

## FWF GENDER FACT SHEET - MOROCCO

### FACTS & FIGURES

- Human Development Index: 121 of 189 countries (UNDP 2019)
- Gender Inequality Index: 121 of 189 countries (UNDP 2019)
- Global Gender Gap Index: 143 of 153 countries (WEF 2020)
- Physical and/or Sexual Intimate Partner Violence: 54.4% of fiancées and 52.2% of married women (National Survey Morocco 2018)
- Child Marriage: 16% (UNICED global database 2018)
- Adolescent birth rate: 8%
- Maternal mortality rate (under 5): 21.4 deaths per 100,000 live births
- Literacy Rate (15-24 aged): 98%
- Secondary school enrolment: female: 64.49% - male: 64.48%
- Share of seats in parliament held by women: 21% (2020)
- Labour force participation rate: female: 23.72% - male: 71.02% (2016)
- Ratio of female to male labour force participation rate: 30.54% (ILO 2020)
- Major religion: Islam
- Languages: Arabic and Berber (official), French, Spanish

### COUNTRY CONTEXT:

- During the “**Arabic Spring**” in 2011, political protest arose demanding for general reforms, democracy and transparency.
- The king appointed a commission for the drafting of a **new constitution**: Morocco is still a **constitutional monarchy**; government has gained more power, but the king is still a fundamental presence and is not subject to the executive authority. **The new Constitution recognizes Morocco’s Arab religious plurality, its commitment to human rights and international law within the respect of its immutable national identity.**
- There are still political protests going on, but these are relative and small, mostly formed by students and young people who demand a more secular government, a further reduction of the king’s powers, freedom of conscience and freedom of religion.

### Economy:

- In the last decade, **tourism and telecommunication sectors expanded**, accounting for more than two-thirds of gross domestic production. Nonetheless, it employs only one-third of the country’s workforce.
- **Morocco’s agricultural production is relevant**, producing two-third of the grain needed for domestic consumption (the ever-present danger of droughts puts at risk its annual production).
- **The manufacturing industry is growing constantly**, and it accounts for one-sixth of GDP.
- The majority of the labour force is employed in the agricultural and manufacturing fields.
- **A large part of the population is employed in the informal sectors (e.g. street vendors), domestic workers and other poorly paid individuals.**
- **High unemployment is a great concern**; the unemployment rate is particularly high among university graduates holding non-technical degrees.

### Garment industry:

- Compared to other countries with a long tradition in the garment industry, **Morocco's textile and clothes industry is relatively new, as this country used to import raw materials.**
- Nowadays, the manufacturing industry represents **15% of the country's GDP.**
- Most of the finished materials are imported to Europe.
- There are around **1,5000 garment factories where 200,000 workers are employed.**
- The whole sector is **low unionised**, and **women's participation is very low.** Nonetheless, **most of the workers** are young girls and **women who are poorly educated and earn very low living wages.**
- **Poor working conditions**, long working hours, temporary contracts, gender disparity, and informality characterize the industry (e.g. **cases of miscarriages in factories happened** because pregnant women had to work with the same intensity as other workers).
- **Around 70% of women garment workers reported that due to long shifts they do not have time to take proper care of their children, and household chores are all upon them.**

### Women in the society and gender-based violence:

- According to the tradition, Morocco is based on a **patriarchal and male-based society.** Women were not considered equal to men for a long time, and only in recent years a wave of **feminism is trying to change the role of women in the society.**
- According to the second Nation Survey on the prevalence of violence against women in Morocco, **the results show that violence against women stand at 54.4 %.**
- Women living in urban areas are more subject to violence compared to those who live in rural areas: 55.8% and 51.6%.
- **Violence against women in public is frequent** with 12.4 % of Moroccan women aged 18 to 64 who suffered at least one case of violence episode in public.
- **Violence against women on-line is increasing:** 13.4 % of women were subject to abuse on the internet, and harassment accounts for 7.2 % of cyber-violence episodes.
- According to the official statistics **only 6.6 % women who were abused filed complaints against their perpetrators.**
- The most frequent kind of violence is represented by being punched, stabbed and/or raped by partners or male family members.
- Despite the fact that in 2004 the minimum age for marriage for both men and women was fixed at 18 years old, **child marriage is still prevalent** and practiced in the countryside.
- **Abortion in Morocco is illegal**, exceptions were introduced in case of rape, incest, mental distress and foetus malformation. Despite the introduction of these amendments in 2015, **public hospitals refuse access to women who ask for abortion procedures.**
- According to art. 490 of the Penal Code, **it is illegal for men and women to have sex before marriage** (maximum one-year jail sentence).
- The new family code of 2004 allows **a child born outside marriage to be registered**, but if the father does not acknowledge the baby, the mother must choose the child's surname from a list where the prefix is always "abd" which means servant, slave or subordinate. As a consequence, many children born outside marriage are abandoned.
- **Sexual education is not institutionalised**, and **reproductive health services are limited.** In addition, access to reproductive health centres is not guaranteed for the younger population.

- **Economic violence is widespread:** according to the Moroccan inheritance law, after the death of a parent women inherit half of what men receive. **According to a 2016 survey, 87% of men and women oppose gender equality in inheritance matters.**

#### LEGAL CONTEXT:

##### National legislation:

- **Art. 19 of the 2011 Constitution establishes that men and women shall enjoy equal rights and freedoms** in all social, civil, political and environmental matters.
- **The Labour Code of 2003 recognised gender-based discrimination, prohibiting discrimination in employment, promotions and salaries.**
- **Pregnant women are granted 14 weeks of maternal leave**, payable from a national social security fund; three days of paternity leave are granted to fathers (it is not clear if this law applies also to informal and domestic workers).
- **A new draft law on the right to strike is under discussion in parliament**, but unions are protesting because they have not been consulted. If the new law passes, the right to strike will be limited and heavy fines will be imposed on those who did not respect the procedure. The draft law does not cover all professions, so some workers (such as miners) are not allowed to strike. In addition, **workers who strike will be considered temporarily absent from work and this means they will not be paid.**
- **Marital rape is not yet criminalised;** before 2014, the Criminal Code allowed the rapist to escape imprisonment if he agreed to marry his victim.
- **The new Morocco Family Code or “Moudawana” (2004) is one of the most advanced in the Arab world:** minimum age of marriage raised to 18 for women (before was 14); sharing of property between married couples; polygamy strictly controlled; divorce and repudiation can be initiated by women and are subject to judicial supervision; women can retain custody of their children; recognition of children born outside of wedlock; removal of degrading language toward women in the family code.
- The Nationality Law was amended in 2007: **children can now gain Moroccan citizenship through their mother for the first time.**
- **The new Law 103-13 on combatting violence against women has introduced several definitions** such as violence against women, sexual violence, physical violence, psychological violence and economic violence. **A more comprehensive definition of sexual harassment has been introduced and it encompasses public and private spaces** (before the amendment, sexual harassment was punished only in the workplace if the superior asked for sexual favours).

##### International legislation:

- Morocco ratified the **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1993**, with reservation of articles 2, 9(2), 15(4), 16 and 29. In the recent years, several reforms were made in order to comply with the convention; finally, with Bill 125-12 Morocco **has adopted the Optional Protocol of the CEDAW**, recognising the competence of its committee to decide on communications submitted by individuals or groups of individuals about the violations of rights and freedom set out in the convention.

#### SOURCES:

Human Development Report 2019 - Morocco: [http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr\\_theme/country-notes/MAR.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr_theme/country-notes/MAR.pdf);

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