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EuroMed Feminist Initiative
المبادرة النسوية الأورومتوسطية
Initiative Féministe EuroMed

REGIONAL CAMPAIGN ZERO TOLERANCE FOR VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

BRIEF #1

LAUNCHING CONFERENCE

2-3 May 2019 Amman, Jordan



On January 1st 2019 EuroMed Feminist Initiative with consortium of women's rights organizations from Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia started implementing a regional project "Combating Violence against Women in the Southern Mediterranean Region" funded by the EU. The overall objective is to contribute to the elimination of all forms of VAWG by promoting a social environment that does not tolerate VAWG, and where decision makers address it as a political priority.

The Regional Campaign on Zero Tolerance for Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) follows up and builds on the recommendations from the Gender Regional Platform (2015-2017), the Civil Society Conference Declaration, (21-22 November 2017 Cairo) and the Outcomes of National Dialogues (2018). It follows up on the 4th UfM Ministerial Declaration (November 2017, Cairo) in the field of combating all forms of Violence Against Women and Girls.

The Campaign was launched on 2-3 May 2019 in Amman during a conference that gathered 140 participants from 14 countries in the Euro-Med region. They included civil society organizations, ministries, political parties and members of parliaments, gender and legal experts, researchers and media. During the two-day conference participants shared experience and expertise on violence against women and girls, status of services for victims, legal frameworks, public awareness on VAWG, education and media. They discussed shared regional challenges, mainly the legal discrimination against women and the inadequacy of protection mechanisms for women and girls victims of violence, as well as a broad social tolerance towards VAWG that has led to the impunity for perpetrators and victim-blaming. Participants also raised priorities specific to the different national contexts and discussed strategies to encourage the societies to stand up against VAWG, demand the criminalization of all forms of VAWG, and implement such legislation when available. A strong focus was put on primary and secondary education.

Conclusions for actions of common priority

- Encourage research and data collection on VAWG due to a major lack of statistics in all countries.
- Raise public awareness on legal discrimination against women and the need to change discriminative laws.
- Hold the perpetrators accountable, both in times of peace and during military conflicts.
- Mobilize public support to combat gender stereotypes and ensure VAWG is addressed by society and decision makers as a social and political issue.
- Enhance coordination and build capacity to improve service provision to victims and survivors of VAWG.
- Take broad measures to integrate and rehabilitate victims of military conflict.
- Spread knowledge on the situation on the ground to all social and political circles.
- Raise public awareness that shame and stigma should be on perpetrator, not on the victim.

MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS IN FOUR AREAS TO GUIDE THE REGIONAL CAMPAIGN

Legislation and International Commitments	Coordination and Capacity-Building	Combating VAWG through Education	Awareness-Raising and Media
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Harmonize national legislation with international women's rights instruments and regional commitments; particular measures dedicated to vulnerable population: (CEDAW, BpA, UNSCR 1325; UfM Ministerial Declaration 2017; Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; Women, Peace and Security Agenda; Convention of Child Rights.) ▶ Lift reservations to CEDAW. Amend or abrogate laws that discriminate against women (Penal Code, Personal Status Laws, Labor Law, Nationality Law) ▶ Amend laws on forced & early marriage, human trafficking. ▶ Adopt and implement comprehensive legislation on VAWG, including reforms to protect victims during and after judicial proceedings. ▶ Address the gap between legislation and implementation ▶ Reinforce legislation to address impunity of perpetrators – both civilians or members of the military. ▶ Develop alternative civil legislation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Ensure effective coordination between CSOs, service providers and first respondents, policy makers, local communities, other partners and media to promote gender equality, address gender stereotypes and prevent VAWG. ▶ Establish State run centers for VAWG victims. ▶ Establish national bodies to monitor commitments of States on VAWG. ▶ Develop handbooks on VAWG and provide adequate training for first respondents (police officers, judiciaries, medical staff). ▶ Allocate funds to address VAWG, and service provision to victims. ▶ Mainstream gender equality in all strategies and national policies. ▶ Develop data collection system to support service providers and improve their support. ▶ Effectively examine social and financial cost of VAWG in the region. ▶ Provide financial support for research on VAWG, and capacity building on data collection in this field. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Combat VAWG in primary and secondary education through promoting the values of citizenship, human rights, and gender equality ▶ Highlight the link between combatting VAWG and gender inequality ▶ Train teachers, managers and child development advisers on Zero Tolerance for VAWG and discuss VAWG with children. ▶ Raise awareness on the principle of equal opportunities between women and men in educational and public spheres. ▶ Provide alternative vocational opportunities for girls who discontinue their education particularly in remote areas and areas of conflict. ▶ Regularly share best practices in combatting VAWG through education curricula and tools in the region. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Work towards changing negative attitudes, stereotypes, norms and behaviors to combat VAWG ▶ Highlight that gender equality, amending laws that discriminate against women and criminalizing violence benefit not only women, but the society as a whole. ▶ Remain committed to the values of gender equality & nonviolence in advocacy. ▶ Encourage and support Media to assume responsibility as key partners in the Campaign, raise awareness and counter the current normalization of VAWG and even its promotion in mainstream media outlets. ▶ Address women and girls not only as target group but also as partners in the campaign, providing them a platform to share their stories and break the barrier of silence to address the social tolerance for VAWG .



Launching Conference of Regional Campaign on Zero Tolerance for VAWG, 3 May 2019, Amman.

Click [here](#) to read the press release, [here](#) to view the Photo Album and [here](#) to watch the video of the conference.

FOLLOW-UP REGIONAL EXPERTS ROUNDTABLES

Regional Experts Roundtable

Combating Discrimination and Violence Against Women in Legislation

17 June 2019, Beirut



Click [here](#) to read the Brief and [here](#) to view the Photo Album.

The Roundtable gathered legal and gender experts and researchers from Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Syria, Tunisia, France and Sweden, as well as representatives from the Office of the Minister of State for Economic Empowerment of Women and Youth (EEWAY) and the EU Delegation to Lebanon. The experts identified three areas for common work: annulling discrimination in family laws, improving legislation on VAWG, and annulling discrimination affecting women's economic participation and independence, notably inequality in inheritance and sexual harassment at work. It was also agreed that a consolidated paper containing an analysis of discriminatory laws and suggested activities is to be produced in participatory approach by experts.

Regional Experts Roundtable

Promoting Gender Equality through Education

18 June 2019, Beirut



Click [here](#) to read the Brief and [here](#) to view the Photo Album.

The Roundtable gathered gender experts and experts in the field of education from Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Syria, Tunisia and France as well as representatives from the Ministries of Education from Jordan and Lebanon. The experts emphasized the need to revise the educational curricula and textbooks with the perspective of challenging cultural and social norms and eliminating gender stereotypes. Participants examined different gender sensitive teaching methods and agreed to develop regional guidelines and training manual to mainstream gender equality in the school curricula based on existing achievements and lessons learned.