



MINUTES

Steering Committee meeting, no. 1

January 19, 2019

Beirut, Lebanon

After welcoming remarks and a tour de table with initial reflections on the Mashreq Gender Facility (MGF), the discussion focused on the Steering Committee composition and Terms of Reference and immediate next steps.

Comments and Decisions

- Mashreq Gender Facility (MGF) Concept Note.
 - The Facility objective and broad concept was endorsed and considered highly relevant and timely, capitalizing on existing country priorities.
 - It was clarified that the MGF will be channeled through the World Bank Group Multi Donor Umbrella Facility for Gender Equality (UFGE), and that the funding will be executed through the World Bank.
 - Canada has allocated \$10 million Canadian dollars initial funding. Other donors are expected to join.
- The Steering Committee Objective and Mandate.
 - The role of the SC is to provide guidance and advice to the three countries, as described in the attached TOR. The importance of the SC to stay light with agile decision-making was stressed.
 - SC will serve to share experiences, challenges and lessons learned across countries.
 - Wording on the role of SC related to country level Action Plans will be amended in the Concept Note and Terms of Reference, as action plans are fully country-owned and may include actions that go beyond the MGF. The SC will advise on focus areas and priorities set out in country level (and regional) annual work plans as they relate to reaching the overall targets set out in the Action Plans, and recommend overall work plan funding allocations.
- Steering Committee Membership.
 - There will be a core SC consisting of representatives of the Governments of Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon; the World Bank; the IFC; Canada (as the founding donor), and UN Women.
 - In addition, development partners that demonstrate strong commitment and a record of supporting women's economic opportunities in the Mashreq region will be invited to participate in the SC. This commitment and record will be evidenced by financial contributions of US\$ 500,000 or more that benefit the Mashreq Gender Facility. To maintain the seat at the SC, the partner would

need to contribute a total of US\$ 2 million for the benefit of the MFG over the period of three years.

- MGF benefiting governments (Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon) will assign two representatives as SC members, and it is recommended that countries consider including the Minister of Finance, Planning or Economy (to ensure that activities tap into the longer-term development perspective), and the government entity responsible for women's/gender affairs.
 - Other institutions (WB, IFC, donors) will appoint Regional Director level representatives as SC members.
 - In addition, the Steering Committee will identify and invite a limited number of representatives from the following institutions as observers at extended SC meetings: From the UN, SRSs of Iraq and Lebanon, and the UNRC of Jordan, one Civil Society Organization per country, and potentially one representative of a regional entity for women's advancement. The SC chairs, in consultation with the core SC, will decide on what meetings merit the participation of the extended SC group, depending on issues to be discussed.
 - The MGF Secretariat will be housed at the WBG and will facilitate and coordinate meetings of the Steering Committee.
- Steering Committee Meetings.
 - The SC will be chaired and convened by the World Bank Regional Director and one of the Governments benefiting from the Facility, to be identified on a rolling, yearly basis to coincide with the country that will host the next annual conference.
 - The Government of Lebanon will be the co-chair from January 19, 2019 till September 30, 2019; the Government of Jordan will be the co-chair October 1, 2019 to September 30, 2020; the Government of Iraq will co-chair from October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2021; and so on.
 - Meetings can be held virtually.
 - The SC agreed to operate initially under the interim Terms of Reference, on the understanding that these will be finalized and adopted at the next SC meeting.

Next steps:

1. Participants will provide specific feedback on the MGF Concept Note by January 30, 2019.
2. Member institutions will assign members of the Steering Committee by January 30, 2019.
3. Based on the discussion, the updated interim Terms of Reference and the Concept Note are being circulated with the minutes.
4. MGF Secretariat will create an email distribution list for the SC members.
5. The World Bank will hire necessary staff to provide technical assistance to support governments to further detail and implement the action plans.
6. Based on the Women's Economic Empowerment Action Plans presented in the Mashreq Conference on Women's Economic Empowerment, the Governments of Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon will present their first work plans for the amount of CAD 2M through December 31, 2020; there will be a regional work plan developed for CAD 2M for the SC's review. The MGF Secretariat will provide a template and technical assistance for this work.

ANNEX 1. List of Participants and Observers

Participants:

- Government of Lebanon: Hazar Caracalla, Advisor to the Prime Minister on Economic Affairs
Abir Chebaro, Gender Advisor to President of the Council of Ministers
- Government of Jordan: Mary Kawar, Minister, Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MoPIC)
Salma Nims, Secretary General, Jordanian National Commission for Women
Boshra Mashour Ben Tareef, Head of Gender Division, MoPIC
- Government of Iraq: Ibtisam Aziz, Director General, Women Empowerment Directorate, General Secretariat of Council of Ministers
Susan Arif Maarooof, Director, Women Empowerment Organization
- Government of Canada: Gavin Buchan, Executive Director, Middle East Development Programming, Global Affairs Canada
Emmanuelle Lamoureaux, Ambassador, Embassy of Canada to Lebanon
- World Bank: Saroj Kumar Jha, Regional Director, Middle East Department
Benu Bidani, Practice Manager, Poverty and Equity MENA
Haneen Sayed, Lead Social Protection, Jobs and Gender Specialist
Natalia Robalino, Senior Legal Counsel
- IFC: Sammar Essmat, Gender Lead for MENA
Henriette Kolb, Head IFC Gender Secretariat
- MGF Secretariat: Jonna Lundwall, Social Scientist, World Bank

Observers:

- Government of Norway: Lene Natasha Lind, Ambassador, Embassy of Norway to Lebanon
- Government of Switzerland: Philipp Beutler, Head of Swiss Cooperation, Embassy of Switzerland to Lebanon
- Government of Canada: Sean Boyd, Executive Director, Middle East Relations, Global Affairs Canada
Aly-Khan Rajani, Counsellor, Head of Co-operation, Embassy of Canada to Lebanon
- World Bank: Angela Elzir Assy, Labor Market Specialist
Gharam Alkastalani Dexter, Regulatory Specialist

ANNEX 2. Agenda and Discussion Points

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

January 19, 2019
Grand Serail, 6:00pm – 7:00pm

Introduction

MGF Concept Note

- Open up for questions and comments on the Concept Note
- Brief presentation of proposed implementation arrangements and governance structure of the MGF.

Points for decision, based on Terms of Reference

- Objective and mandate: Anything missing?
- Membership: Should other stakeholders be invited?
- Meetings: Regularity of meetings adequate?
- Decision-making and conflict of interest