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**The MENA Gender and Development e-Brief** receives material from various sources for its publication. Should you wish to refer to these sources/ sites directly, the list includes publications from: AWID: [www.awid.org](http://www.awid.org), Democracy Digest: [www.freedomhouse.org](http://www.freedomhouse.org), e-Civicus: [www.civicus.org](http://www.civicus.org), Eldis: [www.eldis.org](http://www.eldis.org), ESCWA: [www.escwa.org.lb](http://www.escwa.org.lb), GDB: [www.developmentex.com](http://www.developmentex.com), ILO: [www.ilo.org](http://www.ilo.org), One World: [www.oneworld.net](http://www.oneworld.net), Siyanda: [www.siyanda.org](http://www.siyanda.org), The Daily Star: [www.dailystar.com.lb](http://www.dailystar.com.lb), The Drum Beat: [www.comminit.com](http://www.comminit.com), The World Bank: [www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org), UNDP: [www.undp.org](http://www.undp.org), WLP: [www.learningpartnership.org](http://www.learningpartnership.org), WIDE: [www.wide-network.org](http://www.wide-network.org), IRIN News: [www.irinnews.org](http://www.irinnews.org), Women’s UN Report Network: [www.wunrn.com](http://www.wunrn.com), Women Living Under Muslim Laws: [www.wluml.org](http://www.wluml.org)

**Civicus interview with Amal El Mohandes, director of the women human rights defenders program at Nasra for feminist studies**



*In light of the ongoing threats faced by civil society activists, journalists and ordinary citizens in Egypt from state and non-state actors, CIVICUS interviews Amal Elmohandes, Director of the Women Human Rights Defenders Program at Nasra for Feminist Studies, to get a better understanding on the current situation.*

*1) What is the current state of human rights and particularly Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRDs) in Egypt?*

The current human rights situation in Egypt is pretty dismal. However, violations targeting WHRDs and women in the public space have been systematic and uniform throughout the different governments in the past three and a half years. These atrocities have been prevalent during the rule of the Supreme Council of Armed Forces (SCAF), during President Mohammad Morsi's tenure, and during the reign of the interim government that preceded the election of the new Egyptian president in May 2014. Sexual violence has been carried out by both state and non-state actors, including threats of rape, sexual assault and physical beating.

Read more:

<http://civicus.org/index.php/en/link-to-related-newsresources2/2068>

**Palestine accedes to 8 UN treaties without reservations – very important for advocacy of women in Palestine**

On 2 April 2014, the State of Palestine deposited with the UN Secretary-General its instruments of accession to a number of international treaties. These include seven of the nine core human rights treaties plus one of the substantive protocols, as follows:

- The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)
- The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)
- The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
- The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)
- The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD)
- The Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT)
- The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
- The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in armed conflict (CRC-OPAC)

Five of these treaties are set to enter into force May 7 (namely CAT, CERD, CEDAW, CRPD and CRC); the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC-OPAC); and the two Covenants (ICESCR and ICCPR) will come into force on 2 July.

Read more:

[http://www.wunrn.com/news/2014/06\\_02/06\\_09/060914\\_palestine.htm](http://www.wunrn.com/news/2014/06_02/06_09/060914_palestine.htm)

## Equity or Equality for Women?

Equity or equality is a current debate among women's groups from around the world as they link up and prepare for the great UN debates and decisions that are taking place with regard to Sustainable Development Goals, the Post 2015 Development Agenda as well as the forthcoming celebration of Beijing plus 20 in 2015. Through the emails that are circulated on the subject, one can see the debates among women on the usefulness of supporting the concept of equality versus adopting the use of the concept of equity. The latter is seen as based on the principle of fairness and as addressing inequality and the realities of women's lives; while the former is seen as merely promoting equal or same opportunities as that enjoyed by men. The conclusion is that equality may just continue to perpetuate inequality.

I would like to add to this discussion. In the debates by the women's groups, the meaning that is given to the concept of equality is outmoded. The concept of equality that the CEDAW Convention prescribes and as used by the CEDAW Committee is substantive equality. This concept of equality goes beyond equal opportunities or what is known as formal equality.

Those who prescribe the concept of equity over equality do so because they say that equity requires that each person is given according to their needs; they believe that if you speak of equity instead of equality it will be clear that the objective is not treating women the same as men but more importantly, giving women what they need.

Read more:

[http://www.wunrn.com/news/2014/06\\_02/06\\_23/062314\\_equality.htm](http://www.wunrn.com/news/2014/06_02/06_23/062314_equality.htm)

## Informal Work in Tunisia: A Factor To Be Included In Strategies Addressing Gender Based Violence

*To commemorate International Domestic Workers' Day on June 16 and in parallel to a seminar considering a unified strategy against violence against women in Tunisia, hosted by the Association of Tunisian Women for Research and Development's in Tunis on June 13, 2014, AWID takes a look at the instruments available and the gaps that still exist in addressing violence against informal women workers in Tunisia.*

Article 46 of the new Tunisian constitution states that: "The State shall take all necessary measures to eradicate violence against women". Three months after its enactment, the May 2014 recommendations made in Tunisia by the mechanisms of the United Nations' human rights system, stipulate that violence cannot be eradicated without reforming legal codes. These recommendations also emphasize the need to strengthen oversight of informal sector work.

### Women in the informal sector

The economic crisis has intensified the growth of informal work globally. In Tunisia, informal employment, defined by researcher Nidhal Ben Cheikh as, "unprotected employment or the absence of social protection", accounts for 54% of jobs. According to the Tunisian Union of Industry, Trade and Handicrafts (UTICA), the informal sector affects 85% of Tunisian enterprises.

Read more:

<http://www.awid.org/News-Analysis/Friday-Files/Informal-Work-in-Tunisia-A-Factor-to-be-Included-in-Strategies-Addressing-Gender-Based-Violence>

## Salwa Bughaighis, Libyan human rights activist shot dead

The Libyan human rights activist Salwa Bugaighis has been shot dead by unknown assailants at her home in Benghazi on the day of the country's general election.

"Unknown hooded men wearing military uniforms attacked Mrs Bugaighis in her home and opened fire on her," said a security official, who did not wish to be named.

She was shot several times and taken to hospital in critical condition, where she died shortly afterwards, a spokesman for the Benghazi medical centre said.

Her husband, who was in the family home at the time of the attack, had since been reported as missing, a family member said. "We've lost touch with him," the relative said, adding that a security guard at the house had been shot and injured.

Bugaighis, a lawyer, played an active part in Libya's 2011 revolution, which overthrew the regime of Muammar Gaddafi. A former member of the National Transitional Council, the rebellion's political wing, she was vice-president of a preparatory committee for national dialogue in Libya.

The US ambassador to Libya, Deborah Jones called the news "heartbreaking", and on her Twitter account denounced "a cowardly, despicable, shameful act against a courageous woman and true Libyan patriot".

Read more:

<http://www.awid.org/News-Analysis/Women-s-Rights-in-the-News2/Salwa-Bugaighis-Libyan-human-rights-activist-shot-dead>

## Women rights activists protest last-minute citizenship decree



Lebanese women's rights activists organized a sit-in Wednesday to protest a presidential decree granting citizenship to more than 600 people, arguing that children of Lebanese women should be a priority.

"Giving Lebanese citizenship to foreign nationals, from the likes of Gerogios, Stephen and Robert, whether present inside Lebanon or outside Lebanon, is intentionally or unintentionally stripping us of a legitimate right recognized by civilized nations and uncivilized nations alike – [the right] to give the nationality to our children" said Mary Ghazal, a participant in the sit-in. The "My Nationality is a Right for Me and My Family" campaign organized a sit-in at Riad al-Solh Square and gathered Lebanese women married to foreigners and their children.

Under the current law, children can only receive Lebanese nationality through their fathers.

The activists said that the Lebanese government naturalized 644 non-Lebanese and offered people of Lebanese origin living abroad citizenship once they return to Lebanon, and yet Lebanese women were still denied the right to pass their nationality onto their children.

Read more:

<http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Lebanon-News/2014/Jun-26/261644-womens-rights-activists-protest-last-minute-citizenship-decree.ashx#axzz35j2dJMCf>

## *GENDER BASED VIOLENCE*

### **Mali – Terrorist ultimatum to army & seizure of women**



The MNLA and their accomplices (jihadists and drug traffickers) now control several localities in the North, Kidal and Menaka. In this locality (Menaka), they have even taken control of the rural radio station called "The Voice of Azawad".

Late last week, the terrorists asked the Malian army leave Menaka. They have even issued an ultimatum, it has been learned, which expired on Monday.

But the situation becomes untenable for Mali soldiers that are deployed at the camp. Meanwhile, acts of provocation by terrorists are multiplying.

Menaka consists mainly of Nigerian soldiers. They are often patrolling. But far from reassuring the population, these patrols have no effect on the terrorists. Instead, the MNLA and accomplices have strengthened their position in Menaka. Also, they kidnapped dozens of women to other locations. These poor women are now used as "sex slaves." These are the same women who are manipulated and forced to march to demand the withdrawal of the Malian army.

Read more:

<http://www.wluml.org/news/mali-terrorist-ultimatum-army-seizure-women>

### **Jordan – belief that honor killings are “justified” still prevalent among Jordan’s next generation - research**

New research into attitudes of 15-year-olds in Middle Eastern nation shows that the practice of brutal vigilante justice, predominantly against young women, for perceived slights against family ‘honour’ still holds sway for significant proportions of the adolescent population.

A study into the attitude of teenagers in Jordan’s capital city of Amman reveals that almost half of boys and one in five girls believe that killing a daughter, sister or wife who has ‘dishonored’ or shamed the family is justified. A third of all teenagers involved in the research advocated honor killing.

Importantly, the study found that these disturbing attitudes were not connected to religious beliefs. The research is published in the journal *Aggressive Behavior*.

Researchers surveyed over 850 students, and found that attitudes in support of honor killing are far more likely in adolescent boys with low education backgrounds.

After analyzing the data, researchers concluded that religion and intensity of religious belief were not associated with support for honor killing. Instead, the main factors include patriarchal and traditional worldviews, emphasis placed on female ‘virtue’, and a more general belief that violence against others is morally justified.

Read more:

<http://www.cam.ac.uk/research/news/belief-that-honour-killings-are-justified-still-prevalent-among-jordans-next-generation-study-shows>

## Iraq Women's Shelter Responds to Growing Crisis

*"The situation is horrific for women in Mosul," says the president of the Baghdad-based Organization of Women's Freedom in Iraq. Women "are being kidnapped from their house by the ISIS warriors and forced into what they call into a 'jihad marriage.'"*



Iraqi woman watches from the gates of her home in Mosul in 2008

Amid worsening armed violence in Iraq, the Baghdad-based Organization of Women's Freedom in Iraq is working to help women who have been harmed and driven out of their homes. The group is reaching out to cities with the largest numbers of women displaced by the fighting.

"Kerbala is our target place to go to because this is a city where a big population of displaced have gone and where there are families without men, which are very vulnerable," Yanar Mohammed, the group's president, said in a phone interview on Wednesday.

Read more:

<http://womensenews.org/story/war/140618/iraq-womens-shelter-responds-growing-crisis#.U8EwJZSSySo>

## Grand mufti warns Saudis against temporary marriages



Grand Mufti Sheikh Abdul Aziz Al-Asheikh

Kingdom's Grand Mufti Sheikh Abdul Aziz Al-Asheikh warned the Saudis against temporary marriages being promoted by marriage brokers abroad, stressing that this marriage is not approved in Islam.

In his Friday sermon at Imam Turki bin Abdullah Mosque in Riyadh, he said that some Muslim youth are tricked into marriage with a legal contract and abuse its use. While traveling outside the Kingdom, they get married using these brokers and may even marry a woman who is already married. Some of them remain married for only a few days, he said, noting that this type of marriage is not recognized by our religion.

He said, "This is not a marriage, but is just a contract for spending pleasure times. A Saudi man may perhaps marry four women with one contract and leave them after the birth of their kids," he said.

"Those women may marry more than one man, and they transport diseases; such marriages are not accepted and are considered a means of exploitation of Muslim women," he said.

Read more:

<http://www.arabnews.com/news/590431>

## **Iraq: security forces abusing women in detention**

Iraqi authorities are detaining thousands of Iraqi women illegally and subjecting many to torture and ill-treatment, including the threat of sexual abuse. Iraq's weak judiciary, plagued by corruption, frequently bases convictions on coerced confessions, and trial proceedings fall far short of international standards. Many women were detained for months or even years without charge before seeing a judge.

The 105-page report, "No One Is Safe: Abuses of Women in Iraq's Criminal Justice System," documents abuses of women in detention based on interviews with women and girls, Sunni and Shia, in prison; their families and lawyers; and medical service providers in the prisons at a time of escalating violence involving security forces and armed groups. Human Rights Watch also reviewed court documents and extensive information received in meetings with Iraqi authorities including Justice, Interior, Defense, and Human Rights ministry officials, and two deputy prime ministers.

"Iraqi security forces and officials act as if brutally abusing women will make the country safer," said Joe Stork, deputy Middle East and North Africa director at Human Rights Watch. "In fact, these women and their relatives have told us that as long as security forces abuse people with impunity, we can only expect security conditions to worsen."

Read more:

<http://www.hrw.org/news/2014/02/06/iraq-security-forces-abusing-women-detention>

## **Women in Iraq Tell of Rape, Kidnappings**

Young men armed with assault rifles went door to door in Mosul, the second largest city in Iraq, taking "women who are not owned" for "Jihad Nikah" or sex Jihad. Between July 9th and July 12th, women's rights activists documented 13 cases of women who were kidnapped and raped by militants of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) or DA'ESH, the Arabic shorthand for the group's name. Of the 13 women, four of them committed suicide because they couldn't stand the shame. One woman's brother committed suicide because he could not bear the fact that he was unable to protect his sister.

This is just one account of the extreme violence in Iraq since the Sunni DA'ESH militants have seized control over large portions of the country over the past three weeks.

"Women are being taken in broad daylight," said Yanar Mohammad, Co-Founder and President of Global Fund for Women grantee partner Organization of Women's Freedom in Iraq. "Men have the weapons to do whatever they want and their [DA'ESH] way of dealing with things is to kill."

Being a woman in Iraq was difficult before the conflict and now military leaders are handing guns to young untrained, undereducated and unemployed Shia men. These men are promised big salaries if they leave their homes to fight, according to an anonymous Global Fund ally in Baghdad.

Read more:

[http://www.wunrn.com/news/2014/07\\_14/06\\_30/063014\\_iraq.htm](http://www.wunrn.com/news/2014/07_14/06_30/063014_iraq.htm)

## A father burned his 13-year-old daughter to death for walking home with a boy



A man in Tunisia has been accused of burning his 13-year-old daughter to death after she walked home from school with a boy in her class.

The girl, a middle school student named Aya, spent nine days in the hospital before succumbing to her fourth-degree burns on June 7th.

Her father has since been arrested.

Tunisia Live reports that her murder is believed to be an “honor crime” — a killing made when a relative is perceived to have brought shame to the family.

Though common in Pakistan and Syria, the website reports that honor killings are “almost unheard of” in modern-day Tunisia.

A social media movement in the country has launched in response to the killing, with activists calling for greater news coverage of the incident.

“I cannot believe that this case could fall into oblivion,” said one blogger in a Facebook post, translated from French into English by Tunisia Live. “What happened is an unacceptable crime. Further, the reactions of some people who justify this barbaric act reflect the degree of ignorance that prevails in the country.”

Read more:

<http://equalrights4womenworldwide.blogspot.it/2014/06/a-father-burned-his-13-year-old.html>

## GENDER & HUMAN RIGHTS

### Death row Sudanese Christian ‘apostate’ freed: lawyer



*A Sudanese Christian who gave birth in prison after being sentenced to hang for apostasy was freed Monday, her lawyer said.*

The case of Meriam Yahia Ibrahim Ishag, 26, sparked an outcry from Western governments and rights groups after a judge sentenced her to death on May 15.

“Meriam was released just about an hour ago,” Mohanad Mustafa told AFP Monday afternoon. “She’s now out of prison,” he said, but authorities will not issue the reasons for her release until Tuesday.

Born to a Muslim father and an Ethiopian Orthodox Christian mother, Ishag was convicted under Shariah law that has been in force in Sudan since 1983 and outlaws conversions on pain of death.

Twelve days after the verdict, Ishag gave birth to a daughter at the women’s prison in Khartoum’s twin city of Omdurman.

Read more:

<http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2014/Jun-24/261332-death-row-sudanese-christian-apostate-freed-lawyer.ashx#ixzz36F7B17iN>

## Sudan Undermines Free Expression by Closing Salmmah Women's Resource Center

*In response to the government of Sudan's forced closure of Salmmah Women's Resource Center, a registered non-profit organization focused on advancing gender equality, Freedom House issued the following statement:*

“The crackdown on Salmmah Women's Resource Center is the latest attack in the Sudanese government's long campaign to stifle the promotion of human rights and civil liberties in the country,” said Vukasin Petrovic, director of Africa programs at Freedom House. “The closure decree, signed by the Sudanese Ministry of Justice, did not follow the government's own legal procedures, and demonstrates once again the ruling party's desperation to stay in power by arbitrarily eliminating any organization it sees as threatening to its interests. In what is a clear violation of the freedoms of expression and association, Sudan has shut an organization dedicated to creating a just society through advancing women's rights and gender equality. Civil society organizations and the people they represent form the cornerstone of a just democracy, and must be allowed to operate openly and without fear of retribution.”

Read more:

[http://www.freedomhouse.org/article/sudan-undermines-free-expression-closing-salmmah-womens-resource-center#.U7L\\_NZSSySo](http://www.freedomhouse.org/article/sudan-undermines-free-expression-closing-salmmah-womens-resource-center#.U7L_NZSSySo)

## Positioning women's land rights in the context of right to land



Sex-disaggregated data on ownership of agricultural land is scarce. The Food and Agriculture Organization [FAO] provides data on share of women amongst agriculture holders, defined as those who exercise decisions and manage agricultural operations (FAO, 2011). This data, available for a limited number of countries, suggests that the share of women amongst agricultural holders ranges between 0.8% (Saudi Arabia) and 50.5% (Cape Verde) - most recent observation at the time of finalizing the report. A majority of countries for which data was available record a figure of less than 25% as share of women amongst agriculture holders (FAO, 2011). The data on legal ownership of land is likely to be even lower, as, with the migration of men, women manage the farm which their husbands own. UN Women has rightly placed women's ownership of land and resources as post 2015 development agenda (UN Women, 2013).

### **However can women's right to land be achieved without the right of rural landless to land, and preventing land grab?**

Rural landlessness was always a concern in several Asian countries, wherein land distribution has been skewed across caste, religion and ethnicity.

Read more:

<http://www.comminit.com/global/content/positioning-womens-land-rights-context-right-land>

## Iran MP's demand stronger veil enforcement

*Proponents fear Western cultural influence against the veil*



Two thirds of Iran's MPs have written to the president urging him to take measures to ensure women correctly observe Islamic dress, denouncing Western cultural influence against the veil.

The 195 members of the 290-strong parliament who signed the letter in part blamed satellite television for feeding the trend, ISNA news agency reported on Sunday.

A defining feature of Iran's interpretation of Islamic law since the 1979 revolution, hijab obliges women to cover their hair and much of their body in loose clothing when outside, regardless of their religion.

A dedicated "morality police" has long handed out fines, verbal notices or even arrested women it considers are not properly observing the rules, but lawmakers have in recent months criticized lax enforcement.

Read more:

<http://www.arabnews.com/news/587126>

## Iranian reporter sentences to two years in prison and 50 lashes

*Marzieh Rasouli is the latest journalist imprisoned by Islamic republic for 'spreading propaganda' against the government*



An Iranian journalist has been sentenced to 50 lashes and two years in prison over charges of spreading anti-government propaganda in the latest incident of Iran's crackdown on the independent media.

Marzieh Rasouli reported to Evin prison in Tehran on Tuesday, where she became the latest of dozens of journalists imprisoned by the Islamic republic, which has been branded as one of the world's worst jailer of journalists by the New York Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ).

Her arrest followed the detention in recent months of a number of other Iranian journalists, including Saba Azarpeik , who was being held incommunicado, and Reyhaneh Tabatabaei. As president Hassan Rouhani pursues a reconciliatory foreign policy, hardliners in the country's judiciary and the revolutionary guards appear to be tightening their grip on domestic social and cultural norms.

Read more:

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jul/08/iran-journalist-prison-lashes-propaganda-government>

## Civilians flee as militants take over second largest Iraqi city – women & children



Iraq's prime minister has asked parliament to declare a state of emergency after Islamist militants effectively took control of Mosul and much of its province of Nineveh. Nouri Maliki said "vital areas" of the city had been seized; some 150,000 people are believed to have fled. Troops fled Mosul as hundreds of jihadists from the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIS) overran it. The US has said ISIS threatens not just Iraq, but the entire region. State department spokeswoman Jen Psaki said the situation in Mosul, Iraq's second city, was "extremely serious" and that the US supported "a strong, coordinated response to push back against this aggression". Security sources also told the BBC on Tuesday that fierce fighting had erupted between Iraqi forces and ISIS fighters in a town called Rashad near Kirkuk, south-east of Mosul.....ISIS has been informally controlling much of Nineveh province for months and the past week has attacked cities and towns in western and northern Iraq, killing scores of people. After five days of fighting, they took control of key installations in Mosul, which has a population of about 1.8 million. On Tuesday, residents said jihadist flags were flying from buildings and that the militants had announced over loudspeakers they had "come to liberate Mosul".

Read more:

[http://www.wunrn.com/news/2014/06\\_02/06\\_09/060914\\_iraq.htm](http://www.wunrn.com/news/2014/06_02/06_09/060914_iraq.htm)

## Child marriage remains common, despite legal ban



After Egypt increased the legal age for marriage to 18 years in 2008, policy makers expected to see a decline in the number of early marriages. But, according to new research presented at a seminar at The American University of Cairo this week, the country must overcome significant economic, social, and cultural barriers before child marriage becomes a thing of the past.

AUC's Social Research Center organised the two-day seminar in an attempt to "bridge the gap between the different governmental and private institutions concerned with early marriage and reproductive health in Egypt," said Zeinab Khadr, a professor at the faculty of economics and political science at AUC, who helped plan the event. Researchers from AUC, Al-Azhar, Cairo, Sohag and Assuit Universities presented at the conference. Other participants included the Egyptian Society for Population Studies and Reproductive Health, and Save the Children, among others.

Read more:

[http://www.dailynewsegypt.com/2014/06/22/child-marriage-remains-common-despite-legal-ban/?utm\\_source=CM+in+the+News+-+Update+to+members&utm\\_campaign=225698ca67-CM+in+the+News+-+26+June+2014&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_c21d02558c-225698ca67-382382477](http://www.dailynewsegypt.com/2014/06/22/child-marriage-remains-common-despite-legal-ban/?utm_source=CM+in+the+News+-+Update+to+members&utm_campaign=225698ca67-CM+in+the+News+-+26+June+2014&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_c21d02558c-225698ca67-382382477)

### Sexuality and Social Justice: A Toolkit



Welcome to the Sexuality and Social Justice Toolkit. This toolkit documents the learning from the Sexuality, Poverty and Law Programme at the Institute for Development Studies as it unfolds. In this site you will find summaries of current debates, legal terms explained, options for mobilizing, and practical tools to use with your members. Throughout the site you will also find links to up-to-date case studies, examples and 'inside stories' from our members and partner organizations alongside links to supporting reading, practical guides, articles, blog posts, video clips, images and more, from a range of sources.

This is an interactive site and will continue to be updated. If you would like to comment on any aspect of the toolkit, or suggest further resources or information for us to include, please contact us on [spltoolkit@ids.ac.uk](mailto:spltoolkit@ids.ac.uk)

Read more:

<http://www.spl.ids.ac.uk/sexuality-and-social-justice-toolkit>

### Reconciling work and private life



*A balanced work and private life is important for a healthy workplace.*

Research shows that employees with higher levels of work-family conflict suffer up to 12 times more often from burnout and can experience up to three times more depression or other psychological problems as workers with a better work-life balance.

To create a more family-friendly work environment has been for a long time on the European policy agenda. Article 33 the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union refers to the concept of work-life balance.

Directives, Recommendations and other related instruments concerning gender equality, working time arrangements and maternity/paternity leave have been adopted. Some of the Europe 2020 Flagship Initiatives also impact on work and family life.

In this Key source you will find selected information sources giving background information to this complex issue. Overviews, analytical papers and articles, comparative country information, stakeholders' views, related legislative acts and statistical sources guide you through EU and national measures facilitating the reconciliation of private and professional life.

Read more:

<http://ethinktank.eu/2014/04/09/reconciling-work-and-private-life/>

## Women and men working as partners for peace in the Middle East and North Africa

*From 27-29 May, 20 representatives of civil society organizations from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, working on Women, Peace & Security, came together for the MENA Consultation, organized by the Women Peacemakers Program (WPP) and ABAAD-Resource Center for Gender Equality. After 2,5 days of informed discussion, creative thinking and joint strategizing on advancing the Women, Peace & Security agenda (WPS), the participants developed the following statement to inform future initiatives on the subject in the MENA region.*

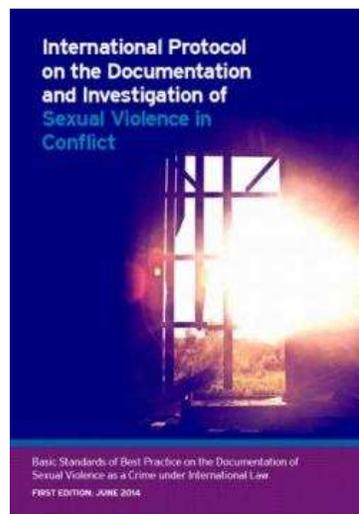
The Middle East and North Africa region (MENA) has a long history of courageous women and men dedicated to establishing peace and just societies in the region. For them, but also for the men and women working to establishing peace today, sharing experiences, creative cooperation and joint strategizing are cornerstones for ending violence and creating peace.

Violence is a cornerstone of the patriarchal system. Among other, forms of discrimination, injustice, and power control degrade the human rights of peoples within it, encourages gender inequalities, legitimizes armed conflict and occupation and halts development in our societies. The use of active nonviolence is therefore essential to demonstrating not only that change can occur without violence, but also that these changes can lead the MENA region successfully away from patriarchy. Alternative systems can exist in the region, and in the world, that respects the rights of all and where development is sustainable.

Read more:

[http://www.wunrn.com/news/2014/06\\_02/06\\_16/061614\\_women2.htm](http://www.wunrn.com/news/2014/06_02/06_16/061614_women2.htm)

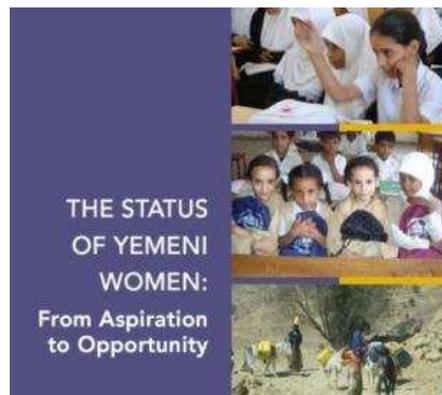
## International protocol on the documentation and investigation of sexual violence in conflict



For a direct link to report:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/319054/PSVI\\_protocol\\_web.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/319054/PSVI_protocol_web.pdf)

## The status of women in Yemen: from aspiration to opportunity – World Bank Report



For a direct link to report:

[http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2014/05/01/000333037\\_20140501101535/Rendered/PDF/878200ESW0Whit0WB0Yemen040210140web.pdf](http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2014/05/01/000333037_20140501101535/Rendered/PDF/878200ESW0Whit0WB0Yemen040210140web.pdf)

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