

# The Arab Transformations

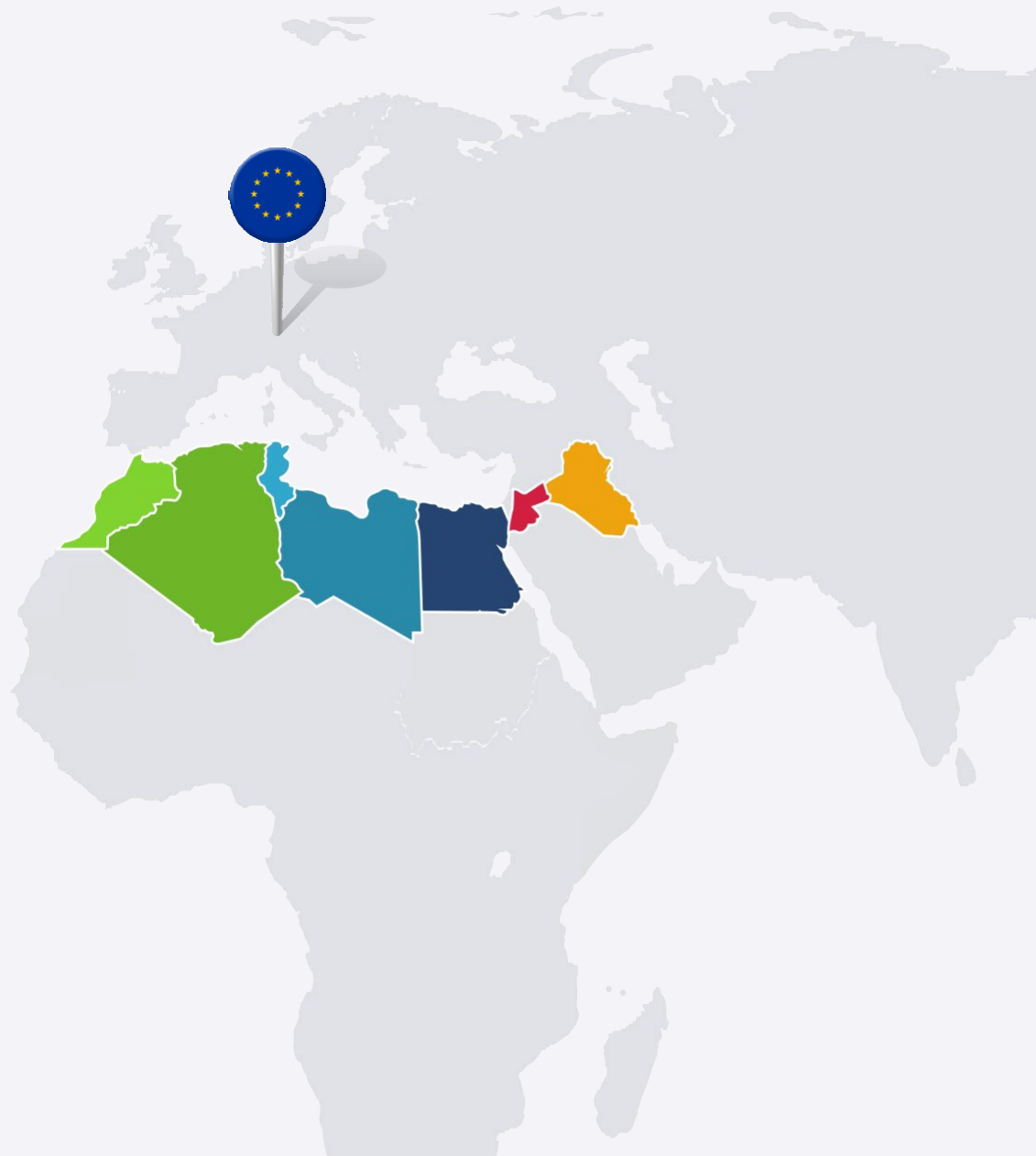
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Gender Equality and MENA Women's Empowerment in  
the Aftermath of the 2011 Uprisings

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# GENDER EQUALITY AND MENA WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IN THE AFTERMATH OF 2011

## **Abstract**

The MENA countries which this Project has considered form part of a 'band' across the map from Morocco in the West to perhaps India in the East which is profoundly patriarchal in its norms and values, treating half the population like children where they are not thought of more as property. Such treatment also brings social cohesion into question, however: women cannot sensibly be part of a consensus about fair dealing and equal treatment when even the laws are not fair with respect to them.

The main conclusion of this Report is that there is little support among either men or women in MENA for gender equality and the empowerment of women. Women are much more supportive than men, although even among women support is low. The gap in support between men and women is noticeably larger in Morocco, Jordan and Iraq and lowest in Libya, with Tunisia and Egypt lying between. The more educated, the better off and those living in urban areas are more supportive and those who support all status law being based on shari'a are less supportive. As in other research, age makes no difference, indicating that young people are no more supportive than older ones and confirming that there has been no generational shift to more liberal values. The differences between countries are statistically significant, with Iraq being the most supportive, closely followed by Morocco and Tunisia, and Libya the least supportive closely followed by Egypt. Jordan lies between the two groups. This finding is much as would be expected. Egypt has long been recognised as one of the countries most restrictive of women's rights in the MENA region and the information emerging from Libya since the fall of Gadhafi indicates very conservative attitudes to women's rights. Tunisia and Morocco have been widely reported as having more progressive attitudes to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. Iraq is not frequently mentioned in the literature as having progressive attitudes, but until the new Constitution of 2005 it had some of the most progressive status law in the region. The analysis suggests that since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century attitudes towards gender equality and the empowerment of women have become more conservative in Egypt and less conservative in Morocco and Iraq. In Tunisia support for personal status law being enacted in accordance with shari'a has increased noticeably, possibly possibly to the influence of Political Islam in the country since 2011.

The findings also confirm those of more recent research that questions the extent to which citizens want procedural democracy as the system of government in their country. Our findings suggest that support for procedural democracy as suitable for their country across the six countries varies from a high of just over 50 per cent in Iraq to a low of 17 per cent in Libya. Men were more supportive than women of unrestricted parliamentary democracy in Egypt and Iraq but the differences were not significant in the other four countries. The correlation between support for democracy and for gender equality and the empowerment of women was very low, with only six per cent of respondents supporting both.

## **Introduction and Background**

This Report examines the findings of the Arab Transformations Public Opinion Survey 2014 on attitudes to gender equality and the empowerment of women. It also draws on questions from its counterparts, the Arab Barometer, the AfroBarometer, and the World Values Survey to provide a detailed picture of the gender attitudes of ordinary people living in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia. The questions were designed to assess respondents' attitudes to gender equality in the domestic and the public spheres including marriage and family life, education, employment and politics. Understanding citizens' attitudes is important for opening up dialogue and ultimately bring about positive change. The Report takes a comparative approach, recognising that the MENA region is diverse economically, politically and socially and that the extent to which individual countries have promoted gender equality and women's rights differs markedly. Tunisia and Morocco had made significant advances before 2011 while the other countries had remained deeply conservative. Furthermore, the events in each country in 2011 differed, as have their post-2011 trajectories. In Egypt and Tunisia mass protests led to the downfall of long-standing authoritarian rulers and the establishment of democratic politics. However, by 2014 Tunisia was continuing on a shaky path to democracy with a secular government, but the democratically elected Islamist government in Egypt had been overthrown by the army and replaced by an army-backed civilian one. In Morocco and Jordan protests had been more muted and the monarchs had responded to them by making popular economic and political concessions while basically retaining their powers. In Libya the authoritarian regime was overthrown following a NATO-led military intervention in 2011 and by 2014 the country had descended into civil war. Iraq did not have popular uprisings in 2011 but there were ongoing political tensions and by 2014 the country was being invaded by the so called Islamic State.

In the aftermath of the Arab Uprisings it is important to understand public attitudes to gender and women's empowerment and how they have changed, if at all, since 2011. The Arab world is generally seen as the least gender-friendly across the globe, with deeply embedded patriarchal values that subordinate women and girls and construct them as second-class citizens. However, many argued that the important role that women played in the Uprisings would result in moves towards greater gender equality with women playing a greater role in the public sphere and politics more generally. The rise of Political Islam across the region (Bradley 2012; Esposito et al 2016; Moghadam 2013), on the other hand, suggests that attitudes to gender equality and the empowerment of women may have become more conservative and that advances that had been made before the Uprisings have been reversed (Al-Ali 2012; Esfandiari 2015; Moghadam 2014; Tonnessen 2013). The 'gender paradox', the contrast between the active role that women played in the uprisings and the ways they have systematically been excluded from participating in the public sphere since then, is already evident (Langhi 2014; Johansson-Nogues 2013). Furthermore, historically gender rights had been expanded as a top down policy, not one based on popular demand (Charrad and Zarrugh 2014; Langhi 2014), and there is little evidence that there was widespread popular support for gender equality and the empowerment of women before or during the Uprisings. While many commentators initially argued that the Uprisings were motivated by political aspirations, the overthrow of authoritarian regimes and demands for democracy and political rights, it is now clear that the protestors were mainly demanding economic and social justice and a fairer society- social and economic rights rather than political rights per se. What protesters wanted was economic security, better public and social services, a reduction in social and economic inequalities and an end to an unfair system where who you knew was more important than what you could do in getting on (Abbott and Teti 2016a, b; Bahramitash and Esfahani 2016; Bradley 2012; Moghadam 2013; Teti and Abbott 2016). This is not to suggest that some

demonstrators did not want an overthrow of authoritarian regimes and their replacement with political systems where they were guaranteed democratic and human rights, including gender equality, but that these were not the major drivers. Even among those women who want to advance women's rights there is a sharp divide between 'secularist' and 'Islamist' feminists (Langhi 2014), with the two groups competing on the question of women's rights. While the former seek to advance women's rights based on a universal human rights agenda, the latter want to argue for rights in line with a feminist interpretation of Islam based on values of human dignity and moral justice.

While the Report will focus mainly on comparing attitudes across six developing MENA countries - Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia - and comparing the differences between men and women, it is important to recognise that there are differences between women (and between men). Women are stratified by class, education, ethnicity and age and divided ideologically and politically. Women's location in the opportunity structure influences the opportunities and constraints they experience in their daily lives, the extent to which they are able to act autonomously and their ability to claim and exercise their rights. While some women support gender equality and the empowerment of women, others accept the patriarchal contract. There are women who actively support political Islam and those that oppose it, there are women who support Islamic feminism, others that support a secular feminism and others that are opposed to feminism.

## **Gender Equality, Human Rights and Economic and Political Development**

If the aspirations of women as well as men in the developing MENA are to be met there needs to be greater gender equality and empowerment of women; social and economic progress depends on narrowing the gender gap. Inequality is costly because lack of progress in gender justice and equity holds back social and economic development (Blumberg 2016; Klasen and Lamanna 2009; Sundstrom 2015). However, gender equality and women's empowerment are key goals in their own right and are central to all other development goals. Gender outcomes are not just about employment rates, education outcomes, financial inclusion or representation in governance institutions, they are about equitable decision-making power, shared control over assets and income, personal safety, mobility, equitable interpersonal relations and having voice and agency. They are about transforming the relationship between men and women so that women as well as men are able to claim and exercise their human rights (Kabeer 2016). Women's empowerment depends on the extent to which they are able to participate on relatively equal terms with men in the public sphere and specifically in economic activities, politics and civil society. Women's empowerment, then, is about rights, perceptions, relationships, resources, power and outcomes. Empowerment is about giving women choice and agency and enabling them to participate.

Stable democracies are found in countries where there is strong support both for democracy and for gender, suggesting that before sustainable democratic transformations can be established there is a need for the development of more liberal gender attitudes (Norris and Inglehart 2002, 2003, 2004). Evolutionary Modernisation Theory as developed by Inglehart and his colleagues posits that there are two main transitions, from agriculture to industrial society and from industrial society to postmodern society. Rising economic and physical security increases with the transition from agrarian to industrial society, challenging the rigid cultural norms typical of agricultural societies, and there is a move from 'traditional' to secular values which makes the emergence of 'electoral democracy' possible but not inevitable. The shift from industrial to postmodern society involves a shift from 'survival' values to a growing emphasis on 'self-expression' values of tolerance, trust and political activism. including support for gender equality. all of which are conducive to the emergence of liberal democracy (Inglehart and Norris 2003'; Inglehart and Welzer 2010; Welzel 2013).

However, they also argue that cultural change is path-dependent and that a society's historic heritage, including religious beliefs and experience of colonialism, shapes people's values as socioeconomic conditions change. They suggest that the reason why strong support for democracies has not developed in Islamic countries is because Islam is a barrier to the development of self-expression values, including supporting gender equality.

However, Islamic feminists argue that it is not Islam that is patriarchal but the rulings in the classic fiqh (Islamic Jurisprudence) that are at odds with contemporary ideas of human rights, equality and personal freedom. They agree that in Muslim countries there are barriers to gender justice for women and that cultural values and the ways in which colonial experience shaped women's as well as men's values are major contributor factors (Jones-Pauly 2011; Mir-Hosseini 2006, 2003; Shaik 2003). However, they challenge the view that gender equality and the empowerment of women is incompatible with Islam. They argue that that justice and equality are fundamental principles in Islam and sharia but that this is not reflected in the laws that regulate gender relations and the family in the majority of Muslim-majority countries. The classic fiqh is an interpretation of the sharia made in a different historical period and the shari'a should be reinterpreted in the context of modern society just as Christians have reinterpreted the bible.

Patriarchal cultural values are a barrier to women's economic empowerment, yet women's economic empowerment is important for women themselves, for their families, their countries and the global economy. Furthermore, economic citizenship is a necessary condition for women's participation in any political process (Moghadam 2013). Investing in women and girls is said to make good economic sense (World Bank 2011; Elborgh-Woytek et al 2013). The President of the World Bank, Jim Yong Kim has argued that women's low economic participation has created income losses of 27 per cent of potential GDP in the MENA Region<sup>1</sup>. When women are economically empowered there is improved economic and social development, including stronger GDP growth and improved wellbeing of children and men as well as women. When women have control over income it has a multiplier effect on their families, their community and at the national level, reducing poverty, improving the health of women and improving the welfare of all (e.g. Burges 2007; Buvinic et al 2008; Ferrant 2010; Gowan et al 2005; World Bank 2012). When women are disempowered, not only are they subordinated but human welfare is poorer, there is a greater risk of armed conflict and risk to ecology, and development slows down or even stalls (Blumberg 2016b).

However, Kabeer (2016) argues that the only relationship between women's economic empowerment and development outcomes is through women investing their income in their children. Women, she argues are expected to continue to fulfil their traditional roles as wives and mothers as well as have paid employment and that this means that women do not have equality of opportunity with men in employment and the public sphere more generally. In other words, the economic empowerment of women does not necessarily promote gender equality. There remains a strong relationship between social institutions (the formal and informal 'rules of the game') and women's and girls' ability to claim and exercise their legal rights and be accorded social justice. Increasing women's legal access to education, asset ownership, employment and political participation will *not* result in social justice for women unless traditional customs and practices that have subordinated and marginalised them are challenged and moderated. Social institutions have been shown to be the main factor constraining women's and girls' freedom of choice in economic activities and their ability to participate in community and political activities, to access resources such as financial credit, ICT, education and health and to increase their self-esteem (Morrison and Jutting 2004).

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2016/03/07/the-state-of-womens-rights-in-the-arab-world>

The extent to which women are able to benefit from socio-economic development is dependent on the opportunity structures that are available to them (Kabeer 2016). Development does not inevitably lead to greater gender equality and the empowerment of women. Nor does the economic empowerment of women necessarily promote gender equality, whatever other benefits it may bring about. Women's empowerment and economic development alone or even in combination are not sufficient to drive gender equality; there is also a need for a continuous policy commitment to gender equality for its own sake (Duflo 2012).

While it is evident that promoting gender equality is good for economic development and for the establishment of stable democratic systems, the ultimate justification for gender equality and the empowerment of women rests on a justice argument. The rights of women to equality with men and their right to be empowered so that they can claim and exercise these rights is set out in the United Nations 1979 Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women. The convention reaches beyond the usual political, economic and educational rights to those in the family and cultural practices. However, the reservations that many Muslim majority countries have made to the Convention, giving priority to shari'a, means that women continue to be treated as second-class citizens without the same legal rights as men. In other words, social institutions in the MENA countries act as a barrier to women and girls being able to claim and exercise their rights to gender equality.

### **Understanding Gender Inequality in the MENA Region**

The countries of the MENA region are neo-patriarchal states (Moghadam 2013) and the region is at the bottom on many gender indicators. They are countries where the family rather than the individual is the basic building block of society, religion (Islam) is bound to power and state authority and men and women have separate and complementary roles and responsibilities. The family and family law reflect and reinforce one another in such a way that women are second-class citizens; they do not have equal legal rights with men, and privilege and authority in the family is conferred on male kin. It has been argued that as Muslim societies have modernised they have not, as has happened elsewhere, come to support greater gender equality. Furthermore, unlike the West, where younger generations have gradually become more liberal, younger generation in the Muslim World have retained traditional values (Norris and Inglehart 2002, 2003, 2004). It is not religious beliefs per se that are said to make the difference but the role that traditional religious values and belief play in Muslim countries in reinforcing social norms of a separate and subordinate role for women as homemakers and mothers, with men as patriarchs within the family and primarily breadwinners in the paid workforce. However, it is not so much living in a Muslim country but living in the MENA region that is a strong negative predictor of supporting gender equality (Norris 2014). The MENA countries are part of a belt of 'classic' patriarchal societies which extend from North Africa through the Muslim Middle East to South and East Asia, including India and China (Caldwell 1982; Kandiyoti 1988; Rizzo et al 2007). These countries include Hindu and Confucian majority societies as well as Muslim ones. They are characterised by high levels of gender inequality and low levels of women's empowerment, including high levels of female illiteracy and low labour force participation. This suggests that it is not Islam but cultural and social heritage that accounts for the persistence of patriarchal attitudes and that economic development alone will not drive gender equality and the empowerment of women (Blumberg 2015; Blumberg 2016a, b, c; Jones-Pauly 2011; Litterell and Bertsch 2013; Moghadam 2013a, b; Moghadam 2014; Morrisson and Jutting 2005).

Three main explanations for the subordination of women in the 'patriarchal belt' have been suggested. Firstly, there is a male-dominated kinship/property system which leads women to



accept the patriarchal bargain (Caldwell 1982; Kandiyoti 1988). This explanation is inadequate, however, as other regions have the same kinship system but high female labour force participation (Blumberg 2016). The second is that it is Islam or rather the patriarchal values embedded in the belief system, but again it is not the case that women are held back all Muslim countries and some countries in 'patriarchal belt' are non-Muslim. Furthermore, Christianity and Judaism share many of the patriarchal values found in Islam. The third is that women's economic bargaining power is low in the countries in the 'patriarchal belt'. Historically women have *not* been engaged in the main productive activities (Blumberg 2015, 2016). Specifically, the countries in the 'patriarchal belt' adopted a male farming system (Blumberg 2016.a, b, c) and women have lacked bargaining power so they have not been able to generate and control economic resources and have been forced into dependency on men. In the same way that treating all Muslim countries as identical can lead to misleading conclusions, so can treating all MENA countries as if they are identical, which much of the research to date has done. While the Arab countries may form a distinct cluster when compared with the rest of the world we should not fail to recognise that there are differences between them. Kostenko et al (2015) remedy this omission by using the first wave of the Arab Barometer (2005). They find that support for gender equality was higher among women than men across the region while support for democracy is comparable for men and women. They also find significant differences in support for gender equality across the seven countries and between men and women in each country. Yemen was the most conservative, with Lebanon the most Liberal, followed by Morocco, Algeria, Kuwait, Palestine and Jordan. Morocco has the highest support for democracy by some distance, followed by Kuwait and Lebanon, with Yemen, Algeria, Jordan and Palestine having the lowest support with similar means. Echoing Norris's and Inglehart's (2002, 2003, 2004) finding that younger generations are not developing more liberal attitudes to the empowerment of women, with support for gender equality in 2007 weaker among younger than older and middle-aged cohorts of males; support was lowest in the 25-34 male cohort, while female attitudes varying little across age groups. Overall women were more supportive of gender equality than men, as were the more educated and the better off. In total 30.8 per cent of respondents supported gender equality but only 17.3 per cent supported democracy *and* gender equality (18.3% supported democracy and not gender equality, 18.3% supported neither and 32.6% were not certain about democracy or gender equality).

The findings from this reach support previous research on low backing for gender equality, although even this, they suggest, has been overestimated. However, they challenge the findings of strong support for democracy. The proportions of respondents supporting both democracy and gender equality are significantly lower than in other research. While Kostenko et al (2014) found that only 30.8 per cent of respondents supported gender equality in 2006, Inglehart and Norris (2003), using WVS data, found that 55 per cent of Muslims supported gender equality. The difference is probably at least partly due to Inglehart and Norris's figure being based on Muslim majority countries and not just Arab ones but it is also undoubtedly related to the questions used to construct indexes of gender equality. Kostenko et al's index takes more account of social/institutional (cultural and legal) barriers to gender equality and women's empowerment in the specific context of Muslim countries. Inglehart's and Norris's index includes only questions on gender equality in politics, employment, education and the importance of motherhood for women while Kostenko et al (2014) include more questions on women and employment (including one on the right of married women to have employment outside the home) and one on a women's right to travel abroad alone. Similarly, while support for democracy has been reported to be as high as 80 per cent in Arab countries (e.g. Tessler 2002, 2015) they found that only 35.6 per cent supported it. While those that argue for high support for democracy use the answer to the Churchillian question, '*democracy may have its*

*problems but is better than any other form of government*', Kostenko et al (2014) construct an index that includes attitudes to how democracy is perceived to work in practice together with this question. Their findings suggest that support for both gender equality and democracy have been taken to be much higher than they actually are among citizens in the MENA countries.

## **Gender in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Libya, Morocco, and Tunisia**

In this section, we look at what is known about gender equality and the empowerment of women in the six countries. The analysis is based mainly on indexes and macro-data but also draws on the literature. Differences between men's and women's achievement in the six countries in four key areas are discussed: human development and education, economic empowerment, political empowerment and legal empowerment. In order for women to be able to claim and exercise their rights, these have to be enshrined in law, the laws and related policies have to be effectively implemented and enforced, women have to know what their rights *are*, and they have to be able to claim and exercise them. Access to the law is an essential part of this. Sen (2009) has argued powerfully that the key to a worthwhile life is the expansion of human capabilities so that people are able to develop their capabilities and claim their human rights. Empowerment is the provision of what is necessary for people to exercise agency and take control over their own lives, and inclusion is the recognition that people have the right to participate in the social, economic, political and cultural institutions of a society on the same basis as all other citizens. This enables people to claim and exercise their human rights. Women have not only been denied equal citizenship but they have often been excluded from developing their capabilities, from being empowered. Gender equality and the empowerment of women is about recognising that women and girls have the same rights as men and ensuring that they are able to develop their capabilities and use them and are recognised as having the right to do so on the same basis as men.

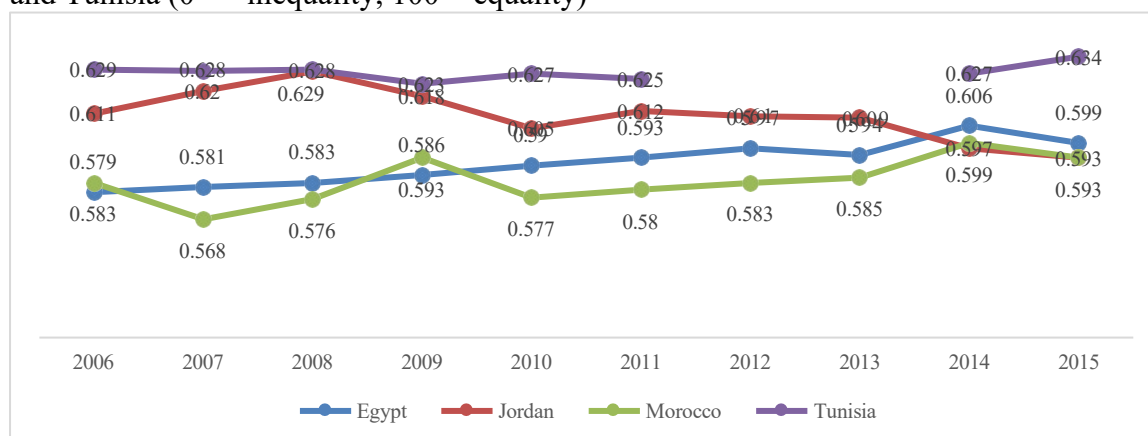
## **Gender Gap**

Women's rights are about gender equality, that women and girls have the same rights as men. Governments are committed under CEDAW to promote gender equality - that is, to take measures to ensure that men and women are able to achieve equal outcomes. This includes taking measure to make up for women's historical disadvantage and level the playing field. The gap between the outcomes for men and women in key areas of social, economic and political life are central to understanding the differential and unequal treatment of women compared to men. The MENA countries have some of the highest gender gaps in the world; for example, on the World Economic Forums Gender Gap Index for 2015, Tunisia was ranked 127<sup>th</sup>- out of 145 countries, Egypt 136<sup>th</sup>, Morocco 139<sup>th</sup> and Jordan 140<sup>th</sup> (Figure 1)<sup>2</sup>, with little progress being made in narrowing the gender gap. It has actually widened marginally in Jordan since 2008, and having been narrowing in Egypt and Morocco, there are now signs of a reverse.

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<sup>2</sup> Iraq and Libya are not included in the report due to a lack of available data.

Figure 1: World Economic Forum Gender Gap Index 2006-2015, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia (0= = inequality, 100 = equality)



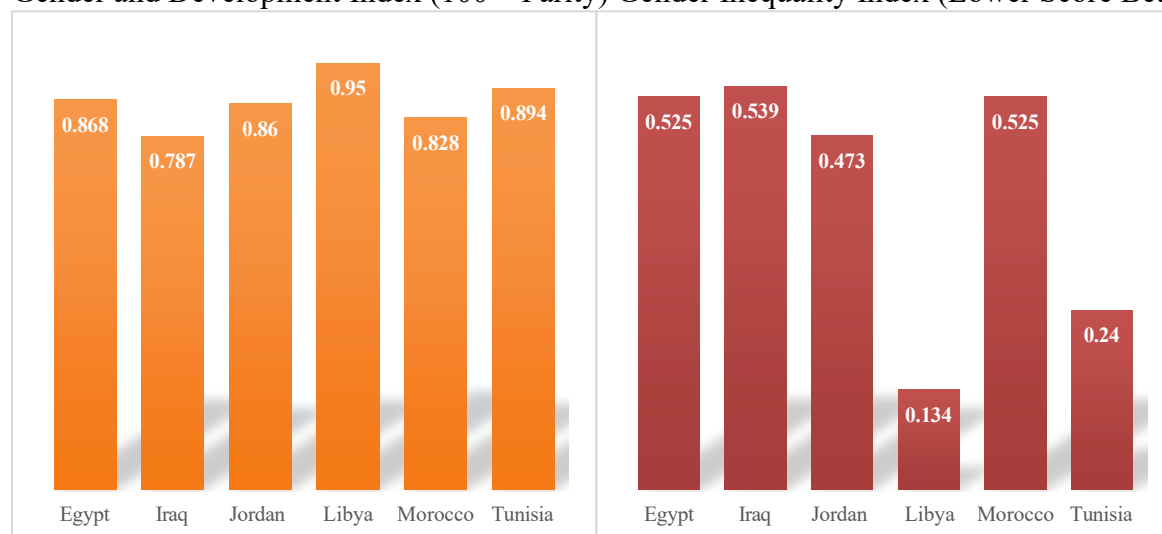
Source: Schwab et al 2016

## Human Development

It is clear that all the countries have invested in improving human development and made significant progress (World Bank 2013). This progress is evident from the improvements all six countries have made on the UN Human Development Index, which is a summary measure of human development in three dimensions - health, education and economic security (UNDP 2015). Egypt, Iraq and Morocco are rated as having a medium level of human development and Jordan, Libya and Tunisia as having high human development. Furthermore, women have benefitted from this investment, as the scores on the WEF 2015 Gender Gap Index (Schwab et al 2015) show near parity by gender for health and education, although the gap in the adult literacy rate remains comparatively large, and especially so in Morocco.

However, the UNDP Gender and Development Index (GDI) shows that there is a noticeable gap between men and women in 2014 in all the countries, with Iraq having the largest gap and Libya the smallest (Figure 2). The Gender Equality Index measures women's empowerment in three dimensions - reproductive health, empowerment (% of seats held in parliament by women and attainment in secondary and higher education) and economic activity (labour market participation). It shows significant variations, with Egypt having the worst score and ranked 131 out of 155 countries and Libya with the best and ranked 27<sup>th</sup>. Egypt together with Iraq (ranked 123) and Morocco (ranked 117) are among the 25 per cent worst performers, while Libya is in the top 25 per cent. Tunisia (ranked 48) is in the top 50 per cent while Jordan (ranked 102) just makes it out of the bottom 25 per cent. There is a strong correlation between the scores on the two indexes. The scores are clearly influenced by the overall level of human development of the country. Libya scores especially well compared to the other countries on maternal mortality rate, adolescent birth rate and proportion of women with at least some secondary education with the proportion being significantly higher for women than men. Tunisia scores well on proportion of women in parliament and adolescent birth rate. Iraq scores poorly on adolescent birth rate and proportion of women with at least some secondary education, and Morocco has a very high maternal mortality rate and a high adolescent birth rate. Jordan and Iraq scores noticeably lower than the other countries on women's employment, although none of the countries perform well on this indicator.

Figure 2: UNDP Gender Measures 2015 Human Development Report  
 Gender and Development Index (100 = Parity) Gender Inequality Index (Lower Score Better)



Source: UNDP 2015

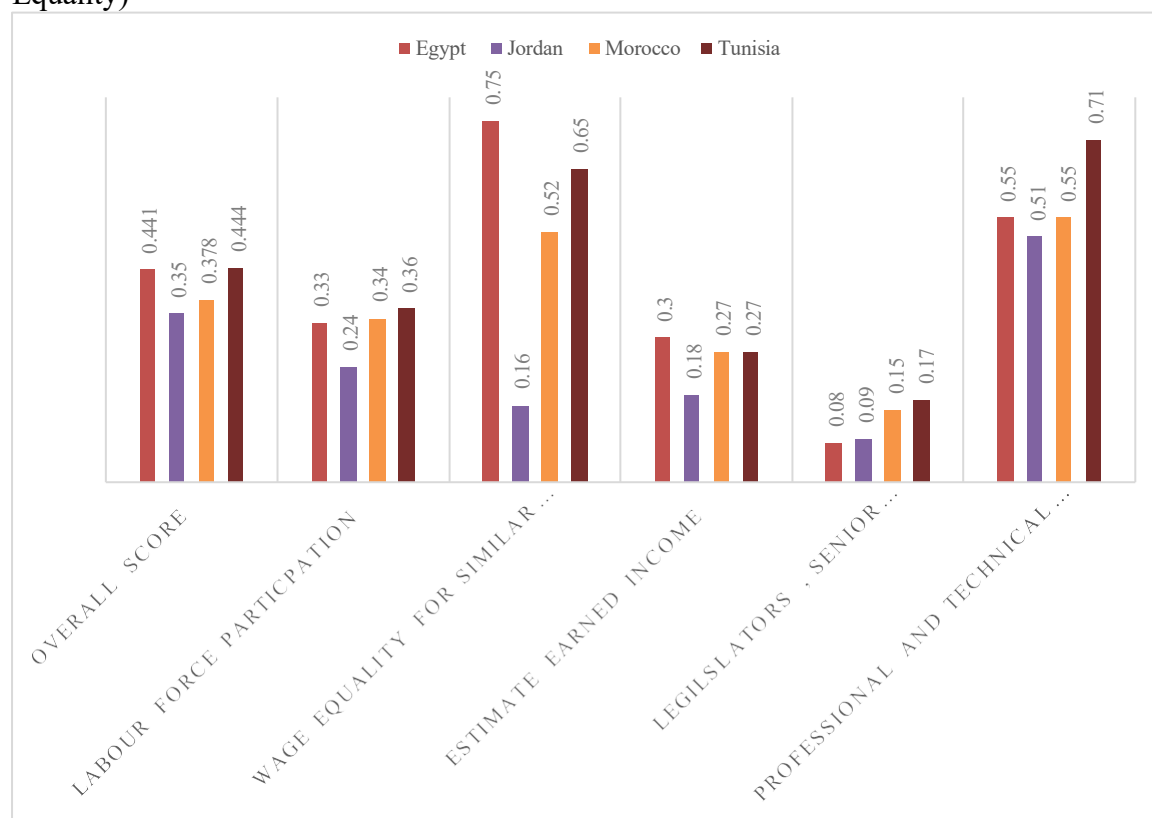
However, all the countries are struggling to translate the rapid reduction in gender gaps in health and education to all areas of social and economic life. Indeed, it is not evident that investing in women’s education and health is necessarily indicative of an acceptance of greater gender equality. Healthy and educated women make more productive wives and mothers.

### **Economic Empowerment**

Economic empowerment is about giving women more control over economic resources. Control over economic resources gives women more say in how they lead their lives, increases their power in decision making in the domestic sphere and increases their status in the public sphere. Employment is the main way in which women can gain greater control over economic resources. Without access to economic resources women are denied the right to make choices about their lives.

Improvements in women’s health, lower fertility rates and improved educational outcomes have not translated into an increase in women’s economic empowerment. The gender gap in employment remains large. Women are much less likely than men to be in employment and are especially under-represented as legislators, senior officials and managers; they earn significantly less for work of equal value and their earned income is much lower than that of men (Figure 3; Schwab et al).

Figure 3: Women’s Economic Participation and Opportunity Gender Gap (1= Gender Equality)



Source: Schwab et al 2016

In order to ensure that women are able to compete equally with men it is necessary for there to be employment legislation in place to promote gender equality. However, legal protection for women in employment in the five countries for which information is available is negligible, with the partial exception of Morocco (Table 1)<sup>3</sup>. The only rights guaranteed in the five countries for which information is available are an entitlement to paid maternity leave and to nursing breaks for nursing mothers. None has an entitlement for parents to request part-time/flexible working. These rights only protect women working in the formal sector, leaving the many women working in informal-sector employment and as dependent family workers with no protection<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> Access to affordable and reliable childcare especially for children below school age is also essential for dual earner families. Information on the availability of such proviso in the six countries has not been found.

<sup>4</sup> The proportion of workers in the informal sector is 44.9% in Egypt, 51.45 in Tunisia, 61.6% in Jordan, 64.4% in Iraq and 76.2% in Morocco (Gatti et al 2014). The proportion of women employed in the informal sector may be lower than the country averages because women tend to be concentrated in the formal public sector because of the more favourable terms and conditions and the legal protection afforded, albeit limited.

Table 1: Legal Employment Rights

	Egypt	Iraq	Jordan	Morocco	Tunisia
Paid Maternity Leave	√	√	√	√	√
Paid Paternity Leave	X	X	X	√	√
Equal Pay for work of Equal Value	X	X	X	√	X
Gender Fair Hireling	X	X	X	√	X
Prohibited to prospective employers ask about family status	X	X	X	X	X
Prohibited dismiss pregnant worker	√	X	X	√	√
Are women guaranteed equivalent position after maternity leave	X	X	√	√	X
Nursing mothers entitled to nursing breaks	√	√	√	√	√
Parents entitled flexible /part-time employment	X	X	X	X	X
Employer Leave for caring for sick relatives	X	√	X	X	X

Source: World Bank Group 2016

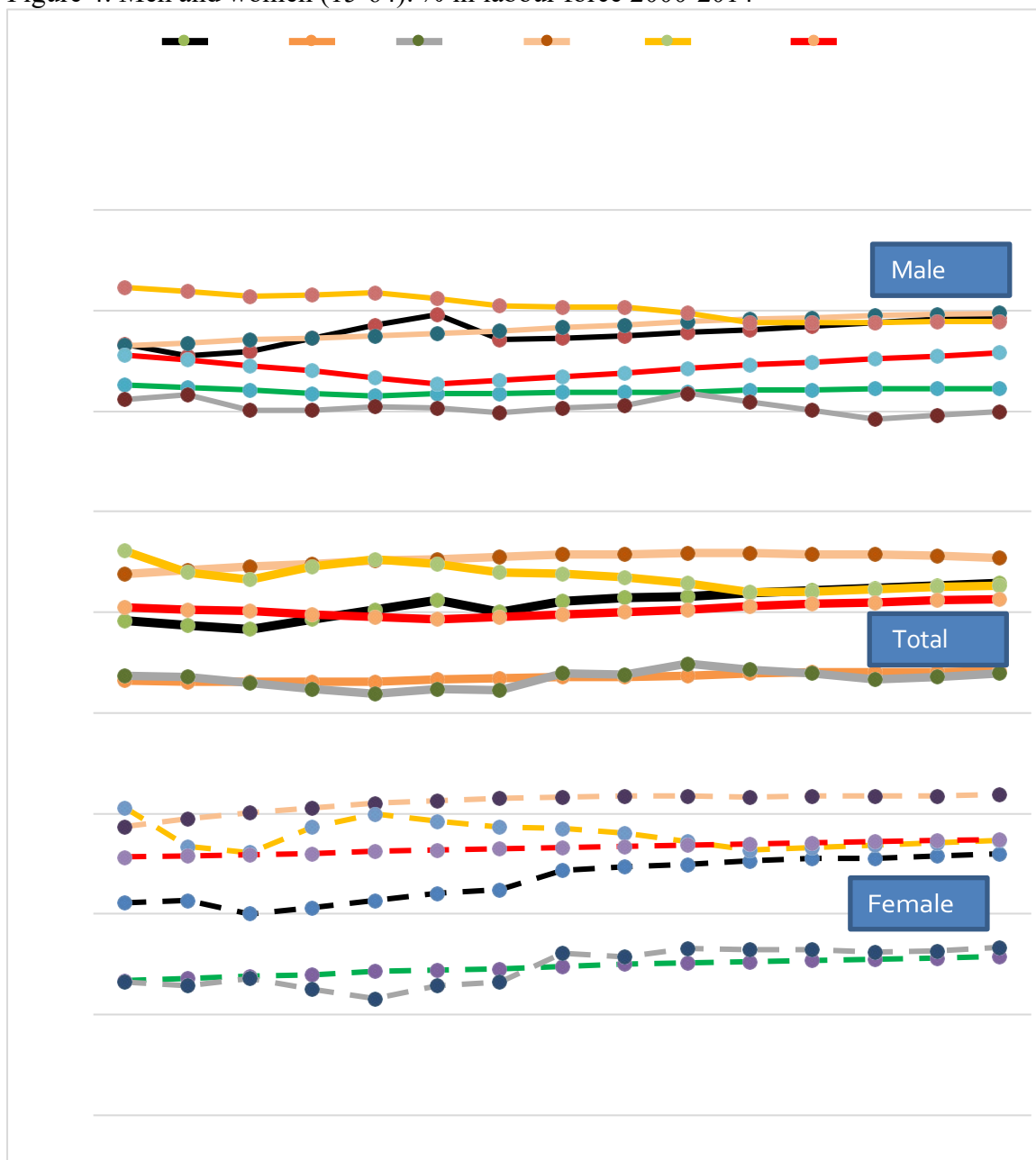
The rates of economic activity among women are among the lowest in the world; the ratio of women in the labour force to men in 2014, taking men as 100, was 32 in Egypt, 21 in Iraq, 24 in Jordan, 39 in Libya, 35 in Morocco and 35 in Tunisia, compared to a world average of 68 and a middle-income country average of 64 (Figure 4). There has been little change in the percentage of economically active women since 2000; it has increased marginally in Tunisia and Jordan but declined in Morocco.

Not only are women much less likely to be economically active than men but even when they *are* active they much more likely to be unemployed than men in all the countries, with the notable exception of Morocco, where the unemployment rate for men and women is much the same. The most noticeable difference is in Egypt, where 27.8 per cent of economically active women were unemployed in 2014 compared with 8.5 per cent of men, meaning that women who want to be economically active are 3.3 times more likely to be unemployed than men who want to be economically active. In Iraq the ratio is 1.6, in Jordan 2.1, Libya 1.8 and Tunisia 1.3. Contrary to Litterell and Bertsch (2013), who found that the proportion of women in non-agricultural employment had decreased since 2000 in Middle Eastern countries, this is not case in Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia<sup>5</sup>, and indeed the proportion of women in non-agricultural employment has increased in Tunisia (author's own analysis of World Development Indicators).

The neo-liberal policies pursued by MENA governments from the 1980s have also had a negative impact on women's employment. The private sector is not growing fast enough to replace the jobs being lost in the public sector and absorb new entrants to the labour market (Schiffbauer et al 2015; World Bank 2013). Women have been heavily concentrated in public-sector employment both because the type of employment is seen as more appropriate for women and because many women find the terms and conditions of employment in the private sector unacceptable (Abbott and Teti 2016; Gatti et al 2014; world Bank 2013). Private-sector employers are also more reluctant to employ women than men, and women complain of sexual harassment in the private sector. The reaction of young women, especially educated ones to the lack of what they see as acceptable employment is to withdraw from the labour market.

<sup>5</sup> Data were not available for Iraq or Libya

Figure 4: Men and women (15-64): % in labour force 2000-2014



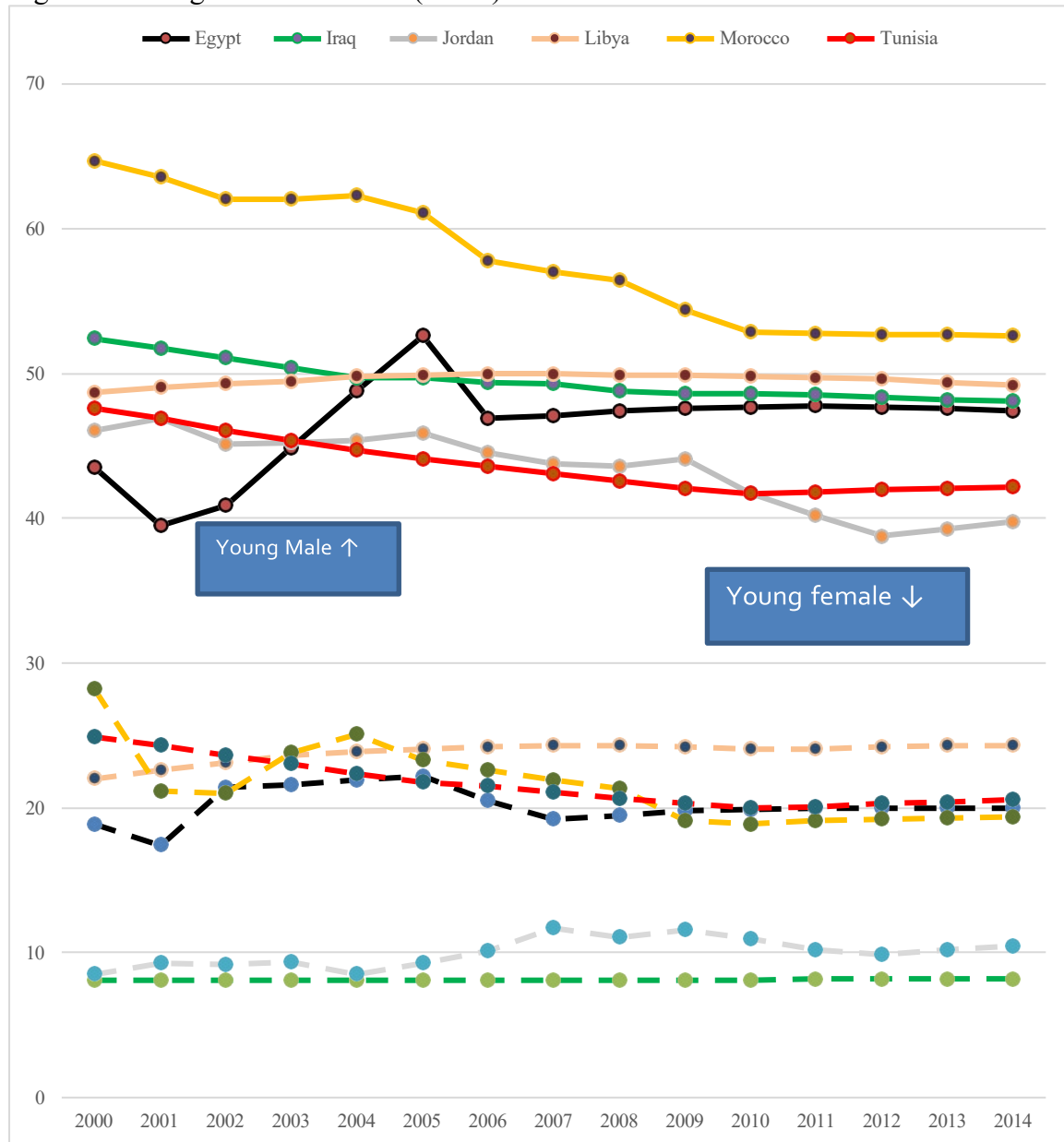
Source: World Development Indicators

Note: the labour force is made up of those that are in productive work (paid or unpaid, formal or informal sector) according to International Labour Office Definition or are actively seeking work. It does not include those that have become demoralised on stopped looking for work or those that have withdrawn from the labour market because they have failed to find work.

Even young women are much less likely to be economically active than young men (Figure 5) and there is no evidence that the proportion of young women entering the labour market is increasing. Lack of employment opportunities combined with cultural norms mean that many young women do not enter the labour market or else that withdraw when they are unable to find appropriate employment (Abbott and Teti 2016; World Bank 2013). Unemployment is also very high among young people and much higher than the overall unemployment rate. It ranges from a high of 69.2 per cent for young women in Libya to a low of 20.6 for young men in Morocco. As with overall differences in unemployment, there is no difference in the proportion of young women that want to work that are unemployed in Morocco as compared to young men. and in Tunisia young women that want to work are marginally less likely to be

unemployed (author's calculation from World Development Indicators). However, in Egypt and Jordan young women who want to work are twice as likely to be unemployed as young men, in Iraq 1.92 times and in Libya 1.8 times. This takes no account of the young men that are queuing for government employment and not actively looking for work outside it, those that have given up actively looking or those who have withdrawn from (or never entered) the labour market.

Figure 5: Young men and women (15-24): % in labour force 2000-2014



Source: World Development Indicators

Traditional attitudes that argue for a complementarity between the roles of men and women with men as breadwinners and responsible for supporting their wives and children and women as homemakers caring for their husbands and children are the major factor in explaining women's low participation in the labour market. However, there are other factors, such as the availability of employment, the type of employment available and the need for employment. In the MENA countries there is a shortage of decent employment, and even more so for women than men (World Bank 2011), and subsidies reduce the need for a household to have



more than one income. The main predictor of a woman being in the labour market in MENA countries is that she has completed higher education (Spierings et al 2007, 2008). This is mainly because the main type of employment acceptable to women is in the public sector, where employed women are heavily concentrated in what are seen as gender-appropriate jobs such as teaching, social work and administration. Women living in less traditional circumstances are also more likely to be in employment - that is, living in a nuclear family, having a husband in a white-collar job and residing in an urban area. Perhaps not surprisingly, women without a husband and women whose husbands are unemployed are also more likely to be employed.

## Political Participation

Politics is the arena for societal decision making. Those that hold formal positions in government are responsible for making decisions that have an impact of all members of a society, including women and children. They allocate scarce resources and make decisions over other social institutions such as health, education and the family, and they codify these decisions in law. Political elites also have the power to enforce their decisions. It is therefore important that women are included in decision making so that their voice can be heard and the interests of women as well as men taken into consideration. Women's political empowerment is seen as an intrinsic goal in itself and, as with women's economic empowerment, as playing an important role in improving social and economic outcomes for women and children and for society as a whole (e.g. Sen 1997; Sundstrom et al 2015). Women's political empowerment involves increasing their capacity to be involved in political decision making, giving them greater opportunity to choose to do so and increasing women's participation in decision-making bodies.

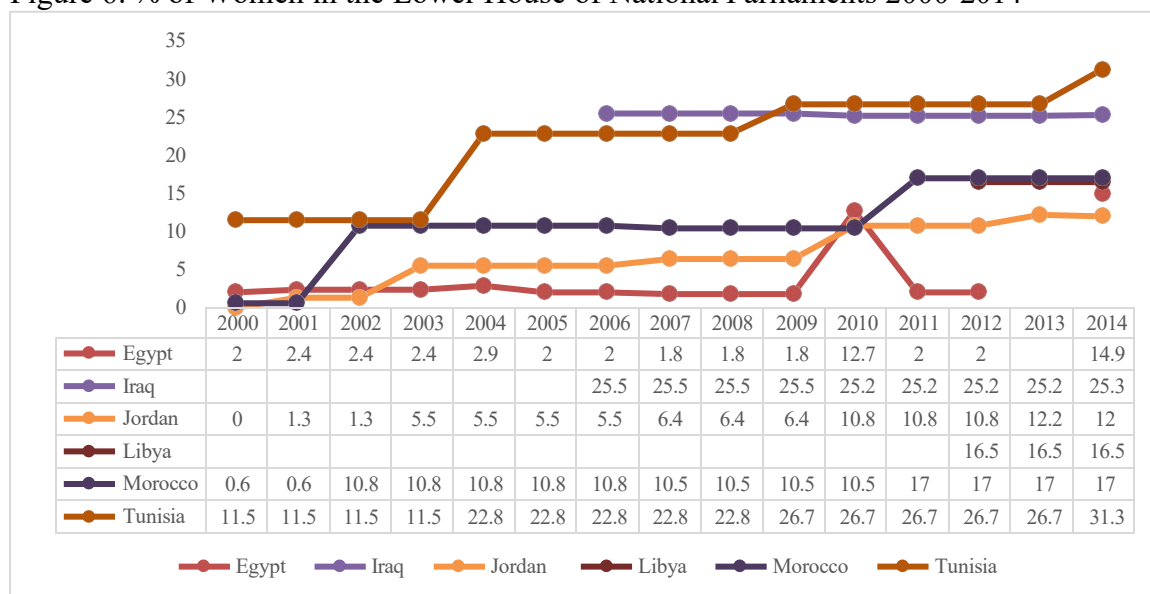
The gender gap in political empowerment across the countries based on the WEF Gender Gap Index is very high. With 1 equaling gender parity, the score in Egypt on the 2015 Index was 0.048, in Jordan 0.073, Morocco 0.11 and Tunisia 0.23 (Schwab et al 2016). One of the key indicators of women's political empowerment is their representation in decision-making fora and especially national parliaments. The generally accepted proportion of women needed for them to have an effective voice is 30 per cent (Krook 2006), but with the target for women's parliamentary representation in the Millennium Development Goals being set for 2015 at 50 per cent<sup>6</sup>. Parliamentary representation is increasing in the six countries, albeit through the use of quotas<sup>7</sup>. In Egypt there is a 10 per cent quota for members of parliament and a 25 per cent one for local government (World Bank 2015). In Iraq there are 25 per cent quotas for women in parliament and in local government. In Jordan there is a 10 per cent quota for parliament and a 25 per cent quota for local government. In Morocco there is a 15 per cent quota for parliament and 25 per cent for local government. In Tunisia there is a 50 per cent quota for candidate lists for parliament. Even with quotas, Tunisia is the only one of the six countries to have 30 per cent or more women members of parliament (31.3%) (Figure 6). Iraq comes the next closest at 25 per cent and Jordan the lowest at 12 per cent. Tunisia is ranked 40<sup>th</sup> in the World, Iraq 50<sup>th</sup>, Morocco 106<sup>th</sup>, Libya 115<sup>th</sup>, Egypt 121<sup>st</sup> and Jordan 141<sup>th</sup> for the proportion of women in the national parliament in 2014. There is very low representation of women at ministerial level, however, and none of the countries have ever had a woman head of state (Schwa et al 2016).

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6 Quotas are controversial because they go beyond promoting gender equality to affirmative action. There is increasing agreement that quotas should be used to ensure adequate representation of women in parliament at least until it becomes taken as normal for women to be members of parliament and other decision-making bodies

7 Figures for lower or single house. Only two countries (out of 193) achieved the 50% target, Rwanda and Bolivia, and in total 46 achieved the 30% target (<http://www.ipu.org/WMN-e/classif.htm>). Sweden, with a female representation of 43.6%, has the highest representation of women with voluntary quotas and Denmark 39.1% with no quotas (<http://www.quotaproject.org/country.cfm>).

Figure 6: % of Women in the Lower House of National Parliaments 2000-2014



Source: World Development Indicators and Women's Inter-Parliamentary Union

The Gender Rights Index is a new measure of women's political empowerment. It measures women's civil liberties<sup>8</sup>, civil society participation<sup>9</sup> and political participation<sup>10</sup> (Sundstrom et al 2015). It was designed to capture women's capacity to choose, their agency and their participation. The highest-ranking country in 2010 was Denmark, with a score of 96.6, and the lowest Saudi Arab (20.2) closely followed by Yemen (22.8) (Figure 7).

The scores on the Index suggest a lack of political empowerment of women in the six countries, although Tunisia scores noticeably higher than the other countries and there is a noticeable gap between Morocco, with the second-highest score, and the rest. Egypt scores noticeably lower than any of the countries. The Index suggests that, as of 2012 and in the aftermath of 2011, women's rights had improved drastically in Libya and to a more limited extent in Morocco and Tunisia. There was no noticeable impact in Jordan or Iraq and some reversal in Egypt. Tunisia is the highest ranked country on the Index and its score has been increasing since 2004 but with a marked improvement between

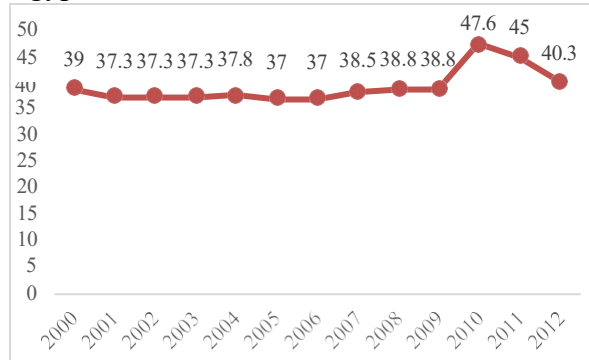
<sup>8</sup> Women's civil liberties are measured by a combination of women's freedom of domestic movement, freedom from forced labour, property rights and access to justice.

<sup>9</sup> Women's civil society participation is measured by women's freedom of discussion, participation in civil society organisations and representation in journalism.

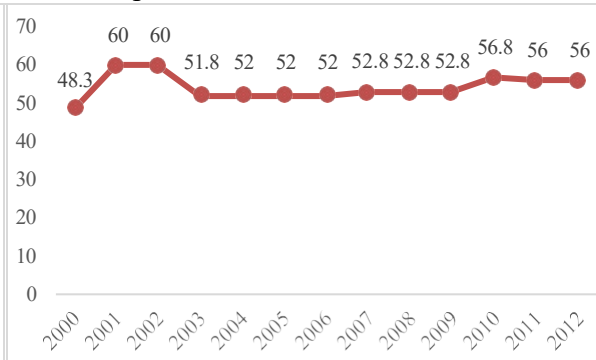
<sup>10</sup> Women's political participation is measured by combining the proportion of women representatives in the lower house of parliament and by expert judgement on the extent to which political power is distributed according to gender.

Figure 7: Gender Rights Index (/100)

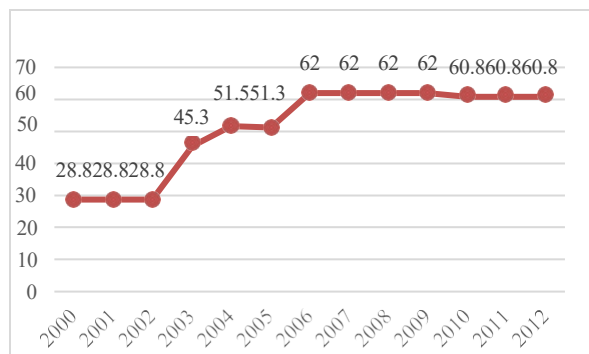
Egypt



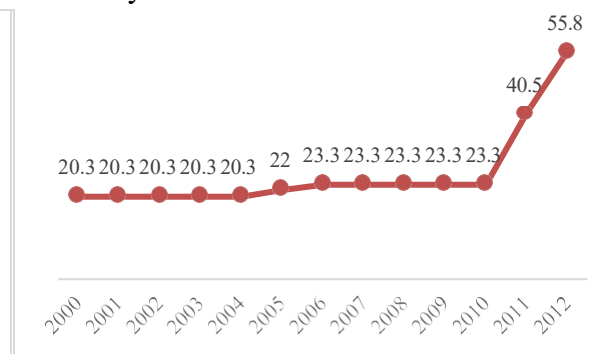
Iraq



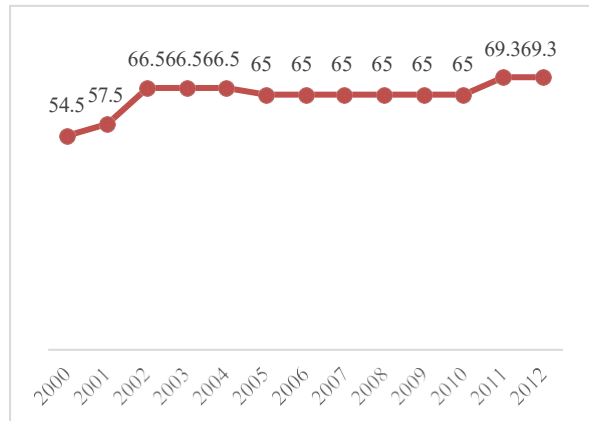
Jordan



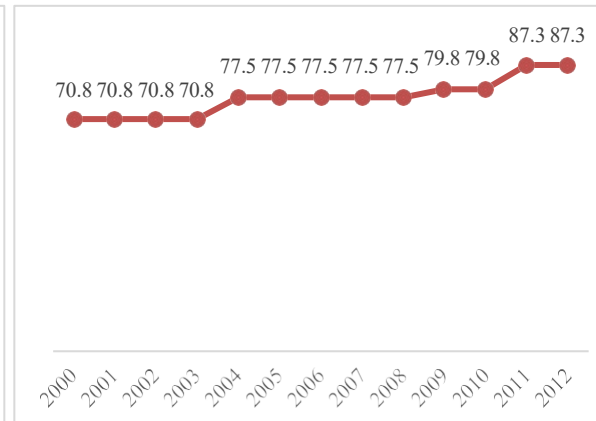
Libya



Morocco



Tunisia



Note: The Gender Rights Index has been computed from V-DEM Women Political Empowerment Index, V-DEM Women Civil Society Participation Index and V-DEOM Women Political Participation Index. The composite index has been computed as the mean of min-max normalised values of the 4 indices, recoded in a 100-point scale.

2002 and 2011. Morocco is the second-highest scoring country and its score varied little between 2002 and 2010 but improved between 2010 and 2011. Jordan, Libya and Iraq have similar scores, but while Jordan's and Libya's have shown improvement since 2000, Iraq's has not. Jordan has increased its score by a large amount, but after very rapid improvement between 2002 and 2006 it has remained much the same. Libya's score remained much the same until 2010 but has since increased dramatically. Egypt has the lowest score in 2012, and its score was much the same as in 2000. After making progress between 2009 and 2010 it then fell.

### Patriarchal Norms and Values and The Legal Status of Women

Patriarchal norms and values continue to dominate in all the countries; they are patriarchal societies according to gender experts in the region (Thomas Reuters Foundation 2013). The

2014 OECD Institutions and Gender Index measures discrimination in institutions (Figure 8). It is directly concerned with inequalities rather than empowerment and therefore measures the conditions for empowerment but not the outcomes. Morocco is highlighted as having made progress and is graded as low (on a scale from very high discrimination to very low) and Tunisia and Egypt are highlighted as having had reversals in their country profiles<sup>11</sup> (Kolev et al 2014). Tunisia is graded medium, Iraq and Jordan high and Egypt very high. Libya is high/very high but not included in the overall index because of missing data.

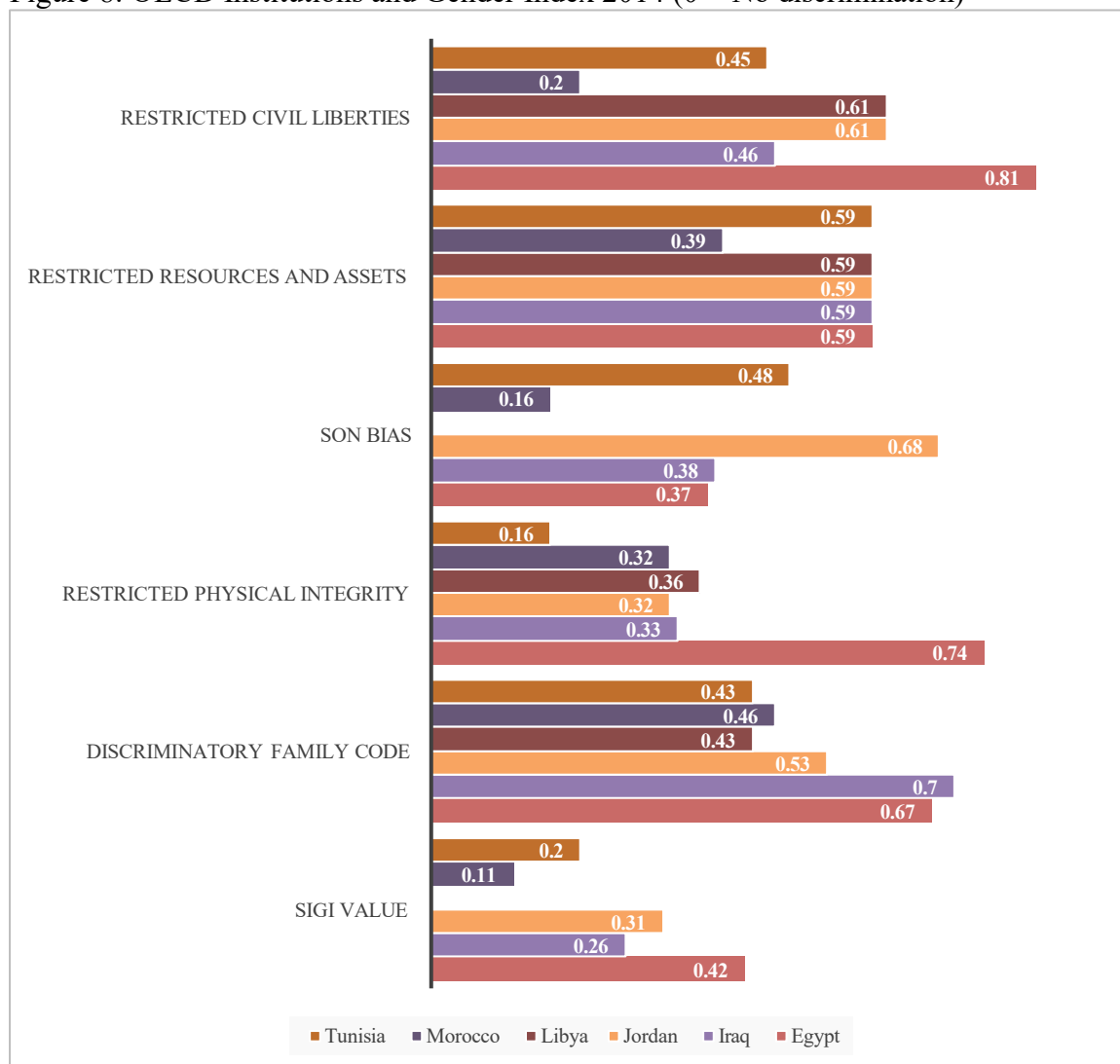
Women remain second class citizens, while constitutions may include gender equality the continued inclusion of family law based on the shari'a mean that in practice women do not have equal rights with men. The constitutions of all six countries guarantee equal gender rights but Libya, Morocco and Tunisia do not have a clause on non-discrimination (World Bank Group 2016). All 6 countries have ratified CEDAW. Tunisia and Morocco have withdrawn all reservations to the Convention<sup>12</sup> and Morocco has stated that it will bring all domestic law into line with the requirements of the Convention. Egypt, Iraq, Jordan and Libya have reservations to the treaty in place, including to article 16 on marriage and family life (personal status law). Tunisia has been a secular state since 1956 and the 2011 Moroccan Constitution says that Islamic law will guide law rather than law be based on it. In Iraq the Constitution states that Islamic law will be the main source of legislation and in Jordan, Egypt and Libya personal status law is based on shari'a. Although it is important to remember that fiqh Islamic jurisprudence, is an interpretation of shari'a and that as a result family codes based on shari'a vary across Muslim countries. Mir-Hosseini (2006), for example, argues that the Iraqi family code is relatively progressive but that it has been interpreted in a more conservative way since the invasion in 2003. Jones-Pauly (2011) argues that when the judiciary is independent then the family code is interpreted in a less conservative way.

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<sup>11</sup> The Index was constructed in 2009, 2012 and 2014 but extensive internet searches have failed to find the country scores for 2009 or 2012.

<sup>12</sup> Morocco <http://www.wluml.org/node/4941>, Tunisia <https://www.hrw.org/news/2011/09/06/tunisia-government-lifts-restrictions-womens-rights-treaty>.

Figure 8: OECD Institutions and Gender Index 2014 (0 = No discrimination)



Source: <http://www.genderindex.org/ranking>. Note: Score for son bias and overall score not available for Libya.

Patriarchy is embedded in the norms and values that guide every day social practices and is also codified in law and specifically in family law which makes women second class citizens. While some progress has been made in legislating for gender equality there is still a long way to go even in the more gender friendly countries of Tunisia and Morocco. In 2014, for example, the advocates and Mobilisation for Rights Association in Morocco pointed out that: The 2004 Family Code allows polygamy, maintain men’s power to unilaterally divorce their wives without cause, provides for unequal access to divorce between men and women, maintains discrimination in child custody and guardianship and inheritance, and does not adequately protect women’s economic rights during marriage or upon divorce (Quoted in Advocates for Human Rights, <http://www.stopvaw.org/morocco>).

Similarly, Nessryne Jelalia (2015) has pointed out that:

In fact Tunisian law is still recognises the man as ‘head of the household’, depriving women from having equal power over their lives or over decisions affecting their children,; it doesn’t give the women equal possibility of choosing her spouse, as he should be of Muslim confession; it grants the rapist of a minor the option to marry her against her dropping the charges; it doesn’t explicitly acknowledge rape and does not secure equal access of women to inheritance , further deepening the trend of female improvement ( New Arab, 14<sup>th</sup> January

2015 <https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/comment/2015/1/14/still-a-long-way-to-equality-for-tunisian-women>).

Islamic shari'a is seen as the main source of the law, although the interpretation of shari'a varies across the countries. The shari'a as interpreted in the Fiqh is the body of Islamic provisions that are binding on legal and religious grounds and shapes social relations, the political system and individual lifestyles so that they are compatible with Islamic teaching. It shapes the relationship between men and women and the choices that women have within the family, at work and in social life. There are three main positions on the extent to which discriminatory interpretations of Islam should be codified in law: (1) women's rights should be based on internationally binding standards incorporated in the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and not shari'a ; (2) the law in Muslim countries should be based on a traditional (patriarchal) interpretation of Islam, as the Quran sets down God-given laws; and (3) the law should be based on an reinterpretation of Islam taking account of social changes. With the rise of political Islam there is a fourth position, which is that the law should be based on a more authentic and conservative interpretation of the shari'a (Mir-Hosseini 2013).

In traditional Islamic law the dominant position is reserved for men, with women having fewer rights, especially in marriage, divorce and inheritance. Women are expected to be modest and obedient. The roles of men and women are said to be complementary, especially in the family, with men and women having different rights and duties. However, this also justifies gender inequalities and women being second-class citizens. Those that argue for a reinterpretation of Islam argue that 'complementarity' is based on the conditions prevalent at the time the Quran was written and that the Quran should be reinterpreted in the light of social conditions in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. However, there are different interpretations of the shari'a even among those that advocate a traditional interpretation.

Family law based on shari'a legalises discrimination against women and makes them second class citizens, denying them legal rights that men have. Tunisia is a civil republic, with Islam being the state religion<sup>13</sup>, and in Morocco the 2011 Constitution grants sole power to the Superior Council of Ulemans to guide law based on Islamic principles. The constitutions of the other four countries declare them to be Islamic republics and shari'a to be the main or sole source of law. Tunisia and Morocco have more 'women-friendly' legislation (Charrad 2012) but all 6 countries still have some discriminatory personal status and other laws on their statute books. For example, in all the countries women inherit only half of what men do, but it is only in Egypt that wives have to obey their husbands by law (Table 2).

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<sup>13</sup> This was the case before the Uprisings and was adopted in 2014 as part of the new constitution (<https://www.rt.com/news/tunisia-rejects-islam-law-196/>).

Table 2: Legal Rights of Married Women (√ = Yes, X = No)

	<b>Egypt</b>	<b>Iraq</b>	<b>Jordan</b>	<b>Morocco</b>	<b>Tunisia</b>
<b>Is personal status law recognised?</b>	√	√	√	X	X
<b>Are wives required to obey their husbands?</b>	√	X	X	X	X
<b>Can a married woman be head of household in the same way as a husband?</b>	n/a	X	X	X	X
<b>Do female and male surviving spouses have equal inheritance rights?</b>	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Are there special provisions protecting the marital home?</b>	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Do sons and daughters have equal inheritance rights?</b>	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Is a woman's testimony afford equal weight to that of a man?</b>	√	√	X	√	√
<b>Do spouses have equal rights to convey citizenship?</b>	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Can a wife convey citizenship to her children in the same way as a man?</b>	√	X	X	√	√
<b>Must spouses jointly maintain the family?</b>	X	√	X	X	√
<b>Can a married woman apply for a passport in the same way as a man?</b>	√	√	X	√	√
<b>Can a married woman travel outside the country in the same way as a man?</b>	√	X	√	√	√
<b>Can a married woman travel outside her home in the same way as a man?</b>	X	X	X	√	√
<b>Can a married woman get a job in the same way as a man?</b>	√	√	X	√	√
<b>Are personal law courts recognised?</b>	√	X	√	√	X
<b>Is there domestic violence legislation?</b>	X	√	√	X	X
<b>Are there clear criminal penalties for domestic violence</b>	X	X	X	√	√
<b>Is marital rape explicitly criminalised?</b>	X	√	X	√	X
<b>Are rape perpetrators exempt if they are married to the Victim?</b>	X	X	√	X	X
<b>Are rape perpetrators exempt if they marry the victim?</b>	X	X	√	X	√
<b>Does the domestic violence cover physical, sexual, emotional and economic violence</b>	P, S, E	X	X	X	X

Source: World Bank Group 2015. Note: Information not available for Libya.

One very clear indicator of the status of women in a society is the tolerance of violence against women (VAW), the threat and actual use of physical, sexual, psychological or economic violence by men to control the behaviour of women and to 'punish' them for behaving in ways that are seen as inappropriate/unacceptable. Patriarchal ideology positions men as dominant and women as subordinate and violence is sanctioned as a way for men to maintain power, control and dominance over women. Women's economic dependence on men makes it difficult for them to leave violent men and deeply embedded cultural beliefs mean that many women think that a man has the right and even the obligation to discipline his wife if she does not behave 'appropriately'. On the OECD Gender Index (Figure 5 above) Egypt is rated very high for 'Restricted Physical Integrity' and Tunisia low, with the other

four countries rated as medium. There are three separate indicators of the extent of violence against women: the extent to which it is seen as acceptable for a man to ‘discipline’ his wife and the tolerance of sexual and physical abuse of women more generally; the incidence of violence against women in the public sphere as well as domestic violence; and the legal framework for dealing with VAW. Sexual and physical violence and sexual harassment are pervasive in all six countries and female genital mutilation widely practiced in Egypt and the Northern Region of Iraq (Ministry of Health 2014a, b; Thomas Reuters Foundation 2013). According to the World Bank, the MENA region has the fewest laws protecting women from domestic violence in the world, and the OECD highlights the need to increase legal protection for women from gender-based violence. In 2014 there were clear gaps in the legislative provisions to protect women from violence. Only Iraq and Jordan had domestic violence legislation in place, with the other countries using the general provisions of the penal code, and it was only in Morocco and Tunisia that there were clear penalties (Table 2 above). Marital rape is a criminal offence only in Morocco and Iraq, and rape perpetrators are legally exempt in Jordan if they are married to the victim. In Jordan and Tunisia, under certain circumstances, rape perpetrators can be exempt from prosecution if the victim agrees to marry them. In none of the countries does the legislation especially cover economic violence and it is only in Egypt that physical, sexual and emotional violence are explicitly recognised as types of VAW. Legislation on sexual harassment in employment, education and public places exists in Egypt and Morocco, in public places in Iraq but not at all in Jordan or Tunisia. Women may not have an understanding of what types of behaviour are controlling and VAW based on international law. In Iraq, for example, while around 70 per cent of women agree that ‘preventing a wife from visiting her family’ and ‘not giving a wife enough money’ are definitely VAW, less than 20 per cent think that ‘a wife having to ask permission to travel’ is and only around a third that ‘beating a daughter for misbehaving’, ‘controlling a wife’s movements’ and ‘preventing a wife from political participation’ are (Ministry of Planning Central Statistical Organisation 2012). There is evidence that even where there are laws in place that should protect women they face high barriers to claiming and exercising their rights, entrenching impunity and normalising violence against women (Al-Badayneh 2012; Amnesty International 2015 a,b; Kvinna till Kvinna 2015). Cultural taboos and attitudes that frequently blame women for the violence mean that they are often reluctant to report it, and even when they do, the police often fail to take action (Amnesty International 2015a, b). In those countries where surveys have been carried out the acceptance of a man’s right to discipline his wife is relatively high, as is the incidence of domestic violence, with the reported incidence likely to be an underestimate given cultural attitudes and taboos (e.g. Al-Badayneh 2012; Amnesty International 2015a, b). In Egypt, for example, women are subject to gender harassment and even violence in public space, with women being abused by the security forces as well as men in general (Amnesty International 2015a). In 2014, 73 per cent of married women aged 15-49 said they experienced controlling behaviour and nearly a third have been beaten by their husband/former husband. Just over 50 per cent agreed with female circumcision (female genital mutilation, FGM) (Ministry of Health et al 2015a,b). Just over a third agreed that a husband has a ‘right’ to ‘discipline’ his wife by beating her if she is ‘guilty’ of one or more of the following: going out without telling him; neglecting the children; arguing with him; refusing to have sex with him; or burning the food. In Iraq nearly half of girls aged 10-14 y and 36 per cent of currently married women had experienced domestic violence in the year prior to the survey (Ministry of Planning Central Statistical Organisation 2012). Just over a third of women do not think that it is VAW if a husband beats his wife for disobeying orders or going out without his permission and only just over 40 per cent are certain that it is VAW. A fifth of women aged 15-54 have experienced some form of GBV on the street and 1 in 10



on public transport. Violence against women in public space, so-called honour killings (with 68 per cent of young men thinking they are acceptable) and trafficking are also common, as is female genital mutilation in Kurdistan (Kvinna till Kvinna 2015). Just over half of Iraqi women think that a man has a right to hit or beat his wife if she disobeys, Article 41 of the 1969 Penal code gives a man the legal right to punish his wife, although Article 29 of the 2005 Constitution prohibits all forms of violence and abuse in the family. In Tunisia nearly one woman in two (47%) has experienced GBV, and of these one in six is a survivor of sexual violence (Amnesty International 2015b; ONFP-National Board for Family and Population 2010). Most of the violence is perpetrated by husbands and little GBV or sexual harassment in the public space is reported to have taken place. In Morocco 63 per cent of women reported having experienced physical, psychological, sexual or economic domestic violence, with 55 per cent reporting physical violence (Moroccan High Commission for Planning 2011, quoted in Human Rights Watch 2016). A survey of women in Jordan in 2006 (Al-Badayneh 2012) found that VAW was pervasive and that, based on their definition of violence, virtually all the women interviewed had experienced at least one form of violence in the year preceding the interview. Eighty-nine per cent thought that all family members have to obey the husband/father and that husbands/fathers can punish any member of the household. A survey in 2012 found that 69 per cent of wives thought that there were circumstances when it was permissible for a husband to beat his wife. One in three Jordanian women reported having been abused by their husband and 1 in 10 sexual abuse (Department of Statistics and IFC International (2013). In Libya VAW is said to be a significant problem but there is little statistical evidence on its incidence, the subject of VAW is taboo and sexual violence is considered an honour crime not a crime against women (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 2013; Saferworld 2014).

#### Methods

The main aim of the Report is to provide a detailed analysis of public opinion on gender equality and the empowerment of women in the six countries in 2014 and to consider if there have been any noticeable changes post-2011, using public opinion survey data. We identified eight public opinion datasets that included all or some of the six countries spanning the period from 2000 to 2014 (Table 3; see Abbott et al 2016 for more details of the surveys and the quality assurance of the data sets). Concerns have been raised about the quality of datasets collected in developing countries (e.g. Inglehart and Weizel 2010; Kostenko 2015). All eight data sets were subject to quality control checks and two issues were identified - duplicate/near duplicate cases and a high proportion of missing values (don't know, refused, missing) on some questions and for some countries (Abbott et al 2016). Country datasets were not used where more than 10 per cent of cases were duplicates/near duplicates, and suspected duplicate/near duplicate cases were removed from the countries that were retained. The missing values analysis found that the proportion on the variables used in this Report were relatively low and they have been excluded from the analysis unless we specifically say otherwise.

Table 3: Public Opinion Data Sets by Year

	WVS 4	WVS 5	AB I	AB II	WVS 6	AB III	AfroB	AT
Egypt	2001	2008	-----	2011	2013	2013	2013	2014
Iraq	2004	2006	-----	-----	2012	2013	-----	2014
Jordan	2001	2007	2006	2010	2014	2013	-----	2014
Libya	-----	-----	-----	-----	2014	2013	-----	2014
Morocco	2001	2007	2006	-----	2011	2013	2013	2014
Tunisia	-----	-----	-----	2011	2013	2013	2013	2014

Notes: WVS – World Values Survey; AB – Arab Barometer; AfroB – Afro Barometer; AT Arab Transformations.

The post-2011 public opinion surveys have good coverage of the six countries and include detailed questions on gender and the empowerment of women but the data available for 2011 and earlier are much more limited. The World Values Survey (WVS) carried out three waves between 2000 and 2014 and included four of the countries in all three waves. However, the questions asked in each wave that can be used to measure changes in attitudes to gender equality and the empowerment of women are fairly limited. ABI and ABII have more detailed questions, and specifically questions that relate to attitudes to shari’a and personal status law. but country coverage is limited and the questions asked are not identical in the two waves. We have therefore decided to use the limited WVS data to look at the question of changing attitudes to gender equality and the empowerment of women and specifically if there is any detectable change after 2011, but it is important to note that the survey in Morocco was carried out actually *in* 2011. We also look for any evidence of changes in attitudes to personal status law in the three countries; we have data in both 2010/11 and 2013/14 for Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia. This is a very limited time period, however, and two data points provides no indication as to whether any changes are the continuation of a trend, the reversal of a trend or a sharp change.

The main part of the Report, however, examines attitudes in 2013/14 in detail, and here we have data for all the countries. To give as detailed and comprehensive picture as possible we use data from the Arab Transformation, the Arab Barometer III and the Afro Barometer (although the latter only covers Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia). We focus mainly on comparing attitudes between the six countries and on differences between men and women within each country. We recognise that other factors - especially age, education, economic circumstances and religiosity - may be important in influencing attitudes towards gender and women’s empowerment. To look at this we have constructed an Arab Transformations Gender Index and we control for these along with gender in regression analysis. Our gender index is designed to measure attitudes to gender equality in the specific contend of the MENA countries and specifically takes account of the importance of the influence of shari’a on attitudes to gender equality of the empowerment of women.

The Arab Transformations Gender Index was computed from 11 variables in the AT data set. Education and employment

- Education is more important for a boy than a girl (reversed on the Index);
- A married woman can work outside the home if she wishes;
- Women can assume judicial office;
- A woman can be president or prime minister of a Muslim country.

Marital rights

- The first wife’s consent is a prerequisite to allow a husband to take a second wife;
- Women can refuse to marry someone chosen by her parents without her consent;
- Men and women should have equal rights when making the decision to divorce.

## Legal rights

- Women can travel abroad by themselves if they wish;
- The law should not allow a man to marry more than one women;
- In Islam women can stipulate the right to divorce her husband in the marriage contract.
- Women Should have Equal Inheritance Rights

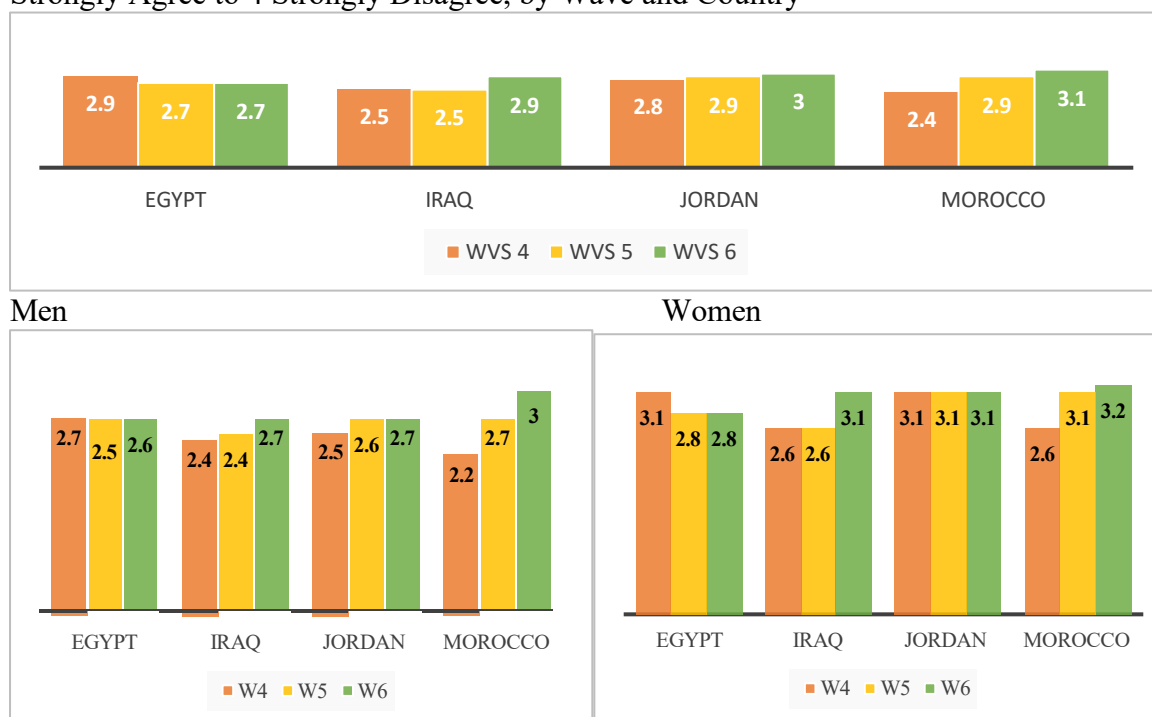
Exploratory factor analysis suggested a three factor solution – three distinct domains. However, as we are interested in measuring attitudes to gender equality and women’s empowerment across sub-domains we computed a weighted Index of Gender Equality. In total 18 per cent of cases had values missing on one or more variables. Replacing the missing values with the mean on factor analysis did not change the solution and only marginally changed the variance explained. Missing values were therefore replaced by the mean on each variable that was used to make up the Index of Gender. The 11 variables were then used to construct a composite Index of Gender Equality based on four domains – education, employment, marital rights and legal rights. Each domain was computed as a scale. On the employment subscale ‘a married woman can work outside the home’, as the fundamental right, was weighted at two with the other two variables given a weighting of one. On the other sub-scales the variables were equally weighted, with each of the subscales equally weighted so that the four sub-domains made the same contribution to the Index. To measure support for democracy we recoded the answers to four question on what type of system respondents thought was suitable for governing their country on a four-point scale: a parliamentary system in which all types of political parties can compete; a parliamentary system where only Islamic Parties can compete; a system with a strong authority and elections and competition among political parties are not important; and a system governed by Islamic law in which there are no political parties or elections. On the recoded variable supporters of democracy were those that thought that democracy was suitable for their country and that no other system was suitable.

## Changing Gender Attitudes?

In this section we consider how gender attitudes have changed since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and if there is any evidence to suggest that they have changed since the events of 2011. Data are available for Egypt, Iraq, Jordan and Morocco from the World Values Survey. Wave 4 covers the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Wave 5 the middle of the first decade and Wave 6 is after 2011 except for Morocco, where the survey was carried out actually *in* 2011. We use three questions that are asked across the waves to measure attitudes to education, economic empowerment and political empowerment. We then combine the three variables into an Index of Gender Equality.

Attitudes to equal educational opportunities for girls are measured by answers to a question that suggested that university education is more important for boys than girls on a four-point scale going from 1 strongly agree to 4 strongly disagree. Figure 9 shows the means for the four countries, for each of the Waves for the sample as a whole and separately for men and women. In the sample as a whole attitudes have become more conservative in Egypt and less conservative in Iraq and Morocco. Men are more conservative than women and there are differences between men and women within as well as across the four countries. In Egypt attitudes for men and women became significantly more conservative between Waves 4 and 5 and in Morocco more liberal. There were no significant changes in Iraq or Jordan between Waves 4 and 5. Between Waves 5 and 6 attitudes became more liberal for both men and women in Iraq and Morocco and for women in Jordan. There were no significant changes for men in Jordan or for men or women in Egypt.

Figure 9: ‘University is More Important for a Boy than a Girl’: mean on a Scale from 1 Strongly Agree to 4 Strongly Disagree, by Wave and Country



Source: WVS.

Sig (t-test)  $p < 0.001$  W4-5, Egypt, Morocco.  
 $p < 0.001$  W5-6 Iraq, Jordan, Morocco,

Sig  $p < 0.001$  W4-5 Egypt, Morocco;  
 $p < 0.001$  W5-6 Iraq, Morocco

The changes across the three Waves are significant across the countries (Anova:  $p < 0.001$ ). Egypt has become more conservative and Morocco and Iraq more liberal. In each Wave the countries form three homogeneous subgroups (Scheffé). Morocco has moved from being the most conservative country to the most liberal by Wave 6 (Table 4) while Egypt has moved from being the most liberal in Wave 4 to the most conservative by Wave 6. By Wave 6 Iraq had become more liberal and was in the second group with Jordan, whose attitudes had not changed.

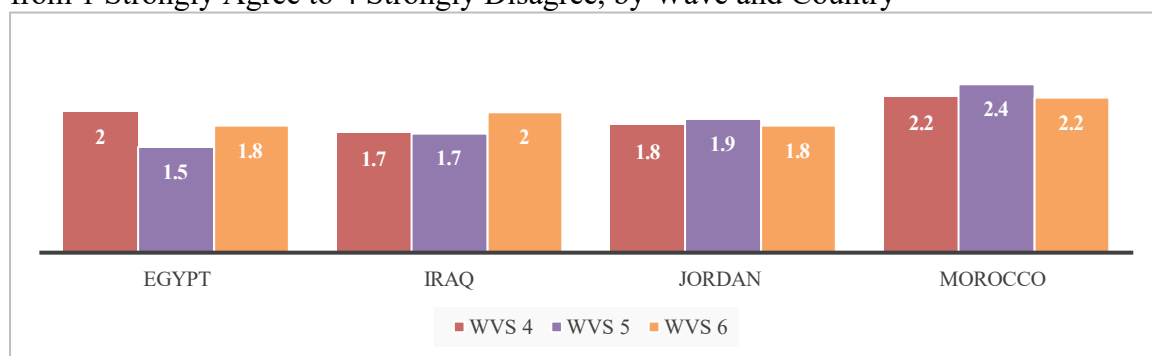
Table 4: Homogeneous Country Sub-Groups: ‘University Education is More Important for a Boy than a Girl’

	W4			W5			W6		
Sub Sets	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
<b>Egypt</b>			2.9		2.69		2.69		
<b>Iraq</b>		2.52		2.53				2.89	
<b>Jordan</b>			2.79			2.87		2.89	
<b>Morocco</b>	2.36					2.86			3.07

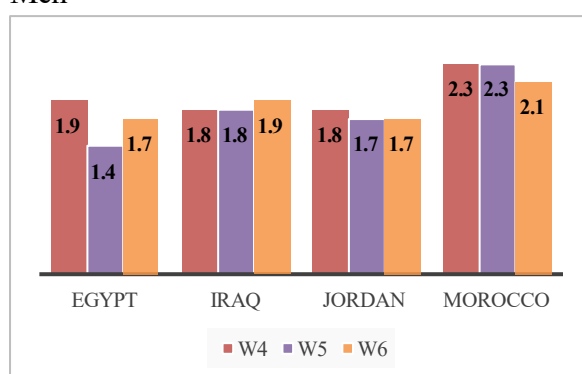
Anova sig  $< 0.05$

The question on attitudes to being a housewife is used to measure attitudes to women’s economic empowerment. As with attitudes to education, attitudes have become more conservative in Egypt and more liberal in Iraq, with no significant change for Jordan or Morocco (Figure 10). Both men and women became more conservative between Waves 4 and 5 in Egypt and then moved in a more liberal direction between Waves 5 and 6 but remained significantly more conservative than in Wave 4. Moroccan women became significantly more liberal between Waves 4 and 5 and Iraqi women between waves 5 and 6.

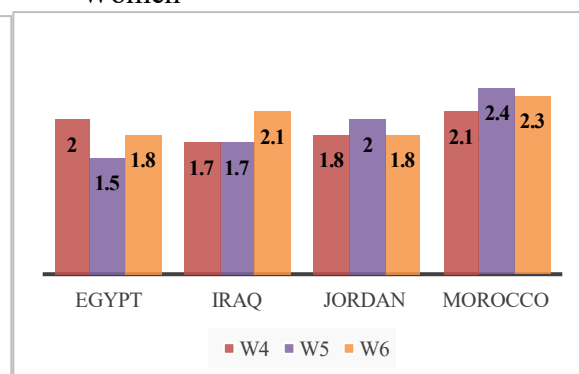
Figure 10: ‘Being a housewife Just as Fulling as Having Paid Employment’: Mean on a Scale from 1 Strongly Agree to 4 Strongly Disagree, by Wave and Country



Men



Women



Source: WVS

Sig (t-test)  $p < 0.001$  W4 - W5 Egypt,  
 $p < 0.001$  W5-6 Egypt, Iraq.

sig  $p < 0.001$  W4-5 Egypt, Morocco;  
 $p < 0.001$  W5-6 Egypt, Morocco.

The differences between the countries across the Waves are significant (Anova:  $p < 0.001$ ). Basically, Egypt has become more conservative and Iraq more liberal. In Waves 14 and 5 the countries form four homogeneous subgroups, and three in Wave 6. (Scheffé). Morocco is the most liberal on all three Waves although it is no more liberal by Wave 6 than it was in Wave 4. Egypt moved from being the second most liberal to being the most conservative by Wave 6 and Iraq moves from being the most conservative to being the next to most liberal by Wave 6. Jordan has moved to being the most conservative along with Egypt, although there has been no significant change in its attitudes.

Table 5: Homogeneous Country Sub-Groups: Being a housewife Just as Fulling as Having Paid Employment

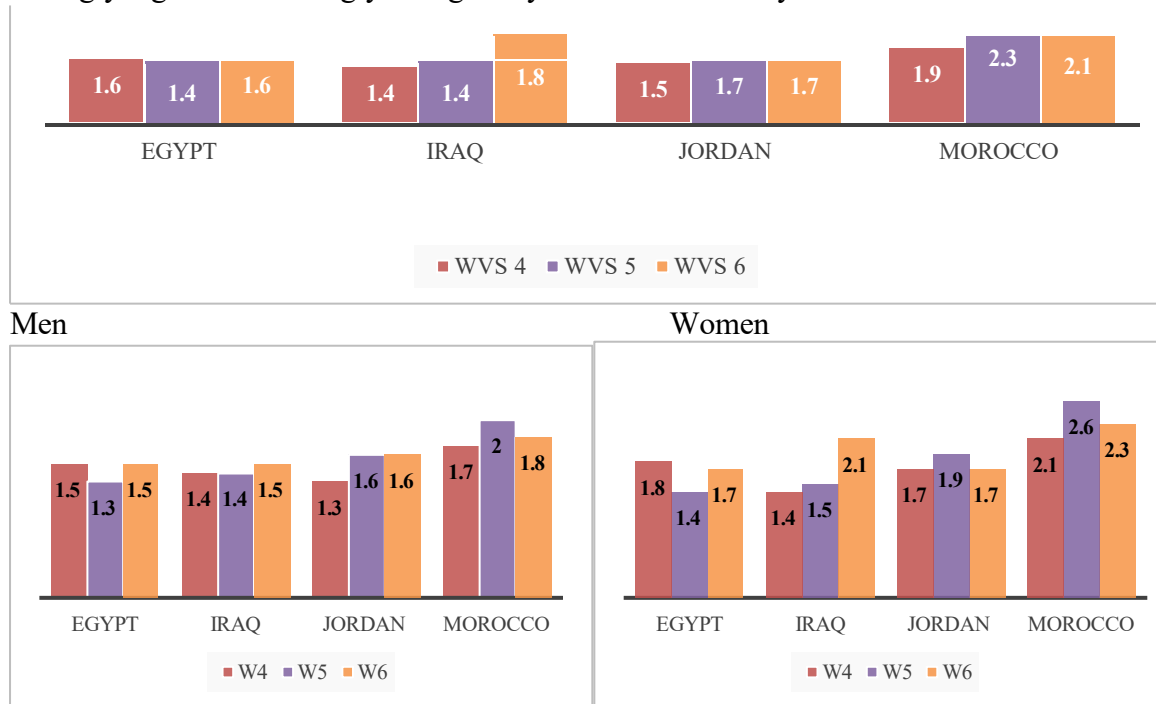
Sub Sets	W4				W5				W6		
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3
<b>Egypt</b>			1.97		1.45				1.75		
<b>Iraq</b>	1.73					1.71				2.01	
<b>Jordan</b>		1.83					1.85		1.75		
<b>Morocco</b>				2.20				2.36			2.16

Anova:  $p < 0.05$

Attitude to women’s political empowerment is measured by attitude to women’s ability as political leaders. Egyptians and Jordanians have the most conservative attitudes across the three waves while Iraqis move from the most conservative attitudes to marginally more liberal ones (Figure 11). Morocco has the most liberal attitudes across the three waves, with

values becoming more liberal between Waves 4 and 5, falling back between Waves 5 and 6 but remaining more liberal than in Wave 4. Women are more liberal than men across all Waves in Egypt and Morocco but it is only in Wave 6 that Iraqi women are more liberal than men. In Egypt both men and women became more conservative between Waves 4 and 5 and then more liberal between Waves 5 and 6. Moroccan men and women were more liberal between Waves 4 and 5 and then moved to more conservative attitudes between Waves 5 and 6 although still marginally more liberal than in Wave 4. Attitudes among Iraqi women became significantly more liberal between Waves 5 and 6 but not among men.

Figure 11: Men Make Better Political Leaders than Women Do Means on a Scale from 1 Strongly Agree to 4 Strongly Disagree by Wave and Country



Source: WVS  
 Sig (t-test) p<0.001 W4-5 Egypt, Jordan, Morocco; p<0.001 W4-5 Egypt, Morocco;  
 P<0.001 W5-6 Egypt, Iraq, Morocco. p<0.001 W5-6 Egypt, Morocco.

The differences between the countries across the Waves are significant (Anova: p<0.001). On each Wave the countries form three homogeneous subgroups. Morocco is the most liberal on all three Waves. Iraq moves from being the most conservative along with Jordan on Wave 4 to being the second most liberal by Wave 6. Jordan is the most conservative on both Waves 4 and 6 and Egypt moves from set 2 on Wave 4 to the most conservative subset by Wave 6.

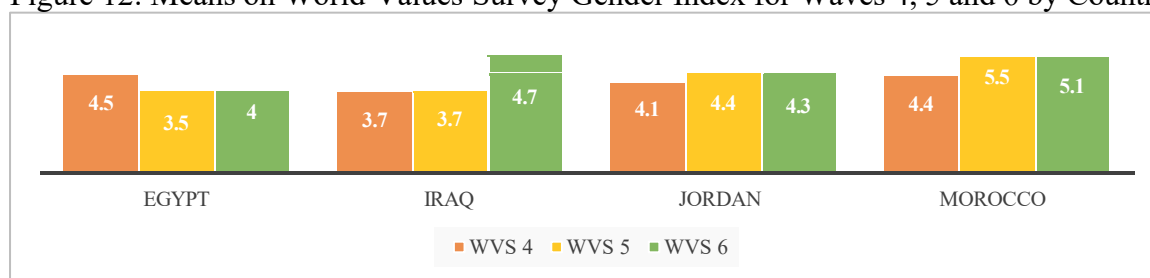
Table 1: Homogeneous Country Sub-Groups Men Make Better Political Leaders than Women Do

	W4			W5			W6		
Sub Sets	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
Egypt		1.63		1.38			1.6		
Iraq	1.44			1.43				1.78	
Jordan	1.47				1.71		1.65		
Morocco			1.88			2.25			2.05

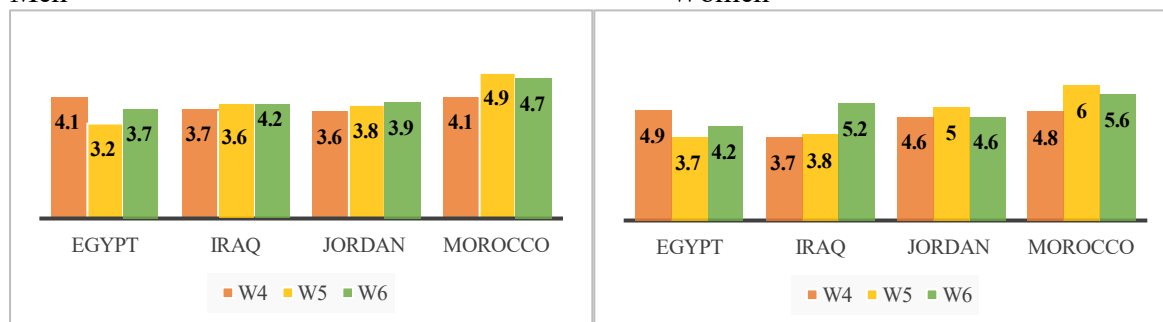
Anova: p<0.05

Combining the three indicators gives a broader overall measure of attitudes to gender equality. On a WVS Index of Attitudes to Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women computed from the three variables attitudes become more liberal in Iraq and Morocco between the early part of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and in the period following the uprisings and in Egypt more conservative. The improvement in Morocco was between W4 and W5 and in Iraq between W5 and W6. In Egypt there was a move towards more conservative attitudes between W4 and W5 and although they became more liberal between W5 and W6, overall between W4 and W6 they became more conservative. Women are more liberal than men in all the countries and are driving the move towards more liberal gender attitudes in Iraq. In the other three countries the attitudes of men and women move in parallel.

Figure 12: Means on World Values Survey Gender Index for Waves 4, 5 and 6 by Country



t-test:  $p < 0.001$  W4 to W5, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco; W5 to W6, Egypt, Iraq, Morocco; W4 to W6 Egypt, Iraq, Morocco



Source: WVS

Note: The Index was constructed by adding the three variables (attitudes to education, being a housewives and women as political leaders together) making a 10-point scale. The Index was coded from 1 most negative to 10 most positive.

The ranking of the countries has changed as a consequence; using the Scheffé procedure for identifying homogeneous subgroups, in Wave 4 Egypt and Morocco were the most liberal and Iraq the most conservative, with Jordan lying between the two groups. By Wave 6 the four countries were all significantly different, with Egypt being the most conservative and Morocco the most liberal. Iraq had moved to being the next most liberal.

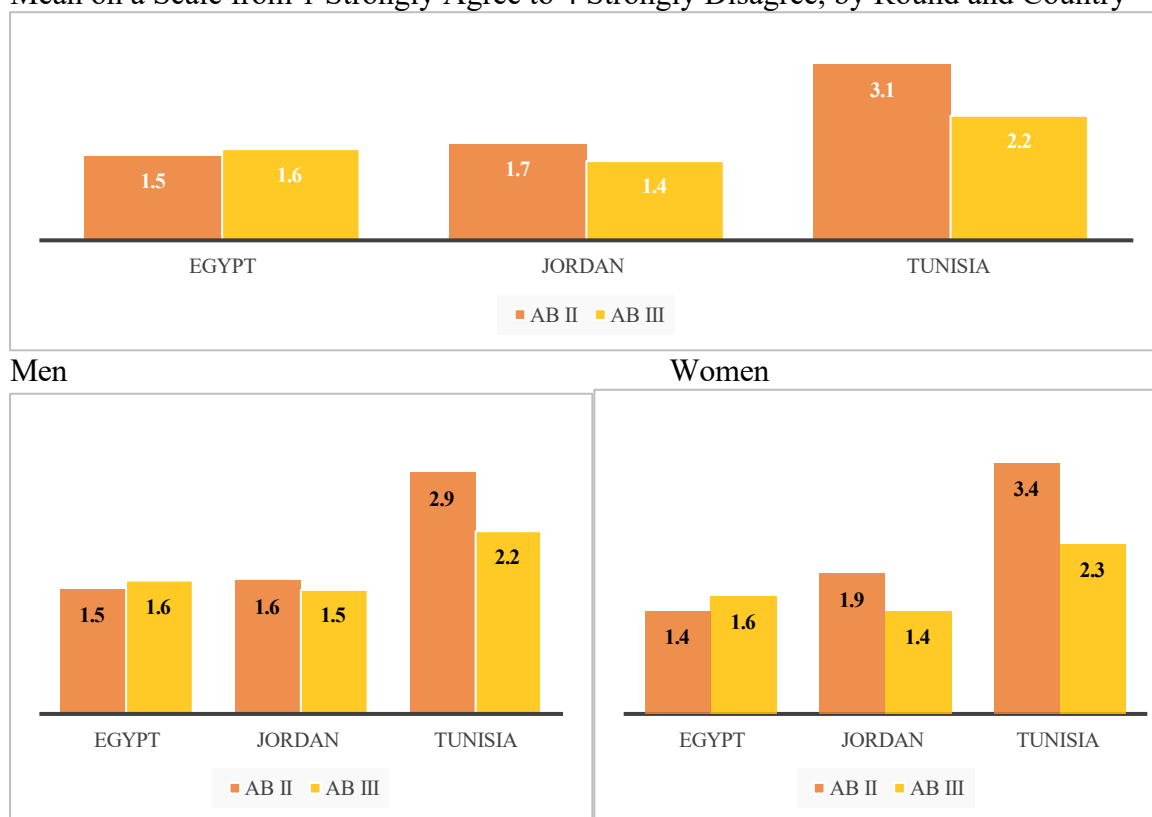
Table 7: Homogeneous Country Sub-Groups, WVS Gender Index

Sub Sets	W4			W5			W6			
	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	4
Egypt			4.5	3.5			4			
Iraq	3.7			3.7					4.7	
Jordan		4.1			4.4			4.3		
Morocco			4.4			5.5				5.1

Anova  $p < 0.05$

The analysis of the WVS suggests that the events of 2011 have had neither a positive nor a negative impact on gender attitudes. Iraqi women have moved to more liberal attitude but Iraq did not have Uprisings and the changes in Morocco cannot be put down to the Uprisings because the survey was carried out in 2011. One of the weaknesses of the variables available in the WVS is that known of them measure attitudes to shari'a. To remedy this, we turn to the Arab Barometer carried out in 2010/11 and 2013. In Egypt there has been no noticeable change in the strong support for personal status law being enacted in accordance with shari'a, while in Jordan and especially Tunisia there was a noticeable shift to a more conservative position, and more so for women than men. While Jordan and Tunisian men were more conservative than women in 2010/11, by 2013 there was not significant difference in either country.

Figure 13: 'The Government Should Enact Personal Status Law in Accordance with Shari'a': Mean on a Scale from 1 Strongly Agree to 4 Strongly Disagree, by Round and Country



Source: AB II & III

### Attitudes to Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women in 2013/14

In this section we look in detail at gender attitudes in 2013/14 drawing mainly on the Arab Transformations Public Opinion Survey 2014 but supplementing this with data from Arab Barometer III (2013), Afro Barometer 2013 and WVS Wave 6. The Gender Rights Index (Figure 7 above) suggests that Tunisia is the most gender friendly of the six countries and Egypt the least gender friendly. Morocco although some way behind Tunisia is clearly ahead of the other three countries which all have much the same scores and are clearly ahead of Egypt. On the Index there has been a sharp decline in women's rights since 2011 in Egypt, a modest improvement in Morocco and Tunisia and a dramatic improvement in Libya. There was a dramatic improvement in Jordan in the early part of the 21<sup>st</sup> century but no improvement since 2006 with a slight decline since 2009. The analysis of time series data was limited by data availability but it found no evidence that gender attitudes have changed

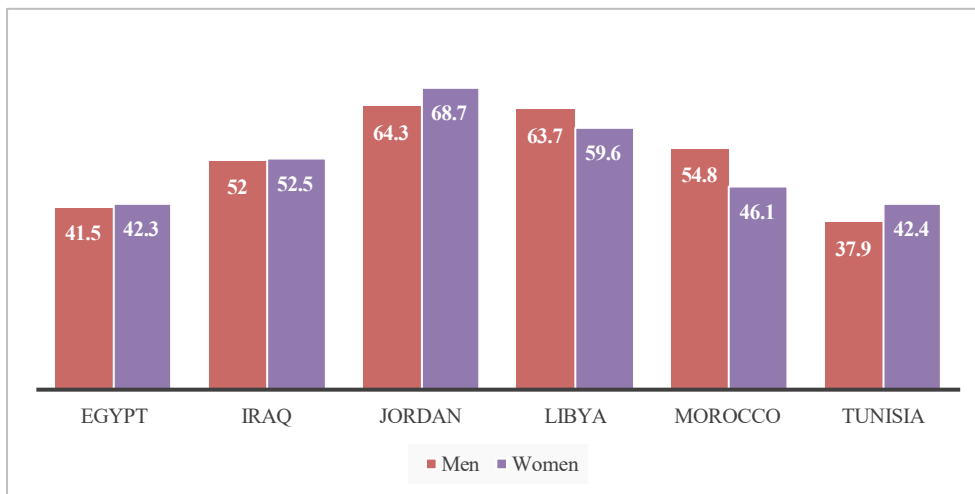


significantly post-2011 with the notable exception of Tunisia where both men and women have moved to a more conservative stance on the extent to which personal status law should be based on shari'a. The analysis suggested that Egypt's have the most conservative attitudes followed by the Jordanians and that Moroccans and Tunisians have the most liberal ones.

### **Equal Rights**

There is little evidence that women think that they are more likely to be treated as second-class citizens than men do. It is true that women are more likely to think that they are treated as second-class citizens than men in Jordan, Libya and Morocco, but the differences are not large except in Morocco (Figure 14).

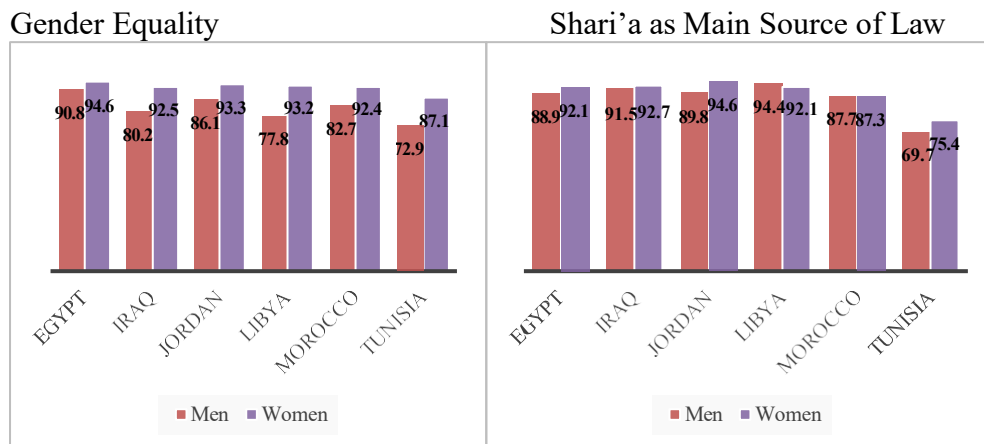
Figure 14: 'Feel Being Treated Equally to Other Citizens', % to Great/Medium Extent, by Gender



Source: AB III

Both men and women are strongly supportive of the notion that the Constitution should guarantee women equally rights (Figure 15). Women are more supportive than men but the differences are not large. However, there is also strong support for the Constitution including a clause stating that shari'a should be the main source of law. Support is somewhat lower in Tunisia but still more than three-quarters of women and two-thirds of men think that such a clause should be there. This is despite the fact that there has never been such a clause in the Constitution, unlike the other countries (with the exception of Morocco since 2008) where it has at least stated that personal status law should be based on shari'a. As we have already noted, support for the law being based on shari'a increased among Tunisians and especially women.

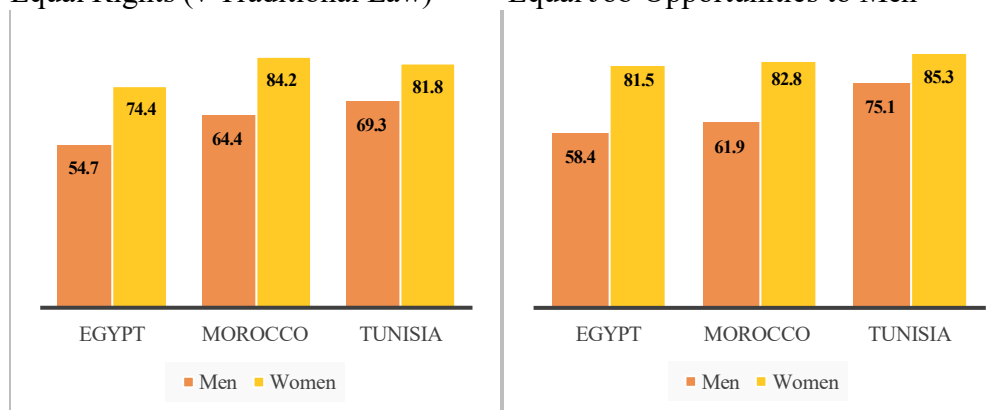
Figure 15: Gender Equality and Law Based on Shari'a Important /Somewhat Important in the Constitution



Source: ABIII

The findings from the Afro Barometer, which has more detailed questions on the law and on women's rights in employment, shows that women are much more supportive of equal rights for women than men (Figure 16). While women's attitudes to equal rights for women in employment are much the same across three countries, and in Morocco and Tunisia for women's rights to be based on modern law, men's attitudes vary across the three countries. Egyptian men are the most conservative and Tunisian men the most liberal.

Figure 16: Equal Rights for Women  
Equal Rights (v Traditional Law)

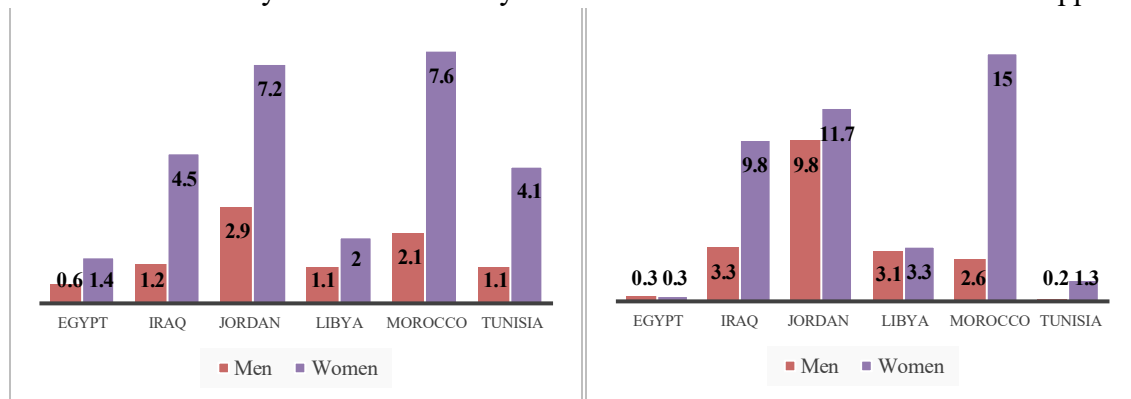


Source: AfroB 2013

None of the surveys asks how important it is to promote women's rights. However, in the Arab Transformations Survey respondents are asked about the ways in which the European Union (EU) can support their country, and the responses suggest that in comparison with other policies women's rights are rated very low. Asked to say which of 'promoting democracy', 'promoting economic development', 'resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict' or 'promoting women's rights' the EU could most positively support, 'promoting women's rights' was nominated by very few respondents, varying from 0.6 percent of men in Egypt to 7.6 per cent of women in Morocco (Figure 17). When asked to nominate ways in which the EU could provide support for their country, with other options including various types of financial support, support with security or not providing any support, the percentage nominating women's empowerment increased in Jordan and among women in Iraq and Morocco but remained very low. In general women were more likely to want support for

women’s empowerment policies than men and support was noticeably stronger in Jordan and Morocco

Figure 17: Support for Promoting Women’s Right as a Priority Policy  
 Most Positive Policy for EU in Country      One of Two Priorities for EU support

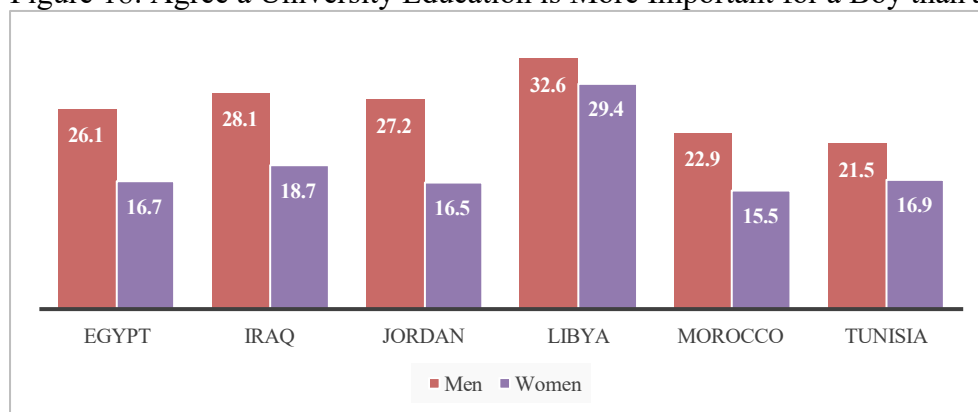


Source: AT 2014. Based on % of sample

### Education

As we have discussed already there is near gender parity in education, and according to the findings of the Gallup World Poll (2012) around 90 per cent of both men and women think that boys and girls should have equal access to education in Egypt, Libya and Tunisia with little difference between the views of men and women. However, when it comes to university education between a fifth and a third of men and 16 and 29 per cent of women think university education is more important for boys than girls. Libyan men and women are the most likely to agree that university education is more important for a boy than a girl and the difference between women in Libya and the other six countries is especially noticeable. There is little difference for women across the six countries when Libya is excluded, but men fall into three groups: Libya, where men are most likely to agree, and Tunisia and Morocco where they are least likely to agree, with the other three countries lying between.

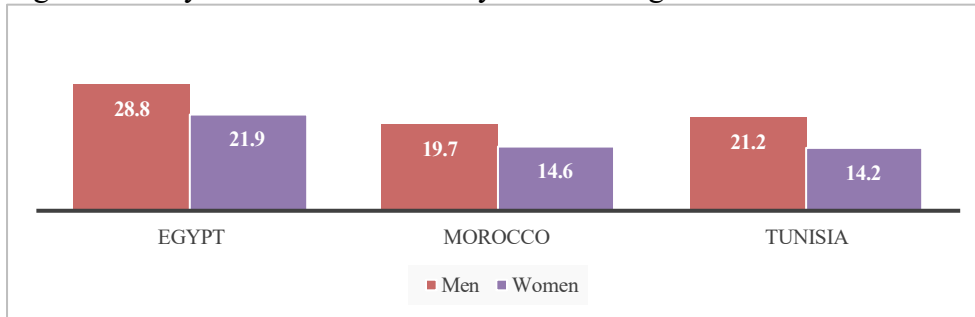
Figure 18: Agree a University Education is More Important for a Boy than a Girl



Source: AT 2014

Turning to the Afro Barometer support for boys having priority in receiving education over ability the picture for the three countries for which there is data is much the same with men being more conservative than women and Egyptians more conservative than Moroccans and Tunisians.

Figure 19: Boys Should Have Priority in Receiving Education Rather than Ability

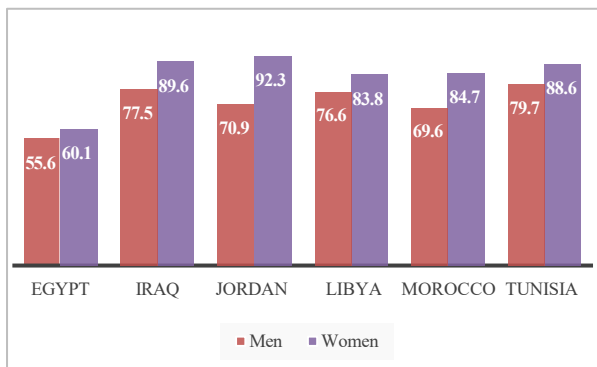


Source: AfroB 2013

### Economic Empowerment and Employment

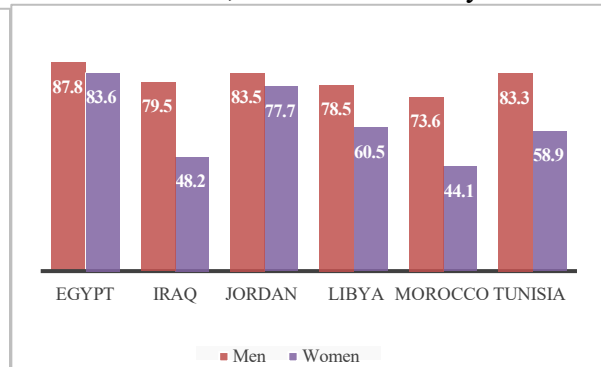
Women are more likely than men to support women’s economic empowerment across all the countries and on a number of different indicators (Figure 20). However, there are differences between the countries. Overall, men and women in Egypt have the most conservative attitudes to women’s economic empowerment, with women holding much closer views to those of men than in the other countries. Men across the six countries strongly support the view that when jobs are scarce men should have priority, that men make better business executives than women (with, surprisingly, the exception of Egypt) and between 60 per cent and 70 per cent think that women should not be judges.

Figure 20: Attitudes to Employment  
Married Women Can Work Outside the Home



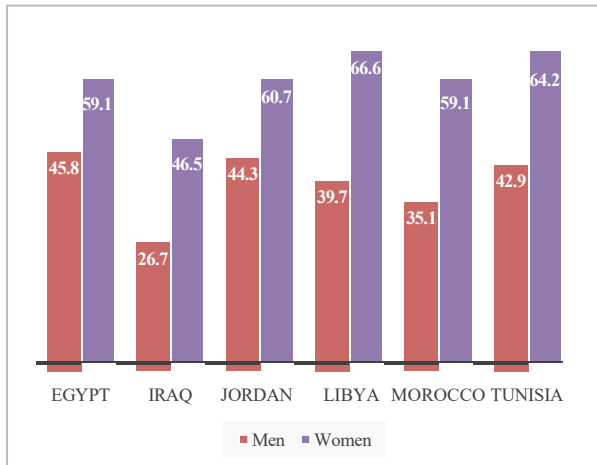
Source: AT Survey 2014

Jobs Scarce, Men Have Priority



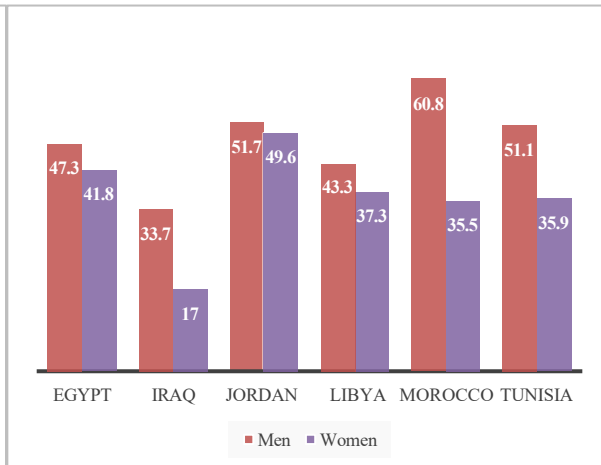
Source: WVS Wave 6

Job Best Way for a Women to be Independent  
Husband



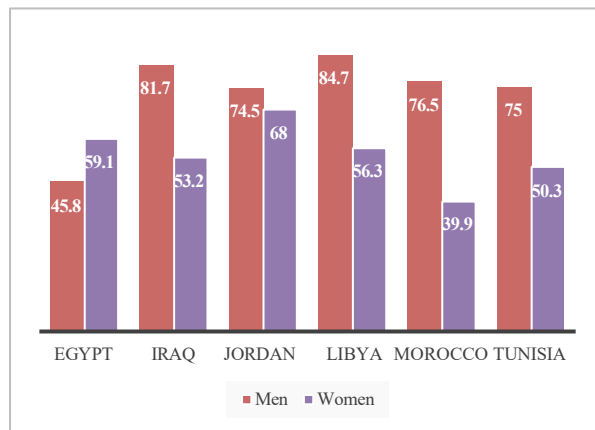
Source: WVS Wave 6

Problem if Wife Earns More than



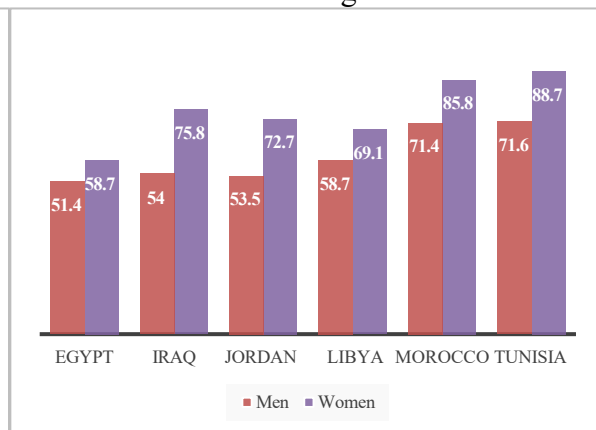
Source: WVS Wave 6

## Men Make Better Business Executives than Women



Source: WVS Wave 6

## Women Can Be Judges



Source: AT 2014

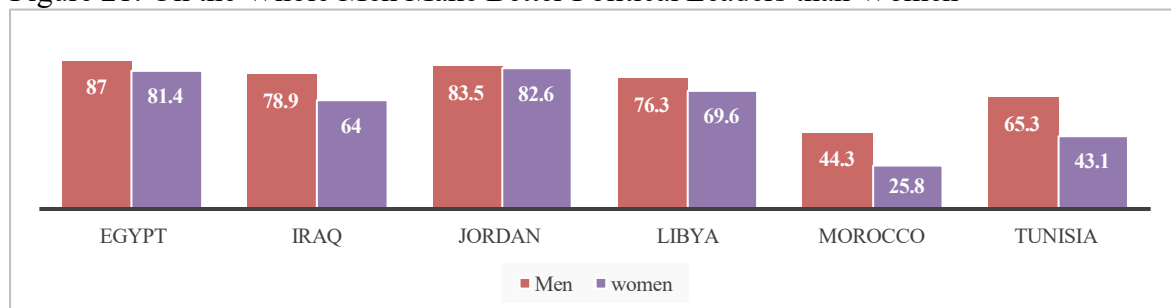
A clear majority of women (with the exception of Iraq) think that having a job is the best way for women to be independent; men are much less certain than this, probably reflecting their lack of agreement that women should be independent. Men are more likely than women to think that it is a problem if a wife earns more than her husband.

### Politics

Political empowerment is about more than women becoming politicians. However, attitudes to women becoming political leaders is a reasonable measure of the extent to which women have any chance of being elected to positions of power and influence in their country. Women are much less likely to be elected to political office if there is a general view that men make better political leaders than women.

That men make better political leaders than women is indeed a general view, although only a minority of men and women in Morocco and of women in Tunisia think that this is the case. The countries fall into three groups: Egypt, Iraq, Jordan and Libya, where the attitude is conservative, Tunisia, where it is less conservative than in the first group, and Morocco where it is noticeably the most liberal. Men and women in Egypt, Jordan and Libya hold much the same view but women in Iraq, Morocco and Tunisia are much more likely than the men in their country to disagree with the statement, although over 60 per cent of women in Iraq do agree with it, compared to around a quarter in Morocco and just over 40 per cent in Tunisia.

Figure 21: On the Whole Men Make Better Political Leaders than Women

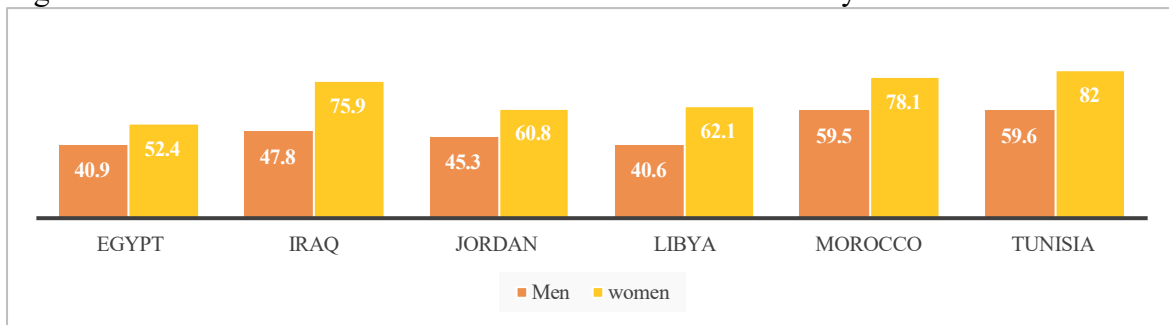


Source: AT 2014

Women are much more likely to agree that a woman can be the prime minister of a Muslim country than men with women in Tunisia, Morocco and Iraq being strongly supportive but with only just over half of women in Egypt agreeing that a woman can become a prime

minister of a Muslim country. Men are less supportive, varying from a high of 60 per cent in Tunisia and Morocco to a low of 41 per cent in Egypt and Libya.

Figure 22: A Woman Can Be Prime Minister of a Muslim Country



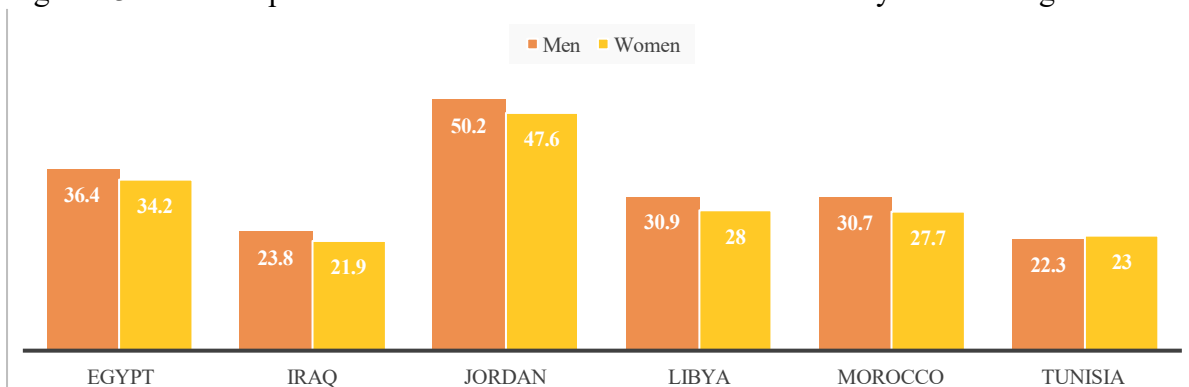
Source: AT 2014

### *Norms and Values and Legal Status*

Norms and values shape the ways we live our lives and embody the taken-for-granted acceptable ways of behaving in a given society. They are institutionalised and structure the ways in which we think we should behave as well as the ways in which we expect others to behave. Gender norms and values shape the ways in which men and women, boys and girls live their daily lives and relate to one another. Patriarchal values construct women as inferior to men and in need of support from and control by men. They form part of the taken-for-granted, and women as well as men ‘live’ these values. Violations of them result in social sanctions and, when they are codified in law, legal sanctions as well.

If women are not able to participate equally with men in the public sphere it limits their opportunities and the possibility of gender equality. If education is segregated women are likely to get a different education to men, and if workplaces are segregated men and women are likely to end up in different jobs, with ‘women’s jobs’ having lower status than ‘men’s jobs’ and being less well remunerated. In the ArabTrans Survey (Figure 23) a noticeable minority of respondents think that men and women should not attend university classes together. There are significant differences across the countries but the views of men and women within each country are much the same. The most conservative country is Jordan, where about half of respondents think that men and women should not attend university classes together, and the most liberal Iraq and Tunisia, where just over a fifth take this view. In the other three countries it was around a third of respondents.

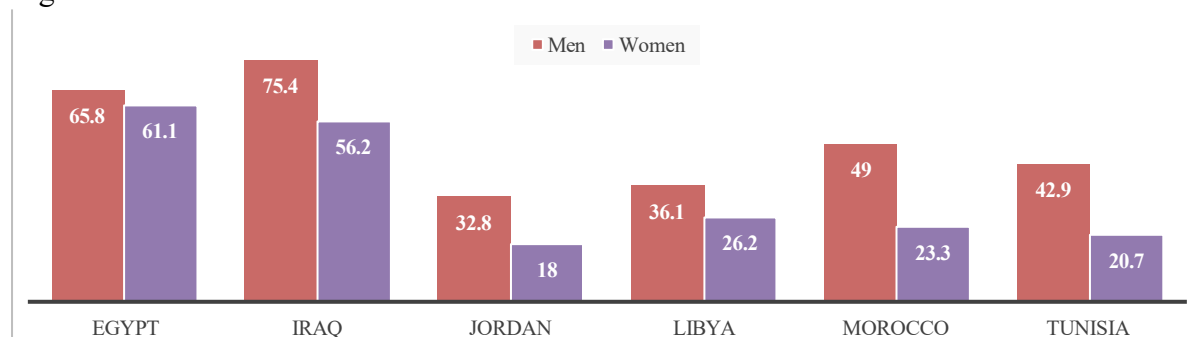
Figure 23: Not Acceptable for Men and Women to Attend University Classes Together



Source: AT 2014

An important indicator of the status of women in a society is the extent to which violence against women is seen as acceptable and the extent of such violence. As we have already discussed, VAW is high in all six countries and the legal framework for protecting women is inadequate. One clear indicator of the status of women as the possession of men and needing to be controlled by men in much the same way as children and animals is the extent to which it is thought to be justifiable for a man to beat his wife. In the WVS, respondents are asked if it is ever justifiable for a man to beat his wife. The responses to the question show the extent to which both men and woman accept the second-class status of women and the need for men to control women’s behaviour, by force if necessary. There is significant variation across the six countries and women are less likely to agree that it is acceptable than men. What is most noticeable is that even among women there are a noticeable proportion who agree that it is justifiable, ranging from a high of over 60 per cent in Egypt to a low of 18 per cent in Jordan. The proportions are even higher for men ,ranging from three quarters in Iraq to 33 per cent in Jordan.

Figure 24: Justifiable for a Man to Beat his Wife

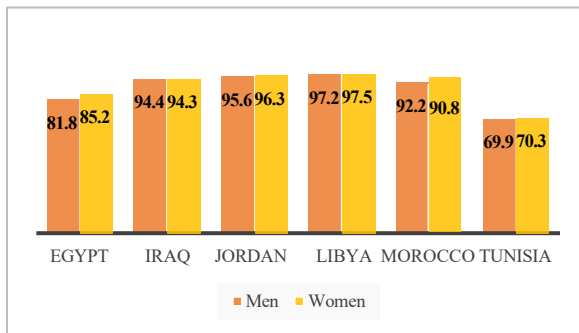


Source: WVS Wave 6

The codification of gender norms into law gives them greater legitimacy and enforcement by legal sanctions. While there are different interpretations of shari’a, all include the acceptance of some rules that create women as second-class citizens, giving them different and inferior rights to men. In Egypt, Iraq, Jordan and Libya at the time that the ABIII and the ArabTrans Surveys were carried out the Constitutions stated that personal status law was to be based on shari’a, and in Morocco it was to be guided by it. Only in Tunisia was there no constitutional requirement that shari’a underpinned personal status law. However, even in Tunisia there are personal status laws that discriminate against women. Furthermore, as we have already discussed, there is support for law being based on shari’a and this support seems to have increased since 2011.

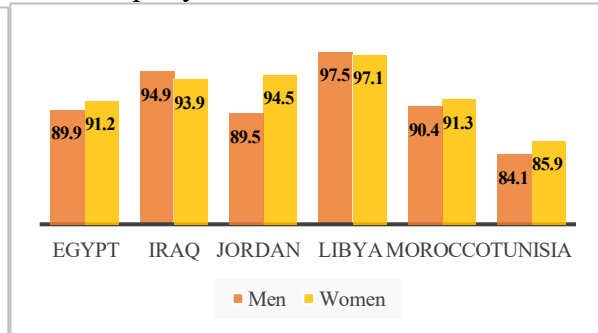
Across the six countries there is very strong support for both personal status law and property law being based on shari’a, although support for status law being based on shari’a is noticeably lower in Tunisia. Difference between men and women within countries are negligible, indicating that women as well as men think that women’s status should be different from and inferior to that of men.

Figure 2: % Agree Laws Should Be Made in accordance with Shari'a  
Personal Status Law



Source: AT 2014

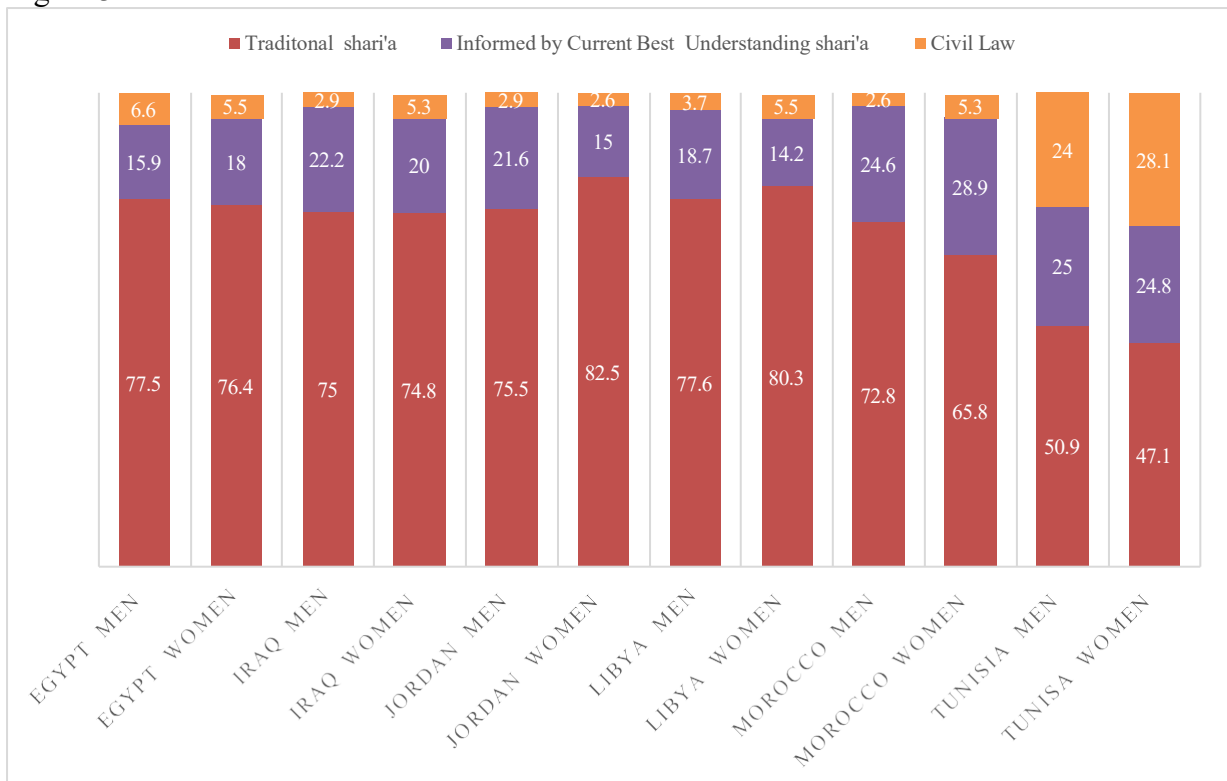
Property Law



Source: AB III

There are, however, different views as to whether personal status law should be based on a traditional interpretation of shari'a or an interpretation that takes account of the social changes that have taken place since the shari'a was laid down. A modern interpretation would give women rights more equal with those of men than a traditional interpretation, and for Islamist feminists it would give equal rights. Status law based on civil law could ensure that women have equal rights with men. A majority of men and women across the six countries (with the exception of women in Tunisia where it is just short of a majority) support personal status law being based on a traditional interpretation of shari'a. Tunisia stands out as somewhat different from the other countries, with much lower support for traditional shari'a and much higher support for civil law, but what is of interest here is the high support for shari'a in a country where personal status law has been based on civil law since 1956.

Figure 3: Basis for Personal Status Law



Source: AB III



In the Arab Transformations Survey respondents were asked their personal opinion about the principles that should determine the behaviour and situation of women in their country today, on a four-point scale. The answers show that there are indeed different views as to what is acceptable, suggesting that even amongst those that support personal status law being based on a traditional interpretation of the shari'a this does not mean all the laws that it included (Table 8). There are significant differences across the countries and between men and women within each country on the extent which women should have rights in family law. Overall, Egyptian men and women are the most conservative and Iraqi, Moroccan and Tunisian women the most liberal. Moroccan and Tunisian men are also more liberal than men in the other countries. The most conservative views relate to inheritance, where support for women having equal inheritance rights with men is generally low. Women are more supportive than men but it is only in Iraq that a majority think that they should have equal inheritance rights with men. There is also strong support for polygamy, or at least for it not being made illegal, but also support, especially among women, for the first wife to have to give permission for a man to take a second wife. Women are less supportive of polygamy than men and especially so in Tunisia, where nearly three quarters of women think it should be illegal. Support for polygamy is especially high in Egypt and Libya among both men and women and among men in Iraq, Jordan and Morocco. Tunisian men, like Tunisian women are less supportive, with more than half agreeing that polygamy should be against the law. By contrast, a clear majority of respondents across the countries think that a woman should be able to refuse to marry someone chosen by her parents/guardian and there is also relatively strong support for women having equal rights in divorce.

Table 2: Respondents' Personal Opinion on Rights of Women in their Country

A woman should:	Have Equal Inheritance Rights	Be Able to Travel Abroad Alone	Be Able to Stipulate Right to Divorce in Marriage Contract	The Law should not allow a Man to Take a Second Wife	Agree to Husband taking Second Wife	Have Equal Rights in Decision to Divorce	Be Able to Refuse an Arranged Wedding
Egypt Men	7.2%	11.6%	20.8%	11.1	59.6%	55.0%	87.0%
Egypt Women	9.5%	22.0%	32.5%	26.2	74.0%	69.2%	86.9%
Iraq Men	31.3%	26.4%	60.7%	18.8	51.1%	59.1%	70.5%
Iraq women	61.1%	45.8%	80.8%	47.9	73.7%	80.4%	84.7%
Jordan Men	38.8%	16.2%	51.3%	17.6	49.6%	57.4%	80.0%
Jordan Women	38.4%	27.9%	62.5%	35.8	77.5%	75.3%	93.2%
Libya Men	na	15.9%	63.6%	21.6	57.1%	71.9%	71.7%
Libya Women	na	20.8%	73.7%	26.6	67.2%	79%	78.7%
Morocco Men	16.2%	43.6%	54.5%	26.4	60.0%	60.4%	74.0
Morocco Women	26.3%	69.2%	73.7%	56.1	83.6%	78.7%	86.4
Tunisia Men	30.1%	46.0%	64.6%	55.0	51.9%	70.5%	81.3
Tunisian Women	47.2%	63.6%	70.0%	73.4	55.9%	80.2%	85.8

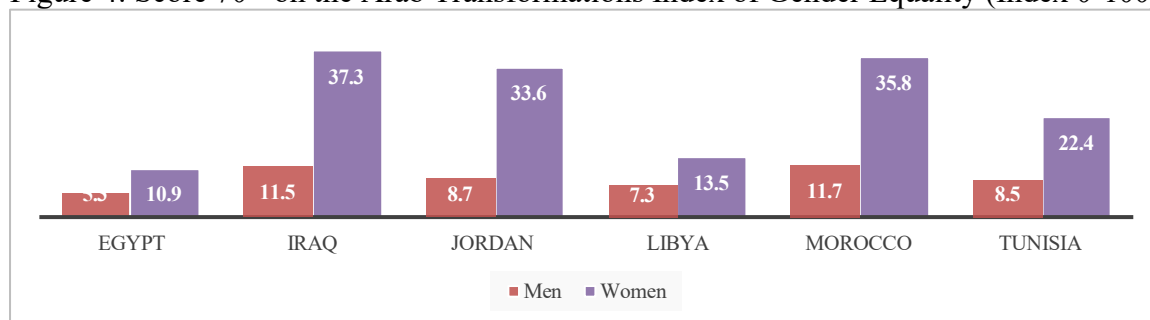
Source: AT. Differences between men and between women across countries sig  $\chi^2 < 0.001$ ; differences between genders sig  $\chi^2 < 0.001$

## The Drivers of Gender Equality<sup>14</sup>

To understand in more detail what factors influence attitudes towards gender equality across and between men and women in the six countries we constructed an Index of Gender Equality based on four domains – education, employment, marital rights and legal rights. The Index covers more domains than those used in previous research and specifically takes into account the importance of shari'a in influencing cultural attitudes to women and the legal framework. As already discussed, the Index was weighted so each of the four domains contribute equally to the final Index and converted to a scale of 0 to 100. The mean on the Index is 57.5 with a SD of 14.4.

Support for gender equality is low, with only 17 per cent of respondents across the pooled dataset scoring 70+ on the Index. In all the countries support for gender equality is much stronger among women than men, with the narrowest gaps being in Egypt and Libya, where twice as many women as men support gender equality, and the largest in Iraq, Jordan and Morocco, where women are more than three times more likely to support gender equality than men. The gap is marginally smaller than this in Tunisia. Country differences are also noticeable for women; they are over three times more likely to support gender equality in Iraq, Jordan and Morocco and twice as likely in Tunisia as in Egypt and Libya. Country differences are much less noticeable for men.

Figure 4: Score 70+ on the Arab Transformations Index of Gender Equality (Index 0-100)



Source: AT Survey Data

One-way analysis of variance showed that there were significant differences across the mean scores for the six countries (Anova:  $p < 0.001$ ,  $df = 5$  between groups). The countries fall into three homogeneous subsets (Scheffé). Egypt and Libya are the least gender-friendly and Iraq, Tunisia and Morocco the most, with Jordan laying between the other two groups (Table 9).

Table 3: Homogeneous Sub-sets of Country on Gender Equality Index

Country Group	1	2	3
Egypt	52.5		
Libya	53.3		
Jordan		57.8	
Iraq			59.8
Tunisia			60.4
Morocco			60.9

Anova:  $p < 0.05$

<sup>14</sup> For the analysis in this section and come others a sample weight was used so that the sample size was the same for each country. This prevents countries with larger sample having an undue influence on the findings.

In all six countries women on average have a significantly higher mean score on the Index than men, with the largest gap being in Jordan and the smallest in Libya. It is noticeable that the three most gender-friendly countries are those with the largest gap between men and women

Table 4

<b>Country Gender</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
<b>Egypt</b>	<b>48.6 (SD14.0)</b>	<b>55.5 (SD 12.4)</b>
<b>Iraq</b>	<b>54.2 (SD14.4)</b>	<b>65.7 (SD 12.9)</b>
<b>Jordan</b>	<b>51.3 (SD14.1)</b>	<b>64.4 (SD12.8)</b>
<b>Libya</b>	<b>51.3 (SD14.2)</b>	<b>55.3 (SD14.0)</b>
<b>Morocco</b>	<b>55.2 (SD13.9)</b>	<b>66.6 (SD 13.5)</b>
<b>Tunisia</b>	<b>57.6 (SD 10.7)</b>	<b>63.7 (SD 11.1)</b>

T<0.001

Analysis of variance shows that there are significant differences between the mean scores of men and women across the six countries. There are four homogeneous sub-groups for men and three for women. Women in Egypt and Libya are the most conservative and those in Tunisia and Morocco the most liberal. For men it is those in Egypt who are the most conservative and those in Tunisia who are the most liberal.

Table 5: Homogeneous Sub-sets Country on Gender Equality Index Men

<b>Country Group</b>	<b>Men</b>				<b>Women</b>		
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Egypt</b>	<b>48.6</b>				<b>55.3</b>		
<b>Libya</b>		<b>51.3</b>			<b>55.5</b>		
<b>Jordan</b>		<b>51.3</b>				<b>63.7</b>	
<b>Iraq</b>			<b>54.2</b>			<b>64.3</b>	
<b>Morocco</b>			<b>55.2</b>			<b>65.7</b>	<b>65.7</b>
<b>Tunisia</b>				<b>57.6</b>			<b>66.6</b>

Anova <0.05

In order to examine what factors influence gender equality values across and within the countries we carried out a series of linear regressions with the Arab Transformations Gender Equality Index as the dependent variable. On the basis of the factors that have been shown to influence gender attitudes in the MENA countries we selected a number of demographic and attitudinal variables. As well as gender, age, education and household economic circumstances we included a variable on the extent to which respondents thought shari'a should be the basis for status law and preference for a religious and piety. Given that a large majority thought that status law should at least be partly based on shari'a we dichotomised as 'all vs. other'. Similarly, a large majority of respondents said that they were at least somewhat religious so we dichotomised as very religious and other. For preference for

a religious party we dichotomised at ‘strongly and prefer vs. other’. All the variables were significant ,in bivariate analysis<sup>15</sup>.

In the first regression, Model 1 (Table 12), we entered all the independent variables and then we controlled for country (Model 2). Looking at Model 1 it is clear that gender makes the largest difference to the variance explained. by some distance. Education makes a difference, with the more educated having more liberal values, as do those that live in urban areas and those that do not think status law should be totally based on shari’a. The poorest have less liberal values. When the countries are added the adjusted R<sup>2</sup> increased significantly. Age does not make a difference and this is in line with the findings of other research. Compared with Egypt, Libya had significantly less liberal gender equality values. The other four countries had significantly more liberal values, with Morocco leading the way, followed closely by Iraq and then Tunisia, with Jordan somewhat less liberal. This is what we would expect, as it is more or less in line with the findings from the analysis of variance. However, in the analysis of variance Libya formed a homogeneous subgroup with Egypt while in the regression analysis controlling for all the variables in the model it is more conservative. Education, economic circumstances, living in an urban area and not wanting status law to be totally based on shari’a continue to make a contribution.

Table 6: Linear Regression Arab Transformations Gender Equality Index Pooled Sample

Independent Variables	Model 1			Model 2		
	b	SE	β	b	SE	β
Constant	48.231***	.831		46.311***	.533	
Gender	9.128***	.292	.316	9.478***	.282	.328
18-35 (excluded)						
36-54	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
55+	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Elementary Education or Lower	-2.067***	.404	-.063	-2.797***	.401	-.086
Basic Education	1.740***	.446	.043	ns	ns	ns
Secondary Education (excluded)						
Post-Secondary Education	1.682***	.393	.048	2.177***	.384	.062
Comfortably Off	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Income Adequate	ns	ns	ns	.908**	.344	.031
Income Inadequate (exclude d)						
Struggling	-.903*	.446	-.023	ns	ns	ns
Index of Deprivation	.190*	.087	.024	ns	ns	ns
Rural-Urban	2.074***	.381	.067	1.782***	.316	.058
Shari’a Status Law	2.643***	.305	.091	1.504***	.314	.052
Piety	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Preference for a religious party	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Egypt (Excluded)						
Iraq				7.714***	.508	.197
Jordan				4.875***	.514	.131
Libya				-1.557**	.567	-.039
Morocco				7.743***	.500	.203
Tunisia				7.181***	.508	.176
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.121			.184		

Sig \*\*\*P<0.001, \*\*P<0.01, \*P<0.05

15 The model was tested for multicollinearity.

Table 13 shows the regression models for all the countries. There are some differences by country although gender is the most important factor in all of them. The amount of variance explained by the model varies across the countries, with the amount explained being especially low in Libya, where the contribution of gender to explaining differences in gender attitudes is much lower than in the other countries. The amount of variance that gender explains is noticeably higher in Iraq, Jordan and Morocco. Education makes no difference in Libya, economic circumstances in Tunisia, living in an urban area in Jordan, Morocco or Tunisia and shari'a in Jordan. Those in Jordan and Libya who support a religious party are more conservative but the reverse is the case in Morocco and Tunisia. Those who are very religious are more conservative in Iraq but the reverse is the case in Egypt and Jordan.

Table 7: Linear Regression on the Arab Transformations Gender Index by County

	Egypt	Iraq	Jordan	Libya	Morocco	Tunisia
	$\beta$	$\beta$	$\beta$	$\beta$	$\beta$	$\beta$
Gender	.280***	.368***	.456***	.171***	.407***	.276
18-35	ex	ex	ns	ex	ex	ns
36-54	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ex
55+	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Elementary Education or Lower	ex	ex	-.062*	ns	-.156***	ex
Completed Basic	ns	.120***	ex	ns	-.100***	ns
Secondary Education	.103***	ns	ns	ns	ns	.077*
Post-Secondary Education	.169***	ns	.054*	ex	ex	.163***
Comfortably Off	.047*	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Income Adequate	ex	ex	ns	ns	ns	ex
Income Inadequate	-.075*	-.010	ex	ns	ex	ns
Struggling	-.072*	ns	ns	ex	ns	ns
Index of Deprivation	ns	.076***	-.048*	-.165***	.058*	ns
Rural-Urban	.114***	.088	ns	.079**	ns	ns
Shari'a Status Law	.056*	-.074**	ns	.167***	.082***	.118***
Very Religious	-.82***	.086***	-.055*	ns	ns	ns
Prefer a Religious Party	ns	ns	.110***	.100***	-.068**	-.08**
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.16	.185	.202	.085	.199	.132

Sig \*\*\*P<0.001, \*\*P<0.01, \*P<0.05

We did a series of linear regressions separately for men and women in each country to see if different factors influence gender attitudes. However, although all the models were significant, the adjusted R<sup>2</sup>s were low, varying from 0.109 for men in Egypt to 0.016 for women in Jordan, and it was difficult to discern any interesting patterns between men and women or for men or women across the countries. It does confirm that the six countries cannot be seen as identical in terms of the factors that influence gender equality values. However, the difference between men and women is common across all countries - but even here the extent to which women are more liberal than men differs significantly across the countries.

Table 8: Linear Regression on Gender Index by Country for Women and Men

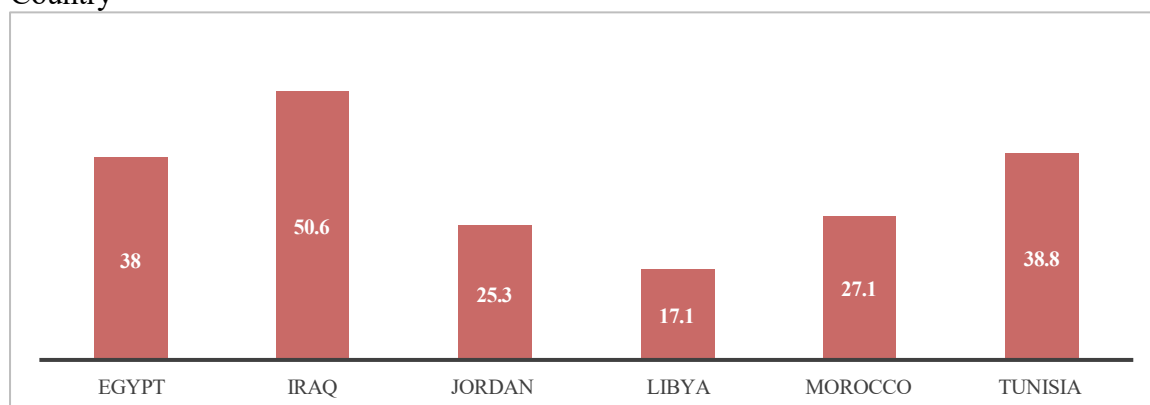
	Women						Men					
	Egypt	Iraq	Jordan	Libya	Morocco	Tunisia	Egypt	Iraq	Jordan	Libya	Morocco	Tunisia
	$\beta$	$\beta$	$\beta$	$\beta$	$\beta$	$\beta$	$\beta$	$\beta$	$\beta$	$\beta$	$\beta$	$\beta$
18-35	ex	ex	ex	ex	ex	ex	ex	ex	ex	ex	ex	ex
36-54	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
55+	-.091*	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	-.091*	.133***	ns	ns	ns
Elementary Education or Lower		ex	ns	ns	ex	ex	ex	ex	ns	ns	-.162***	ns
Completed Basic	.066*	.186***	ns	-.087*	ns	ns	ns	ns	ex	-.087*	-.083**	ns
Secondary Education	.122***	.145***	ns	ns	.127**	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ex
Post-Secondary Education	.157***	.143***	ns	ex	.162***	.149**	.169***	ns	ns	ex	ex	.135***
Comfortably Off	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	.096**	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Income Adequate	ex	.091*	ns	ex	ns	ex	.110**	ex	ns	ex	ns	ex
Income Inadequate	-.102**	ex	ex	ns	ex	ns	ex	-.102**	ns	ns	ex	ns
Struggling	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Index of Deprivation	.130***	ns	-.105**	-.150***	ns	ns	ns	.130***	ns	-.150***	.086*	ns
Rural-Urban	ns	.131***	ns	.098**	ns	ns	.120**	ns	ns	.098**	ns	ns
Shari'a Status Law	ns	-.101**	ns	.100**	ns	ns	.083*	ns	ns	.100**	.124***	.161***
Very Religious	.177***	ns	ns	ns	ns	ex	-.078*	.177***	ns	ns	ns	ns
Prefer a Religious Party	ns	-.082*	ns	.104**	-.078*	-.128**	ns	ns	-.083*	.104**	-.074*	ns
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.098	.084	.016	.084	.043	.063	.109	.076	.021	.039	.052	.053

Sig \*\*\*P<0.001, \*\*P<0.01, \*P<0.05

## Gender and Democracy

The Arab Spring was not followed, as many assumed it would be, by a bottom-up democratic process, but by the rise of Islamist parties. The optimism that democracy would follow the Arab Spring was based to some extent on research that suggested there was majority support for democracy across the region as high as 80 per cent (e.g. Tessler 2002, 2015). However, this is based on the answer to a question that assumes both a shared understanding of what democracy means and that people think that it is suitable for their country. Kostenko et al (2015) found that when people's attitudes to how democracy actually works in practice were taken into account only 35.5 per cent support democracy in a sample of MENA countries in 2006, with no difference in level of support between men and women. The support for a democratic system of government in 2015, measuring it by those that think an unrestricted parliamentary system and no other system is suitable for their country, is comparable to this at 32.8 per cent. This varied significantly by country (Figure 28) but gender differences were significant only in Egypt and Iraq. The difference was most marked in Egypt, with 45 per cent of men compared to 33 per cent of women wanting an unrestricted parliamentary system (Cramer's V:  $p < 0.001$ ); in Iraq the gap was narrower, with 54 per cent of men and 47 per cent of women thinking an unrestricted parliamentary system was suitable for their country (Cramer's V:  $p < 0.01$ ).

Figure 5: 'Unrestricted Parliamentary System and No Other suitable for Country', % by Country



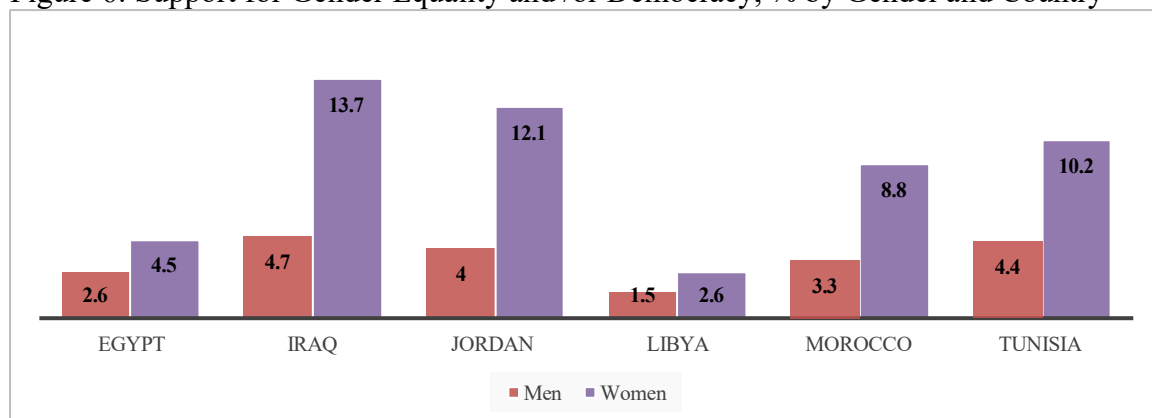
Source: ArabTrans 2014:  $p < 0.001$  ( $\chi^2$ )

Only six per cent of respondents across the sample supported both gender equality (with a score of at least 70 on the Arab Transformations Gender Index) and an unrestricted parliamentary system; a further 11 per cent supported gender equality but not democracy and 26.8 per cent support an unrestricted parliamentary system but not gender equality. Support for gender equality is comparable with the findings of Kostenko et al (2015), but support for gender equality plus democracy is much lower. Women are more supportive of gender equality than men and men marginally more supportive than women of unrestricted parliamentary democracy. Only 8.5 per cent of women and 3.4 per cent of men support both gender equality and democracy, with a further 16.5 per cent of women and 5.5 per cent of men supporting gender equality but not democracy. Just under a third of men (31.2%) and just over a fifth of women support democracy but not gender equality. There are differences by country, with women more likely to support gender equality plus democracy or gender equality and not democracy in all the countries and men more likely to support democracy and not gender equality. The lowest support for gender equality and democracy is among men in Libya (1.5%) and the highest among women in Jordan (12.1); the lowest support for gender equality but not democracy is for men in Egypt (2.7%) and the highest among women

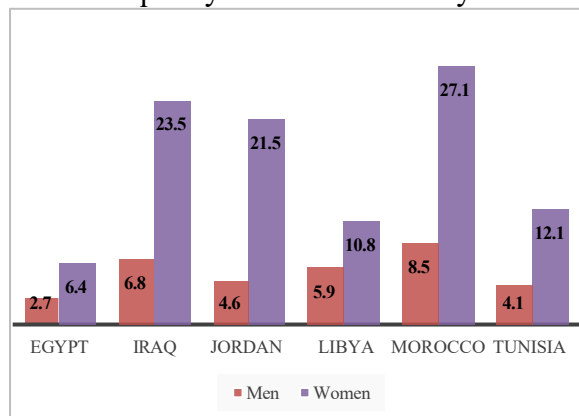


in Morocco (27.1%). The highest support for unrestricted parliamentary democracy but not gender equality is among men in Iraq and the lowest among women in Libya (15.1%).

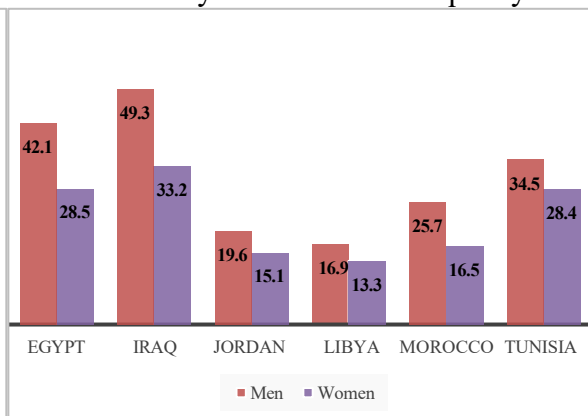
Figure 6: Support for Gender Equality and /or Democracy, % by Gender and Country



Gender Equality but not Democracy



Democracy but not Gender Equality



Source: AT 2014

## Conclusions

The main conclusion of this Report is that there is little support among either men or women in MENA for gender equality and the empowerment of women. Women are much more supportive than men, although even among women support is low. The gap in support between men and women is noticeably larger in Morocco, Jordan and Iraq and lowest in Libya, with Tunisia and Egypt lying between. The more educated, the better off and those living in urban areas are more supportive and those who support all status law being based on shari'a are less supportive. As in other research, age makes no difference, indicating that young people are no more supportive than older ones and confirming that there has been no generational shift to more liberal values. The differences between countries are statistically significant, with Iraq being the most supportive, closely followed by Morocco and Tunisia, and Libya the least supportive closely followed by Egypt. Jordan lies between the two groups. This finding is much as would be expected. Egypt has long been recognised as one of the countries most restrictive of women's rights in the MENA region and the information emerging from Libya since the fall of Gadhafi indicates very conservative attitudes to women's rights. Tunisia and Morocco have been widely reported as having more progressive attitudes to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. Iraq is not frequently mentioned in the literature as having progressive attitudes, but until the new Constitution of 2005 it had some of the most progressive status law in the region. The analysis suggests that since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century attitudes towards gender equality and the empowerment of women have become more conservative in Egypt and less

conservative in Morocco and Iraq. In Tunisia support for personal status law being enacted in accordance with shari'a has increased noticeably, possibly possibly to the influence of Political Islam in the country since 2011.

The findings also confirm those of more recent research that questions the extent to which citizens want procedural democracy as the system of government in their country. Our findings suggest that support for procedural democracy as suitable for their country across the six countries varies from a high of just over 50 per cent in Iraq to a low of 17 per cent in Libya. Men were more supportive than women of unrestricted parliamentary democracy in Egypt and Iraq but the differences were not significant in the other four countries. The correlation between support for democracy and for gender equality and the empowerment of women was very low, with only six per cent of respondents supporting both.

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