Measuring and intervening to change gender social norms in MNA

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Social norms in the MNA

• The MNA region lags behind all other regions on female labor force participation (FLFP).

• Fewer than 1 in 4 women work in Lebanon and less than 15% of women are economically active in Jordan and Iraq (Lugo, Muller, & Wai-Poi, 2020).

• Jordan has the lowest female labor force participation (FLFP) in the world for a country not at war (Gauri, Rahman, & Sen, 2019).

• Adherence to unequal norms can generate unequal outcomes.
It is important to determine whether a practice is held in place by norms because...

Social norms can act as a **brake** on social change because they may inhibit changes in behavior even when an individual changes their personal attitudes.

Social norms might act as **accelerators**, facilitating a change in the behavior of those individuals whose personal attitudes have not yet changed.

Cislaghi & Heise, 2016
## Measuring social norms in the MNA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Survey Focus</th>
<th>Social Norms Across Dimensions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tunisia, Morocco, Jordan (2020)</td>
<td>Men’s Household Behaviors and COVID consequences</td>
<td>1. Social norms around men’s household behaviors &lt;br&gt;2. Time allocation &lt;br&gt;3. Demographics (Marital status, working status/ spouse, support of spouse working) &lt;br&gt;4. COVID-related consequences (time on activities, employment, community)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq (2021)</td>
<td>Women’s labor force participation</td>
<td>(Forthcoming)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Why Do Women Not Work?

Is it okay for a woman to work? (Jordan)

- PB: Personal Beliefs, SE: Social Empirical Expectations, SN: Social Normative Expectations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Work</th>
<th>Work outside</th>
<th>Work if married</th>
<th>Leave child w/ relative</th>
<th>Work w/ men</th>
<th>Return after SPM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SN</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Why Do Women Not Work?

- Other: 4%
- Due to health reasons: 6%
- Cannot find jobs/no good opportunities: 7%
- Prefer to take care of child(ren): 20%
- Salary is too low: 2%
- Do not want to work at mixed gender jobs: 1%
- Worried about exploitation at work: 0%
- Discouraged from working by family: 2%
- Discouraged from working by friends: 19%
- Still studying: 14%

Female: Orange, Male: Blue

* 0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50%
Household labor behaviors do not appear to be driven by social norms - they have become automatic.
Men in Jordan hold somewhat positive associations with participating in household chores.

Who does what in the household?

Activities that have increased for women due to COVID-19:

Activities that have increased for men due to COVID-19:
Leveraging evidence for communication campaigns

• Working with the Mashreq Gender Facility (MGF), informing the design of communication campaigns and outreach activities across the three countries of Jordan, Iraq, and Lebanon.

• How can we promote a more permanent behavioral change?

• Shocks like COVID can present an opportunity to change norms or to instill new ones.

• A systematic mapping of behavioral campaigns implemented shows little impact evaluation to build on campaign effects of what works and what does not.
Key takeaways

What we would have normally done:

• Ask men to do more housework
• Convince about the importance of women working
• Inform public of existing negative behaviors
• Measure reach

Given the evidence what we will be doing:

• Build a value that is sustainable
• Give men an active role they respond to
• Inform public of existing positive behaviors
• Measure impact