

This Newsletter presents highlights of the progress made under the **Mashreq Gender Facility (MGF)** through the three country work programs – Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon - and the regional work program. It also reports on budget. The period for this quarterly Newsletter is September through November 2023. Next issue will be circulated in March 2024.

الله أكبر

IRAQ

- A series of workshops were held in October on (i) **Integrating Women into National Policies** to share experience and knowledge across representatives from the GoI and KRG, including on M&E; (ii) **Budget that Supports Women** focusing on data and tools for piloting budgeting for women for MOLSA programs; (iii) **Improving childcare data collection and management** including the use of digital platforms with representatives from Ministries of Planning, Labor & Social Affairs, Education, Health, Trade, Women Empowerment Directorate, High Council Women Development, Child Welfare Committee, Baghdad governorate.
- To **facilitate the participation in the regional MGF Childcare Community of Practice** platform for knowledge sharing, an awareness session was held with key stakeholders, including Ministries of Education, Health, Higher Education, Labor and Social Affairs, Child Welfare Committee, civil society and academia.
- A **technical session on the findings of the report on integrating women in public procurement** was held with the Council of Ministers in the KRI. Recommendations will be considered in amendments of the regulations on public procurement by the KRG. Proposed recommendations include incorporation of preferential programs, quotas for WLSMEs, provisions for subcontracting in particular sectors in which women-owned businesses in KRI are active or are being promoted.



JORDAN

- To learn about **evidence-based policies and programs for women**, a study visit to Egypt was co-organized with UN Women. The delegation included JNCW, MOPIC, MOF, DOS, the IMC-W, among others. Meetings were held with the Egyptian National Council for Women, the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development, and the Ministry of Finance focusing on the Egypt National Observatory for Women and the Egypt Impact Lab's implementation and measuring of impact of behavioral interventions targeting girls and women on issuing IDs, financial inclusion and self-efficacy. Learning emphasized the importance of cross-cooperation, linking strategy with data and implementation for results.
- To launch the **IFC Care Mashreq initiative** under the MGF, the team met with several companies and relevant stakeholders such as NCFCA and SSC who confirmed interest in joining the program. The initiative will facilitate a peer learning platform for 25 private sector firms to exchange on care policies and practices; and build technical and financial management capacities of 30 nurseries.
- Building on the MGF analytical work and policy dialogue, and **to inform further action to enhance women's economic opportunities**, a series of technical discussions were held with GoJ and other stakeholders to identify needs for support to improve workplace conditions, expand access to childcare, enhance financial inclusion and entrepreneurship, and promote safe and affordable public transport.



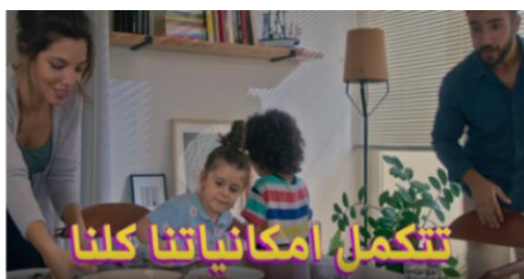
LEBANON

- The campaign **"Reaching Our Full Potential"** aimed at breaking gender stereotypes around the role of women in the workplace and around men's role in the household was launched in September. Three evidence-based, behavioral-science informed videos targeting women, men and employers were disseminated across 5 TV stations, 10 radio stations, 11 websites and social platforms, with engagement of 11 Lebanese influencers, gaining significant traction and reaching more than 3.8 million video views on Instagram and Facebook alone.
- A **training of trainers on the Lebanese Labor Code**, organized in partnership with NCLW and the Ministry of Labor, was delivered in November with around 30 representatives of NGOs across Lebanon. The objective was to build the capacity of participants on the rights and obligations of employees and employers under the Lebanese Labor Code. Participants unanimously expressed a high level of satisfaction and requested follow up trainings, including on the national social security system.
- The **Comprehensive Assessment of the Childcare Landscape in Lebanon - A Mixed Methods Study** has been published. It aims to set the ground for an informed dialogue with the government, private sector, and various stakeholders on expanding quality childcare solutions. A high-level launch event is expected to be organized early 2024.

SPOTLIGHT ON: INNOVATING FOR RESULTS – BEHAVIORAL CAMPAIGNS

Supported by the MGF, the World Bank's Mind, Behavior, and Development (eMBeD) unit and national stakeholders collaborated to co-create videos to **positively shift gender attitudes and norms related to women's work and family responsibilities**. These videos were grounded in behavioral science and contextual data. Knowledge and capacity in designing such interventions was built among government partners to ensure the sustainability of similar efforts in the future. In both countries, the videos were pre-tested on social media to inform decision makers on the suitability and potential impact of the videos.

In Jordan, with JNCW, the MGF supported the design of videos with messages to encourage men to share household and childcare responsibilities. One video highlighted the strong family bonds resulting from sharing household and childcare duties, and the other emphasized the benefits of a father's involvement in child development. The content was designed using an iterative process, considering behavioral theories like self-efficacy and loss aversion. Key messages leveraged behavioral mechanisms like role modeling and highlighting the benefits of such behaviors, to increase men's confidence in parenting and childcare.



Similarly, **with NCLW in Lebanon**, a campaign aimed at shifting perceptions towards working mothers and gender roles involved two videos: the main video (primarily targeting women) focused on the broader theme of supporting women in the workforce despite challenges like family discouragement and hiring discrimination, while the condensed version (primarily targeting men) emphasized men's role in supporting women. The campaign was informed by qualitative research and secondary data review and addressed restrictive gender norms by focusing on role modeling and social networks available to women. The videos

depicted the protagonist's journey in overcoming gender barriers, emphasizing the role of men and employers in supporting women's work and family life balance. Both campaigns underscore the promise of targeted media interventions in altering gender norms and attitudes. The experience points to the importance of building partners' capacity to deliver meaningful, evidence-based campaigns, particularly in a digital age. A knowledge brief will be published to share lessons learned and recommendations for future campaigns.

MGF Budget Report

Reporting Period: June 1, 2019 – December 1, 2023

Received to Date

Donor	Amount Received
Canada	10,662,540.00
Norway	2,894,460.00
Total received	13,557,000.00

Committed to Date

Funds Allocation	Estimated amount
Iraq Work Plan	3,450,000.00
Jordan Work Plan	3,450,000.00
Lebanon Work Plan	3,450,000.00
Regional Work Plan	2,600,000.00
Total committed	12,950,000.00

Available Funds

Available balance	607,000.00
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Iraq Work Plan

Total budget allocation to date	\$	3,450,000.00
Total disbursements to date	\$	2,561,705.26
Available balance	\$	888,294.74

Jordan Work Plan

Total budget allocation to date	\$	3,450,000.00
Total disbursements to date	\$	2,573,337.61
Available balance	\$	876,662.39

Lebanon Work Plan

Total budget allocation to date	\$	3,450,000.00
Total disbursements to date	\$	2,474,479.46
Available balance	\$	975,520.54

Regional Work Plan

Total budget allocation to date	\$	2,600,000.00
Total disbursements to date	\$	2,569,169.39
Available balance	\$	30,830.61

disbursements = actual expenditures & committed budget

The **Mashreq Gender Facility** (MGF) is a 5-year Facility (2019-2024) that provides technical assistance to **Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon** to enhance **women's economic empowerment and opportunities** as a catalyst towards more inclusive, sustainable, and peaceful societies, where economic growth benefits all. Working with the private sector, civil society organizations and development partners, the MGF supports **government-led efforts, country level priorities** and **strategic regional activities** that: (i) Strengthen the enabling environment for women's economic participation; and (ii) Improve women's access to economic opportunities.

The MGF is a **World Bank - IFC initiative** in collaboration with the governments of **Canada and Norway**. It is mainly supported by the **Umbrella Facility for Gender Equality** that counts on generous contributions from Australia, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the United States, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and the Wellspring Philanthropic Fund.

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