

Talk by Eve Mahlab at Launch of Gender Lens for Inclusive Philanthropy at Victorian Women's Trust, 1<sup>st</sup> December 2009.

In yesterday's Australian newspaper, there is an item about Red Stitch, a small theatre company which reports that it has engaged women directors exclusively for its upcoming season of 4 plays because the Melbourne Theatre Company and the Sydney based Belvoir Theatre Company, each of which produces about 12 plays per season, have engaged only one female director each.

The article appears next to another, which reports that the Victorian Attorney General Rob Hulls has launched an attack on the Federal government for putting women and children at increased risk of family violence because of Commonwealth funding cuts to legal aid.

It's enough to break your heart!

Ever since I joined the Women's Electoral Lobby, 37 years ago I have been aware that women get the crumbs from the government and philanthropic funding tables. At that time women rarely got a mention. Today the United Nations, as well as national and state governments are big on rhetoric but still very small on budget allocation.

Furthermore, while we women ourselves are very generous with our sweat, our skills and our time, overall, until recently, few of us have been in the position to give money, especially large amounts of money to projects which empower women and girls. Indeed those women who had money donated it to art galleries, museums and would you believe boys private schools.

Two years ago, I together with Jill Reichstein, that outstanding leader of social change philanthropy, established a loose network of women, which we called the Australian Women Donors Network to promote and increase funding of projects, which invest in women and girls.

From the outset, we were supported by the indefatigable Mary Crooks, by Fleur Spitzer, by Kristi Mansfield in Sydney and various people from IWDA.

We had two objectives, first to promote giving to projects which specifically target Women and Girls but also to ensure that a fair share of mainstream funding for funding for people, kids, sport, youth, the homeless, medical research and the arts - indeed most funding - reached women and girls.

We were driven by two principles - first fairness - there is plenty of evidence that in most areas of disadvantage women suffering is greater and different than that of men and second effectiveness - there is plenty of evidence that funding of women spreads to children, families and communities. Whereas funding of men stays with - well men.

We understood from the beginning that we had to build the case for funding Women and Girls because most donors and trustees think that they are automatically included when they fund "people" - and we have done just that.

We have gathered statistics about women's disadvantage and testimony about the effectiveness of funding Women and Girls. The statistics are stark:

- Women are 2 and ½ times more likely than men to live in poverty in their old age
- Violence is the leading cause of death, disability and illness of Australian women aged 15-48
- Globally, less than 10% of foundation grants go to women and girls. (USA) and for every development dollar spent, less than 2 cents go to women and girls
- The greatest threat to the environment is population growth yet millions of women are denied access to safe family planning
- Every day, 1500 women die from pregnancy - or childbirth-related complications -leaving countless children orphaned. Most of these deaths are preventable

We have developed two tools for marketing the case for funding women and girls.

The first is our website [www.womendonors.org.au](http://www.womendonors.org.au) which presents statistics, quotes and links to other sites which will outrage and inspire you. It will also inform you of news and events which give you the opportunity to connect with projects and other women and men who share our passion for building a better world for all by investing in Women and Girls.

It will empower you to be an advocate.

The second tool will be the wonderful publication which will be launched here today.

This publication *Gender Lens for Inclusive Philanthropy* is the basis for workshops which will be held next year, and which, we believe will change the culture of the giving community in Australia.

We expect that the executive directors and the trustees of foundations will undertake these workshops and eventually each time a foundation is approached for funding, it will become de rigueur to ask:

1. Is this project intended to benefit male and females equally and if not in what proportions?
2. Has the project taken into account that the circumstances for women different to men?

I have to tell you that it is absolutely amazing how effective those two questions can be.

A fortnight ago, I was at a viewing of the film Polly and Me. It is a documentary made by Ian Darling of the Caledonia Foundation. The film is part of an awareness campaign about homelessness and the Caledonia Foundation is designing an outreach program to accompany the films.

After telling the audience that 40 % of the homeless are women and that the people most likely to be turned away from emergency accommodation - are women with children, I asked Ian whether the outreach program took into account that the reasons for women homelessness are often different from those of men and the sort of housing accommodation available for men was not safe for women or girls.

His response was that "it hadn't" but "now, of course it now would".

It was perfect example of unintended lack of awareness that permeates our country. Awareness can be created so easily because few people are actually anti women. Its just that most people don't think about women's disadvantage or the potential for effectiveness when women are funded.

There is good news. We women are getting wealthier. In the USA, it is predicted that women will control 60% of the wealth by next year. A UK report predicts that by 2020 53 % of UK millionaires will be women. We have no figures for Australia but there is evidence that women are controlling more money and you can be sure that the galleries and the opera will be after it. So it is important that the women's funds also go for it.

It is also important to know that women tend to give differently from men. According to Nicky McIntyre, the Executive Director of the Netherland based women's fund "Mama Cash" men tend to be driven to philanthropy by the desire for influence and recognition, whereas women are typically more emotionally attached to the missions of the organizations to which they give

and feel stronger about the reasons for giving.

Women also tend to be more relationship oriented and to seek and form collaborative networks with other like-minded people, becoming “partners” with the organizations they support. Women want to do more than give money: they want to also offer their time and expertise and they want to learn, often combining money with activism. They want regular updates on how their money is being spent. They are more likely to fund “harder causes”, smaller projects and more marginalized groups that require taking more risks. And they welcome “family philanthropy” as a way of keeping their families close.

Having said that, it is my belief that many women of wealth want recognition too. They want to be presented with strategic projects which make a difference.

In February, next year, the Greenstone Group owned by one of our board members Kristi Mansfield together with the Australian Women Donors Network will be hosting a visit to Oz by several very wealthy American women who promote giving to Women and Girls through their own high profile example.

Their organization is called Women Moving Millions.

Although we don't yet have many women millionaires in Australia, we have plenty who are married to them. We hope that their example will inspire others to give more to women and girls, and to do so publically in order to inspire others. We hope it will also encourage the women's funds in Australia to increase their capacity to capture the hearts and purses of the increasing number of women and men with wealth.

The Australian Women Donors Network will be hosting lunches for these women in both Sydney and Melbourne and I invite you to attend to what will be the first annual Women in Philanthropy Lunch, which will take place in Melbourne on Tuesday, February 16 next year.

There will be small workshops for major donors whom we hope to convert to the cause of giving to Women and Girls. Or who already do so.

The Women Moving Millions group will be accompanied by Christine Grumm the CEO of the Women's Funding Network an organization of 145 funds from all around the world who specifically fund Women and girls. The number of such funds is increasing dramatically.

Indeed, I believe that we are witnessing the third wave of the Women's Movement, the first got us the vote, the second liberated us from our virtual confinement to unpaid house and caring work , and the third, in the wake of women gaining education, influence and wealth will see the financial empowerment of women and the resulting benefit to families, the community and the country.

If you are a philanthropist in the sense that you give money, time, influence or voice to advance women and girls in any planned way we would welcome you into our network.

So let me again thank the Victorian Women's Trust for their support of Women Donors and for developing this wonderful publication which when used with workshops will change the culture of the philanthropic sector.

The *Gender Lens for Inclusive Philanthropy* is another feather in the cap of the Victorian Women's Trust and its dynamic Executive Director Mary Crooks, who will now tell you more about it.

Eve Mahlab AO