1997 by the then first lady [Hillary Clinton](#) to empower female leaders. There was agreement that the revolutions freed millions from dictatorship but are delivering only limited gains in the struggle for women's equality - and in some cases are threatening to set back the advances already made. This week Clinton, who is now US secretary of state, said women's rights in newly liberated Arab countries were a test of whether the revolutions were living up to their promise. "One of the important indicators as to how the whole process of democratisation, political reform, economic reform is going is the way that the newly formed governments and their allies in the various countries treat women," said Clinton. "To that end, there's mixed news. There's some positive news in that there are certain guarantees put forth about women's rights and opportunities. But there are some worrying actions that certainly don't match those guarantees." The challenge was demonstrated at the weekend in Cairo's Tahrir square, the crucible of the Egyptian revolution, as hundreds of men attacked women demonstrating for an end to sexual harassment and assaults. Marianne Nagui Hanna Ibrahim was among the hundreds of thousands of Egyptians in the square last year for the protests that brought down President [Hosni Mubarak](#). "During the 18 days against Mubarak there were no women and men. It was just Egyptians in danger. I was in the square almost daily and I didn't witness a single case of sexual harassment. To read the entire article follow the link http://www.wunrn.com/news/2012/06_12/06_18/06182_arab.htm

RESOURCES & CALLS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Women Deliver Conference 2013 - Call for Registrations [Women Deliver](#) is a global advocacy organization that brings together voices from around the world to call for improved health and well being for girls and women. Our conferences in 2007 and 2010 were the largest of the decade to focus on the health and well-being of girls and women. In 2010, we convened more than 3,400 people in Washington DC, including 75 parliamentarians and government ministers, five UN agency heads, the UN Secretary General and more than 250 global media outlets.

Women Deliver 2013 will be even bigger, with more than 5,000 expected participants from Ministries of Health, Finance and Development Cooperation, Parliaments, leading civil society organizations, global companies, media and more. More than 120 concurrent sessions, high-level plenaries, ministerial and parliamentary forums, and skills building workshops will inspire and inform your work to build a better world for girls and women. For more information please follow the link <http://www.cvent.com/events/women-deliver-2013-conference-registration/event-summary-ccfb71484fb4492da451fabcc2679863.aspx>



WOMEN DELIVER
INVEST IN GIRLS AND WOMEN - IT PAYS
THE 3RD GLOBAL CONFERENCE
 KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA
 MAY 28-30, 2013

REGISTER NOW! www.wed2013.org

Early Bird Registration

1 June 2012 - 31 January 2013

- \$500 USD; \$400 USD for youth*

Regular Registration

1 February 2013 - 26 May 2013

- \$650 USD; \$400 USD for youth*

On-Site Registration

27 May 2013 - 30 May 2013

- \$800 USD (Group discounts available for groups of 25 or more)

*Youth participants (under age 25 as of Mar 5, 2013) will be required to submit scanned copies of an ID that verifies their age.

"A Women Deliver global conference in 2013 offers an opportunity to step up the pressure and to address solutions for the period ahead. By giving mothers-to-be the services they need before, during and after pregnancy, and by providing quality health care to all women, we ensure (and) prevent suffering and associate progress forward all the Sustainable Development Goals!"
 - UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon

CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS:
 More than 5,000 expected attendees from more than 150 countries
 High-level forums for Parliamentarians and Ministers
 More than 300 plenaries, sessions and side events
 Youth leadership program
 Media forum, press briefings and workshops
 Two exhibit halls

BOOKS and REPORTS

Syria Crisis by Peace Women

This edition of PeaceWomen ENews focuses on the deteriorating situation in Syria. At this time of brutal violence and gross violations, we wanted to focus on the women, peace and security aspects of the crisis. News with gender perspectives remains very limited but we have included below some news sources and articles on the situation.

In a recent statement, WILPF reiterated our call for an arms embargo on Syria and demanded that all Member States, including Russia, cease any and all military sales and assistance. The situation is fuelled by the arms trade, both legal and illegal, which has led to the region being

awash with weapons. As we prepare for upcoming negotiations on the Arms Trade Treaty, the



situation in Syria must remain front and centre to remind us the ATT is about life and death. The Arms Trade Treaty has the potential to prevent arms transfers in situations bearing violations of international humanitarian law (IHL) and/or human rights standards, incidents of gender-based violence, or threats to sustainable development. We must support a strong ATT ([see more on ATT here](#)).

WILPF also continues to reiterate the importance of **women's participation**. Women's voices will be crucial in any attempt to find a political, peaceful and sustainable solution to what is rapidly becoming a civil war. The importance of meaningful participation in the region will be discussed further at WILPF International's upcoming **conference on the Middle East North Africa (MENA)** region in Geneva on June 20-22. Women from eight countries in the MENA region—Iraq, Libya, Tunisia, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Yemen and Morocco—will participate in this meeting which follows national consultation in each of their countries. Discussions will focus on supporting efforts to reinforce peace and security in the region. (To read the publication

http://www.peacewomen.org/publications_eneews_issue.php?id=170

The MENA Gender and Development E-Brief is published by CRTD.A.

To get all previous MENA GAD e-brief issues please log on to: <http://crtdda.org.lb/newsletter/82>

For more information about CRTD.A please visit: <http://crtdda.org.lb>

You are receiving this newsletter because you are a member of CRTD.A / IRIS.

Please direct any comments to rchemaly@crtdda.org.lb

If you choose to unsubscribe please send a blank e-mail from the e-mail in which you receive the e-Brief from, with the heading unsubscribe to unsubscribe@crtdda.org.lb

If you wish to subscribe please send a blank e-mail, with subscribe as a heading to subscribe_ebrief@crtdda.org.lb

All the available links were accessible during the preparation process

Please accept our apologies if your subscribe / unsubscribe needs are not being met to your satisfaction, as errors will inevitably occur

Opinions and views expressed in this GAD E-Brief relate to their respective authors and do not necessarily reflect those of CRTD.A

Information presented in this GAD E-Brief is considered public information and may be distributed or copied. Use of appropriate credit is requested. While CRTD.A makes every effort to provide accurate and complete information, various data such as contacts, weblinks, dates, etc. may change.

CRTD.A provides no warranty, expressed or implied, as to the accuracy, reliability or completeness of the data and information harvested from other public sources.

Some of the information in this GAD E-Brief may contain references to information created and maintained by other organizations. Please note that CRTD.A does not control and cannot guarantee the timeliness, or accuracy of these outside materials.
