

Editorial

Always Changing

Again, there are changes! In the beginning of 1994, this combined issue of AL-RAIDA was set as the target for a series of developments which involved giving it a new look and enriching its content. The Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World (IWSAW), producer and sponsor of AL-RAIDA, is determined to make it a quality publication. Initially, IWSAW requested additional funding from Beirut University College (BUC), to finance the costs of these basic improvements. We take this opportunity to thank the BUC administration for the support that made it possible for Al-Raida to move on. The first set of changes focused on the layout design and adding more colors and pages. Without further ado, we will let our new look speak for itself. Furthermore, realizing the need for research and statistical data, we added a new section, a special **File**, which will appear in each issue from here on. The File will have any of the following sub-headings: studies, articles, surveys and other writings on a specific theme for which AL-RAIDA will solicit articles from specialists and engage in some research itself.

The File of this issue addresses the topic of violence against women and focuses on **Battered Women in Lebanon**. It is introduced in two feature articles relaying the testimonies of battered women. One recounts real stories of Lebanese women suffering from battery and the other addresses forms of psychological violence that women endure at home. For the section on studies, IWSAW solicited research on battery in religious courts and hospitals, in order to examine the real situation and the facilities that are available to women. Hence, leading religious figures in four of Lebanon's religious courts and staff members in the emergency rooms of nine hospitals were questioned about the procedures and laws that they follow with cases of battered women. Additional research includes screening of three leading Lebanese newspapers for reported incidents of violence against women. The File also includes an interview with a highly influential Moslem Shiite learned man in Lebanon, Sayyed Mohammed Hussein Fadlallah. Following the File, which has a main focus on Lebanon, is a study on domestic violence against women in Jordan and newspaper clippings of various incidents there. Evelyne Accad shares with us an in-depth comparative analysis on gender and violence in Lebanon and Yugoslavia. Other than File-related material, AL-RAIDA offers various articles, interviews, book reviews, and a bookshelf section.

Future Files will feature studies on topics related to women and health, women and education, women and agriculture, women and the media, women and syndicate activities. We, therefore, encourage independent scholars who have conducted their own research in Lebanon or in any other country in the Arab World to contact IWSAW and AL-RAIDA for the possibility of networking.

— Randa Abul-Husn

AL-RAIDA

About (IWSAW)..

IWSAW - The Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World was established in 1973 at the Beirut University College. It began with a grant from Ford Foundation with Dr. Julinda Abu Nasr as its Director.

Objectives of IWSAW: To serve as a data bank and resource and advance a better understanding of Arab women and children. To promote communication among individuals, groups and institutions concerned with women and children in the Arab world. To improve the quality of life of Arab women and children through educational and development projects. To enhance the Beirut University College curriculum.

IWSAW projects:

Conferences: The Institute organizes local, regional and international conferences, seminars and lectures to discuss issues of concern to women in the Arab world.

Women's Documentation Center:

IWSAW houses the Center, in the Stoltzfus Library of BUC. It holds books and international periodicals.

IWSAW publications on women include books, and the status, development and conditions of Arab women in addition to Al-Raida. Eight children's books with illustrations and two guides, one for setting up children's libraries and the second for writing and illustrating children's books have also been published.

Income Generating Project

consists of workshops and job assistance to women in war-stricken families.

The Basic Living Skills

Projects is a non-formal integrated educational program for semi-literate women to be used in development projects.

Additional projects include:

The Rehabilitation Program for Children's Mental Health; Teaching for Peace, and The Portable Library Project that received the Asahi- Reading Promotion Award in 1994.