



MMM France 25th Anniversary Diner “Quand les meres s’en mêlent... Ça marche!”

In a world riddled with violence, where to find peace initiatives

By Pauline Ambrogio's

For my book, I interviewed 70 mothers in 40 countries. In the two minutes I have to speak, I will never be able to quote them all. And yet each of them deserves to be. They contribute to making this world – which takes so little care of human beings - a better place. My book Mothers and Peace asks the following questions: What does peace mean for mothers? How do they act on a daily basis to promote peace within the family, in society and at international and governmental institutions?

Who are these mothers?

Some are direct or collateral victims of conflicts and wars. Others, of family, social, institutional, economic or marital violence. Others still are not specifically victims of violence. But they all decided to take action on the ground for peace and security.

How do they act?

- ⇒ To those who cannot speak, they give a voice, sometimes their own
- ⇒ To those who cannot survive economically, they teach a trade
- ⇒ To those who cannot educate their children, they give the means
- ⇒ To those who no longer have an identity, they restore self-esteem
- ⇒ To those who suffer violence, they give back rights
- ⇒ To those who no longer believe in peace, they give hope

What do we retain from their actions?

Three points, three specificities:

- A mother who gets up every morning to encourage her children to go to school and educates their will, is as worthy as mothers who organize a march for peace, who build a shelter for raped women or who go into politics. There is no small or big action when it comes to peace. Every action counts. It is a chain that goes from the home to the nation and from the nation back to the home
- Mothers have the capacity to connect family, professional and public spaces together... for them, there are no borders. They occupy these spaces in a complementary way

- Mothers are the first and last bulwark against violence - The first, because they are there to educate children on the values of peace, respect, love and kindness. The last, because when there is nothing and no one left, mothers go on answering the call. Mothers are not afraid to transgress laws and established order when it comes to saving lives

Training, empowerment, education, transmission, care, mutual aid, knowledge of rights, justice, truth, self-esteem, trust, love, family, are words that these 70 mothers used regularly to mention peace, even though they do not all speak the same language, do not all have the same level of language and come from different social, cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds. These words, however, have the same impact and meaning all around the globe.

Make Mothers Matter (MMM) is an international NGO created in 1947 to raise the awareness of policy makers and public opinion on the contribution of mothers to social, cultural and economic development. MMM has no political or religious affiliations, and thus transparently voices the concerns of mothers at international level with permanent MMM representatives at the United Nations (General Consultative Status), UNESCO and the European Union.