

7 Adopting multi-stakeholder and multi-sector approaches

Why does it matter?

Reforms on women's economic empowerment touch on so **many aspects of the lives of women**, their families and the **community** at large.

Therefore, it is necessary to undertake reforms in different areas of the law as well as to involve different types of stakeholders in these reform processes and in their implementation.

Promising practices



When pushing for legal reform in favour of women's economic empowerment, **different types of laws** that touch on it should ideally be reformed in parallel. E.g., reforming legislation to enhance childcare options for working mothers can also have a positive impact on their children.



Reforming **personal status legislation** has been the most **challenging** but countries have been creative in their reform approaches. E.g., the four countries are promoting shared family responsibilities for women and men through changes to the labour law rather than personal status legislation by introducing and/or extending paternity leave as well as looking into flexible work arrangements.



Multi-stakeholder efforts have proven to be successful when **advocating** for legal reform, as well as for the implementation of a particular reform. E.g., in Jordan, the National Committee for Pay Equity (NCPE), a multistakeholder committee, put forward a list of proposed labour code amendments, some of which led to legal reform.

Promising practices



The four countries are developing the **capacity of actors** involved at the different steps of the process, from advocacy to drafting and adopting legislation, as well as implementation.



Reform or momentum for reform can also have **spill over effects in neighbouring countries**. This is especially evident in the recent reforms on violence against women.



The four countries are participating in **regional and global exchange on legal reform** to get inspiration and expertise on how to make reform happen. At the global level, the **Commission on the Status of Women's annual meetings** are a good example of a platform. At the regional level, the **MENA-OECD Women's Economic Empowerment Forum** (WEEF) offers the opportunity for countries to exchange experiences on legal reform.

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Building capacity and learning from peers

Why does it matter?



A **range of skills** are needed to make legal reform on women's economic empowerment happen and to make sure the reforms are implemented.



9 Addressing restrictive social norms and stereotypes

Why does it matter?

Restrictive social norms and stereotypes about women and men are a key factor in **holding back women's economic empowerment**. In some cases, these restrictive norms are also enshrined in the family legislation. The UN Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment recognises adverse social norms as the number one constraint to women's economic empowerment.

Promising practices



All four countries are developing the **evidence base** on social norms and stereotypes and are implementing projects that aim to transform traditional perceptions of masculinity and fatherhood. Surveys have been carried out in Egypt, Morocco and Jordan looking at the attitudes of men and women towards gender equality.



Legal reform can either **precede** the change in social norms (e.g. the introduction of paternity leave in the labour law in Jordan Morocco and Tunisia to promote shared family responsibilities) or **enshrine changes** in social norms (e.g. abolition of a circular in Tunisia, which now makes it easier for Tunisian women to marry non-Muslims).



If deeply entrenched social norms are to be overcome, society has to be **convinced of the need for such changes**. This can be facilitated by community leaders who advocate for change. E.g., Egypt's highest religious authority, Al-Azhar, has firmly condemned sexual harassment in line with the recent legal reforms.



Promising practices



People that are affected by a reform should be **aware of the reform**. The **media and CSOs** have an important role to play in disseminating this information.



Different stakeholders are supporting women to **access justice** and provide support on how to navigate the **judicial system**.



Other mechanisms that can **facilitate compliance** with reforms include reporting, labour inspections, complaint mechanisms and scrutiny by national human rights institutions.

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Ensuring implementation and awareness

Why does it matter?



Without implementation, legal reform has little value. Countries have put into place mechanisms that can **facilitate implementation and compliance** with reforms.