Gender and Development in the Middle East & North Africa:

Women in the Public Sphere
Outline

- Introduction and definitions
- Key messages
- Presentation of key findings of the report
- Framework for action
- Strategy and key entry points for Bank action
- Where are now? What has been our progress
- What do we expect of this meeting?
Introduction

- **Purpose of the book**: Advance the gender debate by analyzing impact of gender inequality on the growth and development of MENA countries.

- **Scope of the analysis**: Focus on issues of female labor force participation as an important component of gender equality and women’s empowerment.

- **Definition of gender equality**: equality under the law, equality of access to opportunity, and equality of voice.
Main Messages (1)

- MENA invested significantly in women’s education & health →
  - achieved impressive results (high literacy and low fertility)
  - Women benefited significantly from these investments
  - In MNA, this investment is not translated fully into economic returns for women and for the economies
Main Messages (2)

- Women face inequality in the public sphere and have a low FLFP which has high costs
  - Keeps a heavy toll on families and society that MENA can no longer afford
  - Notion that women take away jobs from men is unfounded
Main Messages (3)

- Gender issues must be fully integrated in the policy making process to ensure that women can participate in the economy while balancing family responsibilities
Key findings of the Regional Report
Impressive Progress in Social Sectors (1)

Male and female education and life expectancy, MENA region, 1970–2000

![Graph showing progress in female and male education and life expectancy in the MENA region, 1970–2000.](image)

Impressive progress on social sectors (cont.)

- **Progress in Women’s Education:**
  - Literacy up from 16.6% (1970) to 52.5% in 2000
  - Average years of schooling up from 0.5 (1950) to 4.5 (2000)
  - Gender disparity in enrollment and completion closing – nine girls attend for every ten boys → achievement of MDG likely
  - Girls’ tertiary education doubled since 1980 (now 14% of girls vs. 20% of boys go to university)

- **However:**
  - Female illiteracy still high compared to other regions
  - Quality of education for girls still lower than for boys
Impressive Progress (cont)

- Improvements on Women’s Health
  - Female Life Expectancy up from 59.4 (1980) to 70.1 (2000)
  - Lower infant and maternal mortality.

*Decline in Total Fertility Rates in MENA Countries, 1980–2002*
Progress in social indicators, Shortfall in empowerment indicators

Progress in Empowering Women in MENA and Other Developing Regions, 2000

- Seats held by women in parliament (percent)
- Ratio of women to men in nonagricultural-wage employment
- Female life expectancy
- Reduction in fertility rate
- Ratio of girls to boys in primary and secondary education
- GDP per capita (US$)
MENA FPFP increasing fast but remains lowest

Accelerated growth over 1980-2000 reaching 5% in 1990s,
FLFP actual vs. potential & comparison between MNA and EAP re education/FLFP

Ratio of Actual to Predicted Female Participation in the Labor Force in MENA and Selected Countries and Regions, 1980 and 2000

Actual:predicted ratio

- MENA 1980
- MENA 2000
- Non-MENA 1980
- Non-MENA 2000

- Morocco
- Kuwait
- Tunisia
- Egypt Arab Rep of
- Algeria
- Syrian Arab Rep
- Iran Islamic Rep
- Bahrain
- Jordan

- Iraq
- MENA
- LAC4
- India
- Turkey
- ECA2
- EAP4
- China
- AFR4

Female enrollment in secondary school MENA
Female labor force participation MENA
Female enrollment in secondary school EAP
Female labor force participation EAP

Percent

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80

The MENA Woman in the Labor Force
Female unemployment highest among the more educated & women leave the labor force when married and with children
MENA’s Low Female Labor Force Participation has a high cost to society as well as families.

High dependency ratio – the highest in the world
- Average of 2 compared to 1 in East Asia
Incidentally: contrary to belief: Women May NOT Take Away Jobs From Men

**Female Labor Force Participation and Unemployment in MENA and OECD Countries, 2000**

Aggregate unemployment rate

| Female labor force participation rate | 0 | 5 | 10 | 15 | 20 | 25 | 30 | 35 | 40 | 45 | 50 | 55 | 60 | 65 | 70 | 75 | 80 | 85 |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| MENA                                 |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| OECD                                 |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
Lower FLFP has social and economic costs

- **Lower family income**
  - E.g. Egypt 25%, Jordan 20%, Morocco 17%
  - Women’s work increasingly the ticket between poverty and middle class
  - Important source of income for expenditures on better education and health of next generation

- **Lower per capita GDP growth**
  - For subset of countries GDP could have been 2.6% instead of 1.9% with greater female participation in labor force
  - Translates into billions of $ of lost opportunity for the region
Factors affecting Women’s Labor Force Participation

- **Historical:** Growth Policies Of The Past
  - Public Sector / private sector
  - Oil Legacy

- **Economic:** High Unemployment For Men & Women
  - Labor Market Discrimination

- **Social:** Factors Anchored In The “Gender Paradigm”
  - Centrality Of The Family -- affecting outlook and aspiration
  - Male Breadwinner Model – influencing laws and implementation
  - Inequality In The Private Sphere – intra-household decision making and access to public sphere
  - “Code Of Modesty” – conditionality of access to public sphere
What needs to be done – next steps

- Advocate that gender equality is not just for the sake of women
  - It is for the welfare of families, for the growth of the economy, and thus for society in general
- Integrate gender agenda into the ‘New Development Model’ for the region
  - Consistency between Constitutional Rights and Regular Legislation
  - Labor Regulation to Create Level Playing Field for Men and Women
  - Education Enhancement Toward Market skills
  - Investments in Infrastructure to Support Women’s Work and Family Duties
Framework for Implementation
Framework for Implementation

Policy Framework for a Comprehensive Gender Policy in Support of MENA’s New Development Model

- Principle: Efficiency and equity
- Inclusiveness: Equal minimum rights for men and women through greater voice and agency
- Accountability: Institutions that advance gender equality
- State leadership

- Goal: Equal access to opportunity and security
- Women’s advocacy
- Labor market
- Education
- Infrastructure
- Policy layer
- Laws
Strategy for the Bank and key entry points
Three Pronged Strategy for Bank

- Focus on making the **business/economic case** for gender equality → managing a county/company talent pool and strength in diversity for “**bottom line**”

- Focus on improving women’s economic rights and access as employees, entrepreneurs, producers, and investors

- Focus on creating a infrastructure to balance work and family responsibilities
Entry Point (1) : Gender and Governance

Gender equality is an integral part of good governance:

- respecting everyone’s rights and
- taking everyone’s needs into account

→ Twin pillars of good governance:

*Inclusiveness* (women’s political participation)

*Accountability* (State Leadership)
Entry Point (2) : the Private Sector

- It will be the main source of job growth in the future
- It discriminates more against women than the public sector → understanding the reasons and putting in place mitigating measures
- It has high barriers to entry for minorities and women – creating a level playing field
- Yet, it provides the vehicle for self-empowerment and advancement
Entry Point (3) : the Urban – Rural divide

- Social Cohesion Strategies
- Children & Youth issues
- Education and Health
- Digital Divide and the Knowledge Economy
- Gender and Infrastructure
Where are we today?
What is our progress?
Current Gender Activities

- Regional Report and Follow up
  - Subregional conferences on MNA reports, other conferences
- Country Level Work
  - Country gender assessments, Capacity building, Monitoring & evaluation
- Sector Level Work
  - Development of framework and tools for gender coverage
- Internal and External Training
  - E-learning, GDLN, Flagship course
- Partnership and Networks
  - CAWTAR, CWS, EU/EC, GTZ & other bi-lateral donors
- Bankwide Work
  - Gender & governance, Gender & violence, Gender & private sector
- Iraq & conflict work
  - Capacity building and mainstreaming gender across the board
Expansion of Country level work

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Expansion of gender work at sectoral level

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Constraints

- Staffing & skills
- Budgets
- Tools
- Data
- Incentives
What do we expect from these meetings?
CCG Input

- Are we on the right track?
- How can we scale up?
- Effectiveness of the CCG? CCG business?
- Next challenges