

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 2022. Next issue will be circulated in March 2023.

الله أكبر

IRAQ

- A **peer-to-peer learning event on piloting a Gender Responsive Budget (GRB)** took place in the Dubai, UAE, in collaboration with the UAE Gender Balance Council and UAE Federal Competitiveness and Statistics Centre. The GoI was represented by the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Planning and Comsec. The learning event led to the establishment of a national committee on GRB in Iraq which is devising specific actions for piloting GRB in a few sectors.
- To assist Central Bank of Iraq (CBI) in **developing gender-disaggregated indicators on access to finance**, the MGF supported the design of a survey that was issued by the CBI to commercial banks and financial institutions. The survey will identify the type of data and data collection process in place to monitor compliance with the circular on non-discrimination in access to finance.
- Preparations to launch 11 **financial management training modules to women-led MSME** is underway in collaboration with the Baghdad Chamber of Commerce.
- Upon completion of data collection on **Gender-Responsive Public Procurement (GRPP)**, a menu of options outlining possible elements in a gender responsive public procurement policy was drafted and is currently under discussions with the KRG counterparts.



JORDAN

- Following an introductory workshop on the **Women, Business and the Law methodology**, the GoJ requested a technical deep dive, which was held in September with support from MGF. As a result, the GoJ identified priority legislation for reform to improve female labor force participation in Jordan and helped inform the engendered strategy for the Economic Modernization Vision.
- The **Leader4Equality** activity was concluded by a closing event that demonstrated private sector firms' achievements and lessons learned from the technical assistance provided by IFC to adapt firm practices for improving gender diversity and inclusion in the workplace. The event included testimonials from aspiring female leaders who were trained on leadership topics. Both partners Int@j and JNCW called for adopting such practices amongst a wider range of firms to grow the pool of gender-responsive private sector firms.
- To support **expansion of satellite work units in the ITO/BPO sector**, the MGF team participated in the MENA ICT Forum, organized by Int@j and supported by the Youth, Technology and Jobs project under MODEE, to present the need to expand locally in the sector to potential investors and employers, and to use government incentives with a view to create opportunities for women. Ongoing support includes streamlining incentive schemes for employers in the sector, leveraging the MoL Satellite Work Program.



LEBANON

- **Strengthening cross-sectoral coordination and collaboration for stronger impact** of activities has been in focus in the past few months, including (i) the Leaders4Equality companies will be featured in the video targeting employers developed as part of the behavioral-focused campaign and will support the dissemination of this video; (ii) the legal firm that conducted the previous series of webinars also delivered a legal training to women entrepreneurs benefiting from the Access2Market Booster Program; (iii) as part of the childcare activities, MGF is working with the World Bank education team to develop the curriculum for teachers and children in nurseries and kindergartens, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education and coordinating with the Ministry of Public Health.
- Another area of focus has been on **social norms**, by (i) working with the Syndicate of Advertisement Agency to plan for a capacity training workshop for members to **influence campaign content**, aiming to ultimately help shift social norms related to gender stereotypes and women's role in society; and (ii) producing **videos aiming at shifting social behaviors in support of women's economic empowerment** targeting women, men and employers. A national dissemination plan is being developed.



MGF Regional Work Program

SPOTLIGHT ON: INNOVATING FOR RESULTS

Under the **Regional Displaced Women Economic Empowerment (R-DWEE)**, technical assistance on municipal service orientation for refugee women’s economic empowerment were provided in two municipalities in Jordan, Mafrq and Madaba, to address barriers and identify opportunities for refugee women, linking to private sector engagement. This pilot resulted in (i) increased municipalities’ institutional capacity and awareness on legal frameworks governing refugees, and on regulations of home-based businesses (HBBs) favorable to refugee women’s access to formal economic opportunities; positive change in perceptions by the municipality staff on engaging with refugee women and the private sector, as demonstrated by their willingness to facilitate job-matching services; and (iii) concrete actions led by the municipalities to encourage Jordanian and refugee women to formalize their HBBs, including through an information platform. A **knowledge brief: Mashreq – Maximizing the Impact of Gender-Lens Investing and Business Practices for Forcibly Displaced Women** was published in November 2022. The brief highlights the need to provide targeted services and products to forcibly displaced women and their communities, to promote a systemic disaggregation of indicators for comprehensive analysis, and to prioritize refugee- and gender-lens investments. A **successful application to the World Bank-administered Human Rights, Inclusion and Empowerment umbrella multi-donor trust fund (HRIETF)** resulted in a **US\$250,000 grant** to improve human rights achievements and contribute to local economic development and increased social cohesion at community level. Consistent with the MGF regional work plan, the activities funded through the HRIETF grant will provide technical assistance to municipalities in Iraq and Lebanon to increase engagement of forcibly displaced women in decent livelihoods opportunities. MGF National Coordinators and relevant government counterparts will be involved in determining selection criteria and final design of these additional activities. In Lebanon, the engagement will be conditional upon endorsement following an assessment of Jordan pilot’s lessons learned and a Lebanon risk analysis carried out in consultation with stakeholders.



MGF Budget Report

Reporting Period: June 1, 2019 – December 1, 2022

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	2,350,000.00
Jordan Work Plan	2,650,000.00
Lebanon Work Plan	2,500,000.00
Regional Work Plan	2,600,000.00
Total committed	10,100,000.00

Available Funds

Available balance	3,457,000.00
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Iraq Work Plan

Total budget allocation to date	\$ 2,350,000.00
Total disbursements to date	\$ 1,912,311.45
Available balance	\$ 437,688.55

Jordan Work Plan

Total budget allocation to date	\$ 2,650,000.00
Total disbursements to date	\$ 2,200,476.18
Available balance	\$ 449,523.82

Lebanon Work Plan

Total budget allocation to date	\$ 2,500,000.00
Total disbursements to date	\$ 1,835,167.15
Available balance	\$ 664,832.85

Regional Work Plan

Total budget allocation to date	\$ 2,600,000.00
Total disbursements to date	\$ 2,035,133.55
Available balance	\$ 564,866.45

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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