



« Recent Trends in Arab Countries Towards  
Addressing Gender in Public Management:  
Comparative overview on lessons and challenges »

Addressing Gender in Public Management

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# CAWTAR

**The Center of Arab Women for Training and Research (CAWTAR) is a regional Arab NGO established in 1993 as a direct response to a long-felt need in the Arab region for a Center specialized in promoting Gender to meet development challenges and therefore dedicated to the empowerment of Arab women as a critical social capital for good governance and prosperity in the region.**

# Gender in Public Management

- The question of gender in public management situates us at the heart of the political, social and scientific debate on the issue of *decision making power*
- Considering the fact that public administration remains the main employer for men and women in the Arab region, it is important to focus on the following fundamental question: *to what degree does public administration constitute a space allowing for the participation of women in decision making?*

# Men & Women in Public Administration

- Statistical data regarding the employment breakdown of the active population by sector in Arab countries reveals a high propensity of men and women to integrate the public sector.
- According to the 2005 AHDR, the proportion of women (among total active female population) in public administration reached 68% in Egypt, 55% in Palestine, 88% in Oman, 100% in Qatar, and 34% in Morocco. The report notes that the rates of males in public administration are close to that of women.

# Gender Disparity in Decision-Making Roles

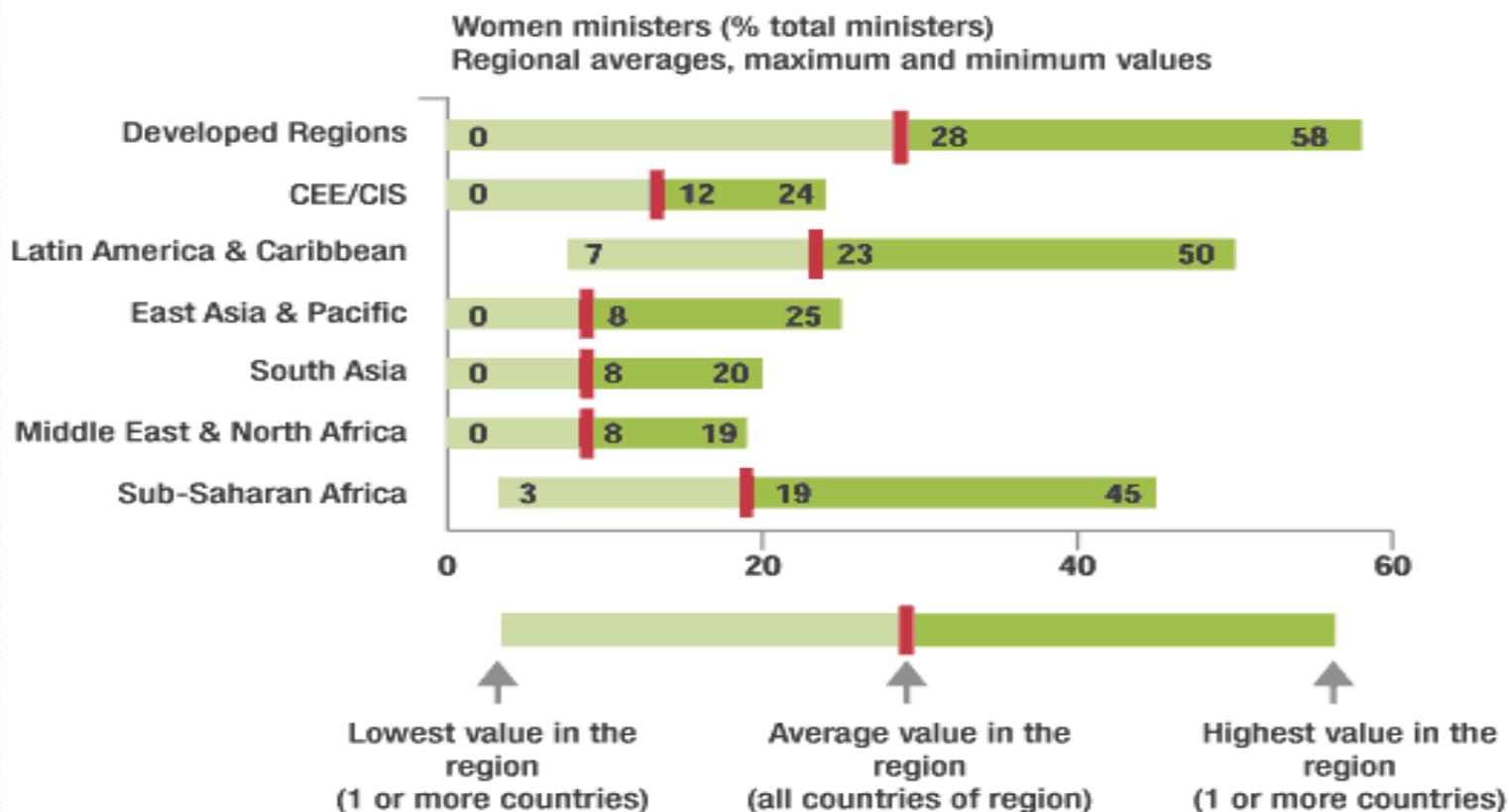
- An underrepresentation of women as we get further along the responsibility ladder
- Women that occupy management posts represent only 1% in Qatar, 2% in Djibouti, UAE and Sudan, 3% in Syria, 5% in Kuwait, 6% in Algeria, 8% in Mauritania, 10% in Morocco, 13% in Iraq, 18% in Tunisia, and 21% in Bahrain. It is officially illegal for women to access management positions in KSA in order to avoid “mixing” in the workplace.

# Women Legislators & Managers

Country	Year	%	Source
<b>Algeria</b>	2004	5	Labor Force Survey
<b>Bahrain</b>	2001	12	Population Census
<b>Egypt</b>	2006	11	Labor Force Survey
<b>Morocco</b>	2006	11	Labor Force Survey
<b>O.P.T.</b>	2007	10	Labor Force Survey
<b>U.A.E.</b>	2005	10	Population Census

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/indwm/tab5d.htm>

Women hold between 7.7% to 28.1% of ministerial posts. Five regions include countries with no women in government.



**Notes:** Information includes Deputy Prime Ministers and Ministers. Prime Ministers were also included when they held ministerial portfolios. Vice-Presidents and heads of governmental or public agencies have not been included.

**Sources:** IPU (2008).

# « Traditional » Sectors

- A high concentration of women in certain sectors considered to be an extension of the “traditional” role of women: Health and education.
  - In Morocco for example, women represent 48% of health sector employees, 33% in primary and secondary education, and 22% of higher education and scientific research
  - In KSA, women account for 7% of total active population and their presence in the health and education sectors reached 90% of the total female active workforce
  - A similar situation may be observed in Tunisia, Lebanon, Sudan, and Egypt, etc.
- It can be noted that the majority of women that do not integrated the “public function” are “work at home mothers” and predominantly veer towards the informal sector. As for men who work outside the public sector, there are generally employers and are mainly in the private sector.

# Encouraging Measures

- Despite these disparities in terms of access to decision making positions and sector of activity, the Arab region has witnessed considerable transformation in terms of gender relations due in great part to the process of modernization reinforced by the universality of the principles of gender equality and human rights, and “institutionalized” through international conventions and conferences, but also certain judicial reforms observed in certain Arab countries
- A comparative overview on the different national contexts; while taking into account the specificities of each country, can shed light on the situation of women in public administration

# Int'l Conventions & Conferences

...

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)
- Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)(1979)
- Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), particularly MDG 3: Promote Gender equality and women empowerment
- Beijing Platform for Action, Fourth World Conference on Women (1995)

...

- *“Without the active participation of women and the incorporation of women’s perspective at all levels of decision-making, the goals of equality, development and peace cannot be achieved.”*

*Beijing Platform for Action,*  
Fourth World Conference on Women, 1995

# Arab Summit Declarations:

- Tunis (2004); Algiers (2005); Khartoum (2006); Riyadh (2007)
- Arab Summit Declaration, Tunis (2004), paragraph 2-3 section 2:
- فقد أكد رؤساء الدول العربية ضمن إعلان قمة تونس عزمهم " الراسخ على ... 2- 3 : العمل، استنادا إلى البيان حول مسيرة التطوير والتحديث في الوطن العربي، على مواصلة الإصلاح والتحديث في بلداننا مواكبة للمتغيرات العالمية المتسارعة من خلال تعزيز الممارسة الديمقراطية وتوسيع المشاركة في المجال السياسي والشأن العام، وتعزيز دور مكونات المجتمع المدني كافة بما فيها المنظمات غير الحكومية في بلورة معالم مجتمع الغد، وتوسيع مشاركة المرأة في المجالات السياسية والاقتصادية والاجتماعية والثقافية والتربوية ودعم حقوقها ومكانتها في المجتمع ومواصلة النهوض بالأسرة والعناية بالشباب العربي".

# Personal Status Codes

- Tunisia:
  - Article 6 of the 1959 constitution recognizes the universal equality between men and women: *“All citizens have the same rights and duties. They are equal in front of the law.”*
  - Specific legal texts which affirm the principle of non-discrimination against women and which ensure the right of both sexes to education, health, and work.
  - Article 5bis of the Labor Code delineates the principle of non-discrimination, which conforms to the Copenhagen Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination between the sexes; ratified by Tunisia.

# Personal Status Codes (cont.)

- Morocco:
  - Principle of equality of citizens is explicitly inscribed in article 5 of the constitution, and article 12 recognizes that all citizens can access without discrimination posts and functions in the public domain.
- KSA
  - The judicial system remains unfavorable to the non-discrimination between the sexes. Judicially speaking, Saudi women are not considered as citizens per se and require a male “tutelage” in order to go to university, invest, travel, manage her own affairs, etc.

# Labour Laws

- Labour laws in many Arab states now protect working women
- Constitutions and labour laws in certain Arab countries (i.e.: Jordan, Egypt), explicitly prohibit gender discrimination in the workplace.
- Many states guarantee women the right to:
  - maternity leave,
  - ban the dismissal of working women during maternity leave or pregnancy,
  - and guarantee them child-care leave and time for nursing infants.
  - (Jordanian labour law gives a male or female worker the right to extended leave to accompany a spouse to a new work location.)

# Maternity Leave Benefits

Country	Length	% of Wages Paid in Covered Period	Provider of Benefit
Algeria	14 weeks	100	Social Security
Bahrain	45 days	100	Employer
Comoros	14 weeks	100	Social Security
Egypt	90 days	100	Social Security & Employer
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	50 days	50, 100 (t)	Employer (SC for self-employed)
Yemen	60 days	100	Employer

Last Update: December 2008

Source: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/indwm/tab5d.htm>

# Labour Laws (cont.)

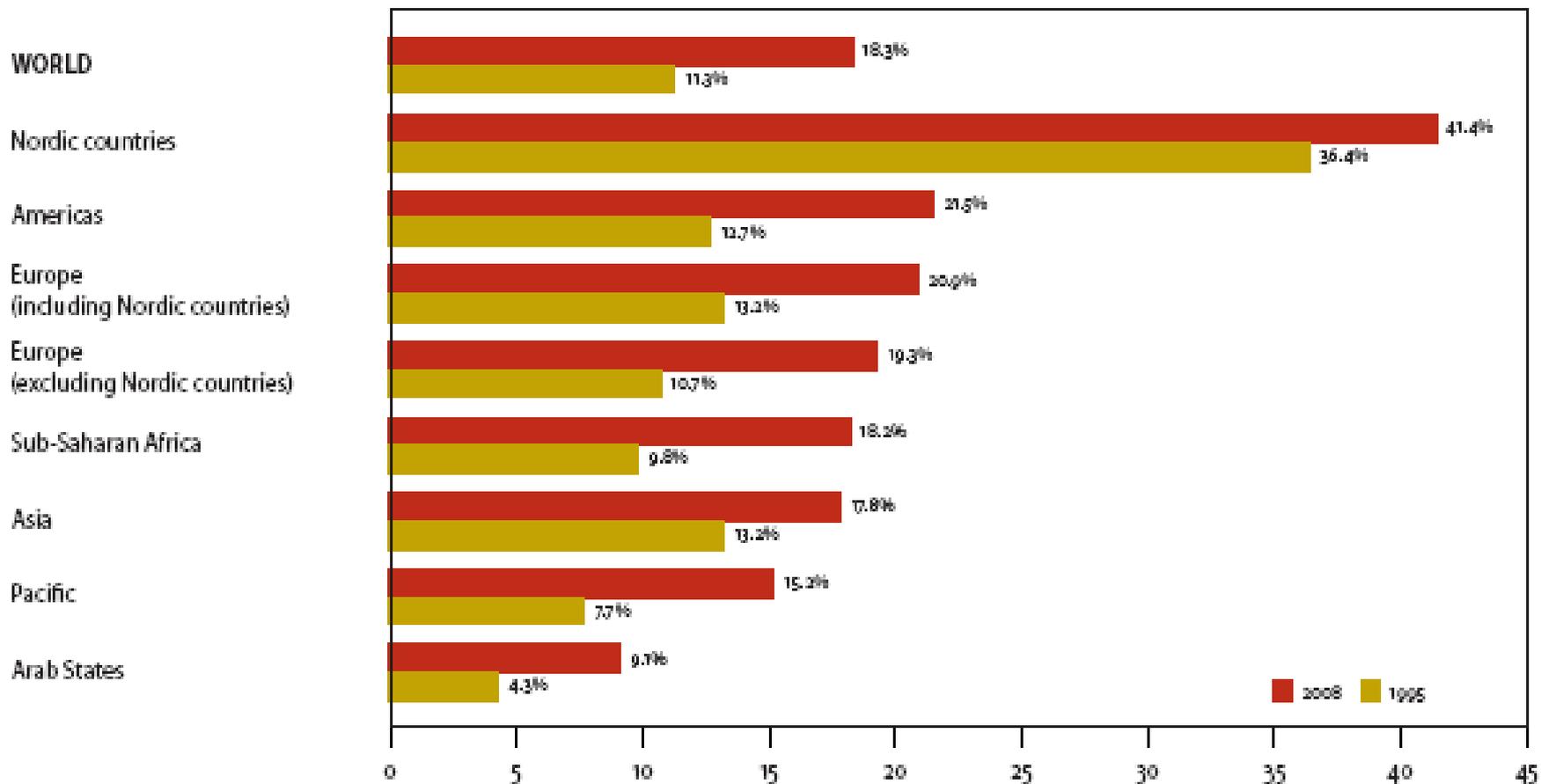
- Many Arab states have signed the ILO Equal Remuneration Convention, but national legislation in this regard varies considerably
- Some states explicitly provide for equal pay for the same job (as is the case with Iraq, Kuwait, Libya and Syria, for example), others have no legal provision for this at all (Bahrain), and yet others stipulate equality in pay only in the civil-service sector (Qatar and Saudi Arabia)

# Quotas

- Quota systems have brought about an influx of women into positions of power: In Iraq, women's representation in parliament reached 25% with the 2005 elections. In Morocco, the percentage of women in parliament rose from 1% in 1995 to 11% in 2003. In Jordan, women's representation climbed from 2.5% in 1995 to 5.5% in 2003. In Tunisia, it rose from 6.8% to 11.5%.

## World and Regional Averages of Women in Parliaments, 1995 and 2008

*Situation for all chambers of parliaments combined in December of each year*



# Favorable Factors for Women's Access to Decision-Making Positions

- Political will and judicial framework
- Awareness and knowledge of the state objectives
- Individual characteristics: initiative, competences, determination and motivation, perceptiveness, charisma, and personal capacities

# Unfavorable Factors

- **Cultural:** Misconceptions and stereotypes (the drawbacks of familial responsibilities, her lack of capacity to occupy decision making positions, etc. - true even in countries where political decisions and laws have been put in place)
- **Societal:** Family responsibilities and difficulty of reconciling professional and private life (lack of assistance from husband)
- **Institutional:** Implementation of statutory principles and political decisions
- **Education and “socialization” of decision-making**

# A few recommendations (AWDR, Arab Women and Decision-Making)

- ...
- Generalize the quota system in a transitional stage to enhance female participation in decision making positions
- Achieve gender equality before the law
- Set objective standards to ensure equality of chances in reaching high level positions and stress the principles of transparency and clarity
- Carry out administrative reform towards the enhancement of women's situation in the process of decision taking and making, in addition to the « democratization » of the administration management so that capacity and competence would become sole criteria to meet with to gain responsibilities
- ...

# Women & Decision Making

- A different female “leadership”/decision making
  - More humanized
  - Women are more courageous and enterprising than men
  - More vigilant, have a greater sense of responsibility

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*“Women are braver and more involved than men in a number of matters, provided their extreme willingness to impose themselves and make more efforts than men who see that their own role as decision makers is natural and taken for granted.”*

**Ahmed, 50 years old, Manager of a Public Institution, Tunisia**

# Prospects

- Decision making is no longer a male monopoly. Women have introduced new rules, expectations and behavior in an environment still male dominated. There are new social rapports being erected in the Arab world, despite persistent social and cultural resistance
- That said, women should invest in other domains where there are veritable decision making power as well

# CAWTAR Activities

- **Publications:**

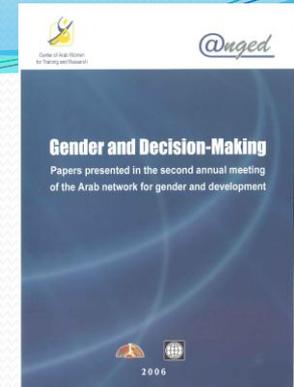
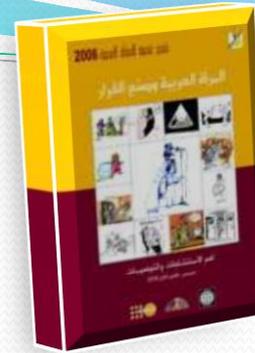
- Arab Women Development Report: Arab Women and Decision-Making (forthcoming)
- Arab Women and Decision Making in the Political Sphere
- ANGED Edition on Arab Women and Decision-Making

- **Training Material:**

- Women and Decision Making in process

- **Projects:**

- Women and Local Governance
- Women and Public Services, as Providers and Beneficiaries



## Women and Public Services, as Providers and Beneficiaries

- This project allows for exploring
  - the added value of women in the public sector, as providers, and their needs to enhance their role within the sector on the one hand,
  - and how the public sector can better address gender inequality and enhance its services towards marginalized communities on the other.
- Meaning that our assessment of gender in public management must be two fold:
  - 1/ how can the public sector enhance the participation of women in decision making positions and foster a gender balanced environment within its management structure, and 2/ how can the public sector contribute to fostering gender equality within society at large through more effective and efficient services

*« the notion of participation in decision-making involves the extent to which women contribute in public, economic, social, and political life, and that by influencing the decision, which then impacts in return on the different trends in society, ranging from political decisions which guide the overall action of society and the State, to decisions taken inside the family, and others pertaining to individual affairs. »*

*Amel, 34 years old, business owner, Sudan*

# Gender in Public Management

- Gender in Public Management as it relates to reinforcing notions of:
  - Citizenship,
  - Transparency, and
  - Participation