



Mouvement Mondial des Mères

Make
Mothers
Matter

MAKE MOTHERS MATTER

*“MMM listens to Mothers and
Gives them a Voice”*

ACTIVITY REPORT **2015**



MMM's mission is to promote the importance of the role mothers play in the economic, social and cultural development of their society. Despite the fact that they face serious difficulties, MMM is convinced that mothers can play an active part in resolving many problems when they are considered as stakeholders, when they are supported, informed and motivated to act.

2015 was a year when we planned how we might better implement this mission. Three main thrusts became clear: **listen to mothers (federate), give mothers a voice (communicate), strengthen the teams (motivate).** We are targeting these three main goals.

1. Listening to mothers gives MMM the authority to speak in their name. To this end, MMM federates each year a growing number of mothers and grassroots associations throughout the world, with whom we develop a close working relationship. The MMM Mothers' Workshops and new member associations feature in this Report.

2. Giving mothers a voice is to get the message over.

Getting the message over about mothers and to mothers by every means at our - and their - disposal. Getting the message over in advocacy work with the international authorities - the United Nations, UNESCO and the European Union – and with policy makers and national governments. Ensuring that mothers are involved in so many areas means that our advocacy work is limitless. At the same time we must continue to pinpoint specific areas for intervention and coordinate our activities to enhance our impact. This is why – as you will see in this Report – our work has been focussed on three subjects: the **economy, health and peace.**

3. Strengthening our teams is a necessary requirement to enable us to fulfil our mission. Our human and financial resources are currently too limited: practically all of our MMM teams are volunteers. The personal commitment, availability and the quality of the work of our volunteers is truly remarkable. Nevertheless, to ensure the continuity of our activities into the future, we must **recruit younger team members with new skills.** For this we need **funding** - because of the way society is evolving we must be in a position to pay some of our key team members.

In 2017, MMM will be celebrating 70 years of working for mothers! With that in mind we plan to build on the work launched in 2015, so that by the end of 2016 we will be well on the way to achieving the goals set out above – and ready to make 2017 a new beginning.

I give my heartfelt thanks to all those of you who give their skills and time to MMM. Thank you to those who support us. And special thanks to the graphic artist, Françoise Ernst, who has set out many MMM publications during this year, including this Activity Report.

Anne-Claire de Liedekerke

Make Mothers Matter

Make Mothers Matter (MMM) is an international NGO created in 1947 at UNESCO (the UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation). Its mission is to give a voice to mothers, to support and advocate for recognition of their essential role for social, economic and cultural development. The strength of MMM is that, despite the diversity of their circumstances and cultures, mothers around the world have many concerns in common.

MMM is an apolitical and non-denominational organisation, with more than forty grass-roots member organisations in twenty-eight countries. At this time, MMM is actively engaged in a process of expansion.

With permanent representatives at **THE EUROPEAN UNION (EU), THE UNITED NATIONS (UN)** in Geneva, New York and Vienna, as well as at **UNESCO** in Paris, MMM voices mothers concerns at international level through its advocacy work.

MMM speaks out for the education and the empowerment of women, for the promotion and recognition of the essential role played by mothers, for the promotion of the rights of mothers and their children, for the recognition of unpaid family care work, for the need to reconcile commitments in the home and in the workplace, for maternal and child health, as well as for the fight against poverty.

MMM WAS AMONG THE FIRST CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS
ACCREDITED BY THE UN IN 1949.

ADVOCACY refers to the work we do to influence policies and actions at local, national and international levels to bring about positive changes in the lives of mothers. Promoting the interests of mothers requires research, political analysis, communication and public campaigns.

Through its advocacy work, MMM asserts the importance and universality of the economic and social role played by mothers, and the need to recognise and support this role by ensuring that measures are adopted which give mothers the support they need.

THE WORK OF THE MMM REPRESENTATIVES AT INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

Working with its member associations, MMM aims to influence policies to bring about positive and concrete changes in the lives of mothers. We are convinced that such changes will have a positive impact on their children, their family, and society in general.

As the Chinese proverb says, “women hold up half the sky” - a telling image. If we estimate that about 80% of these women are mothers, we can assume that all the issues addressed at the UN, UNESCO and the EU affect mothers. However, unable to follow and contribute to all the debates, MMM has chosen three main areas, which are relevant to all mothers:



- **Mothers and the Economy**, and in particular the challenges of reconciling work and family life and the issue of unpaid family care work. These are aggravated in developing countries where there is lack of infrastructures, public services are poor, and working mothers face many discriminations : all resulting in the feminisation of poverty.
- **Maternal and Child Health**, covering issues from maternal and child nutrition to maternal mortality and morbidity, including the stress resulting from an imbalance between the workplace and family life, and the fatigue resulting from the burden of unpaid family care work, particularly in developing countries.
- **Mothers as Educators and Agents of Peace**, enabled only by the creation of an environment which allows mothers to play this role and by the absence of all forms of violence against women: domestic violence, forced or child marriages, unequal rights...

Practical Recommendations for governments, the private sector and other stakeholders, proposed by MMM to improve mothers' lives:

- *Recognise unpaid family care work as a real and specific category of work, which should give access to political and social rights : social security, pension rights, education and training, etc.*
- *Promote and support equal sharing of care responsibilities between men and women*
- *Conduct surveys to measure the importance of unpaid family care work and its contribution to the market economy*
- *Develop and make accessible infrastructures and public services, including health and childcare services, particularly in rural areas*
- *Promote flexible working conditions*
- *Promote a life cycle approach to work, that allows career breaks and facilitates return to work*
- *Introduce a system for evaluating skills acquired while performing unpaid family care work*



Credit : UN Photo / Milton Grant

Democracy and transparency – MMM's operational ethos

MMM teams meet very regularly, either in physical meetings once or twice a year or via Skype meetings. The Operational Team seeks advice from the Board of Governors and/or the MMM Officers when necessary. In 2015, the Board met three times (including two physical meetings), and the Officers met about ten times.

There were no elections in 2015.

MAKE MOTHERS MATTER BOARD 2014-2016

OFFICERS

President: **Anne-Claire de Liedekerke** (Belgium)

Vice-Presidents: **Jill Donnelly** (UK)

Nectar Nasr (Lebanon)

Secretary General: **Marie-Liesse Mandula** (France)

Deputy Secretary General: **Florence Rentler** (France)

Treasurer: **Françoise Blin** (France)

Valérie Bichelmeier, President of the UN Delegation (Switzerland)

Marie-Laure des Brosses, President of MMM France (France)

OTHER MEMBERS

Aliette Abraham, President of Otitsara (Madagascar)

Carmen Quintanilla, President of AFAMMER (Spain)

Gabrielle de Milleville, MMM representative to UNESCO (France)

Laetitia Wolkonsky, MMM European Delegation representative (Belgium)

Latifa Mayou, President of the Cameroonian Movement of Mothers (Cameroon)

Laurence Vanden Abeele, President of MMM Belgium.

She replaced Patricia Heymans.

Nicole Deigna, President of the NGO 'Repères' (Ivory Coast)

Sophie Péliissié du Rausas, President of 'Enfance sans Drogue' (France)

Wafia Lantry, Moroccan League for the Protection of Childhood (Morocco)

These are MMM's main priorities for the coming years:

- Strengthening the MMM network of international and national members and partners
- Improving external and internal communications
- Fundraising in order to strengthen the MMM teams.

The International General Secretariat: the pivot of MMM work

Four volunteers run the MMM General Secretariat in Paris. This Operational Team ensures the on-going administrative management of the association, particularly:

- *The organisation and preparation of MMM statutory meetings*
- *The leadership and coordination of the MMM networks*
- *The co-ordination of MMM internal and external communications*
- *The administrative work required by MMM for its work representing mothers at international institutions and organisations*
- *The support required for member associations to realise the objectives set by the Board*
- *The management and update of the MMM website*
- *The editing, promotion and diffusion of MMM products and publications*



Françoise Blin,
Cécile de Laage,
Florence Rentler,
Marie-Liesse Mandula

The MMM UN Delegation

At the UN, the member states commit to peace and security, social development and progress, the improvement of living conditions, and the respect of human rights. The role of the MMM UN Delegation is to use our General Consultative Status to ensure recognition and support for the participation of mothers in this mission.



'General Consultative Status' is the highest Consultative Status at the UN, and is granted to international NGOs whose interests cover the majority of the agenda of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). These organisations are able to address the delegates, disseminate statements of up to 2000 words, and add points to the agenda. Every 4 years, they must provide a report on their contributions to the work of the UN.

In 2015, 4360 NGOs were listed as having a consultative relationship with ECOSOC. Among them, MMM is one of 144 NGOs granted General Consultative Status.

UN headquarters in New York lit up with the colours of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the Agenda 2030



« Mothers play a critical role in the family, which is a powerful force for social cohesion and integration. The mother-child relationship is vital for the healthy development of children. »

*BANK KI-MOON: SECRETARY
GENERAL OF THE UN*



© UN Photo /Olivier Chassot

Unpaid family care work is at the heart of MMM advocacy work at the United Nations

Unpaid family care work responds to the material, educational and emotional needs of the members of a family, notably children, but also people affected by a handicap, illness or old age. This work is indispensable for the well-being of individuals, their community - and society as a whole. Globally, 2/3 of this work is undertaken by women, notably mothers. This responsibility and its resulting **time poverty**, limits women's ability to participate fully in economic life, particularly in developing countries where they must also face poor infrastructures and public services (water, energy, transport, healthcare, nurseries, etc.). As they lack time to engage in earning activities, women often stay home in secondary positions and suffer disproportionately from poverty.

In its advocacy work, MMM calls upon UN member states to **recognise** the value of this unpaid family care work, not only through evaluating its monetary value and its inclusion as an indicator in GDP satellite accounts, but also by giving unpaid caregivers access to certain social rights from which other workers benefit (such as social security, training and pension rights). MMM also speaks for the adoption of **policies to reduce and redistribute this unpaid work** (notably by developing infrastructures and public services, by adopting measures to redress the balance between commitments in the home and in the workplace, and encouraging more involvement on the part of fathers).

« WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT IS AN ILLUSION IF WE DON'T ALSO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE UNPAID WORK WOMEN ARE DOING IN THE HOME »
Magdalena Sepúlveda,
Special Rapporteur of
the UN on Extreme
Poverty and Human
Rights, International
Women's Day,
8th March 2014

MMM WORK AT THE UN IN 2015

2015 was an important year at the UN, with the 70th anniversary of the organisation, the conclusion of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and most of all, the adoption of the ambitious **2030 agenda** for sustainable development, which is structured around **17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**.



SDGs are globally pertinent for mothers, beginning with Goal 5, which addresses gender equality and the empowerment of women. It must be noted that this goal includes an indicator about unpaid family care work, which should at last give this issue the visibility it deserves.

"5.4 : recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies, and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate."

Working on the issues which are raised by MMM member associations, the agenda and the themes of the UN conferences, the MMM UN Delegation continued its advocacy work on its priority themes : mothers and the economy, maternal and child health, and mothers as educators and agents for peace.

In New York, Geneva and Vienna, MMM is a member of several **NGO Committees**, which are strategic platforms for NGO advocacy work at UN level. MMM representatives are specifically active in the **NGO Committee on the Status of Women** (New York and Geneva), the **NGO Committee on the Family** (New York and Vienna), the **NGO Committee on Ageing** (Geneva), and in the **NGO Committee on Social Development** (New York). In Geneva, MMM is also a member of **Child Rights Connect**, a NGO network which advocates the promotion of children's rights.

The UN Commission for Social Development was established by ECOSOC in 1946. The Commission is charged mainly with following up on the commitments made at the World Summit for Social Development that took place in Copenhagen in 1995. The Commission meets once a year in New York, normally in February, where it reviews the central themes of social development that were discussed in Copenhagen. In 2015, the main theme was "Rethinking and strengthening social development in the contemporary world".

▷ In New York

Sabine de la Villemarqué and Sabine Huet



Commission for Social Development (CSocD)

MMM's written Statement to the Commission recalls the major contribution of unpaid family care work to economic and social development, and to the well-being of individuals, families and societies. The strengthening of social development must be able to meet the challenge of recognising this invisible work and include the formulation of **policies which would enable mothers to stay in the home or return to the workplace without being penalised by their family responsibilities and their unpaid work in the home.**

Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)

In 2015, the CSW reviewed the **implementation at global level of the commitments, which were made by the states during the 4th World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995, ("Beijing+20")**. CSW59 concluded the Beijing +20 review process launched in 2014 in the 5 regional UN Commissions. In Geneva, MMM had been very much involved in organising the NGO Forum, which had preceded the regional meeting of the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). In the name of the Geneva NGO Committee on the Status of Women which had organised this Forum, Valérie Bichelmeier briefly presented the results to a plenary session of the CSW.

In a written statement, MMM proposed a list of practical recommendations to governments and other stakeholders in the critical area of "Women and the Economy".

The UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) was created by ECOSOC in 1946 to promote, report on and monitor issues relating to the political, economic, civil, social and educational rights of women. Assisted by UN Women (the UN entity responsible for gender equality and the empowerment of women), it meets once a year in New York, normally in March, to discuss one main theme, "Beijing+20" in 2015, among other women's issues. The sessions of this Commission are attended by thousands of representatives from Women NGOs, making it a major meeting for all organisations working on women's rights.



MMM Team in New York for the 59th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, adopted by 189 member States of the UN at the occasion of the 4th World Conference of Women in 1995 in Beijing, is a landmark document for the advancement of women's rights. This programme is still a reference framework today, covering **12 critical areas**:

- Women and Poverty
- Education and Training of Women
- Women and Health
- Violence against Women
- Women and armed conflicts
- Women and the Economy
- Women in Power and Decision-making
- Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of Women
- Human Rights of Women
- Women and the Media
- Women and the Environment
- The Girl-child

« The social significance of maternity, motherhood and the role of parents in the family and in the upbringing of children should be acknowledged. The upbringing of children requires shared responsibility of parents, women and men and society as a whole. Maternity, motherhood, parenting and the role of women in procreation must not be a basis for discrimination nor restrict the full participation of women in society. Recognition should also be given to the important role often played by women in many countries in caring for other members of their family. »

Beijing Platform for Action, paragraph 29, Chapter II

« We want to address the issue of women and the economy: all over the world, millions of women fetch water or firewood, cook and clean, look after their children as well as elderly or sick relatives. In economic terms it is not classed as 'work', although it is an indispensable support to the world economy. It is not counted in the national GDP and brings women no income or any other type of recognition. »

Anne-Claire de Liedekerke, MMM President in her introduction to the panel

MMM also organised a parallel event to the CSW, with a panel on **“Reconciliation of work & family life – Key for women’s economic empowerment and a society that cares”**. The speakers were Philip Biswas, founder and director of the Rural Reconstruction Foundation (RRF), MMM member association in Bangladesh, and Margunn Bjørnhold, a Norwegian sociologist specialising in gender issues related to the economic and social fields. Anne-Claire de Liedekerke also highlighted current good practices in reconciliation in various countries where MMM member associations are present.



ECOSOC Annual Ministerial Review

In its **written statement**, MMM emphasized that the transition from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) must give rise to a thorough questioning regarding our current economic model based on the endless growth of GDP, too often to the detriment of the well-being of people and the environment. Economic policies should also be based on socio-economic indicators measuring this type of well-being. In this way care work for people and protection of the environment would be better recognised and supported.

The **Annual Ministerial Review (AMR)** takes place during the annual meeting of ECOSOC in July, held alternately in New York and Geneva. Its objective is to “Assess progress made towards the implementation of the goals and targets agreed at the major UN conferences and summits which constitute the UN Development Agenda”. It consists of a thematic examination followed by several presentations by volunteer countries. In 2015, the theme of the Annual Ministerial Review was: “Managing the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the Sustainable Development Goals: what it will take”.

► In Geneva

Valérie Bichelmeier

Human Rights Council

In Geneva, MMM essentially works at the Human Rights Council, which meets in three sessions of several weeks every year. MMM participates in debates during these meetings, through written and oral statements.

In 2015

When the Annual Report of the Special Rapporteur on **the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation** was published, MMM highlighted the link between the right to water and unpaid family care work, and underlined how important it was to implement this basic right for **the health and the economic empowerment of women**. According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), women in sub-Saharan Africa spend around 40 billion hours yearly providing their families with water, the equivalent to a year’s worth of the total labour of the workforce in France! In rural areas, it is estimated that African women walk an average of 6 km daily to fetch water. This is time and energy that they cannot dedicate to activities which generate income. This situation keeps them in a state of poverty and economic dependence.

MMM took part in the 1st session of **intergovernmental working group on transnational corporations and other business enterprises with respect to human rights**. Established in 2014 under the aegis of the Human Rights Council, the mandate of this WG is to “elaborate an international legally binding instrument to regulate, in international human rights law, the activities of transnational corporations and other business enterprises”. MMM underlined the necessity for business enterprises to include obligations concerning work/family balance, non-discrimination for mothers and more generally the protection of people with family responsibilities (children, elderly, sick or disabled persons).

Human Rights Room at the Palais des Nations in Geneva



© UN Photo / Jean-Marc Ferré

The **HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL (HRC)**, was created in 2006 by the UN General Assembly, with the mandate to address situations of human rights violations, and issue recommendations. The HRC also oversees the **Universal Periodic Review (UPR)**, which evaluates the situation of human rights in each of the 193 UN member States, as well as the mechanism of **Special Procedures**, which address situations specific to countries (currently 14) or at global thematic human rights issues (38) such as extreme poverty, the right to water and sanitation, discrimination against women, the right to food, etc.





The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) is a review mechanism of the Human Rights Council, whose ultimate goal is the improvement of the human rights situation in each of the 193 UN Member States. It is a state-driven cooperative periodic review process of the human rights situation in a country. It provides the opportunity for each State under review to declare what actions they have taken to improve the human rights situations in their countries and to fulfil their human rights obligations. Each Member State can formulate recommendations to the State under review that aim to improve its human rights record. The human rights situation of the 193 UN member States is thus reviewed in a four and half year cycle. Established in 2007 with the Human Rights Council, the UPR is currently in its 2nd cycle.

- During the presentation of the Annual Report made by the **Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty** about the **increase of inequalities**, MMM appealed for the inclusion of **a gender perspective** in the making of policies aiming to reduce these inequalities. Discrimination, social and economic inequalities between men and women must indeed be addressed. The main challenges to meet this objective concern the implementation of pay equity, equal access to resources and the labour market, reducing and redistributing unpaid family care work.
- As in 2014, MMM continued its commitment for **a right to peace** by co-signing several statements drafted by other NGOs about the guidelines for the Working Group. Set up in 2012 under the aegis of the Council, this group is charged with drafting a declaration on the right to peace. MMM upholds that peace awareness must be developed in the home from early childhood and that mothers have a major role in teaching how to prevent violence and promote the peaceful resolution of conflicts.
- Working with MMM Lebanon, MMM seized the opportunity of the **Universal Periodic Review (UPR)** of Lebanon to denounce the Lebanese Nationality Law, which prevents mothers married to foreign nationals to pass on their nationality to their children. This discriminatory law not only violates the United Nations Charter of equality between men and women as well as the Lebanese Constitution, it also brings about negative consequences for the children concerned : they become foreigners in their own country and therefore have restricted access to education, healthcare the labour market, etc.

Other Events

MMM contributed to the drafting of a general comment on article 7 of **the International Covenant on economic, social and cultural rights**, by requesting special treatment for unpaid family care work. MMM based its request on a resolution adopted in October 2013 by the International Conference of Labour Statisticians in the International Labour Organisation headquarters in Geneva, to widen the framework of "labour statistics" to include unpaid care work. This is an important step towards the recognition of this type of work.

The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights is an international treaty drafted by the UN in 1966 and currently ratified by 165 countries. It completes the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights by defining the economic, social and cultural rights of each human being, such as the right to work, the right to social security, the right to education, etc. **Article 7 of this Pact** has to do with the notion of **"just and favourable working conditions"**.

Invited to the **7th NGO Forum on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of Women** organised by OCAPROCE International (Organisation de la Communication en Afrique et de Promotion de la Coopération Economique), MMM spoke in the session on the economic empowerment of women, denouncing the motherhood penalty which affects working mothers in various ways: discrimination on hiring, lower pay, discrimination in promotion etc. This accumulation of discriminations leads to a significant pension gap upon retirement between men and women, reaching up to 40% in some European countries.





► In Vienna

Irina Palffy

In Vienna, MMM regularly contributes to the quarterly bulletin of the NGO Committee on the Family, with Irina Palffy representing our organisation. These bulletins are the perfect occasion to periodically share information on MMM activities and its main statements regarding all topics that relate to the family.

At the International Forum organised at the UN in Vienna to celebrate the 30th Anniversary of the NGO Family Committee, **MMM called upon policy makers to take better account of time use, which is such an important factor in the lives of families.**



Irina Palffy at the International Forum for the 30th anniversary of the NGO Committee on the Family, Vienna

2016 PERSPECTIVES FOR THE MMM UN DELEGATION

At the UN, work on the 2030 agenda continues, with negotiations on the 159 selected targets within the 17 global objectives for Sustainable Development, which still have to be finalised. The reviewing mechanisms and indicators for monitoring progress must likewise be defined.

Issues related to the critical area of Women and the Economy or rather Mothers and the Economy are central to the UN Delegation's work. In addition to unpaid family care work, the Delegation is planning to work further on the topic of the discrimination and penalties related to motherhood which mothers face in the workplace. It is necessary to pass from an overview to concrete policy recommendations, with best practices to improve the situation of mothers worldwide, to facilitate work/family balance and to recognize and promote their contribution to their society at family, social and economic level.

Lastly, MMM has regularly followed the works of other UN bodies in Geneva, notably the **International Labour Organisation – ILO**, which recently highlighted the various discriminations mothers experience in the workplace, and also the **World Health Organisation - WHO** (maternal and child health, nutrition, the prevention of obesity and non-communicable diseases, etc.). MMM is aiming to strengthen relations with these two institutions, focussing on relevant issues of concern.



MMM Representation at UNESCO

Gabrielle de Milleville
and Pauline Ambrogi



UNESCO is one of the 15 **specialised agencies** of the UN (along with ILO, FAO, WHO, IMF or World Bank...). According to the UN Charter, they are autonomous intergovernmental organisations and they have their own budget, secretariat and executive and legislative councils, as well as their own membership conditions. They collaborate with the UN and with each other at intergovernmental level, thanks to ECOSOC, to which they report regularly. **MMM benefits from an official partnership with UNESCO, holding consultative status.**

How MMM WORKS AT UNESCO

MMM participates in UNESCO's General Conference and the International NGO Conference, and is involved in the preparation as well as the follow-up of forums and days organised in partnership with the Secretariat of UNESCO and the NGO Liaison Committee, in order to campaign for mothers on the international scene, notably in the field of education.

Moreover, MMM collaborates closely with its member associations by making their actions known in speeches or written statements, and by assisting them in the implementation of projects that correspond to UNESCO programmes.

MMM was born at UNESCO!

In 1947, the French association, the Civic and Social Union of Women, organised an international congress at UNESCO on "Mothers build human progress". The delegates unanimously agreed to found MMM and adopt the Mothers' Charter, which became the founding text for their future activities.

« IN LONDON, 65 YEARS AGO, UNESCO'S MISSION WAS DEFINED AS THAT OF BUILDING PEACE THROUGH COOPERATION IN EDUCATION, SCIENCE, CULTURE, COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION. [...] AS WE CONSIDER THE CHALLENGES OF GLOBAL GOVERNANCE IN THE 21ST CENTURY, THIS MISSION HAS NEVER BEEN SO RELEVANT. »
IRINA BOKOVA, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF UNESCO



KISANY is a project of *En Avant les Enfants* – EALE, an MMM member association which works in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Its general mission is to support and empower children affected by conflict, by supporting their reinsertion into their families, and in their social and economic environment with education and job training. KISANY offers a professional training in sewing and embroidery to young women who create high-quality textiles, which are then sold in Europe.

“KISANY believes that giving a woman the means to take her life in hand, is giving her family, her community and her country a chance”
www.kisany.com

MMM WORK AT UNESCO IN 2015

Forum on the Role of Women in Fighting Poverty

The NGO Liaison Committee and several NGOs, including MMM, organized a Forum on the Role of Women in Fighting Poverty at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris in June 2015. The MMM President spoke on the day dedicated to the theme “Women’s empowerment, a major asset in the fight against poverty”, this theme being closely correlated to MMM’s mission and work.

Anne Claire de Liedekerke recalled that **women are more affected by poverty than men, but that they are often the first agents of life-support systems and change.** Mothers’ unpaid family care work is vital for their family and community, but it also represents an important contribution to the world economy. This indispensable invisible work generates much feminine poverty, but it is neither recognised nor included in national accounting.

A film on Kisany was also projected that day, showing a fine example of empowerment of women.

The General UNESCO Conference

The Incheon Declaration was adopted during the World Education Forum (WEF 2015), which was held in Incheon in South Korea in May 2015. Recognising education as a major driving force for development, this declaration states the commitment of the education community at international level towards “**Education 2030**”, **Goal n°4** of the Sustainable Development Agenda for 2030. **The Education 2030 Framework for Action**, describes the means of achieving commitments which were taken at national, regional and global level at Incheon. Aiming to mobilise all the countries and partners about this SDG on education and its associated targets, the framework proposes procedures for implementation, coordination and financing.

Following the unanimous adoption of the Incheon Declaration and 2030 framework for Action by member States, MMM spoke at the Education Commission during the 38th General UNESCO Conference, highlighting the importance of families for the realization of the objectives of the Declaration, and underlining the importance of their role as major stakeholders. MMM is delighted that the family is specifically named and considered a vital partner for education in this Action Framework.



EXTRACTS OF THE INCHEON
FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION:

«TO BEGIN WITH, PARTICIPATION MUST INVOLVE FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES TO REINFORCE AND GUARANTEE THE GOOD GOVERNANCE OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION.»

THE INCHEON FRAMEWORK ALSO CALLS FOR «SUPPORTING FAMILIES AS THE FIRST PROTECTORS AND EDUCATORS OF THEIR CHILDREN.»

Projects about access to water in the Ivory Coast

MMM continues its collaboration with AJAD, the RONUCI network and the government of the Ivory Coast.

UNESCO is the only UN agency that has created National Commissions with its member States as direct links between them and civil society. There are currently 198 National Commissions, which form a truly worldwide family. Established by their respective governments, National Commissions operate on a permanent basis, for the purpose of linking the work of UNESCO with that of national governmental and non-governmental bodies competent in issues such as education, sciences, culture and communication.



The exemplary partnership established in 2014 with the MMM member association, Aide à la Jeunesse Africaine Défavorisée - AJAD, based in the Ivory Coast, operates in this framework. Following the Yamoussoukro Forum on Access to Water organized that year by the UNESCO and the Ivory Coast government, AJAD president, Mr. Bolly Kouassi, created the NGO-UNESCO network of the Ivory Coast (RONUCI) and proposed a strategic plan for achieving the objectives of this Forum.

UNESCO headquarters in Paris





MMM and other NGOs partnering with UNESCO decided to undertake 2 projects relating to water in Africa with the support of the MMM/AJAD association in the Ivory Coast : the training of hydrologists and water technicians on one hand and educating about the safe use of water on the other hand. In parallel to the 38th General UNESCO Conference, MMM and these other NGOs met the Ivory Coast Minister for Education for this purpose. She confirmed that her government would support both projects.

In the framework of local RONUCCI projects, a number of students will be trained at the 2iE Hydrology Institute in Burkina Faso for the maintenance of water wells and to develop sanitation in the villages. The project on education for the safe use of water also includes a communication section to raise awareness among the populations and mothers more specifically, as they often are responsible for managing water supplies. Another part focuses on the training of school and village communities.

AJAD is working on these 2 projects in collaboration with the Ivory Coast government, the UNESCO Bureau and the National Commission of the Ivory Coast. AJAD is developing village networks of mothers to ensure effective action and an awareness-raising campaign, which also enables AJAD to tell them about MMM missions and activities.



Meeting with Ms. Kandia Camara, Ivory Coast Minister for Education, at UNESCO in Paris



COP21 stands for the 21st Conference of Parties (hence the name COP21) to the UN Convention Framework on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Every year, the participants meet at this Conference and agree on ways to limit global warming and its undesirable effects. COP21 was held in December 2015 in Paris. 195 states met and ratified the Paris international agreement, to avoid global warming beyond 1.5 to 2° by 2100.

MMM AT COP21

To address the concerns of many of its members, MMM took part in the online consultation organised by the NGO Liaison Committee. MMM also facilitated the NGO Action Day Against Climate Change on 6th October 2015 : many experts and 70 NGO representatives from 26 countries met to find common positions and discuss concrete commitments towards this global challenge.

MMM made a large contribution to the drafting of the declaration of the NGOs partnering with UNESCO, which was sent to the stakeholders of the COP21 conference. This declaration insisted on the important role of parents in educating their children about sustainable development. It also asserted that data should systematically be sex-disaggregated and include gender sensitive indicators : such data is indispensable for the drafting of policies to meet the basic needs of women and their families in terms of food, hygiene, and access to drinking water. This NGO declaration also mentioned how important it is to include parents in the decision-making processes for climate change.

Mothers and Climate Change

The Group of Intergovernmental Experts on Climate (GIEC) demonstrated that the impact of climate change on individuals varies according to gender, age and social environment, and that poor populations are likely to be most affected.

Women and girls are included in these vulnerable populations and amongst these, **mothers are most concerned: they are most often responsible for the production of food, the health and nutrition of their family and for managing natural resources. However, women are not only victims but also agents for change with specific knowledge and skills.** To be effective, climate change policies must encourage and request their participation and leadership skills in the planning and decision-making processes.

"WOMEN PLAY A CRUCIAL ROLE IN ALL SOCIETIES; IT IS ESSENTIAL FOR THEM TO BE TOTALLY INVOLVED IN AN EDUCATION PROCESS ALSO BASED ON THEIR KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCES, TO ENABLE THEM TO BECOME ACTING AGENTS IN THEIR COMMUNITIES. WOMEN HAVE A KEY ROLE IN MANAGING ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT; THEIR FULL PARTICIPATION AT ALL ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL LEVELS THEREFORE IS VITAL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT."
Extract of the Declaration of the NGO Action Day Against Climate Change.



Olalla Michelena,
Secretary General of
the MMM European
Delegation

MMM European Delegation

EUROPEAN TEAM IN BRUSSELS: OLALLA MICHELENA, PALOMA ALONSO, PIETER BAETEN, CATHERINE COUPLAN, MARIE CLAUDE HAYOIT DE TERMICOURT, ANNE MICHELLE DE MATHELIN, JOHANNA SCHIMA, VÉRONIQUE DE VAUMAS, LAETITIA WOLKONSKY.

How MMM WORKS WITH THE EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS

The European Union adopts legislative and non-legislative initiatives that have a direct impact on the lives of European citizens. The EU also plays an important role at international level, notably for the protection of Human Rights and is an important partner of the United Nations and the biggest donor for development aid.

In this context, the MMM European Delegation focuses on supporting and empowering mothers and highlighting how their contribution at social and economic levels matters for Europe's future development. The Delegation works to influence European policies and legislation to bring about positive changes in the lives of mothers, which will in turn have a positive impact on their children, family and the whole of society. MMM aims to support mothers and help them develop their independence. MMM likewise acknowledges the important role of fathers, and recommends measures to support this role and to implement a better sharing of family responsibilities and domestic work. The recognition and support of fatherhood and motherhood by European policies are vital for gender equality in the family and in the workplace.



MMM European delegation team members with MMM Belgium team members. The Delegation helped with the creation of MMM Belgium.



MMM ACTIONS AT THE EUROPEAN UNION

Mothers continue to voice their worries about the challenges they face to balance their commitments at work and in the home.

Enabling mothers to better reconcile work and family life is therefore a key priority for the MMM European Delegation.

The results of the survey **"WHAT MATTERS TO MOTHERS IN EUROPE"** conducted in 2011 with the participation of 12,000 mothers across Europe still guide the Delegation's advocacy work: mothers expressed the lack of recognition, of time for their family and of real choices in terms of work-family balance.

Reconciling commitments in the family and the workplace: how the Delegation works in the framework of European directives

The Maternity Leave Directive

The jumble of maternity leaves in Europe

Rules on maternity leave vary from one country to another. In some countries such as Germany, Austria, Spain, and Greece, this right is reserved to employees; in others (Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Hungary, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia), all working women have access to maternity leave. Some countries extend this right conditionally to all their residents (in Bulgaria, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Malta, Portugal, Romania, United Kingdom, Slovakia, and Sweden). Only 6 countries grant maternity leave for the adoption of a child (France, UK, Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, and Ireland).

Source: Le Monde diplomatique, January 2016



Mothers supporting the Maternity Leave Directive at the European Parliament.

The 'European Reconciliation Package (ERP): a collection of best practices in Europe for work-family reconciliation

The ERP was the outcome of the campaign entitled "2014, the year of reconciliation of work and family life in Europe", coordinated by the Confederations of Family organizations in the EU (COFACE). MMM made a large contribution to the drafting of this document, which brings together examples of best practices collected from various European countries. Throughout 2015, the MMM Delegation promoted the ERP and its recommendations of practical solutions for the support of families to improve the quality of life of mothers and other family members.



A proposal to amend the Maternity Leave Directive was submitted in 2008, mainly for the purpose of extending the minimum period of paid maternity leave from 14 to 18 weeks. It was adopted in 2010 by the European Parliament but blocked by the Council of the EU and then put back on the agenda by the Commission in 2014. Faced with fruitless negotiations, the Commission finally decided to withdraw its proposal to amend the maternity leave directive in July 2015.

However, confronted with the protest of NGOs including MMM, the Commission committed to launch a new and broader initiative about the reconciliation of work and family life. This initiative could have a significant impact on the lives of mothers who have to face this major challenge.



In August 2015, the Commission published a roadmap called: 'A new start to address the challenges of work-life balance faced by working families'. The objective of this new initiative is to modernize and adapt the current EU legal and policy framework to allow working parents with children or those with dependent relatives to better balance caring and professional responsibilities.

It is in this context that the MMM European Delegation participated in a vast public consultation launched by the Commission in November 2015, on relevant measures to put in place. MMM particularly advocated the integration of the **Right to Request flexible working conditions, such as it exists in the United Kingdom.**

As regards working conditions, situations in EU countries are very diverse. Flexible working hours are quite widespread in Denmark or Sweden, where they are accessible to over 60% of men and women. They are rarely implemented in EU southern countries and in the new member states of Eastern Europe.

#DeliverNow #theFinalPush

These hashtags were used by civil society to mobilise stakeholders about the maternity directive on social networks, and to encourage the Council to resume negotiations on this issue. MMM joined the European Women's Lobby, the Social Platform and other NGOs to launch an online petition and send letters to the ministers of the countries opposing the negotiations. MMM also sent a letter to Mr Timmermans, 1st Vice-President of the European Commission, asking him to save the Maternity Leave Directive.

MMM hopes that flexible working conditions and taking into account family responsibilities will help carers, particularly mothers, to return to or stay in the labour market. Flexibility is not only family-friendly ; it favours higher business productivity and talent retention.



The Example of the United Kingdom: the "Right to Request Flexible Working"

In the UK, every employee has the statutory right to request flexible working conditions after 26 weeks employment service. The "Right to Request" covers: Flexi-time, Home working or teleworking, Job sharing, Part-time working, Term-time working, Shift-swapping or self-rostering, Staggered hours, Compressed hours, Annualised hours.

The employer is obliged to duly consider the request and any refusal must be based on the business reasons explicitly defined by this law. The Right to Request Flexible Working is particularly welcome for parents who wish to commit themselves more to their family responsibilities, to manage unforeseen problems, and to be more present in the lives of their children. Besides families, it appeals to the young generation of employees, balking at the idea of staying in an office all day, to older people who prefer to work fewer hours rather than confront an abrupt retirement... Flexible working conditions meet a real social need.

After its successful implementation for parents with caring responsibilities in 2003, the Right to Request was extended to all employees in 2014. The Netherlands recently started to implement a similar law allowing employees to request fewer working hours, a change of working hours or place of work. Another draft law with similar provisions is being discussed in the United States.

MMM is convinced of the benefits of such arrangements and advocates implementation in other countries, starting with European countries.

www.gov.uk/flexible-working and the employment arbitration service www.acas.co.uk/flexibleworking



MMM recommendations at European level

- Promoting flexible working conditions for women and men (the Right to Request) to ensure better work-family balance
- Extending paid parental leave to give parents more family time with their children
- Including unpaid family care work in pension calculations
- Recognising and evaluating informal skills acquired by performing unpaid family care work to enable an easier re-entry into the labour market after a career break
- Reducing VAT for early childhood products and services
- Conducting accurate time use studies to measure the amount of unpaid family care work, how it is shared between men and women and how this evolves over time
- Providing a financial evaluation of unpaid family care work to show its importance in supporting the paid economy and establish its contribution to the GDP

Working Time Directive

MMM took the opportunity of the public consultation on the review of the working time Directive to plead once again for family/work reconciliation and for legislation allowing employees to request more flexible working conditions. The current Directive gives flexibility to employers, but not to employees.

Strategy for Gender Equality 2016-2020

In the public consultation launched in June 2015, MMM underlined the importance for gender equality of policies reconciling life in the family and in the workplace, and the urgency of promoting flexible working conditions : currently, no initiatives at all are being taken at European level. This consultation was a follow up to a Forum in April 2015 focusing on the same topic, where MMM had run a workshop on how to take motherhood into account in the workplace.

Directive on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women in social security

During a consultation in December 2015 on the implementation of this principle, MMM underlined **the penalties mothers suffer in the calculation of their pensions**. They often have to interrupt their careers and reduce their working hours because of their family responsibilities. When these combine with the pay gap between men and women, the accumulation leads to a very significant difference in pension between men and women. Some women do not even manage to attain the minimum conditions for access to a pension.

MMM supports free choice, so that those parents who wish can look after their children at home. In the current demographic situation, it is important that society as a whole should be concerned about finding solutions to calm the frequent tensions between the demands of paid work and unpaid family care work.

MMM was also regularly invited to various conferences, which are ideal opportunities for raising awareness on the challenges parents face and to present MMM recommendations for a better work-family balance.

- Conference organised in February 2015 at the EU parliament by the Christian Policy Foundation for Europe and the Member of the European Parliament (MEP) Arne Gericke on the theme "Towards a European Family Strategy"
- Conference in November 2015 in Luxembourg hosted by the European Parents Association- EPA



PARENTAL LEAVE - THE ROLE OF FATHERS

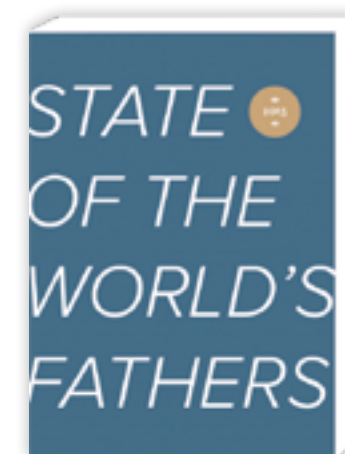
"State of the World's Fathers"

Since 1981, UNICEF publishes an annual report on the situation of children in the world, "State of the World's Children". Save the Children has been publishing an annual report on mothers, "State of the World's Mothers" for many years, the last edition of which shows important disparities in mothers' health in different parts of the world.

On the same line, MenCare, a global campaign to promote fatherhood, launched the first report "State of the World's Fathers" in June 2015. Based on hundreds of studies in all countries with available data, this report analyses the role of fathers relating to 4 main areas:

- Men's caregiving and sharing domestic work
- Maternal and child health, sexual and reproductive health
- Violence towards women and children
- Child development

MenCare
A GLOBAL FATHERHOOD CAMPAIGN



The main conclusions indicate that:

- Fathers with close connections to their children live longer, have fewer health problems, are more productive and are generally happier
- Fathers matter deeply to the development of their children, and involving them is necessary for greater gender equality
- A paid parental leave has the potential of increasing the participation of men in care work
- It is urgent to make further studies on the benefits of paternity for men, women and children so that appropriate measures may be introduced



MMM Team members in front of the European Parliament

"MMM WELCOMES THE REPORT 'STATE OF THE WORLD'S FATHERS' AS A MAJOR STEP TOWARDS THE RECOGNITION OF UNPAID FAMILY CARE WORK, WHICH IS USUALLY CARRIED OUT BY MOTHERS. GENDER EQUALITY WILL NEVER BE ACHIEVED AS LONG AS THIS WORK AND THE RESPONSIBILITIES THAT GO WITH IT ARE NOT SHARED, VALUED AND RECOGNISED AS BEING AN ESSENTIAL CONTRIBUTION BY MOTHERS AND FATHERS TO SOCIETY."

*Anne-Claire de Liedekerke,
MMM President.*



Presentation of the report State of the World's Fathers at the European Parliament

Being convinced of the essential and complementary role of fathers and mothers in the family and in society, MMM wished to contribute to the dissemination of the report. The MMM European Delegation co-organised a round table with the group of Socialists & Democrats to present this report to the European Parliament.

MMM favours flexible and paid parental leave, accessible to both mothers and fathers till the children are 18 years old, which could be part time or spread out over the period according to family needs.

Mothers and the prevention of obesity

The World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates that there are around 600 million obese adults and near to 2 billion people overweight, including 42 million obese or overweight children under 5 years of age. WHO experts foresee a severe aggravation of this problem by 2030.

Mothers have a crucial role to play in the prevention of obesity. The MMM European Delegation decided to make this issue one of its priorities.

MMM continued to publicise the results of the European DORIAN project, and to promote a healthy lifestyle for mothers and their children through several events. In this framework, MMM works jointly with the European Association for the Study of Obesity (EASO) to raise awareness about the negative impact of maternal obesity during pregnancy.

The MMM European Delegation has also been working in close collaboration with MMM Belgium to raise awareness among mothers themselves about this issue.



MMM has been following the work of WHO on this topic and participated in a consultation on the preliminary version of the report developed by the **WHO Commission on Ending Childhood Obesity**. The report suggested a whole series of preventive measures against the growing issue of overweight and obese young children. However, regretting that the report does not include parents among the major stakeholders to fight this epidemic, MMM has made a statement to the effect that parents play a crucial role in preventing this problem.

THE MMM EUROPEAN DELEGATION PLANS FOR 2016

One major objective for the Delegation is to increase the number of European members in the MMM network to reinforce its legitimacy to represent European mothers and to facilitate its participation in platforms. Another priority is to be part of European research consortiums focusing on issues of maternal health or on the family.

MMM will continue to advocate in favour of reconciling work and family life, to keep a close watch on the legislative work at European level and to make constructive proposals concerning the current directives which have been mentioned in this report. Likewise, MMM will work on the EU directives which are likely to be reviewed such as the directive on parental leave, the directive on gender equality in the workplace and the directive on working time.

The Delegation also plans to focus on the issue of maternal health and the prevention of obesity. In March 2016, MMM is organising a conference in Brussels on the topic of "Mothers and Health" to promote good practices which help mothers to be actors of their own health and their children's health.

DORIAN (Developmental Origins of Healthy and Unhealthy Ageing)

The MMM European Delegation was selected in 2012 to participate in a research project called DORIAN (2012-2014), funded by the 7th Research framework programme of the European Union. This project, focused on the impact of maternal obesity, aimed to identify the necessary measures for improving health and ensuring good quality of life, and to evaluate if maternal obesity can independently lead to illness (such as cardiovascular diseases, diabetes) and to premature ageing (cognitive decline and age frailty).

www.dorian-fp7.eu





MMM Communications

To fulfil its mission, MMM informs decision-makers and the general public about the importance of the role of mothers in order to stimulate research and the implementation of conditions that allow them to assume, with fathers, their responsibility for teaching life's lessons, which are essential for their children and for society.

Reinforcing external communication and increasing visibility is an on-going priority.



- In 2015, MMM was increasingly present on social media, notably **Twitter**. A new **Facebook page** was also created for **MMM Belgium**, as well as an **MMM YouTube channel**, which groups presentations made by MMM members as well as a playlist of interesting videos for mothers.
- The **website portal** www.makemothersmatter.org continues to develop and incorporates the new **bilingual Franco-Flemish website** for MMM Belgium.



- **Mothers Far and Wide**, the MMM Newsletter is published twice a year; regular **news-flashes** are also a preferred means of communication targeting all the MMM contacts and supporters, to update a network which is expanding year after year.

2016 PROJECTS

An in-depth evaluation of the external communication, begun in 2015, will be continued in 2016. The MMM teams are in particular refining the design of a "messaging pack" which is intended to be a basis for advocacy work as well as a support for press releases.

It is planned to modernise and redesign the Make Mothers Matter portal website. Our websites must be easier to access from mobile platforms and need to benefit from new technologies, so that we can put across our messages and enable our advocacy work more efficiently. The creation of a page on the social-professional network, LinkedIn, will help give MMM more visibility, develop a wider network of contacts and strengthen the MMM teams. A database project has also been launched to facilitate more precisely targeted communications.

Financial Reports

Make Mothers Matter's income in 2015 was 15,189 €, of which: member subscriptions (3,609 €), cash and in-kind donations (11,202 €), and financial products (380 €).

Total expenses were 16,335 € of which : rent and maintenance of office premises (9,939 €), communications and publications (3,296 €), telecommunications (725 €), travel expenses (875 €) and other costs (1,500 €).



The **MMM European Delegation** is funded independently from MMM. In 2015, its income was 58,794.56 €, and mostly results from the final payment for the European Dorian Project (2,937.96 €), and donations to cover the expense of a salary for the Secretary General (55,700 €), spread over 2014-2015-2016. The remaining 156.60 € come from the interest on a savings account.

The expenses of 56,380.22 € are made up as follows: the salary of the Secretary General (the only person within MMM who is not a volunteer) including a 3 months' maternity leave (46,551 €), travel expenses to go to conferences, seminars and for MMM Mothers' Workshop training sessions (835.20 €), paying back monies owed to MMM Belgium (7,576.45 €), the remainder consisting of other costs and administrative expenses (1,417.57 €).

Here, we would like to thank our donors for their generosity and trust.



PROJECTS FOR 2016

For nearly 70 years, MMM has always relied exclusively on volunteers whose work and commitment is very professional. But volunteers are more and more difficult to recruit and to replace when they leave.

This is why MMM would like to increase the number of paid staff, as securing positions with a salary would allow us to engage in longer-term activities with confidence.

To this end, one of MMM priorities for the present and near future is to identify new funding resources.

MMM is looking for **collaborations with financial partners**: institutions, in particular the European Union, as well as foundations and companies.

MMM also intends to develop a **crowdfunding** strategy; this type of participative funding, could raise the interest of a great number of people to fund a project, including mothers themselves.



Most of the MMM team members gathered in Brussels in March 2015, for a brainstorming on the implementation of MMM's mission: The MMM European Delegation and MMM Belgium hosted the General Secretariat team, MMM representatives to UNESCO, the MMM UN Delegation and members of MMM France.

Roland Vaxelaire - whom we wish to thank for his generosity, his skills and his support to MMM - kindly conducted the seminar using the collective intelligence method.

If you would like to support MMM activities, your donation would be very welcome:

IBAN FR 76 3000 4003 6400 0100 4629 414
SWIFT BNPAFRPPPAK

The MMM Network

THE « NATIONAL MMMs »

2015 saw the creation of MMM Belgium, which like MMM France, MMM England and MMM Lebanon, is a Make Mothers Matter association at national level.

- The aims of MMM National Associations:
- Federate local associations with a similar mission to MMM
 - Implement grass-roots activities to benefit mothers, in particular the MMM Mothers' Workshops using the original technique developed by MMM France
 - Actively present the concerns of mothers to national and regional authorities (advocacy)

MMM Belgium – New MMM National Association

MMM Belgium was set up officially in March 2015.



From left to right: Laurence Bosteels-Vanden Abeele, MMM Belgium President, with Caroline Coomans, Nathalie Berg, and Alexandra Voortman.

In this first year of its existence, the priority of this new MMM entity was to get itself known and start some grass-roots projects, in particular the MMM Mothers' Workshops. MMM Belgium has spent a lot of time and energy seeking funding and submitting proposals. Particular attention was paid to public relations. Including advocacy, all the activities have been done alongside the MMM European Delegation and the MMM President, who is also based in Brussels.

Public Relations

Following a press release on the occasion of Mother's Day in May, the launch of MMM Belgium was published in several media outlets in Belgium. The website mmm-belgium.org was set up and integrated with the main MMM website. The Facebook page is attracting a growing network of "fans". MMM Belgium works in both French and Flemish.

MMM Belgium worked alongside the MMM European Delegation on "Job Day" at the Law Faculty in the University of Louvain-La-Neuve: an information day to enable students to meet professionals or to find an internship. It was also the occasion to make them aware of the problems facing mothers and of MMM's work!



The activities and network of MMM Belgium were the subject of a presentation during a lunch in November at the Château de Sainte Anne (Auderghem) and of a conference in Brabant Wallon in December.

On December 6, the festival of Saint Nicolas, MMM was invited to the television broadcast "For or Against" to take part in a debate about toys: "Do toys lead to sexist tendencies?". The MMM Belgium President defended a child's free choice, and the necessity for parents to buy toys without prejudices and without giving in to the influence of marketing.



Advocacy

MMM Belgium has been involved in the campaign launched by the MMM European Delegation on the maternity leave directive. The association sent a letter to Belgian politicians, both federal and regional, concerned by health and mothers, which resonated with several ministers.

MMM Belgium helped with the dissemination of the results of the EU research project DORIAN on the negative impact on children of their mother's obesity during pregnancy. At the international conference "Tackling Childhood obesity through prevention and partnership" in April in Brussels, it was its President who presented this project and its results. She also took part in the interview with Gaël de Vaumas on this subject - see www.acteursdesanté.fr in October.

MMM Mothers' Workshops

With the support of MMM France, training was launched in 2014 for Workshop Facilitators. In March 2015, MMM Belgium began by organising a series of 4 Workshops in a centre in Brussels, which proved very beneficial to the participants, who were happy to share their 'tricks of the trade' in bringing up their children. This first series of Workshops was followed by the training of three more facilitators by Alix de Villiers of MMM France.



Mothers' Workshop in Brussels

Fundraising for Grassroots Projects

In June 2015, MMM Belgium responded to a call for proposals from the Fond Pauvreté de la Fondation Roi Baudouin (King Baudouin Foundation for Poverty), which supports innovative projects run by small associations to fight poverty in Belgium. The aim of the project submitted by MMM Belgium is to facilitate mothers returning to employment. This project was accepted and will receive financial support of 4,000 € starting in 2016.

"Let's talk about being a mother even when looking for employment"
- Workshop proposal for mothers submitted to the Foundation

Women who are mothers act like « managers »: they know how to organise, have learned how to manage timetables, the activities of each family member, logistics and a budget. They have developed the inter-personal skills of paying attention and giving respect; they have tried to help each of their children realise their potential. Often, they have no idea that they have these skills and qualities acquired in the home – which could very easily be transferred to the workplace.

The aim of the proposed Workshops is to raise mothers' awareness of their 'know-how' which will help them gain confidence in themselves and recognise the value of these skills for finding employment.



MMM team competing at the “Warmathon” organized during *Music for Life*

MMM Belgium was selected to take part in **Music for Life**, a week of activities of solidarity organised just before Christmas by the Flemish radio station, Studio Brussel. In this context, MMM Belgium took part in “Warmathon” in Leuven: 5 adults and 9 children ran in the name of MMM Belgium! This week of solidarity raised 5 million euros, which will be shared between the 1045 associations chosen by listeners – result expected in 2016.

In a similar theme, MMM Belgium submitted a project in the context of a call for donations to reduce poverty in early life (**“Viva for Life”** launched before Christmas by VivaCité, a local radio channel in Charleroi). The project presented by MMM Belgium is based on the successful work of English MMM member association “Volunteering Matters”: some mothers are completely overwhelmed and discouraged and let things slip until Social Services have to intervene. A friendly volunteer spends time with the family every week, suggesting simple and practical ways to do everyday tasks which lead to such an improvement in the quality of life that the family can manage without the intervention of Social Services.

MMM Belgium would like to work in collaboration with two MMM member associations “Chant d’Oiseau” and “Les Trois Pommiers” which home mothers in difficulty. MMM Belgium would get involved at the moment these mothers leave the homes to set up on their own and need support. Volunteers would be there to help them make the transition, including help with their children’s schooling. More than 3 million euros was collected by VivaCité for projects which will be chosen in February 2016.

When former MMM member association **Liga voor het Kind** was wound up in November, the balance of their funds was offered to MMM Belgium – a big thank you to its founder and president, Mia Vanderhasselt.

Thanks to its dynamic activities, as well as generous donors and the support of many Belgian mothers, MMM Belgium has received over 2,000 € in donations, which has enabled it to develop its network, which, by the end of 2015 had more than 400 members!

Plans for 2016

The first priority for MMM Belgium in 2016 is to work on the MMM Mothers’ Workshops, by following up the close links already forged with other associations and districts in Brussels. As a start on the project chosen by the King Baudouin Foundation for Poverty – evaluating the skills mothers learn in the home, we are organising a week-long course in March 2016 to train new facilitators for these specific Workshops, which we hope to launch during this year.

In its advocacy work, MMM Belgium aims to follow the pension reforms currently taking place in Belgium and implement a joint project with Parents Actifs @ Home on this subject. MMM Belgium will continue to publicise in Belgium the results of the DORIAN study and plans to become active in preventing child obesity by supporting the involvement of mothers in this campaign.

Finally, MMM Belgium plans to continue to extend its network of mothers, not only by the number of its members but also by federating other Belgian associations which work with and for mothers. Working together and networking will ensure that the voice of Belgian mothers is heard by the general public and politicians.

www.mmm-belgium.org

MMM Belgium invited by Liga voor het Kind in Ghent





MMM ENGLAND

MMM England has been working for some years with various Muslim groups which actively support young people at risk of recruitment to violent extremism or wish to offer young Muslim girls an insight into a more independent way of life. For example, in the context of the latter, MMM England accompanied Lotus Life on an expedition in the Lake District in October 2015, where the main group climbed the high path of Cat Bells, while a small group took the lower path above Derwentwater. It was a fruitful moment to exchange ideas and proved a happy end to an adventurous week in the mountains.

Lotus Life enables young women to experience activities not available to them in their communities in London, building their self-confidence, life-skills and sense of independence through a wide range of activities, such as leadership training, sport and various outdoor pursuits. Many of these young women become mothers and go on to share their outlook with their children and family members. MMM England remains convinced that it is mothers from different cultures and backgrounds working together who can build a cohesive society founded on understanding and respect for the differences which enrich our lives.

In pursuance of this aim, MMM England plans to develop the MMM Mothers' Workshop model for the UK and expand its team to achieve this.



Jill Donnelly of MMM England (on the left), with members of Lotus Life on their 'LakeDistrict Adventure'

MMM FRANCE

Marie-Laure des Brosses,
President of MMM France



Advocacy

MMM France has continued its work of representing mothers and parents to the authorities and politicians on 3 priority subjects:

- Work-Family Balance
- Family-friendly Policies
- Free choice for mothers concerning childcare.

MMM France campaigns for the right to Parental Leave

Considering it an intrusion into parents' own way of organising their life, MMM France took a position against the new legislation concerning parental leave, which obliges parents to share this leave.



„Stop the reforms against families! Watch it, President! I might have no teeth yet - but I can still bite!“

More than 15,000 parents protested on social media against the obligatory sharing of parental leave

MMM France's argument is based on the following facts:

- 80% of families will no longer be able, as was the case before, to prolong parental leave until a child is 3 years old. Families where both parents cannot take parental leave alternately will be limited to a maximum of two years' leave.
- Alongside this measure, the government had promised the creation of 275,000 new childcare places for those parents who were unable to take parental leave. However, the first results are alarming : by the end of 2014 less than 19% of the various childcare options promised for 2013 and 2014 had been put in place. With the increased pressure of shared parental leave, this means that there is likely to be a lack of 100,000 places for small children by 2017.
- Although gender-equality would seem to justify the obligatory sharing of parental leave, this will actually cause real problems for mothers, particularly those of more modest means (that is, those who could not pay for childcare if no free places were available).



MMM France team members

MMM France's advocacy work:

- Preparing dossiers with facts, figures and practical proposals
- Meeting as many politicians as possible at all levels (members of the National Assembly and the Senate and local councillors), and having a hearing in the two houses
- Informing journalists
- Working with other associations (Familles de France, Union des Familles en Europe, Union Nationale les Associations Familiales (UNAF), SOS les mamans, etc.); and highlighting in particular the work of French MMM member associations (Mercredi C papa, Enfance sans Drogue, etc.)
- Using social media to mobilise parents and politicians and to communicate on the reality of the situation facing parents all over France.

Results of the ViaVoice study (Le Figaro « Work and Family » 2015), 300 Human Resource executives of businesses with more than 50 employees were questioned:

- 81% said that work/family balance is a growing expectation among employees
- 58% said that the personal development of the employee should be taken into account
- 79% said that taking into account the needs of the employee leads to better performance for the company

Complete results of the study (in French) : <http://img.la-maison-bleue.fr/famille-et-entreprise-rapport-2015.pdf>

MMM France got involved against this proposal early on. More than 40,000 parents signed the petition of a mother against this shared leave. More than 15,000 parents went on Facebook about it and thanks to two mothers from MMM France who update week after week the page devoted to this topic, the protest continues despite the fact that the law has been passed. MMM France, in partnership with the Union des Familles en Europe, has registered an appeal against the text of this law. The legal procedure is taking its course and a judgement should be reached in 2016.

In October 2015 MMM France was invited to speak at a hearing in the Senate of the Commission of Social Affairs which deals with family budget issues for the Social Security. MMM France underlined the serious difficulties which parents might encounter in the course of this year in finding suitable childcare for their small children. At the same time, MMM France has been meeting with many politicians who are preparing policy proposals for the presidential elections in 2017, to make them aware of the challenge of encouraging diversity and free-choice for parents concerning childcare.

MMM France campaigns for free choice and childcare options diversity

Over the last few years all the efforts of successive governments have been directed towards day nurseries, which currently look after only 13% of children under 3. Nurseries are the most expensive kind of childcare for public money - and given the current state of public finances it will be impossible to offer places for every child.

MMM France campaigns for the development of all kinds of childcare to give families everywhere in France a real choice (parental leave, childminders, day-care centres, private and state nurseries, shared home childcare). It is particularly urgent to encourage the development and training of childminders, many of whom have reached retirement age : 7,000 places with childminders disappeared in 2014.

MMM France campaigns for flexible working conditions

In the UK, the 'Right to Request' was extended from 30 June 2014 so that every employee has the statutory right to request flexible working after 26 weeks employment service. The employer may refuse only if there is a defined business reason. (This is developed further in the section on the MMM European Delegation). MMM France systematically tells every politician they meet about the advantages of adopting the UK legislation. Interest in this option is growing among politicians at all levels.

MMM France campaigns for the right to chosen part-time work

The reform of June 2013 limited the possibilities of employment contracts of less than 24 hours per week. This has penalised a growing number of employees who can no longer find a part-time contract which suits their needs. This reform puts at risk parents who choose to do part-time work so that they can have time to manage their family responsibilities. MMM France keeps a Facebook page with information on this subject, and systematically tells every politician they meet about this difficulty.



MMM France – more and more a voice to be reckoned with

Given the urgency to gain weight for its campaigns on various topics, MMM France decided at the end of 2014 to make a real effort to develop its network of members, who crossed the threshold of 1,500 by the end of 2015. This policy will continue in 2016.

The growth of MMM France is bearing fruit: MMM France has become a credible actor on the scene who is listened to, as shown by the hearing in the Senate in November 2015, on the same footing as other big national associations such as Familles de France, Familles Rurales... Its well-argued, practical proposals have been particularly appreciated.

Grass-roots activities: MMM Mothers' Workshops and facilitator training

The technique of MMM France's Workshops can be applied to various different purposes and can be adapted according to the needs of the participants. Two main applications proved successful in 2015:

- Their use in a professional context (family and marriage guidance counsellors, psychotherapists, psychologists). Once trained, these facilitators adapt the Workshops, but always according to the MMM France guidelines which have proved so effective.
- The development of themed "bespoke" Workshops, jointly with other associations or local government services, for multi-cultural groups whose native language is not French. Despite this difficulty, the results are very positive, from the point of view of the partners and of the participants alike. A special relationship develops between them and with the facilitator, which enables a deeper discussion of the topics, forges social ties and gives mothers confidence in themselves.

Training Facilitators

In 2015, MMM France provided two training courses, one in Belgium, the other in Paris/Versailles. To make it easier to set up Workshops following their training and to maintain their long-term motivation, the participants are encouraged to work with an already existing association in their neighbourhood, or to set up a local team by training 2 or 3 more facilitators. For 2016, the challenge is to take this training to the provinces to meet the demand from all over France.



Alix de Villiers running a training session in Brussels

MMM Mothers' Workshops: bringing out the « tricks of the trade »

These workshops, designed by MMM France, are based on a positive facilitating model: in a structured discussion targeting a specific theme mothers share what they have found really works to improve the quality of everyday life in the family. The facilitator guides the discussion to bring out what we call the "tricks of the trade" which can be tried by every mother after the Workshop. Through this the participants recognise their own skills, the importance of their role as a mother and gain from the know-how and experience of the others...



A variation on the Workshops, le café des mamans (Mums Meet for Coffee), a small group of mothers meet up once a month to enjoy a coffee and some pleasant time together, where they share their tried and tested 'know-how' on a set theme such as:

- Faced with our children's questions, how should we answer? Can we tell them everything?
- Faced with terrorism, what do we tell our children? How do we keep them safe?

These meetings help mothers get out of their isolation and build neighbourhood networks. This chance to talk responds to a real need that many mothers have to confide and it builds trust between mothers.

MMM France Dinners and the Newsletter "Côté Mères"

Twice a year MMM France organises a dinner, either in Paris or Argenteuil (Val d'Oise), for around 60 mothers on themes linked to education and peace building - because these start in the family!

For 2015, the themes chosen were:

- *In the current atmosphere of gloom, how do we protect our family?*
- *Living together with our differences: that starts in the home!*



The uniqueness of these dinners is to bring together mothers from very different backgrounds and to enable them to spend a pleasant time chatting together. These dinners are run on the same basis as the Workshops: highlighting the role of mothers, giving them the chance to share with others their know-how and sending them home with ideas to try which have proved successful for other parents. Each table is led in a carefully prepared topic. At the end of the meal a spokesperson from each table shares with the other diners the outcome of their discussions.

The themes for these dinners are also discussed in the MMM France Newsletter « Côté Mère ». In 2015 hardcopy was abandoned for online-only publication. Four numbers appeared on the following themes:

- Children and screens
- How to remain positive in the family
- Living together with our differences
- How to give our children the desire to learn.

And Fathers?

Although MMM France's mission focuses on the social and family role of the mother, fathers are never far away! MMM France is always ready to mention fathers when it is relevant, in its advocacy work and in its work with mothers. Both parents are welcome in some of the thematic Workshops and dinners.

www.mmmfrance.org



MMM LEBANON

MMM Lebanon federates associations working in various parts of the country, whose activities are similar to those of MMM, such as improving the quality of life for mothers and children, advocating legislation to uphold the right to gender equality etc. These associations are represented by their President or other Board Members.

MMM Lebanon organises activities and events to help them expand their networks and gain influence in their respective communities to reduce the various forms of discrimination and violence towards women and children. MMM Lebanon members meet once a month to coordinate their activities.



The situation in Lebanon

The political unrest, the economic crisis and armed conflicts in Lebanon and in the neighbouring countries put a heavy strain on families. Mothers and children are the most vulnerable in this difficult context. Lebanon, a small country of 4 million inhabitants with few natural resources, is currently welcoming around 2 million Syrian refugees as well as hundreds of thousands of refugees from other countries like Palestine, Iraq, etc.

Lebanon is also undergoing a major political deadlock: there has been no President for over 18 months and the result is that all the legislative mechanisms and the functioning of the country are totally blocked.

Advocacy

MMM Lebanon encourages leaders and other stakeholders in society to recognise the contribution of mothers to economic and social development, and to better take into account their fundamental role for peace. The MMM Charter and the MMM ethos are indeed always present in all the initiatives that are taken. To this end, MMM Lebanon has organised meetings with Ministers and Members of Parliament, particularly with those who are women.

MMM Lebanon calls on political leaders to change the law and regulations to achieve the following objectives:

- Applying a civil code
- Allowing Lebanese women to pass on their nationality to their children
- Providing a pension and medical insurance for the elderly
- Extending maternity leave to 3 months
- Fighting against the poverty of mothers
- Lowering the voting age from 21 to 18 years old
- Introducing a quota for women in the government, parliament, local government and other public institutions
- Forbidding marriage for girls under 16
- Improving ecological and environmental issues, such as waste management and collection, and the functioning of other public services.

Organisations working with MMM Lebanon:

- The Council of Lebanese women, which groups together over 170 NGOs under its aegis over the whole of Lebanese territory
- The Association of Parents with Disabled Children
- Amnesty International Lebanon
- The Association of the Ladies of Charity (AIC) Lebanon
- The Committee of Lebanese Mothers
- The Lebanese movement for ecology
- The Saint Simon Foyer
- The al-Sadr Association
- The Civil Association for Saving Children in Lebanon
- Women's Auxiliary, Haigazian University
- The Providence Foyer
- The Lebanese Association of University Women

Actions of MMM Lebanon in 2015

In May 2015, MMM Lebanon held a conference in the UNESCO building in Beirut on the theme: "From War to Peace, how Violence affects Women and Families". Dr Fadia Kiwan, Director of the Political Science Department at St Joseph University was the guest speaker. She described how women and girls are the first victims of armed conflicts. These are generating social and political unrest and the rise of unemployment; they are impeding the schooling of women and girls in Lebanon and throughout the Arab world. Dr Kiwan called for new laws to fight violence against women. She also demanded that women contribute more actively to the decision-making processes at national level. A public debate followed the conference, led by MMM Lebanon President, Sana Sohl Raad, and Dr Kiwan.

Since July 2015, Beirut has been seriously affected by an on-going waste crisis, with very negative consequences on general health and the morale of families. Raising awareness about more responsible ecological behaviour, waste management and sorting has, therefore, been MMM Lebanon's priority in the past months. They have worked with certain district councils to teach families how to separate waste - and MMM Lebanon has noticed a rising awareness of this issue in families.

Nectar Nasr of MMM Lebanon, highlights that the political, economic and sanitary situation in the country makes life and the implementation of projects very difficult.



A Syrian Mother and her children, displaced in Lebanon

@ UN Photo // John Isaac

MMM NETWORK: NEW MEMBERS

In 2015, the following associations became members of Make Mothers Matter.

Femmes et Enfants en Détresse (Women and Children in Distress) - FED, Cameroon

Created in Cameroon in August 2005, "Femmes et Enfants en Détresse" (FED), is a solidarity association fighting poverty and working for the welfare of children and mothers who are the most vulnerable members of society.



Its activities are organized around three main concerns :

- Education: giving a framework and education to people in need to enable them to find employment
- Health: organising campaigns to raise awareness and free medical consultations in collaboration with a medical and surgical clinic
- Training in partnership with a professional centre to prevent youth unemployment

FED's first mission is to help women and children who face difficulties of any kind, whether financial, material, moral, passing or permanent.

The association prioritises giving financial help to young single mothers in distress and providing them with support during pregnancy and beyond. The association seeks training opportunities for these young mothers to enable them to become self-supporting and meet their children's needs.

The prevention of early pregnancies figures in the mission of several other MMM member associations. MMM is happy to welcome FED to its network and looks forward to the benefits of exchanging good practices and experiences.

www.asfed.org





Les Trois Pommiers (The Three Apple Trees), Belgium

The originality of *Les Trois Pommiers* project is that it brings together, in the same place, people of all age groups. Organising all kinds of activities open to everyone means that these different generations meet and get to appreciate each other. It was seeing the reaction of mothers alone undergoing family breakdown, which originally inspired this intergenerational approach to developing this special environment, where each person can rebuild their life.

This project aims to show that the age difference is a way of stimulating exchanges, a permanent means of education for everyone:

- For the younger generation, the project enables young mothers and their children to develop in a natural environment, which changes their perception of old-age and disability.
- For the older generation, the project creates many opportunities for contact and helps people break with the feeling of uselessness which is often felt by the elderly, or the middle-aged who have lost their confidence through a slight mental, physical or psychological disability. These people have the time to offer their full attention and advice to mothers and children in need of stability.

This open and original approach is bearing fruit : Les Trois Pommiers currently manages 139 centres in 3 districts of Brussels. This accommodation is considered not just as somewhere to live, but as a working tool to help people gain independence and a desire to be part of society. They shelter some 225 people of various age groups, with different cultural backgrounds and difficulties. They all benefit from very individualised support, which is more or less intensive, and adapted to their specific needs. Whenever possible, independence and taking responsibility for oneself are valued and encouraged. In all cases, acceptance, respect and a relationship based on help and trust is essential.

More specifically, the association welcomes 40 vulnerable mothers, either pregnant and/or accompanied by their children, on average for about a year. They benefit from intensive support - social, medical, educational, psychological and work-related - to enable them to be self-supporting and calmly take their place back in society.

The relation between MMM and Les Trois Pommiers started during a training session at an MMM Mothers' Workshop on "Let's talk about being a mother". Like MMM, Les Trois Pommiers is convinced of the importance of a mother's role in her family and in society for the positive development of children. Working on the mother-child bond is a fundamental part of supporting the families - most of them single parents.

Other associations in the MMM Network focus on this kind of work, such as la Maison de Tom Pouce (France), l'Aide à la Maternité (Mauritius), or le Chant d'Oiseau (Belgium) with which Les Trois Pommiers has a close collaboration in the Brussels area. These convergent interests encouraged Les Trois Pommiers to join MMM. We are delighted that Les Trois Pommiers will strengthen this area of expertise within the Network. MMM is happy to share this association's remarkable approach - a truly human and professional vision.

www.lestroispommiers.be

*"QUALITY OF LIFE
DEPENDS MAINLY
ON THE QUALITY OF
RELATIONSHIPS WITH
OTHER PEOPLE: BUILDING
UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN
PEOPLE OF DIFFERENT
AGE GROUPS; LIVING IN
AN ENVIRONMENT WHICH
IS NATURAL, FLEXIBLE,
WITHOUT LABELS; SEEING
OTHER PEOPLE'S
PROBLEMS, WHICH HELPS
YOU PUT YOUR OWN
PROBLEMS INTO
PERSPECTIVE - THESE ARE
KEY GUIDELINES FOR
THE TROIS POMMIERS
PROJECT."*

*ODETTE VERDICKT, FOUNDER
OF LES TROIS POMMIERS.*



Mame pentru Mame, Romania

Mame pentru Mame was founded by 5 Romanian mothers, who, having lived abroad, had access to practical information about how childbirth can be a wonderful experience rather than a traumatic event. Based on their own experience, they then decided to help women in Romania use safe and gentle birthing techniques while pushing for legislative changes in the system to help Romania end its sad history of traumatic childbirth policies.

In partnership with international institutions, Mame pentru Mame works with the Government and state and private medical institutions to promote a woman's right to non-traumatic childbirth, at the same time advocating better education and support for mothers.

Romania has made important steps to come to terms with the horrors of its recent history, but the moral degradation of maternity services remains to be solved. Childbirth is still considered and managed as a medicalised - and highly traumatic - process. Women are not properly informed about pregnancy and childbirth and even when they are, there is a total lack of adequate maternity services. The psycho-emotional support they need is lacking and midwifery is still severely undervalued.

Mame pentru Mame has also recommended the use of a birth plan, along with on-going education of the general public and the medical community, and obtained the adoption of a marketing code on maternal milk substitutes.

Mame pentru Mame's holistic approach brings changes by:

- Implementing Baby and Mother-friendly programmes in hospitals and maternity wards
- Developing trustworthy, complete and updated prenatal & postnatal education
- Promoting the right of mothers to have a person of their choice supporting them during childbirth

Advocacy work focuses on promoting natural birthing methods, breastfeeding, lobbying for legislation about maternal health, the completion of the midwife practise law and setting up a legal framework for safe childbirth at home.

In becoming an MMM member, Mame pentru Mame hopes to benefit from the expertise of other maternal health stakeholders and from the worldwide movement for gentle birth and improved maternity services.

www.mamepentrumame.ro

*«PRESSURE ULTIMATELY
COMES FROM THE
PREGNANT WOMEN
THEMSELVES WHO
REALIZE THAT THE BIRTH
OF A CHILD MUST NOT
ONLY BE MEDICALLY
SAFE, BUT SHOULD ALSO
BE A MEMORABLE AND
EMPOWERING EXPERIENCE,
WHICH BELONGS TO
WOMEN AND NOT TO
INSTITUTIONS.»*
*ANA MAITA, MAME PENTRU
MAME PRESIDENT*



« WOMEN, ISN'T IT
STRANGE THAT WHEN
THERE IS TALK ABOUT
EQUALITY, IT IS
ALWAYS FOR WOMEN?
IT TAKES TWO TO
REACH EQUALITY.
SO LET'S TALK
ABOUT MEN, TOO »
Extract of the Happy
Men Manifesto

MERCREDI-C-PAPA, FRANCE

The Mercredi-c-papa association gets men working on the challenges of gender equality in the workplace. It is convinced that the only way for women to access positions of higher responsibility in companies is by questioning social and cultural prejudices. These revolve, on the one hand, around a vision of male performance in the workplace, and on the other hand around the perception of a man's role in the family, as a father, husband and main "breadwinner".

Such questioning opens a way for men to better professional and personal life balance. Everyone knows about the 'glass ceiling' affecting women. What about the 'glass floor effect' on men, which often holds them back from attaining fulfilment in the sphere of their private and family life?

Mercredi-c-papa aims at forging a proactive role in the public debate on reaching a better balance between men and women in the workplace by putting forward innovative proposals and becoming the means of promoting new initiatives. The association is active in making its views known: articles and interviews, participation in conventions and panels, a blog, and training sessions. Mercredi-c-papa is most active in companies with its Happy Men project, which enables them to target a large number of men and to provide them with solutions. Several large business corporations are committed to this project.

Happy Men invites men to get involved by creating Happy Men circles in various environments, among friends, associations or in the workplace. Through man-to-man dialogue on the conditions necessary for a better balance between work and home commitments and on the managerial development which this approach entails, the members commit themselves to act on a specific point for more gender equality in their workplace.

MMM and Mercredi-c-papa have in common a resolutely positive vision of how to meet the challenges of family/workplace reconciliation, and their advocacy work on this issue complements one another. Both organisations gain a great deal from this collaboration which is being strengthened now that Mercredi-c-papa has become a member of the MMM network.

www.happymen.fr/decouvrir/mercredi-c-papa/



Antoine de Gabrielli,
mercredi-c-papa
President, attending the
meeting organised by
MMM at the European
Parliament for the
presentation of the
report « State of the
World's Fathers »



© UN Photo - Kay Muldoon (Mali)

MMM MEMBERS AROUND THE WORLD

AFRICA

Cameroon

Femmes et Enfants en Détresse (FED)
Mouvement Camerounais des Mères (MCM)

Democratic Republic of Congo

Association Congolaise d'Appui et de Développement Communautaire (ACADEC)
En Avant les enfants (EALE)
Fondation Boaz

Ivory Coast

Aide à la Jeunesse Africaine Défavorisée (AJAD)
ONG Repères

Madagascar

Otitsara

Mali

Association pour la Défense des Droits de l'Enfant (ADDEN Mali)

Morocco

Ligue Marocaine pour la Protection de l'Enfance (LMPE)

Mauritius

Mouvement d'Aide à la Maternité (MAM)

Nigeria

Women Initiative for Peace and Good Governance (WIPGG)

Rwanda

Vivre Heureux - Ycyemezo

Zambia

Abantu Zambia

ASIA

Bangladesh

Rural Reconstruction Foundation (RRF)

South Korea

Truth and Reconciliation for the Adoption Community of Korea (TRACK)

EUROPE

Austria

Fit for kids - ARGE Erziehungsberatung und Fortbildung GmbH

Belgium

Chant d'Oiseau

En avant les Enfants (EALE)
Parent Actif @ Home
Les Trois Pommiers
MMM Belgium

France

Association Nationale pour l'Education Prénatale (ANEP)
Centre d'Education Pluridisciplinaire de la Personnalité (CEPP)
Enfance sans Drogue
Femmes Internationales Murs Brisés (FIMB)
La Maison de Tom Pouce
Mercredi-c-papa
MMM France

Germany

Verband Familienarbeit e.V.

Greece

Organisation Mondiale des Associations pour l'Education Prénatale (OMAEP International)

Italy

Donneurope Federcasalinghe

Luxembourg

Action Catholique des Femmes du Luxembourg (ACFL)

Romania

Mame pentru Mame

Spain

Acción Familiar
Asociación de Familias y Mujeres de Medió Rural (AFAMMER)
Mas Familia

Sweden

Haro

United Kingdom

Community Service Volunteers (CSV)
Mothers At Home Matter (MAHM)
MMM England

MIDDLE EAST

Lebanon

MMM Lebanon

AMERICAS

Peru

Ades Perou

USA

Global Goods Partners



Mouvement Mondial des Mères

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