No One Left Behind – Evaluating the SDGs with a Gender and Equity Lens: Side Event - 12 May 2016

Background

The Middle East and North Africa Evaluators Network (EvalMENA) held its 5th General Assembly in Tunis-Tunisia 12-14 May 2016 to develop the EvalMENA Agenda 2016-20, discussing evaluation of the SDGs, the role of Parliamentarians in evaluation and mainstreaming gender equality and equity in evaluation. Within the framework of the EvalMENA general assembly meeting and the global discussion on evaluating the SDGs with an equity-focused and gender responsive lens, UN Women Regional Office for Arab States (ROAS), in partnership with EvalMENA and national evaluation associations in the region, the UN Women Independent Evaluation Office, EvalPartners, and EvalGender+, organized a one day meeting (12 May 2016) of parliamentarians, ministries responsible for monitoring and evaluating the SDGs, national women’s machineries, and evaluators from across the region to identify strategies for building an enabling environment to integrate gender equality and equity in the evaluation of the SDGs and discuss national level actions. This meeting built on:

- A series of consultations in the Arab States region supported by the EU-UN Women Spring Forward for Women programme funded by the EU, the UN Women IEO, and EvalMENA, which brought together Parliamentarians and civil society to exchange on how to move forward on the institutionalization of gender-responsive evaluation in the different countries.
- A high level event held in New York March 2016 to launch a multi-stakeholder dialogue around developing an evaluation framework that will support national evaluation capacity processes.

Meeting

The side event on Evaluating the SDGs with a gender and equity lens was held in the Tunisian Parliament, and preceded by the launch of the Forum for Tunisian Parliamentarians for Evaluation, with the vice-speaker of the Parliament providing opening remarks. The session at the Tunisian Parliament was historic, being only the second Parliament globally to host an event.
on evaluation. The side event brought together 16 Parliamentarians, 13 government representatives, and eight representatives of national evaluation associations from seven different countries.\(^1\) Each stakeholder group discussed their specific role in ensuring that the SDGs were evaluated with a gender and equity lens. Participants then came together to share their recommendations and discuss how they can work together. Following the joint discussion each country developed national action points to move the evaluation agenda forward.

**Key results:**\(^2\)

The side event demonstrated the catalytic role regional and global convenings can have for the exchange of experiences and support to Parliamentarians in advocating for the institutionalisation of evaluation at the national level. As the Tunisian Parliamentarian, Hon. Olfa Soukri, noted when she launched the Forum for Tunisian Parliamentarians for Evaluation, ‘it all started in Egypt’ with the regional Parliamentarian meeting on Linking Evaluation to Policy Making in October 2015.

At regional level:

- The core group of parliamentarians from the Arab States Region promoting national evaluation capacity development had been expanded to include representatives of ministries responsible for monitoring and evaluating the SDGs, national women’s machineries and national evaluation societies from seven countries.

- Plans were made to establish a committee with at least one representative from each country to advance the regional agenda on evaluating the SDGs with a gender and equity lens.

At national level:

- Participants jointly developed recommendations and national level actions for future work.

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1 Parliamentarians and government representatives participated from Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia.

2 A meeting report with more information will be produced in the coming weeks.