# Terms of Reference

# Research on knowledge, perceptions, attitudes and practices of institutional actors on men’s caregiving and paternity leave in the MENA region

STATEMENT OF NEED: UN Women is seeking the services of a consultancy firm to conduct a research on knowledge, perceptions, attitudes and practices of state institutional actors (regional intergovernmental institutions, key line ministries, parliamentarians) and non-state institutional actors (private sector, CSOs and labour unions) on men’s unpaid caregiving -with a focus on active fatherhood- and paternity and parental leave in the MENA region under UN Women's regional programme ‘Men and Women for Gender equality’ - Phase II (2019-2022). The research should preferably start in July 2021 and be completed by December 2021.

* **Background information on the project:**

In 2015, UN Women Regional Office for the Arab States initiated the programme “Men and Women for Gender equality” -funded by Sweden- to understand how best to tackle the root causes of gender inequality and discrimination and address them through a bottom-up approach. The programme, focused on engaging men and boys to achieve gender equality in partnership with women and girls, while also promoting the rights of women in the family by providing alternative interpretations of religious texts. Phase I demonstrated the need of: continuation of effective development approaches to address the root causes of gender equality, the creation of new and innovative approaches, and continued support for social movements that tackle inequalities and unfavourable social and gender norms. The countries of programme implementation were Egypt, Palestine, Lebanon, and Morocco, where the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES) studies were conducted.

It is against the above background that UN Women started the second 3-year phase of the [“Men and Women for Gender Equality” programme (MWGE Phase II)](https://arabstates.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/men-and-women-for-gender-equality) in March 2019, with the overall goal of catalysing social norm change to enable men and women to exercise their rights and opportunities equally in six countries: the four countries of Phase I and two new additions, Jordan and Tunisia, that were added to MWGE Phase II due to strong interest from national counterparts in conducting the IMAGES researches in order to contribute to data availability on the topic of masculinities and gender norms in both countries.

Phase II aims to create favourable realities where men and women in the Arab societies will be able to exercise their rights and opportunities equally. The MWGE is achieving that through promoting gender equality and women’s rights in the Arab States region with a distinct focus on the engagement of men and boys in Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Tunisia, and Jordan.

Some of its achievements to date include the completion and dissemination of the [International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES) study](https://imagesmena.org/en/) in four countries (Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco and Palestine) and the implementation of 65 national and community-based projects focused on promoting gender equality through the engagement of men and boys. IMAGES was a ground-breaking research that found that approximately 85 per cent of men whose spouses are working reported participating in domestic work. However, women who work full time get no relief from these duties; 100 per cent of these women reported doing this domestic work in addition to their paid jobs. Sadly, as was shown in the qualitative research, a minority of men acknowledge the importance of an equal division of domestic work.

Moreover, almost two-thirds of men reported that they spend too little time with their children. And while almost two-thirds of women saw their husbands’ role in childrearing as primarily that of a financial provider, only 40 per cent of men agreed with this assessment. This suggests that men desire involvement beyond breadwinning despite the weak paternity leave provisions existing across the MENA region.

In the Arab States, only four countries (Jordan, Tunisia, Morocco, and Saudi Arabia) provide paternity leave. However, this leave is provided for only a few days (2 or 3 paid days), which is too short to allow fathers to establish a caregiving role for a newborn child. Morocco has the longest allowed leave (15 days), but the paid portion is only three days, which may prevent fathers from taking the full leave possible due to financial reasons. No countries in the region have a parental leave law (source: [The Role of the Care Economy in Promoting Gender Equality: Progress of Women in the Arab States](https://arabstates.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2020/12/the-role-of-the-care-economy-in-promoting-gender-equality), UN Women 2020).

Based on research findings and recommendations, the MWGE programme focuses on advocating towards changing perceptions and behaviours on masculinity, including through a social media campaign entitled [“Because I’m a man”](https://arabstates.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/because-i-am-a-man-campaign). During Phase II, the programme is also delivering gender-transformative parenting programme in Egypt, Morocco and Palestine, while partnering with CSOs and grassroots organizations to implement community-based interventions (in Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco and Palestine), many of them focused on promoting men’s caregiving and more engaged fatherhood.

* **Objectives of the assignment:**

In addition to the implementation of the aforementioned interventions, the MWGE programme aims to advocate for legal and policy reforms that promote men’s involvement in unpaid caregiving -and particularly in fatherhood- and domestic work across the MENA region in order to achieve the following objectives: 1) Enhancing wellbeing of fathers, mothers, children and whole families and communities; 2) Engaging men and boys in broader behavioural and social norm change initiatives in favour of gender equality; and 3) Supporting women’s empowerment and participation in formal employment.

In line with the available evidence that highlights the benefits that men’s role in unpaid caregiving does have for men, women and children, increased attention and efforts are being put globally to achieve non-transferable, adequately paid parental leave of equal duration for both women and men, while guaranteeing job protection. However, there is little to no evidence on the role and implications of leave policies and laws in non-Western countries and in particular in the MENA region, especially in the four countries where some paternity leave provisions exist.

With the goals of informing legal and policy reforms to increase men’s contribution in unpaid caregiving, promote paternity leave and address the evidence gap on this topic in the MENA region, the UN Women Regional Office for the Arab States aims to develop a research to analyse the knowledge, perceptions, attitudes and practices of actors from state institutions (i.e. regional intergovernmental institutions, key line ministries, parliamentarians) and non-state institutions (i.e. private sector, CSOs and labour unions). By understanding better the knowledge, perceptions, attitudes and practices of institutional actors around men’s unpaid caregiving and fatherhood, UN Women and stakeholders across the region will be able to develop more effective advocacy strategies and interventions to ensure that men take their share of unpaid caregiving at home.

* **Scope of work, consistent with the budget:**

The research will generate data to increase understanding around the knowledge, perceptions, attitudes and practices of state and non-state institutional actors at regional level and from six countries (Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Tunisia and Jordan) in relation to men’s engagement in unpaid caregiving, and particularly on paternity leave. The research is to inform advocacy interventions, policy, and programming to promote men’s caregiving and paternity leave across the MENA region. It will build upon the work undertaken by the UN Women’s regional programme “Men and Women for Gender Equality” to build the evidence on masculinities in the MENA region through research and knowledge products (i.e. IMAGES), and will also complement the evidence generated by the ILO-UN Women joint regional programme “Promoting Productive Employment and Decent Work for Women” (i.e. regional Care Economy report).

Particularly, the research will seek to:

1. Understand the knowledge, perceptions, attitudes and practices of decision and policy makers from state and non-state institutions around men’s engagement in unpaid caregiving, and with a focus on paternity leave.
2. Provide a review of global and regional trends and best practices from institutional actors advocating for/promoting paternity leave and equal, well-paid, and non-transferable leave for parents, as well as for supporting men’s unpaid caregiving.
3. Raise awareness and facilitate policy dialogue to promote men’s caregiving and engaged fatherhood, and -in the longer term- to promote equal, well-paid, and non-transferable leave policies and laws for all parents in the MENA region.
4. Identify clear advocacy targets to promote paternity leave across the MENA region based on the findings of the research, including the review and analysis of best and good practices identified. Inform advocacy interventions to promote men’s unpaid caregiving and paternity leave across the MENA region.

The researchers’ team will work under direct supervision of the Regional Programme Manager of the MWGE programme and will work in close collaboration with other UN Women team members and partners.

**Methodology:**

Geographical scope: MENA regional level and the following six countries for the data collection: Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Tunisia, and Jordan.

Sampling frame: a selected pool of individuals from state and non-state actors. 50% of the sampling research will be focused on state actors that include regional intergovernmental organizations (i.e., League of Arab States, Organization for Islamic Cooperation, etc.), national key line ministries (ministries of Labour; Economy; Social Affairs; Women’s Affairs, etc.) and actors from other state institutions (i.e., parliamentarians). The other 50% of the sampling will consist of actors from non-state institutions, namely private sector, CSOs -including women’s organizations- and labour unions.

The exact sampling size will be proposed by the researchers’ team and will have to be agreed by UN Women.

Desk review: review of relevant available data and reports at global, regional and country level (including The Role of the Care Economy in Promoting Gender Equality: Progress of Women in the Arab States published by UN Women in 2020, ILO reports on unpaid caregiving, etc.), as well as of global and regional best practices to advocate and promote men’s caregiving, active fatherhood, paternity leave and equal, well-paid and non-transferable leave for parents.

Data collection: a) Interviews with key informants and research participants from institutions/organizations at regional level and in target countries (15-20 KIIs per country and 10 KIIs at regional level); b) Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with research participants at regional level and in target countries (4 FGDs per country and 2 FGDs at regional level); and c) An online anonymous survey addressed to a selected pool of actors from the targeted institutions/organizations at regional and in target countries. UN Women will make every effort to help the researchers’ team to liaise with research participants to conduct the data collection as needed.

The overall research questions to guide the data collection are as follows:

On knowledge:

* What is the knowledge of institutional actors in the MENA region about the importance of men’s caregiving, active fatherhood and paternity and parental leave?
* To what extent the institutional actors in the MENA region are aware about the available evidence and the international standards that supports men’s caregiving, engaged fatherhood and paternity and parental leave (including IMAGES surveys)?

On perceptions and attitudes:

* How do institutional actors perceive men’s caregiving, active fatherhood and paternity and parental leave? Do they find them relevant, useful, and appropriate?
* How supportive of men’s caregiving, active fatherhood and paternity and parental leave are the institutional actors in the MENA region?
* How willing are institutional actors in the MENA to take further actions to promote men’s caregiving, active fatherhood, and paternity and parental leave? What would these actions be?

On practices:

* What are the enabling factors and barriers of institutional actors to promote men’s caregiving, active fatherhood, and paternity and parental leave?
* What are the existing measures taken by institutional actors in the MENA to promote men’s caregiving, active fatherhood, and paternity and parental leave?
* What are the good and best practices at global, regional, and country level in the MENA to promote men’s active fatherhood and paternity and parental leave? Of those good and best practices, which ones could be implemented further, replicated or upscaled in the MENA region?
* What are the most effective advocacy strategies to promote policy and legal reforms for men’s caregiving, active fatherhood and paternity and parental leave in the MENA? What advocacy targets could be pursued in the MENA and the target countries? What would be the best entry points and approaches to achieve these targets?
* How paternity leave provisions can be pursued in conjunction to enhancements in maternity leave across the region?

More detailed research questions for the data collection will be developed by the researchers’ team and included in the inception report for review and validation from UN Women.

Research report: the research will be divided into a) desk review of global and regional best and good practices to promote men’s unpaid caregiving, active fatherhood and paternity and parental leave; b) findings and analysis of data collected through interviews, FGDs and online anonymous survey at regional and country level (in the targeted countries); and c) recommendations to inform advocacy interventions, policy and programming to promote men’s caregiving and paternity leave across the MENA region, while making references to examples of global and regional good practices to promote paternity leave. The findings and recommendations will also be broken down and be specific to the countries targeted by the data collection in addition to providing a regional perspective; and they will also be tailored to the different types of state and non-state institutional actors targeted by the research.

**Language**:

The research will be initially drafted in English, and the final report and executive summary will be delivered by the vendor in English, French and Arabic after inputs from UN Women and a Research Advisory Committee (RAC) are incorporated in the English version. The costs for translation of final report in French and Arabic -if any- need to be included by the vendor in the financial proposal. The researchers’ team will need members who are fluent in Arabic and French in order to conduct the data collection effectively in the corresponding countries.

**Research Advisory Committee**:

UN Women together with the selected company will establish a Research Advisory Committee for the research. The RAC will consist of a selected group of experts from UN Women, other UN agencies, academia, CSOs and government institutions. The research firm will present the research methodology and the draft English report to the RAC, whose members will revert feedback on those two items.

**The core team of researchers:**

This team of researchers is expected to consist of:

1. One Project Director or Team Leader, who assumes a leadership role and is the main responsible person for the coordination of the research and quality of the deliverables.
2. One Technical Lead Researcher, who is a senior international researcher ensuring high-quality of deliverables, high-level and in-depth analysis, and who provides guidance to team members for compliance with international research standards.
3. One or two Technical Researchers, who are experienced researchers that support the team in producing high-quality deliverables, including the conduction of the desk review and an in-depth analysis of qualitative and quantitative data. They also provide overall support and guidance for the conduction of data collection and ensuring overall quality assurance of the research.
4. One national expert per country, who takes the lead in conducting the data collection in each country and supports the analysis of findings.

The core team of researchers itself should strive for gender-balance in its composition and possess background knowledge/expertise in the countries covered by this evaluation.

**Additional Non-Specialized Personnel:**

The core team of researchers may draw upon other non-specialized expertise that may include:

1. Research assistants who help with the data collection and the logistics
2. Translators and editors

* **Deliverables of assignment:**

- An inception report that includes: a detailed methodology, including research guiding questions -and detailed questions of interviews, FGDs and anonymous online questionnaires- and a list of research participants; ethical considerations; list of literature to be reviewed; detailed timeframe of the assignment; and the proposed structure of the final report.

- Presentation of the inception report and research methodology to the Regional Advisory Committee in PPT slides

- A draft report with an executive summary in English.

- Presentation of the research methodology to the Regional Advisory Committee in PPT slides

- A final and ready-to-be-published report with an executive summary that incorporates the inputs provided by the Research Advisory Committee. This will be provided in English, French and Arabic. The respective design and formatting of the final reports to be agreed with UN Women.

* **Period of performance and the review/approval time required:**

The research will be conducted and completed in July - December 2021. The final approved report will be launched no later than January 2022 -noting that travel costs for the launch event should not be included by the vendor in the financial proposal; if COVID-19 situation and budget availability allow it, these costs will be covered directly by UN Women-.

1. **DELIVERABLE SCHEDULE**

Certificates of payment are to be approved by the Regional Programme Manager of the MWGE programme (UN Women) upon satisfactory reception/delivery of deliverables indicated in the below table:

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| **No.** | **Deliverable** | **Payment Amount** | **Timeframe** |
| 1 | An inception report that includes: a detailed methodology, including research guiding questions and a list of research participants; timeframe of the assignment; ethical considerations; list of literature to be reviewed; detailed timeframe of the assignment; and the proposed structure of the final report. | 20% | 2 weeks after signature of contract (mid-July) |
| 2 | Presentation of the inception report and research methodology to the Regional Advisory Committee in PPT slides | 10% | 2-3 weeks after signature of contract (mid/end July) |
| 3 | A draft report with an executive summary in English | 20% | 3 months after approval of inception report (by mid-October) |
| 4 | Presentation of the draft report, with its preliminary findings and recommendations to the Regional Advisory Committee in PPT slides | 10% | 3.5 months after approval of inception report (end October) |
| 5 | A final and ready-to-be-published report in English with an executive summary that incorporate the inputs provided by UN Women and the Research Advisory Committee. The respective design and formatting of this final report to be agreed with UN Women | 20% | 1 month after the RAC meeting (end November) |
| 6 | Final and ready-to-be-published report in French and Arabic. The respective design and formatting of these final reports to be agreed with UN Women | 20% | 1 month after delivery of final report in English (end December) |