



United Nations Entity for Gender Equality  
and the Empowerment of Women



## Spring Forward for Women Programme

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# No One Left Behind - Evaluating the SDGs with a Gender and Equity Lens Multi-stakeholder Meeting

12-13 May 2016 - Tunis, Tunisia



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## Introduction

This report represents the conclusions of two sessions held in Tunis, Tunisia on 12-13 May 2016 with members of parliament, representatives of ministries / government bodies responsible for monitoring and evaluating the SDGs, women national machineries and evaluators from across the Arab States region. The participants came together to identify strategies for building an enabling environment to integrate gender equality and equity in the evaluation of the SDGs and discuss national level actions. This initiative comes within the broader perspective of the “Spring Forward for Women” programme, which is a joint regional programme between the European Union (EU) and UN Women and funded by the EU.

The event brought together representatives from seven countries (Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia) including 16 parliamentarians,<sup>1</sup> 11 government representatives,<sup>2</sup> and eight (8) representatives of national evaluation associations.<sup>3</sup>

Sessions focused on the roles of the different stakeholders, how they could work together and potential regional and national level actions to promote and institutionalise evaluation that integrates a gender equality approach (Agenda Annex I).

## Background

### SDG Follow-up and Review Mechanism

The Sustainable Development Agenda 2030 calls for no one to be left behind. To ensure this goal is met, the Sustainable Development Goals’ (SDGs) follow-up and review mechanism aims to monitor and evaluate progress for all. “Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” states that review of the SDGs will be “rigorous and based on evidence, informed by country-led evaluations”.<sup>4</sup>

Among the nine principles that will guide the SDG review and follow-up mechanism, there is an explicit mention of the need to:

- Use data that “will be rigorous and based on evidence, informed by country-led evaluations and data which is high-quality, accessible, timely, reliable and disaggregated by income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migration status, disability and geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts”;<sup>5</sup>
- Enhance capacity-building support for developing countries, including the strengthening of national data systems and evaluation programmes;<sup>6</sup>
- Develop processes that are people-centered, gender-responsive, based on respect of

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1. 12 women and 4 men parliamentarians

2. 4 women and 7 men government officials

3. 3 women and 5 men evaluators

4. A/RES/70/1 - Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

5. Page 32/35, Point 74 (g) A/RES/70/1 - Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

6. Page 32/35, Point 74 (d) A/RES/70/1 - Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

human rights and have a particular focus on the poorest, most vulnerable, excluded and marginalised and those furthest behind.<sup>7</sup>

During the 2016 session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, nations committed to “include a gender-responsive approach in the national follow-up to and review of the 2030 Agenda,... and (to) strengthen national statistical capacity, including by enhancing technical and financial assistance to developing countries, to systematically design, collect and ensure access to high-quality, reliable and timely data disaggregated by sex, age and income and other characteristics relevant in national contexts.”<sup>8</sup>

## An Evaluation Framework for the SDGs Integrating Gender Equality

Member states in the Arab States region recently officially acknowledged in May 2016 the importance of evaluating policies and programmes to assess progress on the SDGs during the Arab States Regional Forum for Sustainable Development in Amman, Jordan. They recommended the inclusion of ‘*rigorous, independent and transparent*’ evaluation in national follow-up and review mechanisms.

Recommends that national follow-up and review mechanisms, include rigorous, independent and transparent evaluation of policies and programmes in order to measure the impact and results and analysis of progress and trends and identify obstacles and speed up implementation.

Recommendation, Par. 31, Arab States Regional Forum for Sustainable Development, Amman, Jordan (May 2016)

The emphasis on monitoring and evaluation of the SDGs is an opportunity to further strengthen national evaluation capacities to evaluate localized SDGs and national development policies/strategies using an approach based on gender equality and equity. In 2014, in partnership with the International Development Evaluation Association (IDEAS), the International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation (IOCE), the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG), the UN Women Independent Evaluation Office, and the Global Evaluation Facility (GEF), EvalPartners started a global, multi-stakeholder consultative process to brainstorm about the priorities and key areas of a Global Evaluation Agenda for 2016-2020, (EvalAgenda2020) to address priorities for evaluation during the first five years of the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



Within the context of the development of a global evaluation agenda, the Middle East and North Africa Evaluators Network (EvalMENA) held its 5<sup>th</sup> General Assembly in Tunis-Tunisia 12-14 May 2016 to develop the EvalMENA regional agenda 2016-20. Meeting themes included evaluation of

the SDGs, the role of parliamentarians in evaluation and mainstreaming gender equality and equity in evaluation.

7. Page 32/35, Point 74 A/RES/70/1 - Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

8. Women’s Empowerment and the Link to Sustainable Development – 2016 Commission on the Status of Women Agreed Conclusions <http://www2.unwomen.org/~media/headquarters/attachments/sections/csw/60/csw60%20agreed%20conclusions%20conclusions%20en.pdf?v=1&d=20160915T144409>

Within the framework of the EvalMENA General Assembly meeting and the global discussion on evaluating the SDGs with an equity-focused and gender responsive lens, UN Women Regional Office for Arab States (ROAS), in partnership with EvalMENA and national evaluation associations in the region, the UN Women Independent Evaluation Office, EvalPartners, and EvalGender+, organized two sessions (12-13 May 2016) which brought together parliamentarians, ministries responsible for monitoring and evaluating the SDGs, national women’s machineries, and evaluators from across the region to identify strategies for building an enabling environment to integrate gender equality and equity in the evaluation of the SDGs and discuss national level actions. This meeting built on:

- Global discussions including convenings of the Global Parliamentarians’ Forum for Development Evaluation and most recently, the high level event held in New York March 2016 to launch a multi-stakeholder dialogue around developing an evaluation framework that will support national evaluation capacity processes.
- A series of regional consultations in the Arab States region in 2014 and 2015 supported by the EU-UN Women Spring Forward for Women programme funded by the EU, the UN Women IEO, and EvalMENA, which brought together parliamentarians and civil society to increase awareness on gender responsive evaluation, its importance and exchange on how to institutionalize of gender-responsive evaluation in the different countries.<sup>9</sup>

Specifically, during the regional meeting in Cairo, Egypt in October 2015, parliamentarians and evaluation associations called for the inclusion of additional key stakeholders in the discussions, including relevant ministries and other government institutions.<sup>10</sup>



This meeting in Tunis aimed to create a multi-stakeholder partnership to advocate for and work to institutionalise gender responsive evaluation in the context of the SDGs.

### **EvalMENA: “Towards an Evaluation Agenda for the MENA region”**

Participants attended presentations on mainstreaming the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and opportunities

in evaluating equitable and sustainable development in the context of the SDGs and the Global Evaluation Agenda as part of the larger EvalMENA General Assembly.

Presenters<sup>11</sup> provided participants with an overview of the SDGs, how they differ from the

9. Meeting reports for the Linking Evaluation to Policymaking in the Arab States region 2014 and 2015 meetings available at XXXX  
 10. Recommendations from the meeting in Cairo Egypt available in the Linking Evaluation to Policymaking report 2015.  
 11. Presenters included: Mr. Anis Ben Younes, President of Tunisian Evaluation Network and the Middle East and North Africa Evaluation Network; Mr. Khalil Bitar, Palestinian Evaluation Association; Mr. Marco Segone, Director, UN Women Independent Evaluation Office, Co-chair EvalPartners, Chair United Nations Evaluation Group; Mr. Mondher Khaled, Tunisian Evaluation Network; Ms. Olfa Soukri, Member of the Tunisian Assembly of the Representatives of the People; Mr. Ziad Moussa, President of IOCE and Co-Chair of EvalPartners

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the follow-up and review mechanism. Also discussed were the challenges for evaluating the SDGs, the power of gender responsive evaluation for evaluating the SDGs and opportunities to adopt and institutionalize a gender responsive evaluation approach to ensure that no one is left behind.

## Multi-Stakeholder Side Event

The first session of the side event on *'Evaluating the SDGs with a gender and equity lens'* was held in the Tunisian Parliament, and preceded by the launch of the Forum for Tunisian Parliamentarians for Evaluation, with the Vice-speaker of the Parliament, Ms. Faouzia Ben Fodha, providing opening remarks. The session at the Tunisian Parliament was historic, being only the second parliament globally to host an event on evaluation. The side event brought together 16 parliamentarians (twelve women and four men), 11 government representatives (four women and seven men), and eight representatives of national evaluation associations (three women and five men) from seven different countries.<sup>12</sup>

Each stakeholder group met to discuss their specific role ensuring that the SDGs were evaluated with a gender equality lens. Participants then came together to share their recommendations<sup>13</sup> and discuss how they can work together. During the second session, stakeholder discussions by country were held to discuss potential national level actions in each country.

## Discussion Themes

Several themes emerged from the stakeholder discussions.

### *Partnership*

Participants advocated for a unified approach to implementing and evaluating the SDGs, recognising that convening parliamentarians, government, and VOPEs was a key step in this regard. One government stakeholder argued that it was important to leverage SDG 17 which seeks to *'Enhance the global partnership for sustainable development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of the sustainable development goals in all countries, in particular developing countries'*.<sup>14</sup> It also recognizes that the public sector needs to take the lead with review and monitoring frameworks and strengthening national oversight mechanism by legislatures. Citing the importance of additional actors in ensuring the implementation and evaluation of the SDGs, participants expressed the importance of also bringing in other civil society actors as well as the private sector. National evaluation associations spoke of the need to conduct a stakeholder analysis and mapping of the different stakeholders involved in evaluating the SDGs with a gender equality lens as an initial step.

### *Data*

All stakeholders recognized the need for high-quality, reliable data that could inform Par-

<sup>12</sup> Parliamentarians and government representatives participated from Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia.

<sup>13</sup> A complete list of recommendations is included in Annex II

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/globalpartnerships/>

liaments' approval of budgets, as well as the development and continuation of policies and programmes. One parliamentarian noted how currently budgets were approved based on 'subjective reports' rather than clear evidence of what works. The use of evaluations as a tool of legislative oversight to question government officials and discuss the effectiveness of policies and programmes for women, men, boys and girls, and to approve budgets was seen as critical to institutionalising good governance. Participants also discussed the importance of national statistics agencies being included in the conversation on how to evaluate the SDGs with a gender equality lens given that statistics and monitoring data should inform evaluations.

"Successful evaluation can take place only if information is available for the evaluators; this is what SDG 17 is about as part of it urges the importance of statistical information circles".

Government official

### ***Capacity Development***

The importance of developing capacities of government officials and civil society to advocate for gender responsive evaluation to increase its demand and use, as well as of evaluators / evaluation units to supply quality gender responsive evaluations was also emphasized. All country delegations wanted to move forward on increasing the awareness of decision-makers and the public on evaluation. For decision-makers, the conduct of seminars and / or workshops for colleagues to define concepts such as evaluation, monitoring, supervision and auditing, so they are not confused or used interchangeably, was considered key. Specific mention was made in some countries on using technology including television and social media. Using the media to raise awareness on the SDGs was also considered to be very important for all constituencies. On the supply side, participants called for building the capacities of national evaluation networks on evaluation which integrates gender equality with clear criteria for the evaluation profession.

### ***Institutionalization of Evaluation***

Institutionalizing evaluation was seen as a key strategy to ensure the systematic use of evaluation to assess outcomes of policies and programmes for women, men, girls and boys. This included both legislative and institutional development efforts. On the legislative side, participants advocated for the development of constitutional amendments or bills codifying parliament's role in evaluating public policies, as well as the commissioning of evaluations. Recognizing that follow-through on implementation of laws was equally important, participants also spoke of the necessity to ensure adequate budget to conduct evaluations. Institutionally, participants spoke of the need to establish specialized bodies to commission, manage and conduct evaluation, which could be housed in parliament. They also advocated for the creation of permanent monitoring and evaluation parliamentarian commissions to discuss evaluation reports issued by national specialized units.

### ***Gender***

Participants repeatedly stressed the importance of ensuring that issues of gender equality and women's rights were an integral part of discussions, processes and regional and national level action regarding the SDGs and evaluating the SDGs. The inclusion of advocates for



gender equality and women's rights was seen as key. Also seen as important were the continued promotion of gender responsive national budgets which are aligned with the SDGs, the establishment of permanent commissions for women affairs within parliaments that do not have one, and the creation of national bodies for sustainable development and women's rights comprised of experts, CSOs, individuals, and neutral units reporting to parliament or government formed of to make sure that legislations are coherent with SDGs.

## Conclusions

Stakeholder groups agreed on the need to continue discussions both at the regional and national level. At regional level, participants advocated for the ongoing sharing of experiences, tools (global, regional and national) and plans as countries move forward on localising the SDGs and building the capacities of their monitoring and evaluation systems to assess progress. The side event demonstrated the catalytic role regional and global convenings can have for the exchange of experiences and support to parliamentarians in advocating for the institutionalisation of evaluation at the national level. Tunisian Parliamentarian, Hon. Olfa Soukri, noted when she launched the Forum for Tunisian Parliamentarians for Evaluation, *'it all started in Egypt'* with the regional parliamentarian meeting on Linking Evaluation to Policy Making in October 2015. Participants who had been involved in earlier discussions in 2014 and 2015 welcomed the expansion of the core group of parliamentarians from the Arab States region promoting national evaluation capacity development to include representatives of ministries responsible for monitoring and evaluating the SDGs, national women's machineries and national evaluation societies.

## Key Recommendations<sup>15</sup>

### Short-term Recommendations

- Develop and / or support virtual platforms for the exchange of information and experiences on evaluating the SDGs with a gender equality lens and institutionalising gender responsive evaluation
- Conduct and / or support awareness raising sessions for decision-makers on what evaluation is and why it is important, ensuring the integration of issues of gender equality
- Establish a regional committee with at least one representative from each country to advance the regional agenda on evaluating the SDGs with a gender and equity lens
- Provide practical examples of participatory, gender-responsive evaluations and how they have been used

### Long-term Recommendations

- Develop specialized studies at university and post-graduate level on evaluation, including gender responsive evaluation
- Put forward legislation to institutionalize evaluation at the national level
- Establish monitoring and evaluation units within parliaments to commission evaluations which are gender responsive

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15 A full list of recommendations by stakeholder group is included in Annex 2 and country level actions in Annex 3.

## Stakeholder Discussions

### Key Recommendations



#### Parliamentarians

- Form permanent monitoring and evaluation parliamentary commissions to discuss evaluation reports related to the SDGs issued by national specialized units
- Develop constitutional amendments to institutionalize evaluation



#### Government Bodies

- Establish a joint committee (ministries, parliamentarians, civil society) to develop strategies and evaluate them
- Increase national evaluation capacities on gender responsive evaluation



#### Evaluation Associations

- Conduct a stakeholder analysis /mapping on monitoring and evaluation of SDGs with a gender equality lens
- Cooperation between evaluators' networks and governments to localise SDG indicators and develop plans for monitoring and evaluation

## Annex 1: Meeting Agenda

### No One Left behind – Evaluating the SDGs with a Gender and Equity Lens

Meeting Agenda - 12 May 2016 – Tunis

<b>13.45 – 14.00</b>	Welcome
<b>14.00 – 14.20</b>	Introductions
<b>14.20 – 14.30</b>	Objectives of the meeting Overview of main outcomes of the Linking Evaluation to Policymaking - Parliamentarians regional meeting (October 2015)
<b>14.30 – 15.00</b>	Roundtable discussions by stakeholder group What are (or should be) the objectives and roles of each of the different actors present (Parliamentarians, Ministries, National Women’s Machineries, evaluators) in ensuring that no one is left behind in the SDGs and how can evaluation help in the process?
<b>15.00 – 15.30</b>	Report back and plenary discussion How will / should the different actors work together in moving forward to promote the demand and use of evaluation of the SDGs with a gender and equity lens? What are the challenges and opportunities for partnership?
<b>15.30 – 15.45</b>	Coffee break
<b>15.45 – 16.15</b>	Plenary discussion What kinds of evaluation capacity development will be required to institutionalise evaluation at the national level or strengthen the capacity of the existing national evaluation systems to monitor and evaluate the SDGs with a gender and equity lens? What are the main challenges in moving forward?
<b>16.15 – 16.45</b>	Discussion of action points / next steps by country
<b>16.45 – 17.15</b>	Presentation of country action points / next steps
<b>17.15 – 17.30</b>	Summary and wrap up

## Annex 2: Stakeholder Group Recommendations

### Parliamentarians' Recommendations

1. Hold workshops to raise awareness on the concept of evaluation, its meaning, implications and benefits and its potential use as a tool to facilitate legislative oversight.
2. Use evaluation findings in parliamentary interrogations and discussions.
3. Regulate legislations coherent with national constitutions, SDGs and international treaties.
4. Conduct parliamentary questioning of executives based on evaluation reports at the end of each year where parliamentary blocks and commissions play effective role in observing public policies and budgets both on party and sectoral levels.
5. Introduce a bill for information trading and.
6. Introduce a bill or amendment to validate MPs role of evaluation the public budget.
7. Establish a training center for MPs to train them on how to apply evaluation as a tool of observation.
8. Develop constitutional amendments to institutionalize evaluation.
9. Approve evaluation as a licensed profession following a union and code of conduct.
10. Develop post graduate studies related to evaluation.
11. Form permanent monitoring and evaluation parliamentary commissions to discuss evaluation reports issued by national specialized units and relating it to SDGs.
12. Form permanent commissions for women affairs within parliaments that do not have one.
13. Develop independent, parliamentary or national public policies and programs evaluation units.
14. Approve KPIs to evaluate MPs performance.
15. Form parliamentary cells working on evaluation in collaboration with national, regional and international evaluation networks.
16. Move to outcome based budgets and approve variable indicators for these outcomes in accordance to SDGs and with gender responsive lens
17. Train and build capabilities of workers on preparing and observing public budget.
18. Develop national bodies for sustainable development and rights of next generations reporting to parliament or government and formed of experts, CSOs, individuals, and neutral units to make sure that legislations are coherent with SDGs.

### Government Bodies Recommendations

1. Ensure sufficient allocation of funds for monitoring and evaluation
2. Ensure monitoring + evaluation plan in place
3. Look at process and impact
4. Increase national evaluation capacities
5. Establish joint committee (Ministries, MPs, CS, media) to develop strategies and evaluate them

### Evaluators' Recommendations

1. Conduct a stakeholder analysis / mapping of different roles related to monitoring and evaluating the SDGs

2. Build national capacities of governmental bodies and parliamentarians in the field of monitoring and evaluation as well as offering them help, consultancy and partnership. And we point out here the necessity of separating the concept of evaluation from auditing.
3. Ensure credible data is available that serves the goals of sustainable development (SDGs) and documentation of evaluations conducted in this field.
4. Develop and promote through advocacy practical definition for “the evaluator” to ensure evaluations are conducted by professional evaluators.
5. Advocate for increased demand for evaluation: legislative amendments, budgeting open channels with media.
6. “Leaving no one behind”, evaluators’ networks should cooperate with governments to define localised SDG indicators and support the development of plans regardless of network participation in implementing and evaluating these plans. (determine local indicators (localization) – put forward a plan)
7. Building capacities of national evaluation networks

## Annex 3: Country level Actions

### *Algeria*

- Evaluate existing constitutional provisions related to women and monitoring their implementation by governmental bodies.
- Validate the constitutional provision related to evaluation.
- Work on a gender sensitive budget.

### *Egypt*

- Create evaluation specialized post graduate studies.
- Develop electronic mechanism to facilitate monitoring accomplishments.
- Validate Paris declaration and devote proportion of each project's budget to evaluation.
- Hire international and national evaluators and publish their reports.
- Develop Social Justice Observatory and national code of conduct.
- Promote *freedom of information* law.
- Create specialized training center to train local employees, parliamentarians, presidential consultants and CSOs on monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and how to use them as tools of sustainable development.

### *Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine*

- Create parliamentarian unit aiming to develop partnerships with national, regional, and international evaluation networks as well as with other parliamentarian evaluation units.
- Modify parliamentarian system to use evaluation as a tool of interrogations.
- Include evaluation in national development plans.
- Build capacities of national evaluators' networks.
- Approve national code of conduct for evaluation as a profession according to international standards.

### *Morocco*

- Embody SDGs within public policies.
- Develop national framework for SDG indicators.
- Promote the national plan of equality 2012-2016.
- Validate 2011 constitutional provision "equality between men and women in all rights and social justice".
- Link responsibility to accountability.
- Develop financial law to include gender and budgeting based on outcomes.

### *Tunisia*

- Integrate evaluation within basic education programs, academic research and think tanks.
- Institutionalize evaluation through legal and organizational frame.
- Cooperation between legislative and executive branches in monitoring and evaluation.
- Switch from objective national budget to a gender-sensitive one.
- Build evaluation capacities of CSOs and supporting their role in conducting evaluation.

## Annex 4: Participant Listing

1. Mr. Abdessamad Lamrani, Ministry of Solidarity, Women, Family and Social Development, Morocco
2. Ms. Abla Alhawary, Member of Parliament, Egypt
3. Dr. Ahmad Holly, Member of Parliament, Palestine
4. Ms. Amina Lotfi, UN Women Morocco Multi-Country Office
5. Mr. Anis Ben Younes, EvalMENA, Tunisian Evaluation Network
6. Mr. Bader Ali Ahmad Abuzahra, Council of Ministers, Palestine
7. Mr. Basem Kanaan, Ministry of Planning + International Cooperation, Jordan
8. Dr. Bashir Osmat, Ministry of Social Affairs, Senior Advisor - Social and Development Policy, Lebanon
9. Mr. Bechir Khelifi, Member of Parliament, Tunisia
10. Ms. Dana Tarawneh, Jordanian National Council for Women, Jordan
11. Mr. Fadi Hajjar, Evaluator, Lebanon
12. Ms. Ghalia Kacem, UN Women Tunisia Programme Office
13. Dr. Haitham Abbadi, Member of Parliament, Jordan
14. Ms. Hela Skhiri, UN Women Tunisia Programme Office
15. Mr. Imed Daimi, Member of Parliament, Tunisia
16. Ms. Jamila Ksiksi, Member of Parliament, Tunisia
17. Dr. Magued Osman, National Council for Women, Egypt
18. Ms. Malika Moussaoui, Ministry of National Solidarity, Family and Women's Affairs, Algeria
19. Ms. Manal Maher El-Gamel, Member of Parliament, Egypt
20. Mr. Marco Segone, UN Women Independent Evaluation Office
21. Ms. Marian Dieabs, Evaluator, Palestine
22. Ms. Maryse Guimond, UN Women Regional Office for Arab States
23. Dr. Mohamed El Fouly, Egyptian Association for Evaluation, Egypt
24. Mr. Mohamed Qaryouti, Eval-Jordan
25. Mr. Mohammed Barrech, High Commission for Planning, Morocco
26. Ms. Mona Selim, UN Women Regional Office for Arab States, Independent Evaluation Office
27. Mr. Moncef Mansri, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Directorate General of Political Affairs and International Security, Algeria
28. Ms. Myriam Boujbel, Member of Parliament, Tunisia
29. Dr. Nagwa Khalil, National Council for Women, Egypt
30. Ms. Naima Bouchareb, Member of Parliament, Morocco
31. Dr. Najaat Al-Astal, Member of Parliament, Palestine
32. Mr. Naser Qadous, Palestinian Evaluation Association
33. Ms. Neziha Bayaoui, Member of Parliament, Tunisia
34. Ms. Nouara Djaafar, Senator, Algeria
35. Ms. Olfa Sukhri, Member of Parliament, Tunisia
36. Ms. Ourida Larfi Kessal, Member of Parliament, Algeria
37. Ms. Rima Abou Baker, Evaluator, Lebanon
38. Dr. Roula Hroub, Member of Parliament, Jordan
39. Dr. Salma Galal, Egyptian Research and Evaluation Network
40. Ms. Yamina Zoghلامي, Member of Parliament, Tunisia

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## Spring Forward for Women Programme

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