

OECD-MENA Women's Business Forum: A Platform for Empowering Women in Business



Women's Business Forum

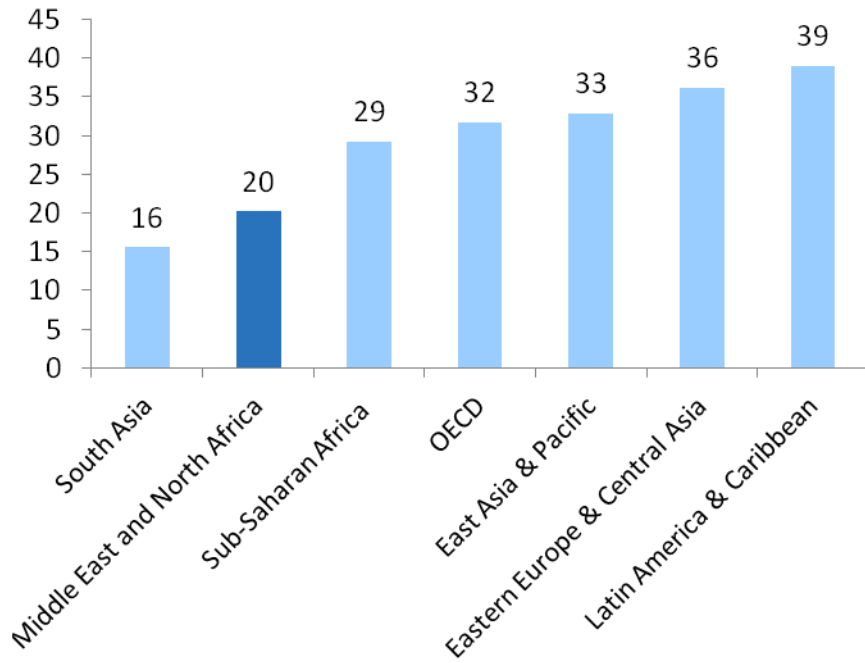
Briefing at OECD Washington Center
28 April 2010, Paris, France

- Over **90%** female-to-male enrolment rate in almost all MENA countries*
- Over **100%** female-to-male enrolment rate in tertiary education in **Kuwait, Tunisia, UAE, Bahrain & Qatar**
- In some countries, such as **Morocco and Tunisia**, a higher proportion of women than men is participating in mathematics or engineering programmes

**Primary, secondary, and tertiary schools*

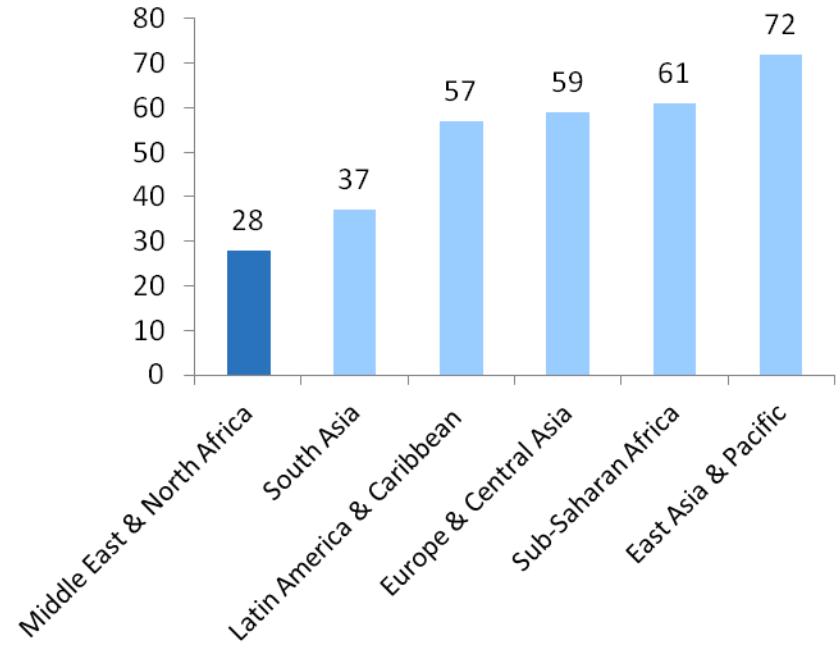
Source: OECD (2009) Draft Progress Report on Women's Entrepreneurship and Employment in the MENA Region

Percentage of Firms With Female Participation in Ownership



Source: World Bank (2005-2009) Enterprise Surveys

Female Labour Force Participation Rate

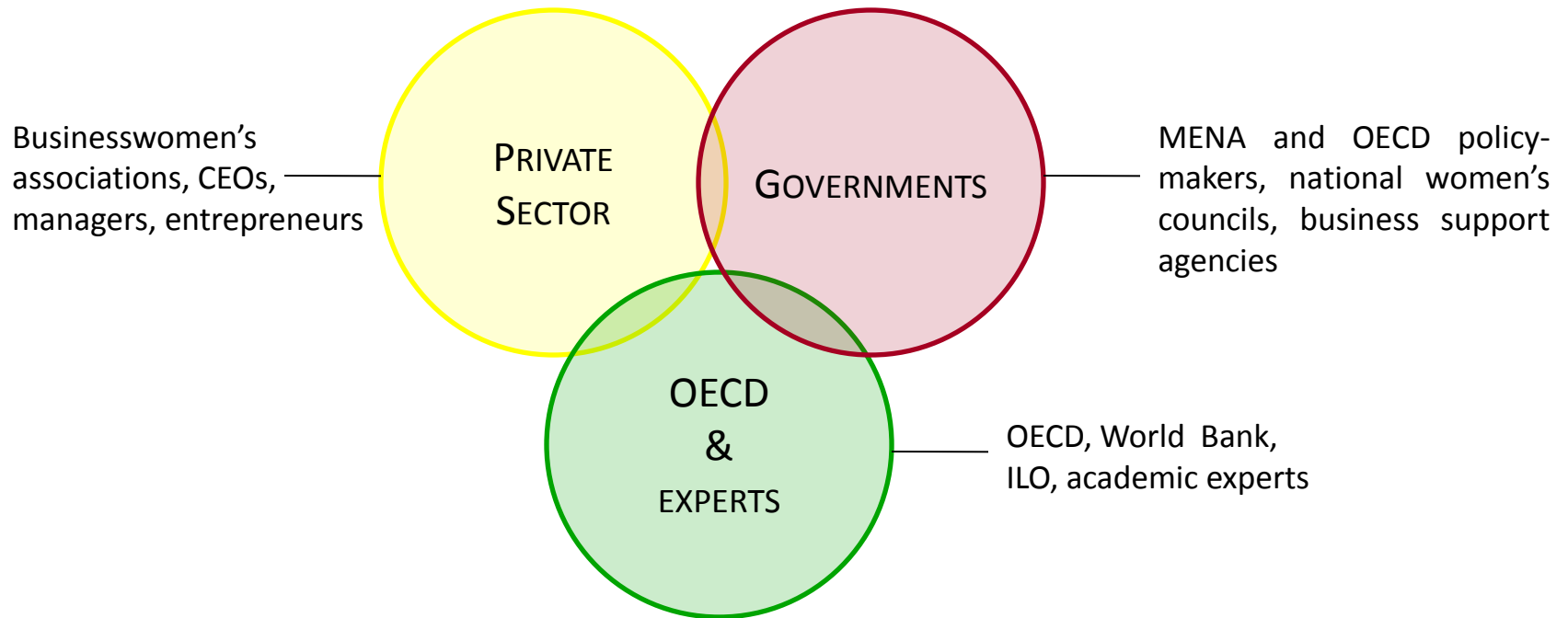


Source: World Bank (2007) Genderstats

Ministers committed to support women's economic participation at the MENA-OECD Ministerial Conferences.

1. In 2007, they agreed that a **“targeted and integrated support approach is required to accelerate the rate at which women in the MENA region are starting new businesses”** (2007 Ministerial Declaration on Fostering Women's Entrepreneurship in the MENA Region).
2. In 2009 they:
 - endorsed **the Action Plan on Fostering Women's Entrepreneurship and Employment in the MENA Region** and
 - Supported the Action Plan's implementation by the **OECD-MENA Women's Business Forum (WBF)** .

To **foster the expansion of women-led businesses and women's employment** in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), the OECD-MENA WBF leverages the collective expertise of the private sector, governments, the OECD and experts.



The Action Plan – developed in collaboration with businesswomen from the MENA and OECD regions – identifies **four priority areas of action for the WBF:**

1. Encourage women's entrepreneurship and employment by creating a business enabling environment.
2. Facilitate business registration and growth through enhanced access to finance, in particular for women-owned businesses.
3. Improve economic policy through better gender-disaggregated statistics and indicators.
4. Facilitate participation in the OECD-MENA Women's Business Forum and ensure increased contacts between business networks.

Action Plan implementation

Making it Happen

- Interactive web platform
- Regional and sub-regional workshops
- Mainstreaming at MENA-OECD meetings

Training and Coaching

- Capacity-building training and coaching for businesswomen's associations, entrepreneurs, business support agencies, and other relevant institutions using OECD and international expertise

Assessments & Recommendations


- Inventory and gap assessment of countries' policies and programmes
- Recommendations to support women in business

- **Permanent interactive web platform**
 - Information collection and dissemination
 - Online training materials
 - Prepare business plan competition (MENA 100)
 - Networking and business coaching
 - Interactive Q & A
 - Business coaching between aspiring women entrepreneurs and experienced managers
- **Training workshops** and materials to build capacity for supporting the expansion of women-led businesses
- **Peer-review meetings** to assess progress and identify gaps
- **Mainstreaming** in MENA-OECD Working Group & Steering Group meetings


OECD-MENA Women's Business Forum Platform

Aperçu (personnaliser)
 Tout le contenu (20)
 Discussions (5)
 Documents (15)
Définir comme onglet par défaut

Video Interviews With Participants of the 2009 Women Business Leaders Summit



Neeven El Tahri, Managing Director of ABN AMRO DELTA and CEO of DELTA EAB Brokerage



Ambassador Melanne Vermeer, Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues, United States

[\(Click here for a transcript of Ambassador Vermeer's speech\)](#)

About the OECD-MENA Women's Business Forum

The WBF is a unique network which brings together over 120 women entrepreneurs, experts, representatives of businesswomen's associations, civil society, and governments from both Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and OECD countries. By leveraging the collective expertise of its members, the WBF develops and communicates policy recommendations to MENA governments and the private sector to drive reform in support of women's entrepreneurship and employment in the region.

Key Documents

Action Plan and Ministerial Declaration on Fostering Women's Entrepreneurship and Employment in the MENA Region ([Arabic](#), [English](#), [French](#))

Business Coaching Q&A

How can my businesswomen's association be most effective in advocating for policy reform? par [Korin KANE](#)

27 avr. 2010 10:58


I'd like to start my own business in Tunisia. Is there a business support agency that I can turn to? par [Korin KANE](#)

27 avr. 2010 10:51

How can we measure progress in improving access to finance for women entrepreneurs in the MENA region? par [Korin KANE](#)

10 févr. 2010 18:48

Business incubators: how can they respond to the needs of women entrepreneurs? par [Korin KANE](#)



**MENA-OECD
INVESTMENT
PROGRAMME** 9

The interactive web platform facilitates **networking and business coaching** between MENA and OECD entrepreneurs

Business Coaching Q&A

- 
 How can my businesswomen's association be most effective in advocating for policy reform?
 13 minutes ago
- 
 I'd like to start my own business in Tunisia. Is there a business support agency that I can turn to?
 20 minutes ago
- 
 How can we measure progress in improving access to finance for women entrepreneurs in the MENA region?
 2 months ago
- 
 Business incubators: how can they respond to the needs of women entrepreneurs?
 2 months ago

Training workshops link up women business leaders from MENA and OECD countries to **share experiences** and **build mutual capacity**

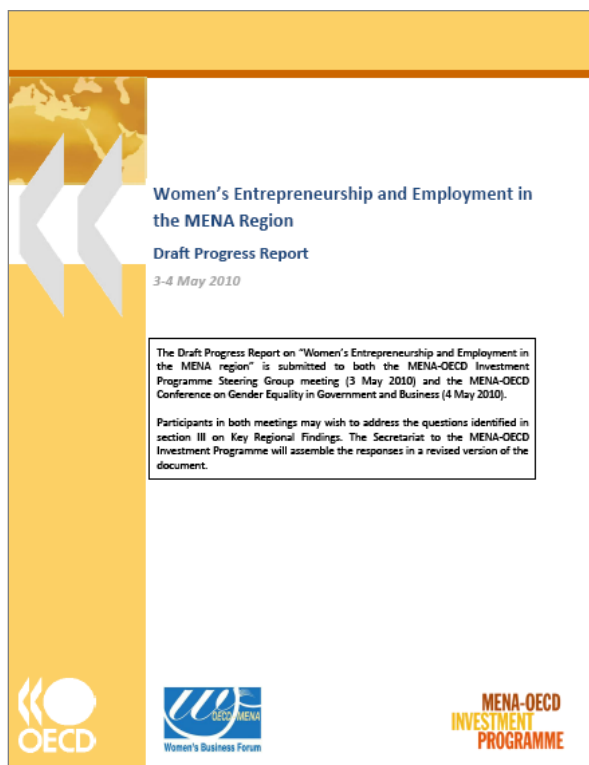


A series of training workshops for women in business will:

- ✓ **Address women entrepreneurs' specific** needs
- ✓ **Leverage existing expertise** of the OECD, the World Bank and other partners
- ✓ **Measure impact** through adapted indicators

EXAMPLES OF TRAINING	IMPACT MEASUREMENT	POTENTIAL TRAINING PARTNERS
Writing a business plan: training for women entrepreneurs	Track women's participation in the annual MENA 100 Business Plan Competition	International Finance Corporation (IFC), MENA Centre for Investment
Financing for growth: how to pitch your business idea	Workshop participation and evaluation	Union of Arab Banks, World Bank
Adapting support services to women's needs: training for staff in business incubators, SME support agencies, and other relevant institutions	Support agencies in collecting gender-disaggregated data on the clients they serve	International Labour Organization (ILO), Fédération Pionnières, Association des Femmes Chefs d'Entreprises du Maroc (AFEM)
Developing competencies in advocacy: training for businesswomen's associations on lobbying for policy reform	Assess the impact of advocacy campaigns launched at the country level	Council of Arab Businesswomen, MENA Businesswomen's Network

2009 Progress Report on Women's Entrepreneurship and Employment in the MENA Region



Some progress in selected MENA countries

- Inclusion of women as a target group in some national development strategies & creation of national councils for women to ensure institutional co-ordination and follow-through
- Gender-neutral business laws & stronger property rights
- Educational access & increased business-related training for women
- Greater number of businesswomen's associations

Remaining challenges

- Gender-specific personal status laws, labour laws which reflect cultural barriers limiting women's economic involvement
- Insufficient access to business support services, information, networks & financing
- Input of businesswomen's associations and national councils for women insufficiently mainstreamed in the policy-making process
- Need for more targeted training and coaching for women entrepreneurs on business creation and growth, lobbying for policy reform, marketing products to international clients, etc.

	2009 Progress Report	Proposed expansion of assessment
Geographical scope	10 countries: Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Palestinian National Authority, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates	All 18 MENA countries, including Algeria, Bahrain, Djibouti, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Syria, Yemen
Policy scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Identifies key gender-related barriers to women’s entrepreneurship and employment •Provides initial scoping of targeted policies and programmes in some MENA countries •Identifies need to produce a more systematic and operative assessment of policy & programme support for businesswomen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Country-level inventory providing: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. policies to support the expansion of women-led businesses and women’s employment ii. Government agencies providing business support services to women iii. Business association support services to women iv. Available gender-disaggregated data

Inventory

Targeted policies & business support services for women in 18 MENA countries

Gap Assessment

Submit inventory to peer review workshops on sub-regional level & develop policy recommendations

MAY

JUNE

JULY

AUG

SEPT

OCT

NOV

Interactive web platform

To provide online training material & facilitate networking & business coaching between MENA and OECD women

Training Workshops

Capacity-building training workshops for women entrepreneurs, businesswomen's associations, & other relevant institutions