

IAW ANNUAL REPORT

Association Suisse pour les Droits des Femmes - ADF-SVF Suisse

Sept 2022 - August 2023

ADF-SVF - An Interaction of Local and International Women's Issues

Looking back over a period of one year, we see how closely local issues are intertwined with global challenges today.

Women in national votes

The successful event «Invisible Women» in 2022 had shown us once again that in all areas of life, women are not visible enough, not taken into account or even heavily disadvantaged.

This became particularly glaring in September 2022 on the occasion of a national vote on raising the women's retirement age in the social-insurance. Together with other women's organizations, ADF-SVF had fiercely fought against this deterioration in the run-up to the vote. Unfortunately, the law was passed with a razor-thin majority, although later on it was proven that the majority of women had voted against it ! Meanwhile, a long-term study revealed that there was also a gender gap in other national votes: In general Swiss women weight social and environmental issues higher than men. **AP 6,7**

Upcoming national elections

It is hardly surprising that ADF-SVF has always advocated equal representation of both sexes in political and legal bodies!

In fact the ADF-SVF sections are successfully campaigning for their candidates at the local and national level, recently at the cantonal elections in Basel-Landschaft in March 2023.

At the moment in the whole country the focus is on the national elections on 22 October 2023. **AP 7**

14 June 2023 – a Nationwide Women's Strike !

As in 2019, many women's organizations plus trade unions have again organized a nationwide women's strike on June 14, 2023. The first one had taken place in 1991. Ten years before on 14 June 1981 the amendment about equal rights of women and men had been enshrined in the National Constitution. Now again, the ADF-SVF sections or individual members have been very actively involved within their respective regional collectives.

At this nationwide strike a huge variety of ideas had developed. Everywhere clear feminist demands were voiced. Under the slogan «**Pay - Time - Respect**» there were calls for equal pay, for a stop of gender based violence, for worldwide peace and for more attention to the unpaid care work of women. **AP 1,2,4,5,6**



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Climate Change - Women as Actors

In Switzerland, too, we have to deal with the threat of climate change.

Some time ago, concerned older women, including some ADF-SVF members, founded the association **KlimaSeniorinnen** (Senior Women for Climate Protection) and since then, often together with Greenpeace, they have demanded a full compliance with the UN climate goals. Their activities were often spectacular. In March 2023 they had even filed a climate lawsuit at the European Court for Human Rights in Strasbourg on the grounds of the particular vulnerability of older women. This had received a lot of attention in the media, and the chances for success are very good! **AP 3,4**

Independently four women professionals based at Geneva and Lausanne were alarmed about the impact of the climate change on women's health. So they launched the **La Marche Bleue** (Blue March). The women's group started at Geneva on April 1 and walked all the way until they arrived in Berne on 22 April 2023. Here thousands of women (and men) were gathered at the closing rally, demanding immediate implementation of the UN climate goals. **AP 3,4**

What a luck! **Martine Gagnebin**, the new president of ADF-SVF could engage these prominent activists for our **public event on 17 June 2023 at Lausanne**.

Rosmarie Wälti, Basel, co-president of the KlimaSeniorinnen as well as Bastienne Joerchel from La Marche Bleue gave some very convincing accounts of their commitment to the climate.

They were supplemented by Agnieszka Kroskowska of Helvetas, a Swiss NGO focusing on developing countries. She confirmed what our IAW colleagues in Africa have been experiencing firsthand for a long time, the daily struggle for survival of the women there due to additional droughts or floods.

It was clear to all participants that in future ADF-SVF wants to become more involved in the fight against climatic change. **AP 3,4**



Rosmarie Wydler (left)
Co-President KlimaSeniorinnen



Agnieszka Kroskowska
NGO Helvetas



Bastienne Joerchel
Initiator La Marche Bleue

Women and Health

Recently, the focus has also been on women's health. In cooperation with other NGOs, ADF-SVF has now achieved a number of things:

First, after years of wrangling, the national parliament approved a reform of the sexual criminal law. The slogan "No is no" now applies in case of (attempted) rape, and a victim's state of shock is taken into account.

AP 1,4

On the other hand, anti-abortionists wanted to defeat the current liberal abortion-law with two popular initiatives. This was prevented thanks to the vigilant civilian population. On the contrary, ADF-SVF is currently involved in a parliamentary motion for total impunity regarding abortions. **AP 2,4**

Furthermore, ADF-SVF is actively working together with the national network for the implementation of the Istanbul Convention, a European legal framework to combat sexual violence. **AP 1**

Networking on Political Issues

As always, ADF-SVF has published its official comments on national consultations during the past year. The aim was always to enhance the women's point of view: Individual taxation (taxation independent of civilian status), affordable public daycare, better employment conditions for domestic workers, etc. **AP 1,2,4,6,7**

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Thanks to the good contacts with our members in cantonal and national parliaments ADF-SVF is always close to the political events and can bring in its demands. **AP 1,2,3,4,5,6,7**

International Alliance of Women

In the international context, the regular exchange with IAW was also very important. In 2022 Ursula Nakamura and Annemarie Heiniger participated at some IAW Zoom meetings. Since the IAW Congress in November 2022 Dr. Sibylle von Heydebrand, IAW main representative at the UN Geneva, is the official delegate of ADF-SVF. Ursula Nakamura and Heidi Bodmer of ADF-SVF are Co-coordinators of the IAW Project Water and Pads. ADF-SVF members have well accepted this action for menstrual health by supporting it with donations.

Organisational Development

We also like to mention some internal organizational development last year. The fact that different ADF-SVF sections are presiding over the Association on a rotating basis has proven well its worth. While it was the Basel section frbb from 2020-2022, now this responsibility lies with the section ADF Vaud.

But for ADF-SVF being a national organization some valuable inputs from other regions were often lacking. Thanks to an amendment of the statutes at the delegates' meeting in June 2022 this has changed. Now delegates from Basel, Bern, Neuchâtel and Zurich are also on the ADF-SVF board. Thanks to Zoom there are frequent meetings, and information can easily get exchanged - all together a very positive development!

This is also an important support for **Martine Gagnebin**, the current ADF-President.

We also are improving the mutual understanding despite of the language-barrier between German and French. Therefore it is very helpful that ADF-SVF is editing a monthly bilingual newsletter which is sent to all ADFSVF-members.

For all further information about ADF-SVF Suisse please visit our website:

www.feminism.ch (French and German)

02.08.2023 Ursula Nakamura, board of ADF-SVF Suisse

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