CHAPTER V

GENDER EQUALITY
Chapter V:
Gender equality

This chapter focuses on Goal 3, “Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women”, of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in ESCWA member countries. Data were primarily drawn from the United Nations Statistics Division and the Millennium Development Goals database (accessed in November 2011), and complemented by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics database 2011 for table V-1.

Table V-1 is on gender parity in education. The Gender Parity Index (GPI) in primary, secondary and tertiary education is the ratio of the number of female students to the number of male students enrolled at the different levels of education. GPI reflects female level of access to education compared to male access. It is calculated by dividing the net enrolment ratio for females by the net enrolment ratio for males for the primary and secondary education, and by dividing the gross enrolment ratio for females by the gross enrolment ratio for males for the tertiary education. A GPI of less than 1 indicates that there are fewer females than males. The table presents estimates of the girls to boys ratio in each level of education since 1999. Most countries have reached or exceeded parity with the exception of Iraq, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen. Gender inequities in education continue to exist in several Arab societies due to a variety of reasons. In a number of Gulf countries, fewer boys than girls are enrolled in the tertiary level of education.

Table V-2 is on women in wage employment. The share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector is expressed as a percentage of total wage employment in that sector. The indicator “share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector” measures the degree to which the labour market is open to women in the industry and services sectors, which not only affects equal employment opportunities for women but also economic efficiency through labour market flexibility, therefore the ability of the economy to adapt to change. There has been a slow increase in the share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector in several Arab countries due to a variety of reasons. In a number of Gulf countries, fewer boys than girls are enrolled in the tertiary level of education.
been a decrease in the share of women in wage employment since 2008 in most countries. This indicates that working women have become less integrated into the monetary economy through participation in the formal and informal sectors. The share of women in wage employment is highest in Oman (24.5 per cent in 2000 and 21.9 per cent in 2008), and lowest in Yemen (7 per cent in 2000 and 6.2 per cent in 2007). Labour market remains strongly gender segregated in many countries due to short supply of productive work, which disproportionately affects women employment. Women are much more likely than men to work as contributing family workers without pay, and in the informal sector.

Table V-3 deals with women in decision-making. It presents data on the proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments, expressed as a percentage of all occupied seats. Data from 2000 to 2011 show significant variations between member countries in the proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments. In 2011, such proportion ranged from a low of 2.5 per cent in Bahrain to a high of 25.6 per cent in the Sudan. The Sudan is 4.4 percentage points from the target goal of 30 per cent, followed by Iraq at 4.8 percentage points. Nevertheless, the process in advancing and enforcing the political rights of women is making slow progress in the region. Women are still underrepresented in national parliaments in most countries. Their proportion in national parliaments has declined in two countries, namely Lebanon since 2009 and Yemen since 2003.

عام 2008 في معظم البلدان. هذا يدل على أن المرأة العاملة أصبحت أقل اندماجاً في الاقتصاد التقديمي من خلال مشاركتها في القطاعين الرسمي وغير الرسمي. وسجلت التحويل أعلى حصة للمرأة في العمل المدفوع الأجر في 24.5% في المانشتين عام 2000 و21.9% في المانشتين في عام 2008، وانها في اليمن في عام 2000 و6.2% في المانشتين عام 2007. ولا يزال سوق العمل شبه خال من النساء في عدد كبير من البلدان نظرًا إلى عدم توفر فرص كافية من العمل المنته، الأمر الذي يؤثر إلى حد بعيد على حملة المرأة. والإدارة أكثر تقبلًا من الرجال للعمل بدون أجر داخل الأسرة، وكذلك للعمل في القطاع غير الرسمي.