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Regional Workshop on Bridging Gaps through Evidence-Based Policies: A Deep Dive into Gender Inequality and Macroeconomic Outcomes January 27-29, 2025, Cairo, Egypt



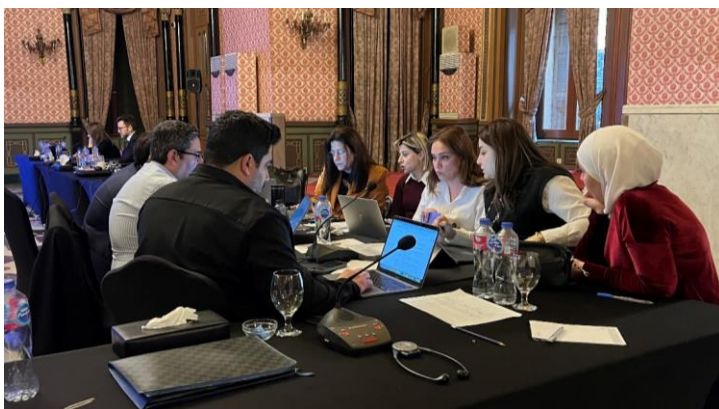
What are the hidden barriers preventing women from fully participating in the economy? How do gender disparities in education and employment impact overall economic growth? And how can statistics and data be leveraged to inform and shape effective gender-responsive policies?

These intriguing questions guided participants during the recent the three-day workshop organized in collaboration with the IMF's Strategy, Policy and Review Department. The workshop offered an in-depth exploration of macro-critical gender gaps and their influence on economic outcomes, including demographics, technology, and conflict. It examined how unequal access to education, infrastructure, and financial services, employment, and leadership opportunities affect growth, stability, and resilience. Thirty participants from 13 countries (of which nine METAC member countries) joined the course from various institutions including Ministries of Finance, Social Affairs, Energy, and Environment, as well as Central Banks and Social Commissions.

The course aimed to build participants' skills in several key areas. Firstly, it focused on identifying and measuring macro-critical gender gaps, such as those related to employment and legal barriers, and assessing the economic impacts of these inequalities. Second, participants analyzed the relationships between gender, demographics, conflict, and technological change within economic contexts. Third, the workshop assisted participants in developing gender-responsive policy recommendations tailored to specific economic environments and demographic contexts such as fragile states. Finally, participants had the opportunity to present evidence and policy recommendations regarding macro-critical gender gaps to senior officials. Participants engaged in small group discussions, hands-on activities, and presented their case studies to foster in-depth learning and collaboration.

Presentations included an overview of gender data for macroeconomic policymaking, showcasing the toolkit which helps policymakers identify key gender gaps and target policy interventions more effectively. Additionally, presentations discussed how women's financial access and inclusion can support economic growth and empower women economically.

Furthermore, the workshop explored gender dimensions in conflict and fragility and provided an analysis of legal impediments to gender equality and economic participation. It discussed demographic shifts and their gender implications, as well as issues of unpaid care work. Speakers highlighted the importance of micro-level data, showcasing how it can provide valuable insights into policymaking and various country applications. Participants also learned how to navigate a comprehensive toolkit with macro-critical indicators, as well as toolkits on gender and growth, financial access, and demographics.



The workshop concluded with participant presentations of case studies on regional challenges, specifically focusing on Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, and Egypt. The group presentations centered on topics related to childcare, early education, and labor market participation. A guest panel including Alex Segura-Ubiergo, IMF Resident Representative in Egypt, and Racha

Ramadan, Professor of Economics at the Faculty of Economics and Political Science at Cairo University, provided insightful feedback and context on the presentation.