

Conference Program

# GENDER EQUALITY IN THE MENA REGION

*OCTOBER 24-25, 2015, CAIRO, EGYPT*



ECONOMIC  
RESEARCH  
FORUM



منتدى  
البحوث  
الاقتصادية

## ABOUT ERF

### Our Mission

The Economic Research Forum (ERF) is a regional network dedicated to promoting high quality economic research to contribute to sustainable development in the Arab countries, Iran and Turkey.

### Our Objectives

Established in 1993, ERF's core objectives are to build strong research capacity in the ERF region, to lead and support the production of independent, high quality economic research, and to disseminate research output to a wide and diverse audience.

### Our Activities

To achieve these objectives, ERF carries out a portfolio of activities. These include mobilizing funds for well conceived proposals; managing carefully selected regional research initiatives and providing training and mentoring programs to junior researchers. It also includes organizing seminars and conferences based on research outcomes; and publishing research output through multiple channels including working papers, books, policy briefs and a newsletter – Forum.

### Our Network

The ERF network comprises a distinguished Board of Trustees (BOT), accomplished researchers from the region and highly dedicated head-office staff. A not-for-profit organization, the Forum is supported by multiple donors, both regional and international.

# CONFERENCE PROGRAM

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# GENDER EQUALITY IN THE MENA REGION

## Context

Most countries in the MENA region have adopted a variety of policies and mechanisms for the empowerment of women and the advancement of their rights over the past few decades. And much progress has been made, especially in terms of female literacy and health outcomes. However, the fact remains that women in the region are still at a significant disadvantage when compared to women around the world and the status of males in the region. The gender gap persists, especially in terms of political and economic participation. The key question addressed in this conference is: What are the factors behind the persistence of the gender gap in the MENA region and how can this gap be narrowed down or eliminated?

The Economic Research Forum (ERF) has been working on the above question for some time. In cooperation with the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), ERF launched two calls for proposals and initiated a large structured project on the matter. In March 2013, the first call was on “Women Economic Empowerment

in MENA.” The call resulted in the selection of seven projects dealing with such issues as work-life conflicts, time use, entrepreneurship and the feminization of poverty. The second call for proposals was launched in December 2014 on “Gender and Social Protection in the ERF Region.” It led to the selection of ten projects on such issues as pension, payments, consumption patterns of the poor, and microfinance services. Finally, the structured project was on the economics of life course transitions in the MENA region, covering various angles of this transition. The main findings of these research activities will be presented in the conference, noting that gender issues are embedded in social, economic, political and cultural formations.

## Conference Objectives

The primary objectives of the conference are to provide a platform for the presentation of research findings and to facilitate open discussions among a well-informed audience, including international experts, regional academics, policymakers and the media.

Ultimately, the discussions are meant to be of relevance to policy-makers in the MENA region.

### Conference Organization

The conference is organized by the ERF in collaboration with the International Development Research Center (IDRC). It will bring together world-renowned economists, social scientists and policy makers and is set to feature the presentation of 12 papers in addition to a panel discussion under the themes of gender inequality, empowerment within the household, inequality in the labor market, women entrepreneurs, social protection, and women in politics and religion. One expert on gender issues is slated to give a keynote speech and the conference is expected to join around 100 participants from the region and beyond. The event is set to last two days and the sessions are structured to allow for ample time for open discussion.

### Conference Venue

Eugenie Ballroom - Marriott Hotel, Cairo, Egypt.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### Travel Arrangements

- Upon your arrival in Cairo “Meet and Assist” service will be provided by a representative from our travel agency Abercrombie and Kent (A&K). The representative will be holding an ERF sign.
- In case you missed your airport pickup, or you don’t find the travel agency representative, please contact Hoda Azmi 01227439154.

### Hotel Accommodation

- Participants will be residing at: Cairo Marriott Hotel & Omar Khayyam Casino | 16, Saray El Gezira • St, P.O. Box 33 | Zamalek, Cairo 11211, Egypt.
- Check in Time is 3:00 p.m.
- Check out Time is 12:00 p.m.
- Kindly note that ERF does not cover expenses related to laundry, alcoholic beverages, phone calls both local and international, internet room service or use of the mini-bar etc.
- For participants arriving before the event and departing after the event, ERF will cover USD 40 inclusive per person as a dinner/lunch allowance at “Roy’s Country Kitchen” including mineral water and soft drinks only.

# DAY ONE: OCTOBER 24, 2015

## 09:00-10:30 **OPENING SESSION**

**Moderator:** *Ahmed Galal*, Economic Research Forum (ERF)

### **Opening Remarks:**

*Arjan De Haan*, International Development Research Center (IDRC)

### **Keynote Speaker:**

*Maria Floro*, American University, USA

Challenges in Addressing Gender Inequality: The Work Ahead

This session will discuss the impact of globalization on gender equality. It will address major global challenges, such as inequalities, persistent poverty and increasing vulnerability to crises and will shed some light on the development of these aspects, both regionally and globally.

## 10:30-11:00 **COFFEE BREAK**

## 11:00-12:30 **SESSION 1: GENDER INEQUALITY**

**Moderator:** *Moushira Khattab*, Former Minister of Family and Population, Egypt

**Speakers:** *Stephanie Seguino*, University of Vermont, USA  
Gender Equality Matters for Economic Development and Growth,

*Suzan Joeques*, London School of Economics, UK  
Special Features of Women's Economic Participation in MENA Countries

### **Open Discussion**

This session will broadly discuss gender equality and the discrimination women suffer from to this day. Indubitably, gender equality is a precondition for sustainable development, reduced poverty and the advancement of society. In this context, the speakers will discuss the reasons behind gender inequality, its effects and the macroeconomic policies that can support greater equality between men and women.

## 12:30-14:00 **LUNCH BREAK**

**14:00-15:30 SESSION 2: EMPOWERMENT WITHIN THE HOUSEHOLD**

**Moderator:** *Heba Handoussa*, Egypt Network for Integrated Development (ENID) and ERF

**Speakers:** *Rana Hendy*, Economic Research Forum (ERF)  
Intra-household Gender Inequality

*Zafiriz Tzannatos*, Senior Consultant for Strategy, Lebanon  
The Empowerment of Women within the Household Starts  
with Women's Empowerment in the Market

**Open Discussion**

This session will investigate women's empowerment within the household. The speakers will discuss gender roles within households, the time allocation of household members. Women's economic agency, participation in decision making, domestic violence, attitudes and perceptions are among the topics that the speakers will explore.

**15:30-16:00 COFFEE BREAK**

**16:00-17:30 SESSION 3: GENDER EQUALITY IN THE LABOR MARKETS**

**Moderator:** *Insan Tunali*, Koç University and ERF

**Speakers:** *Naila Kabeer*, London School of Economics, UK  
Gender Segmentation of Labour Markets

*Ragui Assaad*, University of Minnesota, USA  
Peering behind the trends in Women's Labor Force  
Participation in MENA

**Open Discussion**

This session will focus on gender equality in the labor market. While women comprise half of any country's potential human capital, their MENA labor force participation rates are much lower than they are for men. In this context, speakers will discuss the factors behind women's low participation in the labor market.

**19:00- DINNER**

# DAY TWO: OCTOBER 25, 2015

## 09:30-11:00 **SESSION 4: WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS**

**Moderator:** *Hala El Said*, Cairo University, Egypt

**Speakers:** *Fatma El Hamidi*, Pittsburgh University, USA  
The Fallacy of Women's Entrepreneurship in MENA

*Hadi Esfahani*, University of Illinois, USA  
Institutional and Policy Determinants of Female Ownership  
and Size Distribution of Enterprises

### **Open Discussion**

This session will examine women entrepreneurship in MENA. While the number of female entrepreneurs in MENA has been rising, women have not reached their full potential due to many stereotypes and social and economic challenges.

## 11:00-11:30 **COFFEE BREAK**

## 11:30-13:00 **SESSION 5: GENDER AND SOCIAL PROTECTION POLICIES**

**Moderator:** *Ghada Waly*, Minister of Social Solidarity, Egypt

**Speakers:** *Hania Sholkamy*, The American University in Cairo, Egypt  
Lessons from Implementation of a Women Centered Cash  
Transfers Program

*Nicola A Jones*, Overseas Development Institute, UK  
From Targets of Charity to Citizens?

### **Open Discussion**

This session will address the importance of policy interventions in improving social security, reducing vulnerability and mitigating risks faced by women in the region. While some of these risks and vulnerabilities are shared by both women and men, some are aggravated by gender biases. In this framework, the speakers will present these vulnerabilities, discuss policy options and assess the impact of different social protection instruments on reaching desired goals.



**13:00-14:30 LUNCH BREAK**

**14:30-16:00 SESSION 6: GENDER, RELIGION AND POLITICS**

**Moderator:** *Mona Makram-Ebeid*, Former Parliamentarian, Egypt

**Speakers:** *Amel Grami*, University of Manouba, Tunisia  
Gender Gap in Tunisia

*Aili M. Tripp*, University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA  
Women's Rights, Religion, and Legal Reform in the Maghreb

**Open Discussion**

This session will explore the links between gender, Islam and politics in the region. There are several stereotypes regarding the status of women in the region, their rights, political participation and the role of religion in dictating their societal role. The session will survey these issues in terms of recent regional developments.

**16:00-16:30 COFFEE BREAK**

**16:30-18:00 PANEL DISCUSSION: CLOSING THE GENDER GAP IN THE MENA REGION**

**Moderator:** *Bruce Currie-Alder*, International Development Research Center (IDRC)

**Speakers:** *Caren Grown*, World Bank, USA  
*Ghada Waly*, Minister of Social Solidarity, Egypt  
*Mahmoud El Gamal*, Rice University, USA

**Open Discussion**

In this session policy makers from within and outside MENA will present policy recommendations to bridge the gender gap. The session also seeks to put forward measures for tracking progress on the path towards eliminating the gender gap, taking into account the ideas discussed during the conference.

## SPEAKERS' BIOS

*Organized alphabetically by the last name*



**Ragui Assaad** is professor at the Humphrey School of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota, where he chairs the Global Policy area and co-directs the Master of Development Practice program. He has been a Research Fellow at ERF since 1994 and currently serves as its thematic leader for Labor and Human Resource Development and as a member of its Board of Trustees. His current research focuses on labor markets in the Arab World, with a focus on youth and gender. He holds a PhD in City and Regional Planning from Cornell University and an MA in Mechanical Engineering from Stanford University.



**Bruce Currie-Alder** is Regional Director, based in Cairo, with Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC). His work examines the governance of public research funding and scientific cooperation with developing countries. He authored *Research for the Developing World* (Oxford 2015) and co-edited *International Development: Ideas, Experience and Prospects* (Oxford 2014), which traces the evolution of thinking about international development over the past 60. Currie-Alder holds an MA in Natural Resource Management and a PhD in Public Policy.



**Arjan de Haan** is Program Leader of the Economic and Growth program at the IDRC. Before joining IDRC, Arjan worked at the Institute of Social Studies (Erasmus University Rotterdam) in The Hague, where he was convenor of the master's program in social policy and led the development of the Indices of Social Development database. He previously worked for 10 years with the UK Department for International Development in London, India, and China and managed the Poverty Research Unit at the University of Sussex (UK). He is published widely and is co-editor of the *Canadian Journal of Development Studies*. Arjan holds a PhD in social history from Erasmus University, Rotterdam.



**Mahmoud El-Gamal** is a professor in the Department of Economics at Rice University, where he also holds the endowed Chair in Islamic Economics, Finance and Management. He is also a Rice scholar at the Baker Institute at Rice University. Before joining Rice in 1998, he was an associate professor of economics at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. He has also worked as an assistant professor at the University of Rochester and the California Institute of Technology. El-Gamal has published extensively on finance, econometrics, decision science, economics of the Middle East and Islamic transactions law. His recent books include “Islamic Finance: Law, Economics and Practice” (Cambridge University Press, 2006) and “Oil, Dollars, Debt and Crises: The Global Curse of Black Gold” with Amy Myers Jaffe (Cambridge University Press, 2010).



**Fatma El-Hamidi** is an associate faculty at the Department of Economics and the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs (GSPIA), University of Pittsburgh, PA. Fatma El-Hamidi’s research emphasizes gender aspects of labor markets of developing countries, highlighting the Middle East and North Africa region. Her research has been published in academic journals. She is a member of several economic associations in and out of the United States. She holds a PhD in Economic and Social Development from GSPIA, University of Pittsburgh.



**Hala El Said** is the Dean of the Faculty of Economics and Political Science (FEPS) at Cairo University since October 2011 and a Professor of Economics at FEPS. Dr. Hala served as an Advisor to the Governor of the Central Bank of Egypt and Executive Director of the Egyptian Banking Institute. She is a member of the board of directors of many financial and banking institutions, including the Egyptian Banking Institute, the Arab African International Bank and Egypt’s National Post Authority. She has authored several research papers and articles on the financial sector, international finance, financial markets, privatization and economic reform. She holds a B.A, MSc and PhD with honor in Economics from the Faculty of Economics & Political Science at Cairo University.



**Hadi Salehi Esfahani** is a Professor of Economics and Business Administration at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and serves as the Editor-in-Chief of the Quarterly Review of Economics and Finance. He is a Board member of the Economic Research Forum and the International Iranian Economic Association. He has also served as the President of Middle East Economic Association. He is a graduate of the University of California at Berkeley. His research focuses on the role of politics and governance in economic policy formation in fiscal, labor, and trade areas, especially in the Middle East and North Africa.



**Maria S. Floro** is Professor of Economics at American University, Washington DC, and co-director of the Graduate Program on Gender Analysis in Economics (PGAE). Her publications include co-authored books and articles on vulnerability, informal employment, urban food security, time use and well-being, financial crises, household savings, credit and asset ownership. She has collaborated with researchers, women's groups and community organizations in Thailand, the Philippines, Ecuador and Bolivia in conducting fieldwork in urban poor communities. She is currently working on analysis of China, Mongolia and Thailand national time use survey data and serves as technical adviser to the Economic and Social Costs of Violence Against Women Project.



**Ahmed Galal** is currently Managing Director of the Economic Research Forum (ERF) and the President and Chairman of the Board of Forum Euroméditerranéen des Instituts des Sciences Économiques (FEMISE). He is also a member of the Board of the Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI) and the MENA Health Policy Forum. Galal was Egypt's Finance Minister between July 2013 and February 2014. Previously, he worked for the World Bank for 18 years where he conducted research and provided policy advice to governments in several regions. Galal authored or co-authored more than dozen books, including Welfare Consequences of Selling Public Enterprises and The Road Not Traveled: Education Reform in the Middle East and North Africa. Galal holds a PhD in economics from Boston University.



**Amel Grami** is a Professor of Islamic Studies and Gender Studies at the University of Manouba, Tunisia. Grami is also a human and women's rights activist and a member of the High Committee of Human Rights in Tunisia (2012), an active member of the research group Women in Mediterranean, the Islamic-Christian Dialogue Research Group (GRIC) since 1998 and the ' Religious Discourses research group. Grami holds a PhD on Apostasy in Islamic Thought from the University of Tunis (1993) and a Doctorat d'Etat on the Difference in Islamic Culture from the University of Manouba, Tunisia, (2004).



**Caren Grown**, is an expert on gender issues in development. Prior to joining the World Bank, she was Economist-In-Residence and co-director of the Program on Gender Analysis in Economics at American University (AU) in Washington, DC. Dr. Grown was an Associate Editor of Feminist Economics (2007-2014) and a founding member of the International Working Group on Gender and Macroeconomics (GEM-IWG) (1993-2007). She holds a PhD and MA in Economics from the New School for Social Research and a BA in Political Science from the University of California, Los Angeles.



**Heba Handoussa** is the founder of the Egypt Network for Integrated Development (ENID). She was also the lead author of the Egypt Human Development Report (EHDR) 2010, which was the best report across 50 countries and director and lead author of three previous EHDRs. She is also founder and director of the Economic Research Forum for the Arab Countries, Iran and Turkey and taught at the AUC. She has consistently served as an advisor to the Egyptian government and has served on the boards of international and regional research-related institutions, including CEDEJ, IFPRI, UNRISD and the WBI Advisory Board of the World Bank. She has been selected to become member of the World Bank Chief Economist's Council of Eminent Persons (CEP) in 2015.



**Rana Hendy** currently works as an Economist at the Economic Research Forum (Cairo, Egypt) where she is leading major projects covering inequality and gender issues on the MENA region. Hendy earned her PhD in the fields of labor and gender economics from the University of Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne (Paris, France). During her PhD, she benefited from a full fellowship from the French statistical institution (INSEE-CREST) based in Paris. Hendy's academic papers cover various research areas such as women empowerment, time and resource allocation within the household, inequality of opportunity, firm dynamics as well as issues related to trade policies.

**Susan Joekes**, London School of Economics.



**Nicolas Jones** is a Senior Research Fellow at the Overseas Development Institute in London. She has worked for a range of international donors on the intersection between social protection and social inclusion. She is the co-author of *Gender and Social Protection in the Developing World: Beyond Mothers and Safety Nets* (2013). In the Middle East, she has worked on several evaluations of the Palestinian National Cash Transfer Program in Gaza and the West Bank for DFID and UNICEF. She holds a PhD in Political Science from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and specializes in gender and social policy.



**Naila Kabeer** is Professor of Gender and International Development at the Gender Institute, London School of Economics and Political Science. She has over 25 years of experience in research, teaching and advocacy in the inter-related fields of gender, poverty, social exclusion, labor markets and livelihoods and social protection. She is on the editorial boards of a number of journals, including *Feminist Economics* and *Gender and Development*. Her recent publications include *Organizing Women Workers in the Informal Economy: Beyond the Weapons of the Weak* (Zed Press) and *Strengthening Social Justice to Address Intersecting Inequalities Post 2015* (Overseas Development Institute).



**Moushira Khattab** is an Egyptian human rights activist, former politician & diplomat. She is the former Minister of Family & Population of Egypt,[1] Ambassador of Egypt to the Republic of South Africa, the Czech Republic and Slovakia as well serving in Egypt's diplomatic missions in Australia, Hungary, Austria and the United Nations (New York and Vienna). She is also a human rights activist advocating the rights of children and women. holds a PhD on the rights of the child from Cairo University, an M.A. in International Relations from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, USA and a B.A. Political Science from Cairo University, Faculty of Economics and Political Science.



**Mona Makram-Ebeid** has taught Political Science and Sociology at the American University in Cairo since 1990 until 2015. She was also an Egyptian Senator (2012 – 2013), a member of the Shoura Assembly (2012 – 2013), and a member of the Egyptian Parliament (1990 – 1995). She has also been a member of Arab Organization for Human Rights since 1987, the president and founder of the Association for the Advancement of Education, a founding member of the Egyptian Council on Foreign Affairs, a trustee of Egypt's International Economic Forum, and a member of the National Council of Women (2003-2009 and 2014- 2015). She has received many distinguished awards such as Officier de la Legion d'Honneur (2008), and the Distinguished Alumni Award, AUC, (1999), and the Distinguished Annual Award for Women from AMADEUS Institute in Morocco (2013). She Graduated from Harvard, J.F. Kennedy School of Government (1984) and the American University in Cairo (1975).



**Stephanie Seguíno** is Professor of Economics at the University of Vermont, USA, and Professorial Research Associate at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. She served as an economist in Haiti for several years in the pre- and post-Baby Doc era. Her current research explores the relationship between intergroup inequality by class, race, and gender, on the one hand, and economic growth and development on the other. She has consulted with a wide variety of international organizations, including the UNDP, UNRISD, UNCTAD, World Bank, AFL-CIO, and USAID.





**Hania Sholkamy** is currently a Carnegie Centennial Visiting Scholar at Yale University. She has worked on issues of social protection, feminist approaches to welfare, poverty alleviation and subsidy reform. Her research interests and publications are mainly in the fields of health, particularly reproductive health, gender, population and qualitative methods. She is also an associate research professor at the Social Research Center of the AUC and is also affiliated with the Forced Migration and Refugee Studies Program of the university. She is an Egyptian anthropologist with a PhD from the London School of Economics and Political Sciences and obtained her BA and MA degrees from the American University in Cairo (AUC).



**Aili M. Tripp** is Professor of Political Science and Gender and Women's Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in the US. She is a visiting Fulbright scholar at the Hillary Rodham Clinton Center for Women's Empowerment at Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane, Morocco, for the academic year 2015-2016. She is presently conducting research on women and legal reform in the Maghreb. Her past research has focused on women and politics in Africa, women's movements in Africa, transnational feminism, African politics (with particular reference to Uganda and Tanzania), and on the informal economy in Africa. She has a forthcoming book with Cambridge University Press on Women and Power in Post-Conflict Africa.



**Insan Tunali** is an associate professor at the Department of Economics of Koç University. He teaches econometrics, labor economics and statistics. His recent research focuses on the areas of population and labor dynamics in Turkey and the Middle East; household survey methodology and attrition. Tunali has authored various journal articles and publications. He is a member of the American Economic Association, the Population Association of America, and the Turkish Economics Association. He earned a PhD in Economics from the University of Wisconsin, Madison, in 1985.





**Zafiris Tzannatos** is an economist living in Beirut. Recently he was Professor and Chair of the Economics Department at AUB, and before that Advisor for Social Development at the Executive Council of Abu Dhabi, and Senior Adviser for the ILO. He was also an Adviser to the Managing Director at the World Bank, where he was also Manager for Social Protection in the MENA region. His publications include 14 books and monographs, and more than 200 reports and papers in the areas of development strategy, labor economics, education, gender and child labor as well as broader social policy. His current research is on the euro-crisis, gender in MENA and the post-2010 developments in the Arab region.



**Ghada Waly** is the Egyptian Minister of Social Solidarity. Her work experience includes more than 25 years in the field of Development and Poverty Reduction. In the framework of her position, she is the Chairperson of the Nasser Social Bank, National Center for Social and Criminology Research, National Fund for Drug Control and Treatment of Addiction, the Executive Council of Arab Ministers of Social Affairs, National Authority of Social Insurance as well as the vice-chairperson of the Egyptian Red Crescent Association. Waly is also the Coordinator of the Ministerial Committee for Social Justice.