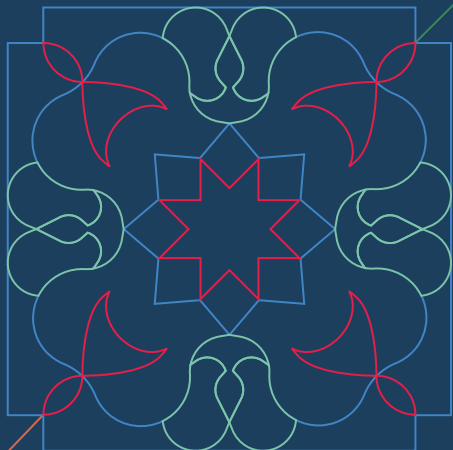
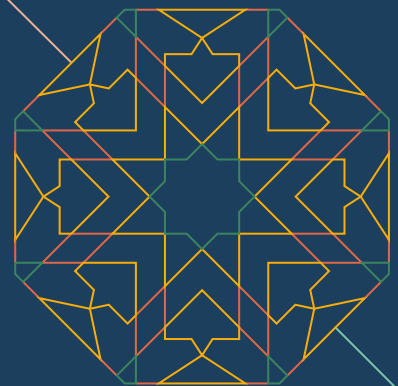
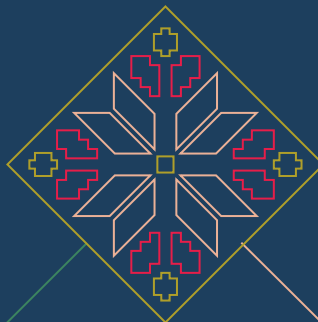
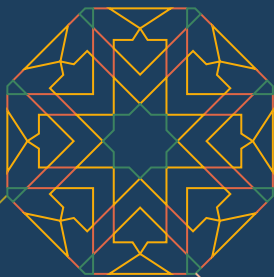


# Understanding Masculinities:

Results from the  
**INTERNATIONAL MEN AND GENDER EQUALITY SURVEY (IMAGES)**  
– MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, and Palestine

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



## ABOUT THE STUDY

The International Men and Gender Equality Survey – Middle East and North Africa (IMAGES MENA) study includes quantitative and qualitative research with men and women aged 18 to 59 in Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, and Palestine. Local research partners are: (1) *Egypt*: El-Zanaty and Associates; Social Research Center, American University in Cairo (AUC); (2) *Lebanon*: Connecting Research to Development (CRD); ABAAD; (3) *Morocco*: Association Migration Internationale (AMI); Rajaa Nadifi (independent researcher); Gaëlle Gillot (independent researcher); (4) *Palestine*: Institute of Women's Studies, at Birzeit University.

The multi-country study and its dissemination were coordinated by Promundo and UN Women, under the UN Women Regional Programme Men and Women for Gender Equality funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), with additional support from the Arcus Foundation, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands (via Prevention+), the United States Institute of Peace, the U.S. Department of State in partnership with Vital Voices, and the Oak Foundation.

## ABOUT IMAGES

The International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES) is a comprehensive, multi-country study on men's realities, practices, and attitudes with regard to gender norms, gender-equality policies, household dynamics, caregiving and fatherhood, intimate partner violence, sexual diversity, and health and economic stress, among other topics. Promundo and the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) created IMAGES in 2008. As of 2017, IMAGES has been carried out in more than 30 countries, including this four-country study. Additional partner studies inspired by IMAGES have been carried out in Asia by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and other partners. IMAGES includes both women and men and is generally carried out with respondents aged 18 to 59.

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Promundo and UN Women coordinated the study in partnership with the UN Women country offices in Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, and Palestine.

The views expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the United Nations, including UN Women or UN Member States.

## SUGGESTED CITATION:

El Feki, S., Heilman, B. and Barker, G., Eds. (2017) *Understanding Masculinities: Results from the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES) – Middle East and North Africa: Executive Summary*. Cairo and Washington, DC: UN Women and Promundo-US.

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This executive summary, updated 15 May 2017, was produced for and presented at the Regional Conference on Masculinities in the Arab World: "Trajectories to Peace and Gender Equality".

Read the full, multi-country report and research findings at: [www.imagesmena.org](http://www.imagesmena.org)

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UN Women  
Promundo-US

2017



 **THE AMERICAN  
UNIVERSITY IN CAIRO**  
Social Research Center



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# Executive Summary

# 1. Overview

There has been significant policy and civil society attention paid to the rights and conditions of women and girls in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) in recent years. In spite of this focus, there is limited research on men's attitudes and practices in terms of their partner relationships and their perspectives on gender equality.<sup>1</sup> As seen in this study and many others, men frequently dominate or control household decision-making, political and leadership spaces, and the daily lives of women and girls, yet relatively little of a systematic nature is known about men's attitudes and practices around such issues.

The International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES) in the MENA region has been designed and conducted to help fill this knowledge gap. Specifically, the study seeks to provide insights into the following questions: Where are men in terms of gender equality in the MENA region? How are men of all ages, and younger men compared to older men, reacting to the gradual but significant improvement in the position of women and girls in the region? How are ideas about masculinity affected by political and economic stresses, and by the impact of the Arab Spring? In short, what does it mean to be a man in the Middle East and North Africa in 2017 and beyond?

The study examines men's – and women's – attitudes and practices related to a range of key issues, including support for gender equality, support for women's rights policies, household decision-making, use of various forms of gender-based violence (GBV), men's participation in caregiving and domestic chores, gendered health vulnerabilities, employment-related stress, physical security and adverse life conditions, and childhood, among others.

## 2. Methodology

IMAGES MENA consists of surveys with nearly 10,000 men and women between the ages of 18 and 59 in Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, and Palestine, including both urban and rural areas (as well as refugee settlements, when appropriate). All countries used a stratified multi-stage cluster sampling methodology. Response rates were high (around 90 per cent or more) in all four countries. For Lebanon and Palestine, samples are nationally representative. For Egypt and Morocco, specific regions of the country were selected; the samples are broadly representative of those regions within each country.<sup>2</sup> Data were collected on handheld computer devices in Egypt, Morocco, and Lebanon, and with paper questionnaires in Palestine. Data were collected between April 2016 and March 2017.

1. For UN Women definitions of gender equality and various gender-related terms that are also in this report, see: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2015/02/gender-mainstreaming-issues>

2. In Morocco, the study was carried out in seven provinces and prefectures centered around Rabat: Rabat proper, Salé, Kénitra, Skhirate-Témara, Khemisset, Sidi Kacem, and Sidi Slimane. In Egypt, the sample was carried out in: Cairo, Menoufia, Sharkia, Souhag, and Beni-Suef.

# IMAGES MENA at a Glance: Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, and Palestine

- **Age range:** Men and women aged 18 to 59, in urban and rural areas, representative of national demographics in selected countries.
- **Total sample:** 9,767 respondents – 4,830 men and 4,937 women.

**TABLE A**  
**Sample Sizes**

	EGYPT	MOROCCO	LEBANON	PALESTINE
Men	1,380	1,200	1,050	1,200
Women	1,402	1,200	1,136	1,199
TOTAL	2,782	2,400	2,186	2,399

- **Translation, adaptation, and survey application:** The questionnaire was translated into local Arabic dialects and pilot-tested in all four countries. Additional topics were added to the master questionnaire as recommended by local research partners. Data were collected on hand-held computer devices in Egypt, Morocco, and Lebanon, and with paper questionnaires in Palestine.
- **Data collection timeframe:** April 2016 – March 2017.
- **Data analysis:** Data were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and Stata.
- **Qualitative research:** In each country, separate qualitative research, in the form of focus group discussions and individual interviews, was carried out to map and analyse context-specific issues related to masculinities and to triangulate the survey findings.
- **Limitations:** The length of the questionnaire was among the reasons respondents cited for refusing to participate in the study in some settings. The sensitivity of questions related to certain topics – among them, violence and sexuality – also presented challenges for research teams. While IMAGES is based on years of testing ways to minimize both social desirability bias and to encourage men and women to feel comfortable answering sensitive questions, these are challenges in any sample survey research on such topics.

### 3. Multi-country results

IMAGES MENA is the first study of its kind in the Arab region to take a wide-angle, comparative lens to the lives of men – as sons and husbands and fathers, at home and at work, in public and private life – to better understand how they see their positions as men, and their attitudes and actions toward gender equality. Equally important, IMAGES provides women’s perspectives on these same issues. Its wealth of quantitative and qualitative findings (a portion of which are included in this report, and are also presented in greater detail in separately published companion country reports) complements a growing body of research on men and masculinities in the Arab region.

The results of IMAGES MENA cut through the stereotypes and prejudices that too often characterise outside perceptions of men and women in the Arab region, obscuring the complexity of dynamic gender identities and relations in the region. The four countries included in this first phase of IMAGES MENA – Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, and Palestine – are diverse, each presenting a particular political, economic, and social context that is central to the country-specific analyses presented in the full, multi-country report. The study results are strengthened by this diversity, and they show a rich variety, both across and within countries, of men’s and women’s perspectives on the ways in which gender roles and women’s rights are changing in their own lives and in the wider world around them.

**A majority of the men surveyed in the four countries support a wide array of inequitable, traditional attitudes. However, a sizeable minority – a quarter or more of the men surveyed in every country – show support for at least some dimensions of women’s equality and empowerment.** These men question violence against women, agree with certain laws that safeguard women’s rights, support women in leadership positions, and often want to spend more time caring for their children. Many men who were interviewed, and many women as well, showed a mixture of equitable and inequitable attitudes and practices. However, too many men in the region continue to uphold norms that perpetuate violence against women or confine women to conventional roles, and they act on these attitudes in ways that cause harm to women, children, and themselves. There is a long and winding road that must be travelled before most men – and many women, too – reach full acceptance of gender equality in all domains.

**With all the challenges, though, the pathways to progress are increasingly clear.** IMAGES MENA’s qualitative research showcases men and women who break the mould. While men’s inequitable attitudes and practices prevail across the four countries, it is clear from this research that there are also individual men and women – from the elite to the most marginalised – whose life experiences show that gender equality is possible. Indeed, their voices affirm that gender equality is not a “foreign import”, but rather can emerge from the societies themselves, given the right circumstances.

The following are key findings of the study, listed by major theme:

## CRACKS IN THE ARMOUR: GENDER NORMS AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

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Two-thirds to more than three-quarters of men support the notion that a woman's most important role is to care for the household.

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**A majority of men interviewed in the four countries support mostly inequitable views when it comes to women's roles.** For example, two-thirds to more than three-quarters of men support the notion that a woman's most important role is to care for the household. Women often internalize these same inequitable views: about half or more of women across the four countries support the same idea. In addition, strong majorities of men believe it is their role to monitor and control the movements of the women and girls in their households, a practice most men recalled starting in childhood. In some countries, majorities of women not only affirm but also appear to accept male guardianship; in others, they challenge the idea, in theory if not in practice.

**The MENA region has some of the lowest rates of women's economic participation in the world.** Given economic instability in the region in recent years, and high unemployment rates among youth (those aged 15 to 25), it is not surprising that three-quarters or more of men in the four countries, and women at nearly the same rates, support the priority of men's access to jobs over women's. Women are still widely defined – by men and women alike – as wives and mothers first, rather than by professional or workplace achievements.

**Yet, there are cracks in the armour.** Across the countries surveyed, about half of men – or fewer – believed a married woman should have the same right to work as a man. At the same time, a majority of men in all four countries would accept a woman as a boss, and were willing to work in gender-integrated workplaces. Much of this acceptance is theoretical, however; what emerges is that many men in the region support women working outside the home – as long, it seems, as he is still the main breadwinner and she is still the main caregiver and organizer of domestic life.

**Which men were more likely to support gender equality? Generally, men with greater wealth, with higher education, whose mothers had more education, and whose fathers carried out traditionally feminine household tasks are more likely to hold gender-equitable attitudes.** In Egypt and Morocco, men from urban areas had slightly more equitable attitudes. In Palestine, Egypt, and Morocco, there was little difference between younger and older men on gender attitudes, although in Lebanon younger men had slightly more equitable views.

**In nearly every other country where IMAGES has been carried out (in other regions of the world), younger men have consistently shown more equitable attitudes and some key practices than their older counterparts; in three of the four countries included in IMAGES MENA, this was not the case.** In other words, in Morocco, Palestine, and Egypt, younger men's views on gender equality do not differ substantially from those of older men. Why are younger men in the IMAGES MENA countries not showing the same movement toward supporting women's equality as younger men in many other parts of the world? The reasons are multiple and dependent on the specific country context. Many young men in these three countries report difficulties finding a job, and as such, they struggle to achieve the socially recognised hallmark of a man as financial provider. This struggle may be producing a backlash against gender equality. Young men's inequitable views may also be a result of a general climate of religious conservatism under which the younger generation has come of age. While other research in the



region has noted similar trends and posited similar drivers, further study is necessary to explore this phenomenon.

**If young men's views are *not* leading the way to gender-equitable views in the majority of the countries studied, what factors are? Education emerges as key for both men and women.** As with men, women with more education, with more educated mothers, and whose fathers carried out more traditionally feminine tasks in their childhood homes were generally more likely to have equitable views. Unlike men, however, younger women in every country held more equitable views than their older counterparts. The conclusion that emerges is that younger women in the region are yearning for more equality, but their male peers fail to share or support such aspirations. This tension between the sexes plays out in public and private spaces across the countries of study, with important country-by-country variations.

## CYCLES OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

**As other studies have shown, experiences of gender-based violence, particularly intimate partner violence and sexual harassment in the streets, are common for women across the region.** All told, across the four countries, around 10 per cent to 45 per cent of ever-married men reported ever having used physical violence against a female partner, with approximately equal numbers of women affirming they had experienced this violence. Equally harmful to women's lives are high rates of emotional violence: between 20 per cent and 80 per cent of men reported ever having perpetrated some form of emotional violence against their wives. In all four countries, as seen in other parts of the world,<sup>3</sup> men who witnessed their fathers using violence against their mothers, and men who experienced some form of violence at home as children, were significantly more likely to report perpetrating intimate partner violence in their adult relationships.

**The roots of gender-based violence, as in other parts of the world, are found in women's limited power, in violence-supportive attitudes, and in highly violent childhoods.** In all four countries, half to three-quarters of the men reported having experienced physical violence in their homes growing up, and two-thirds or more reported having experienced physical violence by teachers or peers in school. In all four countries, women had also experienced these forms of physical violence, but at lower rates than had men.

**The violence men and women experienced as children turns into violence against their own children.** Across all four countries, 29 per cent to 50 per cent of men and 40 per cent to 80 per cent of women reported using some form of physical punishment or other forms of violence against their own children. Women's higher rates of physical punishment against children are clearly a function of the fact that women carry out the majority of the caregiving. Violence against children is also gendered: in most countries, fathers tend to use more physical punishment against sons.

**The other most prevalent form of gender-based violence in the region is street-based sexual harassment, mainly sexual comments, stalking/following, or staring/ogling.** Between 31 per cent and 64 per cent of men said they had ever carried out such acts, while 40 per cent to 60 per cent of women said they had ever experienced it. When asked why they carried out such

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10% to 45% of ever-married men reported ever having used physical violence against a female partner.

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Half to three-quarters of the men reported having experienced physical violence in their homes growing up.

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3. For more information, see: <http://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/16694>

violence, the vast majority of men – up to 90 per cent in some countries – said they did it for fun, with two-thirds to three-quarters blaming women for dressing “provocatively”.

**Younger men, men with more education, and men who experienced violence as children are more likely to engage in street sexual harassment.** More educated women and those in urban areas were more likely to report that they had experienced such violence. This finding, that more educated men are more likely to have sexually harassed (with the highest rate found among men with secondary education, in three of the four countries) – and that more educated women are more likely to have experienced sexual harassment – is one that deserves more research.

## WHO IS IN CONTROL? HOUSEHOLD DECISION-MAKING

**Consistently, women and men in all four countries reported that men make most of the major household decisions, although, on the whole, men reported greater say in such matters than women acknowledged.** Compared with men, women consistently reported less control over their decision to marry the person they wanted, when they wanted, with fathers having the final say in most cases. While men may have more autonomy when it comes to choosing a mate, they also reported feeling considerable pressure to cover the escalating costs of marriage and to provide for their families, in an era of rising unemployment.

**Men expect to control their wives’ personal freedoms, from what they wear and where they go to when the couple has sex.** Two-thirds to 90 per cent of men reported exercising these various forms of control, with women affirming that their husbands sought to control them in these ways.

## FATHERHOOD, DOMESTIC CHORES, AND CAREGIVING

**When it comes to housework and childcare, attitudes translate into action – or the lack of it. The vast majority of the daily care of children and other household tasks are carried out by women, in all four countries.** Just one-tenth to one-third of men reported having recently carried out a more conventionally female task in their home, such as preparing food, cleaning, or bathing children. In all four countries, men whose fathers had participated in traditionally feminine household work, as well as men who were taught to do this work as children, were far more likely to report contributing in this way within their own marriages.

**In two countries – Egypt and Lebanon – women working outside the home may be a driver of men’s greater participation in daily chores and caregiving.** Among the small percentage of men in Egypt (10 per cent) whose spouses are working full time, 45 per cent reported participating in domestic work, far higher than men whose wives do not work. Similarly, in Lebanon, men with wives working full time reported doing more of the housework. It may be that men whose wives work were already predisposed to more equitable views (by agreeing to their spouses working), or it may be that women working outside the home pushes men to take on more care work. Whatever the case,

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even when men who are married to women who work outside the home do more of the housework, working women continue to face a double burden.

**Still, there are encouraging trends when it comes to fatherhood.** More than 70 per cent of men in all the countries reported going for at least some prenatal visits with a pregnant wife (although that male participation may reflect a degree of male control and male guardianship, as well as concern and caregiving). In all of the countries surveyed, half or more of the men said that their work takes time away from being with their children. In addition, two-fifths or more of men in all four countries reported talking with their children about important personal matters in their lives; this points to an emotional intimacy not always associated with masculine behaviour. This suggests that fatherhood may offer a pathway for engaging men in the region in their children's lives in more positive, equitable, and non-violent ways, and, ultimately, in gender equality.

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Half or more of the men said that their work takes time away from being with their children.

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## GENDERED HEALTH VULNERABILITIES AND WELL-BEING

**In addition to gender relations, family dynamics, and gender-based violence, IMAGES includes questions on specific health issues, and compares men's and women's different health vulnerabilities.** Across all four countries, the majority of men (two-thirds to three-quarters) reported that their health is better than that of other men their own age; for women, this was between one-half and two-thirds. In all four countries, upwards of one-quarter of men smoke, making it one of the leading contributors to the burden of disease in the region, with implications for men themselves and for women who care for them. Up to two-thirds of men who smoke think they smoke too much, and up to one-half of those who smoke said they have ever had a smoking-related health problem.

**Men and women were both likely to show signs of depression.** From 40 per cent to 51 per cent of women exhibited depressive symptoms, as well as 20 per cent to 28 per cent of men. The effects of conflict and unemployment were frequently cited as reasons for, or aggravating factors in, depressive symptoms among men. Syrian refugee women and men in Lebanon alike reported that men, in particular, felt a sense of lost masculine identity as a result of the conflict and displacement. At least part of this mental stress was a result of men not being able to fulfil their socially prescribed role as financial provider. For example, the majority of men in Palestine reported being frequently stressed or depressed because of not having enough work or income. In Lebanon, some 37 per cent of Syrian refugee men said they had given up looking for work, alongside high rates of reported work stress and depressive symptoms among the Lebanese population as well. All told, one-fifth to one-half of men in the four sites reported being ashamed to face their families because of lack of work or income.

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From 40% to 51% of women exhibited depressive symptoms, as well as 20% to 28% of men.

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**In sum, the results point to high levels of stress and prevalent mental health concerns among men and women, with specific gendered patterns.** In most of the countries, the results show that a significant proportion of men are under enormous pressure (mostly economic), with little recourse to formal healthcare, including mental health services, particularly for smoking and substance use.

## PUBLIC (IN)SECURITY AND ITS EFFECTS ON GENDER RELATIONS

Reflecting the realities in the region, particularly in the countries affected by conflict and displacement, IMAGES MENA includes questions on public security and the effects of conflict, examining the specific ways in which these affect women, men, and gender relations.

**In all four countries, roughly equal numbers of men and women show high levels of fear for their family's well-being and safety, and for their own.** Across countries, at least two-thirds of both men and women respondents reported such fears.

**In Palestine, 65 per cent of men and 55 per cent of women reported one or more of 12 forms of occupation-related violence and other experiences within the past five years.** The past few years have seen an escalation of occupation-related violence against Palestinians, in particular during the 2012 and 2014 Israeli wars against the Gaza Strip – resulting in the loss of thousands of lives, tens of thousands of injuries, and billions of dollars in total damage and losses.<sup>4</sup> When asked about their own occupation-related violence and experiences, respondents shared many direct ways in which the occupation had affected their lives. Men were more likely than women to report having lost land; having been harassed, detained, or injured by soldiers or settlers; having difficulty accessing health services; and having lost work or educational opportunities due to the occupation.

In Lebanon, Syrian refugee men were between two and three times more likely than Lebanese men to report that they had ever been arrested, imprisoned, or detained by police, or to have experienced some form of physical violence in public spaces (either in their home country or elsewhere). Qualitative research findings with both Syrian refugees and Lebanese-born men suggest that financial hardship, conflict-related displacement, and unemployment play a role in men's use of violence against their wives and children.

**Men in the four countries are often on the move, within or outside their own country, by choice or compelled by difficult life circumstances.** In total, between 7 and 26 per cent of men in all four countries reported ever having migrated, either in their own country or abroad, to work, study, or live for at least six months. While conflict-related displacement is different from choosing to migrate for work or study, men's mobility has substantial effects on household relations regardless of the reason for it.

**One result of migration for work, conflict-related displacement, or imprisonment – albeit in different ways – is that women in these circumstances, while their husbands are away, often take on new roles outside the home, and in the home a greater role in household decision-making.** In the qualitative interviews, among conflict-affected respondents, it emerged that men were no longer able to provide financially (whether partially or fully) during the conflict or conflict-related displacement, and that women had had to take on the role of provider. In some cases, this is because women, being less likely to be arrested or harassed by security forces, had greater freedom of movement, and men had become dependent on them.

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Between 7% and 26% of men in all four countries reported ever having migrated, either in their own country or abroad, to work, study, or live for at least six months.

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4. For more information, see: <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/563181468182960504/Economic-monitoring-report-to-the-ad-hoc-liaison-committee>

## PATHWAYS TO GENDER EQUALITY: WHAT LEADS SOME MEN TO BE MORE EQUITABLE?

Across the four countries, around half of the men and a somewhat similar proportion of the women agreed that gender equality is not “part of our traditions or culture”.<sup>5</sup> At the same time, men, and particularly women, hold many gender-equitable positions and are supportive of certain policies and laws enshrining equality for women in their countries.

**What may drive gender equality ahead in the region?** As part of the study, the research teams carried out qualitative interviews with “more empowered” women and “more equitable” men (identified via contacts from the community and from nongovernmental organizations, and defined as men who displayed more equitable views and practices than did most men in their social context, and women who were in leadership positions or professions that were traditionally male). The results of these interviews suggest the importance of life histories and family influence, as well as circumstance: some men had had to take on more caregiving because they had lost work due to displacement, conflict, or the job market. Other men had come to see their wives as strong and capable after they (the men) had spent time away from home, either migrating for work, or, in the case of Palestine, as political prisoners.

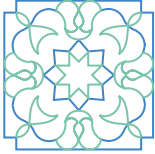
**Family role models matter: having fathers who encouraged daughters to take on non-traditional professions or to work outside the home, or who allowed daughters to choose their husbands, seems to contribute to the emergence of more empowered women.** In some countries, among men, having more equitable and involved fathers or life circumstances that forced men to take on new household roles were the drivers of more equitable attitudes and practices. It is with these men “bucking the trend”, with the sizeable minority of men who already believe in equality, and with young women’s yearning for an equal playing field that movement toward greater gender equality may take hold and gradually ripple through ever-wider circles of men and women. Other men talked about how they came to understand the problem of gender injustice from their work, or from messages they had seen in the media.

The qualitative interviews yielded stories of tenderness, of deep caring and caregiving by men, and of men who supported daughters to make their own decisions about marriage. They yielded the stories of men in Palestine who had been imprisoned by Israeli security forces and who came to see the ability of their wives to manage the household and work while they were away, or who anguished over being able to leave prison in time to be with their wife when their child was born. There were interviews with Syrian refugee men, who struggled with their loss of status from no longer being providers, and who felt emasculated at having to depend both on humanitarian aid and on their wives – some of these men came to accept this new gender order; with men in Egypt, who supported their wives’ education and work; and with men in Morocco, who argued passionately for a level playing field between the sexes as a reflection of a just society. They are not the majority of men, to be sure, but they are key to a better future for women and men alike.

<sup>5</sup> For the exact wording of the question, see the full, multi-country report at: [www.imagesmena.org](http://www.imagesmena.org)

## 4. Country-specific results

The following are the key findings by country. The full, multi-country report provides more extensive background on the gender equality policies in each country, the nuances of the findings (bringing together qualitative with quantitative findings), and country-specific recommendations and conclusions.



### Egypt

**Men and, to a lesser extent, women hold inequitable views about gender roles and rights.**

With a mean Gender Equitable Men (GEM) Scale<sup>6</sup> score of 0.9 for men and 1.3 for women (3.0 being the most gender-equitable score), the majority of Egyptians have patriarchal attitudes toward male and female rights and relations. Wealthier men, those with higher education, and those living in urban areas tend to hold more equitable views, as do more educated, younger, single, urban women. Men who, as children, saw their fathers involved in housework also score higher on the scale.

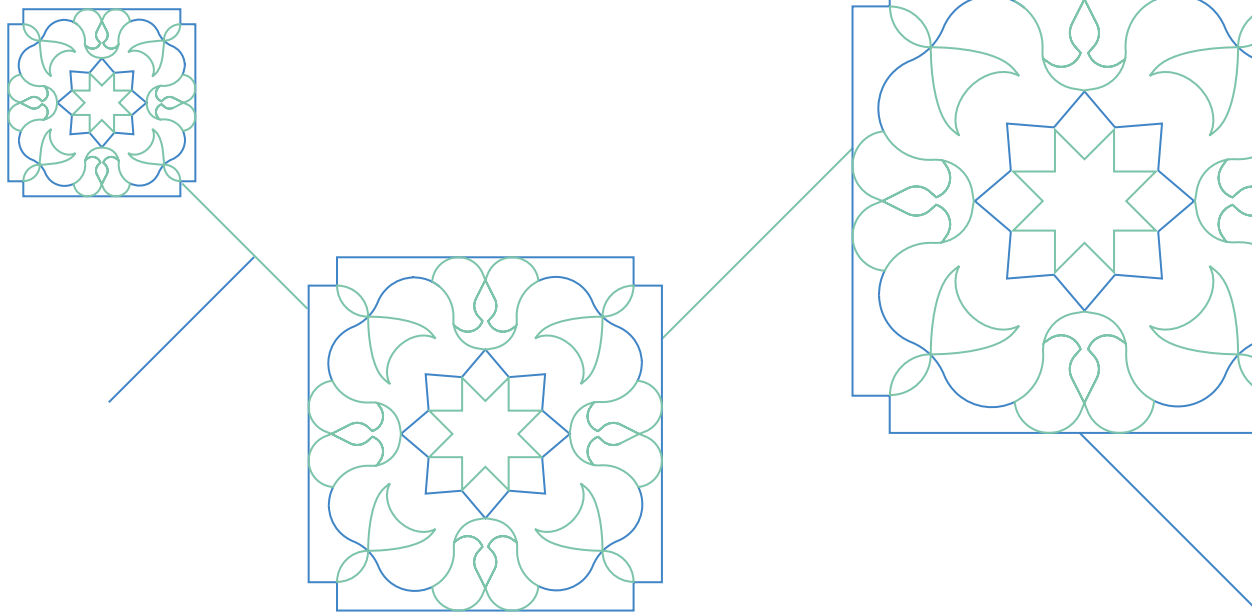
**Men are resistant to women working outside the home, and to their participation in aspects of political and public life.** However, two-thirds or more of men surveyed support educational equality for boys and girls and equal pay for equal work, and reported that they would be willing to work with female colleagues should women gain access to the workplace.

**Women continue to carry the load when it comes to housework, while men make most of the household decisions.** These patterns begin in childhood, with men and women often following the models established by their parents. Both men and women reported having more power and control in household decision-making than the other gender acknowledges.

**In spite of the gap in who does the daily caregiving, men would like to do more.** While more than 60 per cent of men said they spend too little time with their children because of work, nearly half also participate in some aspects of childcare. Almost half of men and women reported being in favour of paid parental leave for fathers.

**Men and women experienced high rates of violence growing up.** Almost one-third of men were beaten as children at home, and more than 80 per cent were physically punished by their teachers. Girls were less vulnerable to physical violence at school, but more vulnerable at home.

6. The Gender Equitable Men (GEM) Scale is a validated instrument to assess attitudes about gender, which has been adapted and validated in household research in more than 20 countries. For more information, see: <http://promundoglobal.org/resources/measuring-gender-attitude-using-gender-equitable-men-scale-gems-in-various-socio-cultural-settings/>



**Economic uncertainty and women's low labour-market participation mean that men face tremendous pressure to be providers.** Almost 80 per cent of men are the main breadwinners for their family. More than half of men reported frequently feeling stressed due to lack of work, and worried about not being able to meet their family's daily needs. More than 60 per cent of male respondents worried about their ability to provide their families with daily necessities, among other concerns.

**Support for female genital mutilation is high.** Some 70 per cent of men, and more than half of women, approve of the practice. More than two-thirds of men and women said the decision to circumcise their daughters is made jointly between husbands and wives.

**Men and women alike reported high rates of men's use of violence against women.** Almost half of men reported having ever used physical violence against their wives. More than 70 per cent of men and women said they believe that wives should tolerate violence to keep the family together.

**Street sexual harassment is commonly perpetrated by men and frequently experienced by urban women.** More than 60 per cent of men reported ever having sexually harassed a woman or girl, and a similar proportion of women reported such unwanted attentions. More women than men blame the victim for having been harassed.

**In spite of attitudes and practices favouring male privilege, between one-quarter and one-third of men said they support selected aspects of equality for women.** Understanding who these men are and why they are different is key to developing new programmes and policies to engage men in social change.





# Lebanon

**Lebanon faces numerous challenges to the achievement of gender equality, including the broad effects of recent regional conflicts and the presence of nearly 2 million refugees in the country.**<sup>7</sup> The strains from the Syrian refugee crisis reverberate directly in household relations, in men's sense of economic stress, and, for some men, in a sense of emasculation.

**Relatively large percentages of Lebanese men and women support gender equality, even as many men continue to hold inequitable views.** Syrian refugees in Lebanon hold slightly more inequitable views. Younger respondents, those with more education, those with greater wealth, those whose mothers had higher levels of education, and those whose fathers participated in traditionally feminine domestic work in their childhood homes hold more equitable views. Men hold somewhat more rigid ideas about sexual roles and rights than do women, especially regarding men's sexual lives.

**Many respondents experienced various forms of violence during childhood; these experiences are linked with other forms of violence, including men's use of street-based sexual harassment.** Fifty-eight per cent of men and 37 per cent of women reported having experienced one or more forms of neglect, emotional abuse, or physical abuse in their homes as children. Boys may have been particularly vulnerable to violence and corporal punishment: half of men surveyed reported having been slapped or spanked in their homes as children.

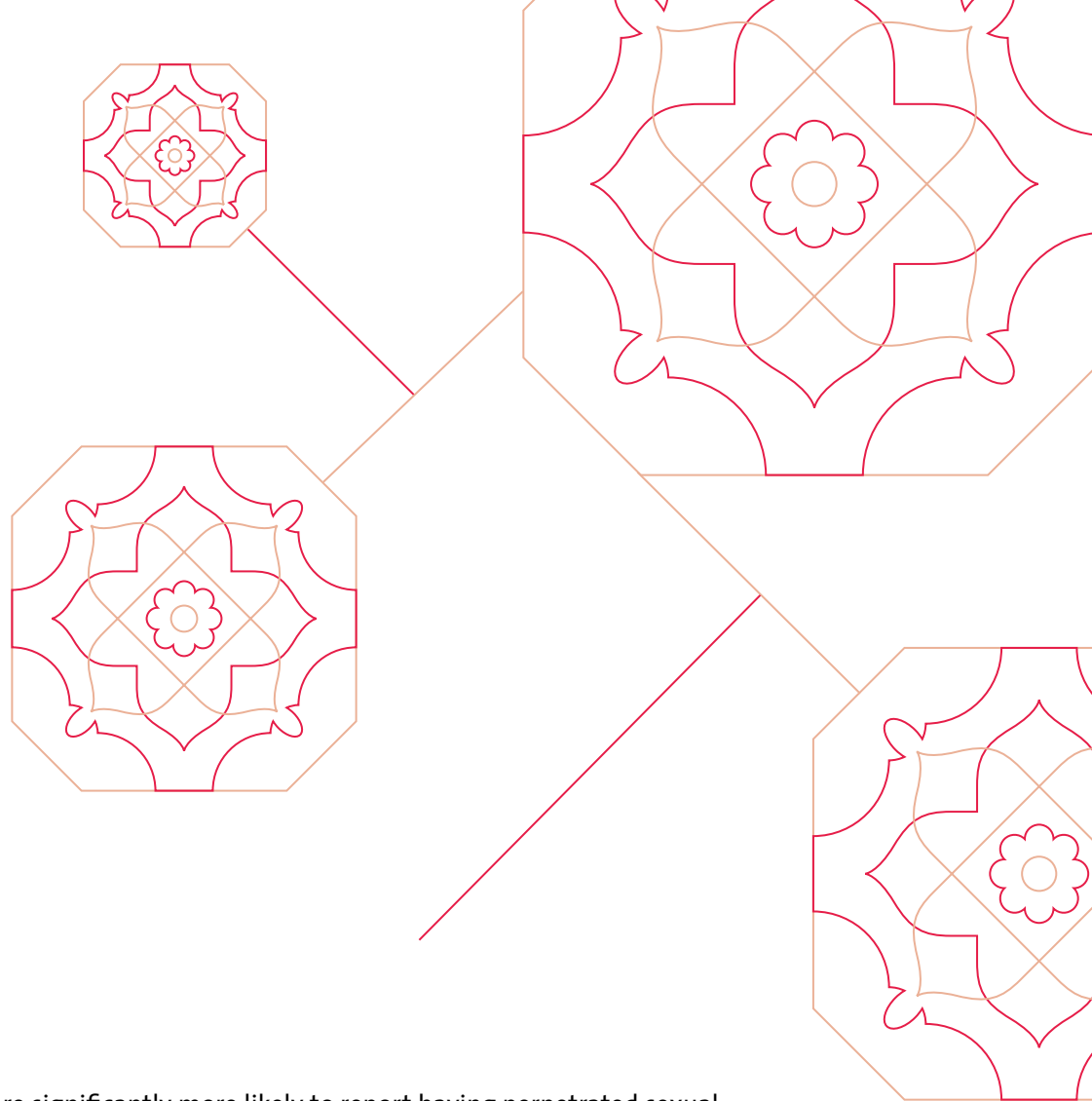
**Women reported washing clothes, cleaning the kitchen or sitting rooms, and cleaning the bathroom or toilet almost unanimously, while only 26 per cent of ever-married men reported ever carrying out these tasks.** Qualitative findings show that shifts in livelihoods, a working wife, migration, and other factors can prompt some men to take on more domestic work, but the overall trend speaks to widespread inequality in sharing household duties.

**Although fathers carry out a limited amount of daily caregiving, there are exceptions, and these point to possible pathways toward equality.** As with domestic work, women reported far greater involvement in routine caregiving than men. In qualitative interviews, however, men and women affirmed examples of men doing this work, mostly in times of conflict or war when men are unable to play the role of provider, or when women are less able to undertake this work because of pregnancy, illness, or injury.

**Nearly 60 per cent of women reported having ever experienced some form of sexual harassment in the street; one-third of men reported having ever carried out this harassment.** Men with inequitable gender attitudes and men who experienced violence

<sup>7</sup> For more information, see the full, multi-country report at: [www.imagesmena.org](http://www.imagesmena.org)





in their childhood home are significantly more likely to report having perpetrated sexual harassment.

**Depressive symptoms are common for men (28 per cent) and women (40 per cent), with Syrian men showing higher rates of depression than Lebanese men.** The effects of the conflict were frequently cited as a reason for depressive symptoms. Syrian women and men alike reported that men felt they had lost identity due to the conflict. Some 37 per cent of Syrian men said that they had given up looking for work. High rates of work stress and depressive symptoms were reported among the Lebanese population, as well.

**Many respondents share fears for their physical and economic well-being.** Some 96 per cent of men and 97 per cent of women, Syrian and Lebanese respondents combined, reported that they “worry about their family’s safety”. Alongside high levels of reported fears for safety in the completed sample, many potential respondents declined to participate in the survey, due to safety or other unknown considerations. Additionally, the proportion of respondents who had ever been married was somewhat lower than expected in the original sample. To address this challenge, researchers carried out a linked study, sampling only ever-married men and women and focusing on couple relations and intimate partner violence.



## Morocco

### **Men and, to a lesser extent, women hold mixed views about gender roles and rights.**

With a mean GEM score of 1.2 for men and 1.7 for women (3.0 being the most gender-equitable score), the majority of men hold patriarchal views on many aspects of male and female rights and relations. Men with more education and with more educated mothers tend to have more equitable views.

### **Men are open to women working outside the home and to their participation in political and public life.**

More than three-quarters support educational equality for boys and girls, and more than half believe in equal rights to work for married women and men. For their part, a majority of women challenge norms that restrict their roles to the domestic sphere, and they are more strongly in favour of their right to work and to occupy positions of public leadership.

### **Women continue to carry the load when it comes to housework, while men make most of the household decisions, either on their own or jointly with their wives.**

These patterns begin in childhood, with men and women often following the models established by their parents. Both men and women reported having more power and control in household decisions than the other gender acknowledges.

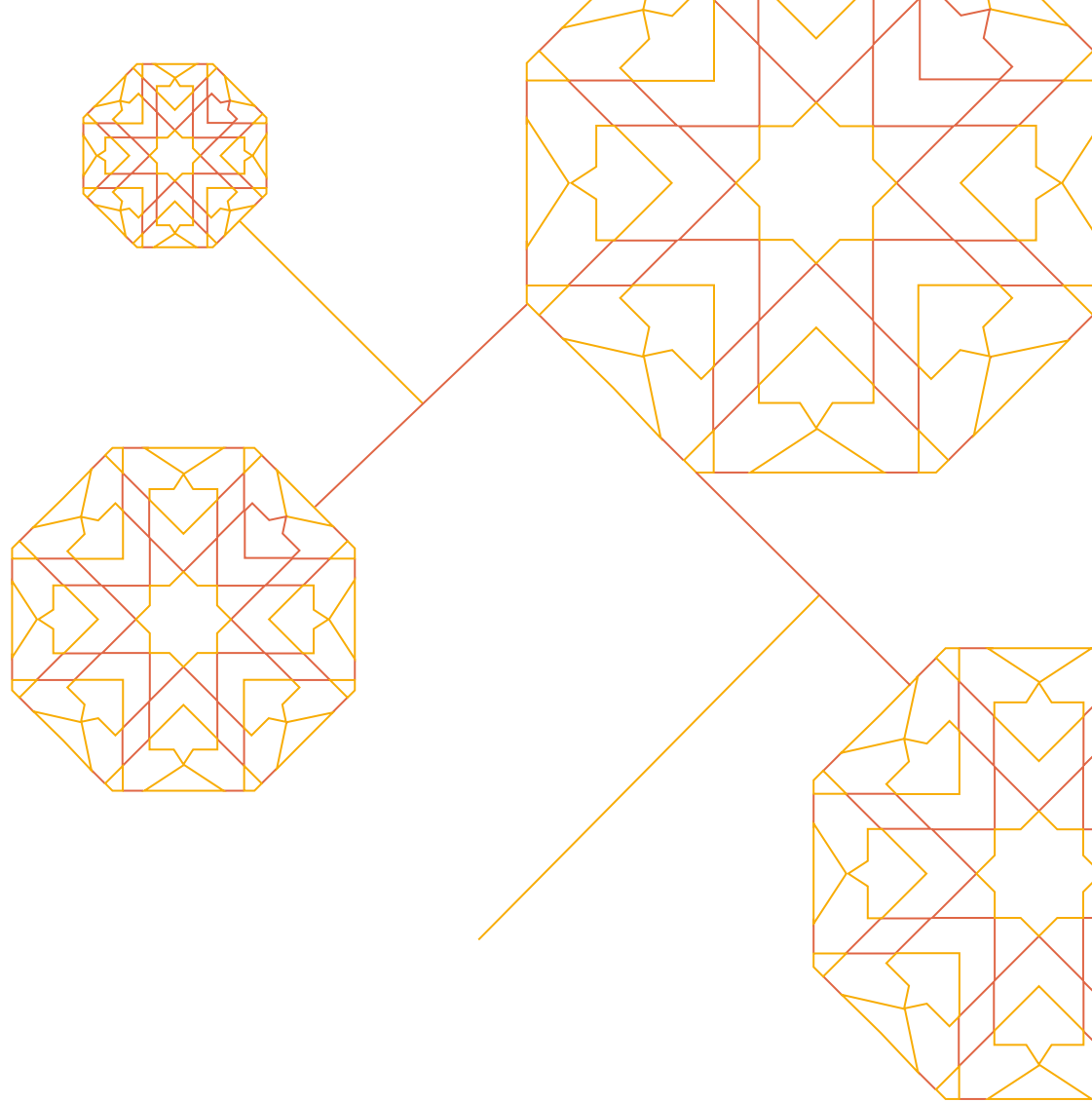
**In spite of the gap in who does the daily caregiving, men would like to do more.** While more than half of men said they spend too little time with their children because of work, almost half are involved in some aspects of childcare. More than 80 per cent of men and women reported being in favour of paid parental leave for fathers.

**Men and women reported high rates of violence growing up.** More than 60 per cent of men were beaten as children at home, and 80 per cent physically punished by their teachers. Girls were less vulnerable to physical violence at school, but at home, were almost as vulnerable as their male peers.

**Men are the main breadwinners, but women and youth feel the economic pressure as well.** Two-thirds of men are the main financial providers for their family. Women and men under age 35 reported frequently feeling stressed due to lack of work, and around two-thirds of male and female respondents worried about not being able to meet their family's daily needs.

### **Men and women are concerned about the present and anxious about the future.**

Virtually all men and women reported fearing for their own safety and more than three-quarters reported worrying about their family's prospects. Around one-half of women, and one-quarter of men, exhibited depressive symptoms.



**Men and women alike reported high rates of men’s use of violence against women.** More than half of men reported having ever been emotionally abusive toward their wives, and 15 per cent reported having ever used physical violence against them. More than 60 per cent of men and almost half of women believe that wives should tolerate violence to keep the family together.

**Street sexual harassment is commonly perpetrated by men and frequently experienced by women.** More than half of men reported ever having sexually harassed a woman or girl, and more than 60 per cent of women reported such unwanted attentions. More women than men blamed the victim’s appearance for provoking harassment.

**Morocco is in a time of transition, where laws outstrip practices and men and women find themselves on shifting ground.** While men are largely in favour of legislation promoting women’s political, economic, and social rights, this stance on gender equality in public policy is at odds with their attitudes toward – and practices in – private life, which tend toward more conservative views of women’s rights and roles. Men and women talked about a “crisis of masculinity”. Both are struggling to find new ground where public and private roles and rights align.



# Palestine

**The reality of Palestinian lives – including gender relations and gender dynamics – has been carved by the prolonged Israeli occupation.** The occupation has become the central structural framework of analysis for all elements of political, economic, and social life in Palestine. IMAGES findings in Palestine must be understood within this contextual framework.

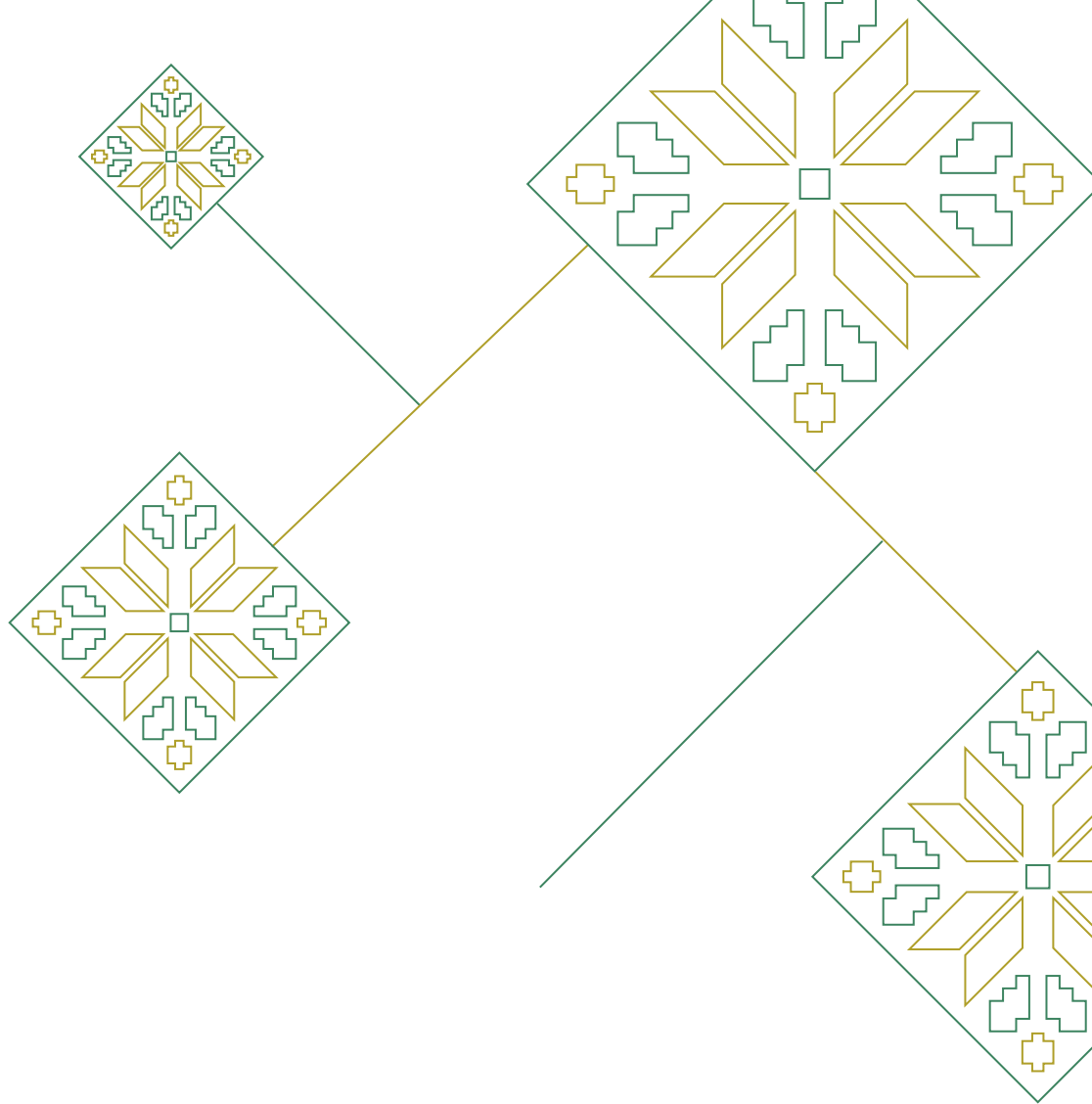
**Inequitable gender attitudes remain common in Palestine, although women hold more equitable views than men do.** For example, around 80 per cent of men and 60 per cent of women agree that a woman's most important role is to take care of the home. Men with greater wealth, with more education, and whose fathers participated in commonly feminine household work hold more equitable attitudes, however. Notably, there is no difference in gender-related attitudes between younger and older men.

**At the same time, there are many signs of more equitable views.** For instance, some three-quarters of women and half of men agree that a married woman should have the same right as her husband to work outside the home. Most respondents of all genders reject the idea that it is more important to educate boys than girls when resources are scarce, as one among other signs of equitable views in Palestine. In practice, there are also many men contributing in commonly feminine household work, as well as sharing decision-making authority with women. Fewer than 20 per cent of men and women think that it is shameful when men engage in caring for children or other domestic work.

**Several men (interviewed for the qualitative portion of the study) who had been imprisoned by the Israeli security forces for political reasons pointed to the extraordinary ability of women to carry a double or triple burden at home during the men's imprisonment.** The ability of women to simultaneously manage the household, care for children, and earn an income gave these men greater respect and appreciation for women. This newfound respect contributed to some men carrying out commonly female household tasks, such as feeding, bathing or changing babies' diapers. In the cases of these political prisoners' families, the change in women's roles during the husband's absence was met with more appreciation and a reconsideration of women's abilities to perform different roles. At the same time, this led to a reevaluation of men's domestic work, reflected in the willingness of many ex-prisoners to share household work with women.

**There is strong agreement among men and women that gender equality has not been achieved in Palestine.** Three-quarters of men and nearly 87 per cent of women agree with the statement, "We as Palestinians need to do more work to promote the equality of women and men".

**Fifty-nine per cent of women and 42 per cent of men believe that women should have greater representation in political authority.** By contrast, however, a majority of both men and women agree that "women are too emotional to be leaders".



**Twenty-five per cent of male respondents and 22 per cent of female respondents reported witnessing their mother being beaten by their father or a male relative during their childhood.** More men than women had experienced physical violence from someone in the household during their childhood. Men faced more bullying and other forms of violence in school than did women, with 57 per cent of men saying they were physically punished by a teacher (compared with 30 per cent of women), and 24 per cent of men saying they were bullied at school (compared with 14 per cent of women).

**Nearly all respondents hold fears related to personal or family safety.** Furthermore, some 70 per cent of women and 78 per cent of men worry about not being able to provide their families with the necessities of daily life. These fears and worries are experienced alongside the constant threat imposed by the occupation on many aspects of Palestinian life.

**There are significant differences between men's and women's agency and autonomy with regard to arranging and planning a marriage.** Forty-four per cent of men said that they had the greatest say about their own marriage arrangements, compared with only five per cent of women. About 25 per cent of men and 39 per cent of women said that their marriage decision was shared between the husband and wife. Furthermore, the majority of men (88 per cent) and women (82 per cent) think that marriage should be ultimately the couple's decision, not the family's decision.

**Women's participation in higher education has been increasing in Palestine, as has women's participation in the paid labour market, compared with previous decades. Still, the division of work within the household falls sharply along gendered lines.** This can be linked to the worsening political and economic situation under Israeli occupation. Women reported high levels of involvement in nearly all types of domestic work, but men mostly concentrated on activities outside the home. Men whose fathers participated in commonly feminine household work, as well as men who were taught to do this work as children, are far more likely to contribute to the household work within their own marriages.

**While women carry out the majority of daily caregiving of children, men express a desire to be more involved.** One encouraging finding is that more than 60 per cent of fathers in the sample reported talking with their child about important personal matters in their lives; this points to an emotional intimacy not always associated with masculine behaviour.

**Most respondents – 65 per cent of men and 55 per cent of women – reported having experienced one or more specific forms of occupation-related violence and adversity within the past five years.** Men were more likely than women to report having lost land; having been harassed by soldiers or settlers, detained, or injured; having had difficulty accessing health services; and having lost work or educational opportunities due to the occupation, but occupation-related violence and difficulties are very common among all respondents.

**Nearly one in five men (17 per cent) said they had ever perpetrated an act of physical violence against a female partner.** Twenty-one per cent of women reported ever having experienced such violence. Men who witnessed violence against their mother as children and men who experienced physical violence in their childhood homes are statistically significantly more likely to report perpetrating intimate partner violence in their adult relationships.

## 5. Conclusions and pathways to equality

Across the countries studied, around half of men, and a similar proportion of women, think that gender equality is not “part of our traditions or culture”.<sup>8</sup> At the same time, men, and particularly women, hold many gender-equitable positions, and are supportive of more policies and laws that enshrine equality for women in their countries. What factors may be driving men’s acceptance of gender equality in the region?

Qualitative research included individual interviews with “more empowered” women and “more equitable” men. The results suggest the importance of circumstance: some men have had to take on more caregiving because they have lost work due to displacement, conflict, or the job market. Other men came to see their wives as strong and capable when they (the men) spent time away from home, either migrating for work or, in the case of Palestine, as prisoners.

**Family role models and early childhood experiences matter.** Fathers who encourage their daughters to take on non-traditional professions or to work outside the home, or who allow them to choose their husband, seem to contribute to the emergence of more empowered women. Perhaps more than any other factors, involved fatherhood and life circumstances that forced men to take on new household roles were the drivers of more equitable attitudes and practices among men. It is these men who “buck the trend”, the sizeable minority of men who already believe in equality, and young women’s yearning for an equal playing field that may ultimately encourage further progress toward gender equality in the region.

The men and women of IMAGES MENA acknowledge that manhood today is not what it used to be. Many men lament what they see as the decline and fall of their domestic authority, and their weakened status as financial providers, while some women question whether gender-equitable laws and policies can really make a difference in their daily lives, and if so, whether that difference is necessarily for the better.

**While it is fashionable to talk about a “crisis of masculinity”, in reality, men and women are at a crossroads as they try to find their way in a shifting world.** For much of the population in the region, gendered relations, like life in general, are under strain. Extended family arrangements continue to give way to nuclear family structures. Conflict, high youth unemployment, political uncertainty, and economic instability all filter into household relations and into men’s identities, attitudes, and practices. Men, in particular, are highly conflicted, holding to a past that no longer fits the present, and frequently uncertain about or unwilling to accept change that might ease their heavy burden of societally imposed patriarchal duty.

Public, structural changes in many of the IMAGES MENA countries – some of them quite dramatic – are throwing the gender order into question. However, these changes

8. For the exact wording of the question, see the full, multi-country report at: [www.imagesmena.org](http://www.imagesmena.org).

have not, for the most part, permeated the private, domestic domain or transformed respondents' attitudes as much as expected. Some of these countries have seen dramatic popular upheavals and movements, employment crises, wars, or on-going occupation – these, among other structural factors, have had undeniable effects on the gender order, particularly on men's ability to realise their traditionally assumed responsibility to provide for the family's physical safety and financial security. For women, these dynamics and upheavals have occasionally opened new social spaces and opportunities, both economic and otherwise, but often at a cost to them and to their male counterparts.

**Patterns of thought and behaviour are often passed from one generation to the next, to positive and negative effect.** All IMAGES studies have found that violence creates violence and care creates care, and the MENA study is no different. In each of the four countries studied, a high proportion of respondents reported various experiences of violence in childhood. Many respondents witnessed violence against their mothers, and reported suffering physical discipline or outright violence at home, bullying or physical punishment at school, and violence in their childhood communities. Childhood seems to have been a particularly violent experience for men in the study – leaving aside the enormous toll taken by the occupation-related violence reported in the Palestinian study, or by the conflict experienced by Syrian refugees. As prior IMAGES research has found, the intergenerational consequences of this violence are clear: men who witness and experience violence as children are significantly more likely to use violence in their adult relationships.

At the same time, the more encouraging corollary to this finding also holds true in the MENA countries of study: men who witnessed their fathers engaging in childcare and other household work, and those who were taught as children to engage in these tasks, are more likely to undertake this work as husbands and fathers. In short, care work – and the shattering of out-dated gender roles that occurs when men embrace this work – passes from a father to his children. Mothers and women make a difference pushing men toward gender equality, as well: men with more educated mothers tended to have more equitable practices and attitudes, and in two countries, women's work outside the home seemed to nudge men toward doing more of the housework.

The findings point to key recommendations for the region, including:

## **1. ENGAGE KEY SOURCES OF SOCIAL INFLUENCE TO CHANGE SOCIAL NORMS THAT UPHOLD INEQUITABLE MASCULINITIES**

As noted throughout the report, a majority of men, and around half of women (or more), support the historical gender division of men as providers and women as caregivers. Many men and women in the four countries are anxious or uneasy about changes to this gendered order. Changing these attitudes requires more than focusing on individuals. It requires engagement with religious, political, and community leaders; producers of new and traditional media; and the private sector. It also means working with women as well as men; in their roles as caregivers and mothers, women exert tremendous influence in perpetuating social norms. Specific recommendations include:



- Use new and traditional media to question stereotypes and men’s conventional roles, building on existing, positive trends toward change, like those identified in the qualitative research.
- Engage with progressive religious discourses and religious figures to challenge gender stereotypes and promote equitable versions of manhood.
- Introduce discussions about more equitable masculinity into religious training curricula, as well as into progressive religious media and other avenues of religious education, to help men and women better understand the possibilities for gender equality that are inherent in their faith.
- Build on existing literature, art, and cultural expressions that already include messages of positive masculinities, and partner with mass media, social media, children and youth media producers, and other artistic producers, to include messages about changing norms related to masculinity.

## **2. ENGAGE MEN IN SUPPORTING A COMPREHENSIVE POLICY AGENDA FOR WOMEN’S RIGHTS**

Many men in the four countries support, at least in theory, certain laws and policies that would promote full equality for women. This finding affirms the strategic importance of engaging men as allies in supporting the full policy agenda for women’s rights. Specific recommendations for this engagement include:

- Complement legislative reforms on women’s rights – particularly those related to gender-based violence – with public discussions and awareness campaigns to help men understand why such change is necessary and to see the benefits to themselves of such changes.
- Identify and support key male political leaders, both in the public sector and in civil society, as visible allies in women’s empowerment. This may include implementing and expanding campaigns inspired by UN Women’s HeForShe campaign.
- Engage men in programmes and platforms that are informed and driven by the UN’s Sustainable Development Goal 5, to “achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”. This includes working with men proactively, as well as holding them accountable for their roles in accomplishing this goal; in eliminating all forms of discrimination, violence, and harmful practices against all women and girls; and in supporting women’s and girls’ full social, economic, and political equality.
- Build alliances between the small number of local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) already working with men and boys and more established women’s rights NGOs.
- Carry out gender-awareness training for (largely male) law enforcement personnel – police, lawyers, and judges, among them – to encourage their active implementation of these laws, and to encourage their support for bringing more women into these traditionally male professions.

### **3. CHANGE THE WAY BOYS AND GIRLS ARE SOCIALISED, FROM THE HOME TO THE SCHOOL SYSTEM**

IMAGES results confirm, across all four countries, that patterns in childhood, from witnessing violence to witnessing men's domination of household decision-making, repeat themselves in adulthood. Men who witnessed or experienced violence as children are more likely to repeat this violence as adults, an association that holds true both for men who use violence against female partners and for men who use sexual harassment in the street. Conversely, men who, as children, witnessed involved fathers are more likely to repeat these behaviours as adults. Given the high rates of violence witnessed and experienced, in the home and at school, by boys and girls, the challenges are great. To change these often violent and inequitable childhoods, the following actions are needed:

- Challenge and eliminate gender stereotypes about the social, political, and economic roles of men and women in school texts and curricula, and implement school-based gender-transformative education for boys and girls.
- Expand teacher training to include non-violent child discipline, and introduce policies that hold teachers accountable when they use violence against children.
- Train teachers and other school staff to recognise and respond to child abuse.
- Implement campaigns and school-based efforts to reach boys and girls at younger ages about sharing care and domestic work.
- Build on existing, evidence-based parent-training programmes, in the region and globally, to encourage and support parents – both mothers and fathers – to raise sons and daughters equally, to practice non-violent childrearing, and to advocate for legislation that bans all forms of violence against children.

### **4. EMPOWER YOUTH AS AGENTS OF CHANGE FOR GENDER EQUALITY**

The finding that young men in three study countries hold attitudes that are as inequitable as (and sometimes more inequitable than) those of older men, affirms the challenge to engaging young men as allies in achieving equality for women. Younger women, on the other hand, tend to hold significantly more equitable gender attitudes than older women do, suggesting their eagerness to be part of social change. To engage young people as agents of change for gender equality, the following actions are needed:

- Mainstream courses in secondary schools and universities that focus on students' abilities to think critically about transforming inequitable gender norms and practices.
- Support the creation of youth-led campaigns and activism to promote gender equality in the region.

- Support youth leadership training for young men and young women through university coursework in gender studies, and in gender-transformative programming and opportunities for internships and mentoring for youth leaders. The small number of gender studies courses offered at universities across the IMAGES MENA countries would benefit from expanding their scope to include the study of men and masculinities in their programmes, and from partnering with academic institutions – particularly those in the Global South – with longstanding experience in these fields.
- Use sports-based programmes and existing youth development sectors to promote gender equality and include gender-sensitivity training in their activities.

## **5. BREAK CYCLES OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE BY IMPLEMENTING AND SCALING UP EVIDENCE-BASED PREVENTION**

IMAGES MENA affirms high rates of violence by men against women in their homes, and by men against women in the streets. There is a growing evidence base of effective programmes in the primary prevention of gender-based violence that should be adapted, tested, implemented, and taken to scale in the MENA region, in addition to response programmes.<sup>9</sup> These include, but are not limited to, programmes that:

- Scale up community-based interventions that change violence-supportive norms, and engage community leaders in both preventing gender-based violence and holding men who use gender-based violence accountable.
- Provide psycho-social – and other forms of – support for children and youth who witness violence in their homes.
- Expand and implement community-mapping and bystander intervention programmes in which men become part of speaking out against street sexual harassment, and expand programming around safer cities for women and girls.
- Implement and scale up gender-based violence prevention curricula for young men and young women, employers, and teachers in schools and workplaces.
- Test and evaluate integrated gender-based violence prevention efforts, such as those that promote women’s rights, including women’s economic empowerment, together with sensitization activities for their husbands.

## **6. PROMOTE MEN’S CAREGIVING AND WOMEN’S FULL INVOLVEMENT IN THE WORKPLACE**

IMAGES MENA results confirm the highly inequitable burden of unpaid care work shouldered by women and the extremely limited participation of women in the formal labour market that characterise the region. At the same time, results affirm that many men appreciate and value their role as fathers and caregivers, and that

9. For more information, see: [http://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2015/prevention\\_framework\\_unwomen\\_nov2015.pdf](http://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2015/prevention_framework_unwomen_nov2015.pdf)

involved caregiving by men could become the key driver of intergenerational change in gender relations in the region. In addition, in Egypt and Lebanon, many men whose wives work are slowly taking on more domestic activities. It is clear, therefore, that promoting equality in the region requires dual, concerted efforts to promote both women's participation in the workplace and men's participation in domestic chores and caregiving. For these efforts, it is necessary to:

- Create protocols and train health providers to engage men as fathers in the public health system, the workplace, and early childhood development programmes.
- Advocate for maternity and paternity leave, and family-friendly policies and support services for working parents, such as subsidized childcare.
- Scale up workplace preparation, income generation, and leadership training for women, in tandem with actions to sensitize men about supporting women and girls in the workplace and in leadership positions.
- Train male senior-level managers in the workplace, as well as policymakers, in ways to encourage women's leadership and create women-supportive workplaces.

## **7. ENGAGE THE HEALTH SECTOR AS A POINT OF ENTRY FOR ENGAGING MEN AS ALLIES IN GENDER EQUALITY**

IMAGES results affirm the numerous health vulnerabilities of women and men, as well as men's limited health-seeking behaviours. In addition, in qualitative interviews, men reported significant levels of stress and depressive symptoms stemming from their inability to fulfil the provider role. Women affirmed that men's stress was often taken out on them in the form of emotional and physical violence. Thus, efforts should be implemented to promote men's own health- and help-seeking behaviours, as well as to engage men as allies in women's and children's health. To these ends:

- Engage men as allies in women's reproductive health needs and men's own reproductive health needs.
- Develop training curricula and protocols for making health systems "friendly" to men, and train health professionals to be attuned to men's and women's mental health needs.
- Use men's high rate of participation in prenatal visits as a gateway for their participation in maternal and child health, and for men's own entrance into the health system.

## **8. INCREASE ATTENTION TO MEN AND WOMEN AFFECTED BY DISPLACEMENT AND CONFLICT AND THEIR GENDER- AND CONFLICT-SPECIFIC NEEDS**

Research findings from conflict-affected communities and populations in Lebanon and Palestine affirm high rates of stress, trauma, violence, and unmet needs related to income, education, and health services. The findings also affirm the relative lack

of attention to men's gender-specific realities in these settings. More responsive humanitarian action that includes an understanding of masculinities should:

- Train humanitarian sector workers in ways to engage men as allies for gender equality in post-conflict settings, and in how to understand the effects of displacement on men.
- Provide gender-specific psycho-social and trauma support for men and women, including group, individual, and community-based therapy.
- Engage those men who show positive coping skills and who are “voices of resistance” to conflict and violence, including gender-based violence, as mentors and peer promoters for other men and boys.
- Screen men and women for mental health concerns and exposure to violence and trauma.
- Build on the potential of men's connections to their children and involvement as fathers to mitigate the effects of displacement.

## **9. CARRY OUT ADDITIONAL APPLIED RESEARCH ON MEN AND MASCULINITIES**

There has been relatively limited research, and very little carried out as part of national or on-going surveys, on men and gender equality in the region. IMAGES MENA is not intended to be the last word on the topic, but should serve only as an example of the kinds of questions that could be included in future data collection on gender, violence, health, and other topics. Specific suggestions for additional work include:

- Carry out research to analyse how men and boys are portrayed in media, as a complement to the extensive existing work on media presentations of women, and use this information to engage with media content producers.
- Use the results of IMAGES and other research to build on the positive discourses around gender equality that already exist in the MENA region.
- Include questions about men's attitudes and practices related to gender equality in existing, nationally representative surveys, and use the resulting data to inform and support policy changes that promote full equality for women and girls.

**Finally, it is important to note that men's attitudes and actions can change for the better.** Although the majority of men who were interviewed in the four countries cling to traditional gendered attitudes and roles, on any given issue, one-quarter or more hold more open, more equitable views. The actions of those men who are more progressive in their practices – of those, for example, who are involved in daily childcare – are, more often than not, pragmatic choices based on circumstance rather than the product of an ideological stand on gender equality. The challenge ahead lies in identifying and supporting these daily demonstrations of equality and the men behind them, for their own sake, as well as for that of future generations who should follow their lead.





# IMAGES.

MENA  
the International Men  
and Gender Equality Survey

