



**Interview of the Month
Hilde Haneuse, President
Femmes Leaders Mondiales Monaco
June 2015**

1. GenderHopes: You are the President of Femmes Leaders Mondiales Monaco. Can you tell us more about this organisation and about its objectives?

Hilde Haneuse: Our objective is to promote the role of women and defend equal rights between men and women in Monaco and/or internationally.

This is achieved by research and the implementation of all possible means, allowing, amongst other things, women to work and exercise a freely chosen and accepted profession; to develop their qualifications, skills and experience, to promote their status, role and image within the company, whether in legal, personal, family, cultural, economic and social terms; to protect their physical and mental integrity; to have access to education and training, both initially and continuously and to maintain a balance between their professional and private lives. It's a vast program, which encompasses the charter of Femmes Leaders:

“To highlight the standing of responsible and united women treading their individual paths; to promote the position and impact of women in the workplace; to revitalise equality of rights between men and women.”

2. What prompted you to open a branch of Femmes Leaders in Monaco, and how was that initiative welcomed in the country?

The association is a part of a worldwide organization, created 15 years ago by Nicole Barbin, a woman from Clermont-Ferrand. I had already been a member of this Association in France for 5 years when the Worldwide President asked me to establish the Association in Monaco. I really liked their approach, which was by no means that of a feminist Association but rather based on equal rights. It gave me great pleasure to establish the Monaco Association, surrounded by my friends, who were also very enthusiastic. We are quite convinced that the position of women in the workplace is still not respected. It's a good thing to notice it, but better still to take action.

At first, we were curious as to how the Association would work. The women with whom I created the Association were my fellow members of the

Association Femmes Chefs d'Entreprises (of which I have been the Vice-President for 7 years). Then we asked ourselves the question: "What is the difference between our two associations?" We should make clear that the AFCEM was 100 % dedicated to entrepreneurship and that FLMM therefore had a very different purpose. The two Associations are complementary and work regularly together - women must show solidarity! We can all be members of two or more associations.

3. Do you think that women in Monaco face any particular challenges? Can the condition of women be improved in any way in the Principality?

Yes, the image presented by women in the Principality is too much along the lines of "the wife of..." I believe that we must project ourselves more and be identified by our activities, particularly those concerning family, health and social life or the economy. We wish to act to raise awareness on certain subjects. For example, the capacities and ambitions of women are greatly under-estimated. When a woman is presented with the same challenges as a man, takes the same risks, possesses the same qualifications and skills, she should be able to attain the same position, carrying the same responsibilities and salary.

4. Femmes Leaders and GenderHopes conducted a joint research project on domestic violence in Monaco and launched the website "No to Violence in Monaco". Do you envisage any future steps or follow-up measures?

Yes, this is one of our preferred working methods: we often work together, hand in hand, with other associations specialising in areas which interest us, which allows us to progress. It is the desire to achieve which is so important. A good example of this is our collaboration with GenderHopes: together, we launched a website and brochure; we have organised several demonstrations and share similar methods of communication.

Together, we should very much like to organise an evening to protest against violence – an evening where we deal with the theme of violence, structured around three "roundtables" led by internationally renowned experts: Domestic violence, violence in school and the widespread violence in war. We are gradually advancing with this project.

5. You are the mother of three children as well as an entrepreneur. As a woman, have you encountered specific challenges throughout your career?

Yes, I think that it is wonderful to be able to experience everything: be a mother, an entrepreneur and a wife. I was lucky to experience no major difficulties: having completed my university studies and obtained a diploma in international business, I began my career immediately. Two years later, I was

an executive and manager of an institute of computer training. I never missed a single working day. People whom I met trusted me and judged me solely on my work and not the fact that I was a woman. When I set up my company, I applied my own style of personnel management – listening to people. It is undoubtedly a more feminine management style. For me, the employees must be happy in their work. It is necessary to secure a balance: satisfaction is a keyword for me, in that both the employees and customers are satisfied.

The most difficult period for me was the death of my husband – a total life change. Not only had this terrible tragedy struck our very close-knit family but it was left up to me to cope with family life alone. To continue what we had built together, this was the biggest challenge that I had to face. But what made it all worthwhile was to be able to meet my family's needs. I am very happy that I did not have to sacrifice my professional life for my family, and vice-versa...

6. Do you have any advice to share with young women today entering the workforce?

To those young women just starting out, I say: we can have it all. It is neither easy nor simple- we must constantly learn to prioritise and organise – but what satisfaction! One needs ambition, fuelled by the very desire to live feminine life to the full.

I always say that life is a puzzle: the greater the number of pieces, the harder but the more interesting it is. Then it balances - if there is a small piece missing, it's not as dramatic as in a puzzle with only a few pieces, and then the missing piece leaves a big hole.

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Hilde Haneuse is the current President of Femmes Leaders Mondiales Monaco and was nominated as the International President of Femmes Leaders in 2014, in charge of launching Femmes Leaders worldwide.

A mother of three children, and with experience in various companies, Hilde decided to set up her own business in 2004, Colibri, a marketing and strategic communication agency. She sold the main part of the company following the passing of her husband, and in March 2010 she took over Bluewave Software as the new CEO. Hilde is very active in non-profit organizations: she co-launched Femmes Leaders Mondiales Monaco in 2010, and is also Vice-President of the Women in Business association of Monaco where she co-initiated a solidarity program to train women in Senegal to become independent small business owners in computer technology. She is also co-founder and general secretary of Eurocloud Monaco, Vice president of the Blue Horizon Business club, and co-founder and Vice-President of Cordons de Vie. Hilde has a real passion for reading, traveling and nature.