



ARAB INTERNATIONAL
WOMEN'S FORUM
المنتدى العربي الدولي للمرأة

COMMUNICATION ON ENGAGEMENT – PROGRESS REPORT (2013-2016)
GLOBAL NGO MEMBER OF THE UN GLOBAL COMPACT

Chairman's Message



Haifa Fahoum Al Kaylani
Founder Chairman, AIWF

On behalf of the Arab International Women's Forum, I am proud to present this progress report bringing AIWF's key programmes, initiatives and events from 2013 – 2016 together in one comprehensive communication and sharing the commitment of AIWF to the UN Global Compact values and vision.

AIWF was founded in London in 2001 as a development organisation with the clear aim of supporting and enhancing the role of women in the social and economic development of their countries and across the Middle East region. Working across the board with civil society, the private sector, academia and governments, AIWF's key priorities have always been education, job creation, entrepreneurship and public life – always working at the heart of the Arab world and internationally, bringing partners in all spheres together to build bridges and build business, effect progress, correct negative stereotyping and build the capacity of Arab women at every level and in every sector.

AIWF programmes have been tremendously successful not only in forging lucrative business links and relationships between women entrepreneurs and innovators, but also in developing concrete skills, capacity and confidence of Arab women entrepreneurs and women in public life. With individual and corporate members serving in senior positions in government, business, academia and the non-profit sector from more than 45 countries, AIWF members enjoy unparalleled opportunities to network and develop global partnerships at our conferences, roundtables and seminars held in international business and financial hubs around the world. Each of our members brings unique experiences and perspectives to the work of AIWF, and all are committed to advancing the potential of women in their communities and countries, in a truly international context. In just 15 years, AIWF has achieved unparalleled recognition in the Arab world and internationally as a powerful advocate for the advancement of women. The work of AIWF to reform restrictive legal and regulatory frameworks in the region towards gender neutrality and inclusivity has been distinguished by collaborations with, among others, the League of Arab States, the European Commission and European Parliament, United Nations organisations and agencies, the World



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Bank, the MENA-OECD Investment Programme, women's business councils in the Arab States, the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office, International Chambers of Commerce and many globally recognised institutes of higher and further education.

AIWF's growing role to promote and advance economic rights for Arab women has also been distinguished by our significant co-operation with leading Arab and international organisations, among them, the City of London Corporation, the Greater Paris Investment Authority, the Dubai International Financial Centre, the EastWest Institute, the Women's Leadership Board at Harvard, UN agencies, NGOs, academic, economic and trade institutions. AIWF also works closely with Chambers of Commerce, UK, US and Arab business networks, entrepreneurs, SME owners and some of the region's largest multinationals and corporations to promote initiatives and build the relationships that will help create the private sector jobs that are so desperately needed in the region. All of our Global Partners are deeply engaged in the region and are committed to recruiting, training and retaining the best Arab talent, to facilitate links and engagement between young professionals in the region and the Arab private sector. AIWF could not have made the impact it has over the last decade and a half without the support of PepsiCo, Pfizer Inc, Shell, Willis Towers Watson, Sharjah Business Women Council, PwC, Jumeirah and the Sungjoo Foundation, all of whom are committed to strong diversity policies and developing, training and progressing young professional women in the region.

Of great importance to the work of AIWF are the MoU partnerships with the Arab-British Chamber of Commerce, the Hawkamah Institute for Corporate Governance, the Mudara Institute of Directors, the Pearl Initiative, the Dubai Business Women Council and Mamac Ogilvy. With Hawkamah and the Mudara Institute of Directors, both headquartered at the Dubai International Financial Centre, AIWF shares the mutual objective of strengthening corporate governance standards to encourage professional directorship and to support a bigger role for women on Arab boards. With the Arab-British Chamber of Commerce, AIWF has created a powerful coalition to jointly promote trade and enhance business co-operation between women business owners in the Arab world and their counterparts in the United Kingdom.

AIWF has also collaborated with some of the world's leading universities and regional institutes of learning, including the London Middle East Institute at The School of Oriental and African Studies at London University; the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World at the Lebanese American University in Beirut; and the Harvard Women's Leadership Board at Harvard University in Boston, to

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give just three examples. All AIWF academic partners promote the empowerment of women as an economic imperative and are advocates for entrepreneurship training to become a core part of the business and management syllabus in the region. AIWF is very proud to offer internships to talented female students, routinely assists universities with research projects and always invites students to attend conferences and participate in its initiatives.

Over the years, AIWF's groundbreaking Annual Programmes and Conferences have been hosted by key government bodies to which AIWF has presented findings, recommendations and reports, in Paris, London, Brussels, Madrid, Cairo, Amman, Washington DC, Sharjah, Beirut, Damascus, Dubai, Doha and Kuwait. These initiatives build upon timely themes and examine key issues that impact Arab women in business, in the professions and in public life. In 2016, AIWF celebrated its 15th Anniversary with a stellar programme of events, conferences and initiatives, all of which provided important opportunities to solidify AIWF's leadership and alliances in the Middle East and internationally. We are proud to present this report, which features a full and detailed summary of many of our initiatives and engagements in the reporting period of 2013 – 2016 that are aligned with our commitment to the UN Global Compact Principles, as well as a concise summary of all AIWF programmes and activities from 2001 – 2013.

We look with great optimism towards the next fifteen years and beyond as we move forward with our mission to advance the call for women and youth to be real drivers of change in the Arab region. Through public-private partnerships and international co-operation, seeking improvements in institutional support and legal frameworks to provide increased opportunities for women and youth in business and in economic and political life, we can meet the challenges of the Arab region head on.

Haifa AlKaylani

Haifa Fahoum Al Kaylani
Founder Chairman
Arab International Women's Forum



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- Part 2** A description of the practical actions that AIWF has taken from 2013 – 2016 to support the UN Global Compact principles and to engage with the initiative;
- Part 3** Measurement of outcomes for key Partnerships and Programmes, including:
- (3.1) ***AIWF Global & Institutional Partnerships***;
 - (3.2) ***Young Arab Women Leaders: The Voice of The Future***, and;
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Part 1. Statement of Continued Support

20 September 2016

To our stakeholders:

I am pleased to confirm that the Arab International Women's Forum reaffirms its support to the United Nations Global Compact and its Ten Principles in the areas of Human Rights, Labour, Environment and Anti-Corruption. This is our Communication on Engagement with the United Nations Global Compact. We welcome feedback on its contents.

In this Communication of Engagement, we describe the actions that our organisation has taken to support the UN Global Compact and its Principles. We also commit to sharing this information with our stakeholders using our primary channels of communication.

Sincerely yours,

Haifa Fahoum Al Kaylani
Founder Chairman
Arab International Women's Forum



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Part 2. Description of Actions

Period of activity covered by this Communication on Engagement:

From: January 2013

To: October 2016

(Commencing with most recent)

This summary of AIWF activities, engagements and initiatives is by no means comprehensive but serves as a description of actions that AIWF has undertaken in this reporting period under its core mission and commitment to support and enhance the role of women in the MENA region and beyond. Each action is linked with the corresponding Principles to which the action is most closely aligned.

Specific Principles most closely aligned with the work of AIWF in this reporting period included:

Principle 1 ('Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights');

Principle 6 ('Businesses should uphold the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation');

Principle 8 ('Businesses should undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility'); and

Principle 10 ('Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery').



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AIWF Annual Programmes, Conferences and Initiatives (2013 – 2016)



AIWF / Sharjah Business Women Council Seminar in July 2016 in London, UK

The Arab International Women's Forum is recognised globally for its vision and successful achievement of groundbreaking and timely initiatives that connect high-level change agents in the region with their international counterparts, always working to promote sustainable economic empowerment for women and girls in the MENA region.

AIWF conferences, seminars, roundtable and networking events have been held over the years in Paris, London, Brussels, Madrid, Cairo, Amman, Washington DC, Sharjah, Beirut, Damascus, Doha, Dubai and Kuwait. Each of the following events and initiative connected high-level change agents in the region, bringing together a diverse gathering of government officials, academics and



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university students, community and business leaders, global media and NGOs from the Middle East, Europe, Africa and North America to build upon timely themes, examining key issues that are relevant across local communities, on the world stage, in rural economies and in corporate life, and delivering the key message of AIWF of '**Building Bridges, Building Business**'.

19 – 20 October 2016

8th Young Arab Women Leaders: The Voice of the Future Conference in Kuwait with the valued support of the Kuwait Ministry of State for Youth Affairs and in continued partnership with PwC Middle East

AIWF believes that it is critical to empower young women leaders now to act as agents for sustainable development and lasting prosperity in the Arab world in the future. In line with this, the Young Arab Women Leaders: The Voice of the Future initiative was launched in 2011 by AIWF in partnership with PwC, as a platform for young aspiring Arab women to support, engage and network with mentors in political, economic and social leadership roles in the Arab world. Through this initiative, which closely examines leadership, technology, education and training, AIWF and PwC are committed to equipping young women leaders with the skills to start, grow and lead successful businesses, increasing access to technical and professional education and strengthening links between women in the UK and the MENA. An inaugural Conference was held in the City of London in 2011; since then, outstanding events have been held in Amman, Beirut, Dubai, and in Birzeit, Palestine, prior to returning to the City of London in 2014 and then moving on to Doha for AIWF's first ever conference in Qatar in October 2015. The 8th YAWL Conference will be held in October 2016 in Kuwait with the valued support of the Ministry of State for Youth Affairs.

AIWF Global Partner on this initiative, **PwC**, is a **Company** participant of the UN Global Compact.

UN Global Compact Principles Supported

Principle 6: Businesses should uphold the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation



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27 July 2016

AIWF and Sharjah Business Women Council: Partnership for Innovation in Entrepreneurship

AIWF and the Sharjah Business Women Council (SBWC) hosted a seminar, Partnership for Innovation in Entrepreneurship, under the patronage of Her Highness Sheikha Jawaher bint Mohammed Al Qasimi, Wife of His Highness the Ruler of Sharjah, UAE, Chairperson of Nama Women Advancement Establishment and Founder & Patron of Sharjah Business Women Council, at London's Royal Automobile Club. The seminar was attended by over 100 entrepreneurs, civil servants, academics and students, and was followed by a Special Luncheon in Honour of Her Highness Sheikha Jawaher bint Mohammed Al Qasimi, on her official visit to London.

UN Global Compact Principles Supported

Principle 6: Businesses should uphold the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation

Principle 9: Businesses should encourage the development of environmentally friendly technologies



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22 March 2016

AIWF Special Visit to Italy and High-Level Seminar on *Women's Talent for Innovation*

In March 2016, AIWF organised a networking and business trip to Tabiano, Italy, that brought together 50 Arab businesswomen leaders with their Italian and European counterparts.

The trip took place from Sunday 20 March to Friday 25 March 2016, with a packed itinerary that featured a number of exciting business visits and cultural experiences.

The programme also included a one-day, high-level seminar on Tuesday 22 March 2016, *Women's Talent for Innovation*, which explored opportunities for collaboration and partnership between AIWF Members and European businesswomen.

UN Global Compact Principles Supported

Principle 1: Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights

Principle 6: Businesses should uphold the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation

Principle 8: Businesses should undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility



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03 March 2016

AIWF / IBA Women Business Lawyers Initiative Conference in Beirut, Lebanon

After a very successful inaugural conference in Jordan in October 2015 within the framework of AIWF's new alliance with the International Bar Association Legal Practice Division (IBA/LPD), the second event in the AIWF-IBA Women Business Lawyers Initiative Conference Series, and the first major event of AIWF's 2016 Programme, was held in Beirut on 3 March 2016 at La Maison de l'Avocat in full partnership with the Beirut Bar Association.

Titled Women in Commercial Law in Lebanon, the conference was aimed primarily at bringing together commercial women lawyers from across the Middle East to discuss standards and trends in the practice of law and strategies for developing an international legal practice. The conference attracted the participation of more than 100 speakers and delegates mainly from Arab countries.

AIWF's partner on the IBA / AIWF Initiative for Women Business Lawyers in the Middle East, the **International Bar Association**, is a **Business Association Global** participant of the UN Global Compact.

UN Global Compact Principles Supported

Principle 1: Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights

Principle 2: Businesses should make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses

Principle 6: Businesses should uphold the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation

Principle 10: Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery



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28 October 2015

7th AIWF Young Arab Women Leaders: The Voice of the Future Conference Doha, Qatar

AIWF was proud to hold its first ever Conference in Doha, Qatar entitled Young Arab Women Leaders – The Voice of the Future on Wednesday 28 October 2015 in partnership with the Qatar Chamber of Commerce, the Qatar Businesswomen Forum, PwC and all of AIWF's Global Partners and with the Qatar Business Incubation Centre as Host Partner.

Close to 130 delegates from 20 countries worldwide, including 10 Arab countries, attended this highly successful conference, the 7th event in this series designed by AIWF in cooperation with its valued Global Partner, PwC, to nurture the next generation of young women entrepreneurs, helping to empower them as they aspire to leadership roles in business and in public life.

AIWF Global Partner on this initiative, **PwC**, is a **Company** participant of the UN Global Compact.

UN Global Compact Principles Supported

Principle 6: Businesses should uphold the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation



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7 September 2015

AIWF / IBA Women Business Lawyers Initiative Conference in Amman, Jordan

AIWF was proud to partner with the International Bar Association and the Arab Women's Legal Network to host the Conference *Jordanian Women in Legal Professions: Challenges and Opportunities*, the primary aim of which was to bring together lawyers from across the Middle East to discuss trends in the practice of law and strategies for developing international legal practice.

Aimed chiefly at lawyers in commercial law practice, the event attracted the participation of over 100 speakers and delegates primarily from Middle East countries. Delegates were addressed by a number of distinguished keynote speakers, including HE Reem Abu Hassan, Minister of Social Development of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan; Mrs Haifa Fahoum Al Kaylani, Founder and Chairman of the Arab International Women's Forum; HE Mervet Tallawy, Director General of the Arab Women Organization (AWO); and The Hon Ihsan Barakat, Founding President of the Arab Women's Legal Network and Judge.

AIWF's partner on the IBA / AIWF Initiative for Women Business Lawyers in the Middle East, the **International Bar Association**, is a **Business Association Global** participant of the UN Global Compact.

UN Global Compact Principles Supported

Principle 1: Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights

Principle 2: Businesses should make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses

Principle 6: Businesses should uphold the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation

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24 October 2014

Connecting the Next Generation of Young Arab Women Leaders, City of London, United Kingdom

The AIWF 2014 Programme culminated with the 6th Young Arab Women Leaders conference on Oct 24 entitled 'Connecting the Next Generation of Young Arab Women Leaders', which was held in partnership with PwC at its offices in the City and was attended by close to 80 guests.

The Conference served to equip young women leaders with skills that will benefit them in starting, growing, and leading successful businesses. The event focused on creating links between women in the UK and the MENA region, strengthening business alliances and exchanging experiences and best practices. The presentations on this day explored how young women leaders can find balance between their personal and professional lives, mentorship and gender diversity management, the transformative power of new media and women and ICT.

AIWF Global Partner on this initiative, **PwC**, is a **Company** participant of the UN Global Compact.

UN Global Compact Principles Supported

Principle 6: Businesses should uphold the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation



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23 October 2014

Building Bridges Building Business between the City of London, the Arab World & the International Community, London, United Kingdom

The AIWF Official Gala Dinner part of the three-day programme was held at the Mansion House on Oct 23 under the theme 'Building Bridges, Building Business' between the City of London and the Arab World and the International Community. The Gala Dinner was addressed by Mrs Haifa Al Kaylani, AIWF Chairman, The Rt Hon Alderman Fiona Woolf CBE, The Lord Mayor of the City of London, The Rt Hon Tobias Ellwood, MP, and Minister for the Middle East & North Africa, United Kingdom, and Mr Omar Farid, President MEA PepsiCo.

This distinguished gathering was attended by close to 240 guests from the UK and across the Arab region and offered AIWF an opportunity to pay tribute to PepsiCo, AIWF Exclusive Global Benefactor Partner, for its longstanding support of AIWF and commitment to the AIWF mission and principles.

AIWF Exclusive Benefactor Partner, **PepsiCo**, is a **Company** participant of the UN Global Compact.

UN Global Compact Principles Supported

Principle 1: Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights

Principle 6: Businesses should uphold the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation

Principle 7: Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges

Principle 8: Businesses should undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility

Principle 10: Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.



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22 October 2014

From Partnership to Prosperity: Women in the Arab World, the United Kingdom & the International Community, City of London, United Kingdom

The AIWF Annual Conference for 2014 entitled 'From Partnership to Prosperity: Women in the Arab World, the United Kingdom and the International Community', was hosted by Willis Towers Watson at its headquarters in the City of London, United Kingdom on Oct 22, 2014.

The Conference emphasized the need for education, leadership training, self-development and most importantly job creation for women and youth across the Arab world.

The Annual Conference was attended by close to 200 guests. Presenters and attendants examined the positive changes that are taking place within family businesses as a common trend within the Middle East region.

AIWF Global Partner **Willis Towers Watson** is a **Company** participant of the UN Global Compact.

UN Global Compact Principles Supported

Principle 2: Businesses should make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses

Principle 4: Businesses should uphold the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour

Principle 6: Businesses should uphold the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation

Principle 10: Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery



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8 June 2014

Signing of Memorandum of understanding between the Arab International Women's Forum and the Pearl Initiative to promote women through the ranks to senior management and board roles

The Arab International Women's Forum signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Pearl Initiative, the GCC-based, private sector-led, not-for-profit organisation developed in collaboration with the United Nations Office for Partnerships to promote best business practices in the Gulf Region; this MOU relates to activity in support of the Pearl Initiative's research programme on Women in Senior Management in the GCC.

Since 2010, the Pearl Initiative has been driving extensive programmes that positively influence business thinking in all 6 countries of the GCC, and produces regionally focused research-based insight reports and corporate good practice case studies. Rania Rizk, AIWF Board Member, and Imelda Dunlop, Executive Director of the Pearl Initiative, signed the agreement on 8 June 2014 in Dubai.

AIWF Institutional Partner, the **Pearl Initiative**, is a **NGO Local** participant of the UN Global Compact.

UN Global Compact Principles Supported

Principle 6: Businesses should uphold the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation



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23 October 2013

First Arab-German Women's Forum 'From Partnership to Prosperity: Women in the Arab World, Germany & the International Community', Berlin, Germany

The Arab-German Women Leaders Forum, entitled 'From Partnership to Prosperity: Women in the Arab World, Germany & the International Community', was held on 23-25 October 2013 under the valued Patronage of His Excellency, Mr Klaus Wowereit, Governing Mayor of Berlin and in full partnership with Ghorfa, the Arab–German Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The successful conference brought together eminent high ranking German and Arab Ministers and other Government representatives, senior international business leaders, academics and esteemed AIWF Members and Global Partners at an exclusive gathering of 180 delegates from across 16 Arab and 8 international countries to meet their outstanding and high profile German counterparts.

AIWF was proud to have welcomed so many distinguished Guest Speakers, all of whom provided great encouragement inspiration and a much welcomed debate within three important and timely themes: 'Addressing Inequality for a More Inclusive Society', 'From School to Work: Lessons Learned from the German Example', and 'Women in SMEs'.

UN Global Compact Principles Supported

Principle 6: Businesses should uphold the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation



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Part 3. Partnership & Programme Outcomes

As shown in the Partnership & Programme Outcomes, the Principles most frequently supported by AIWF's actions and initiatives in this reporting period were:

Principle 1: Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights

Principle 6: Businesses should uphold the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation

Principle 10: Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery

In this reporting period, AIWF worked closely with Global Partners on a number of joint initiatives, conferences and events, laying the foundation for more specialised and microtargeted initiatives to be launched in 2017 and beyond. These are detailed in Section 3.1 AIWF Global Partnerships.

Also in this reporting period, a landmark AIWF initiative, **Young Arab Women Leaders (YAWL)**, gathered considerable momentum in support of Principle 6. In addition, a key recommendation to emerge from the YAWL programme resulted in the launch of a new partnership between AIWF and the International Bar Association, the **IBA / AIWF Initiative for Women Business Lawyers in the Middle East**, supporting Principles 1, 6 & 10.

Sections 3.2 and 3.3 document measurable outcomes of both of these flagship initiatives, which AIWF plans to develop considerably through investment of significant resources and commitment in 2017 and by further integrating the themes and activities of both programmes with the UN Global Compact Principles.



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2013 – 2016

3.1 AIWF Global & Institutional Partners

AIWF shares its strategies and works in close collaboration with both private sector and government contacts and with its corporate and institutional partners, to promote sustainable empowerment for women in the Arab world and to help women leaders advance viable solutions to the region's most critical development challenges.

AIWF places great strategic importance on the development of its global networks and the establishment of key alliances with multinational corporations across all sectors, who all uphold strong diversity policies that enhance the recruitment, training and development of women as key contributors to the Arab human capital pool.

AIWF Global Partners are **PepsiCo** (Exclusive Global Benefactor Partner and a **Company** participant of the UN Global Compact); Platinum Global Partners **Pfizer** (a **Company** participant of the UN Global Compact), **Shell** (a **Company** participant of the UN Global Compact), **Willis Towers Watson** (a **Company** participant of the UN Global Compact), **Sharjah Business Women Council**, **Dubai Land Department**, and Diamond Global Partner **PwC** (a **Company** participant of the UN Global Compact).

AIWF Institutional Partners are the **Arab British Chamber of Commerce**, **Hawkamah Institute for Corporate Governance**, **Mudara Institute of Directors**, and **The Pearl Initiative** (a **NGO Local** participant of the UN Global Compact).

AIWF Media & Communications Partners include the **Financial Times**, a **Company** participant of the UN Global Compact, with whom AIWF has collaborated on Special Reports to recognise the Arab world's emerging women business leaders, and **Memac Ogilvy & Mather**, AIWF's exclusive Global Communications Partner jointly concerned with raising awareness of women's achievements and advancing their empowerment and participation in economic and public life.



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PepsiCo

AIWF Exclusive Global Benefactor Partner

PepsiCo became the first and only AIWF partner with Global Benefactor status in January 2010 with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) by Mrs Haifa Al Kaylani, Founder Chairman, Arab International Women's Forum and Mr Said Abdul Latif, CEO, Asia, Middle East and Africa Division (AMEA), PepsiCo. This MOU underscores the long-standing relationship between AIWF and PepsiCo, which began in 2002, as well as PepsiCo's unwavering commitment to the region. AIWF and PepsiCo share a common, long-standing determination to break stereotypical views of women and facilitate cross-border networking and experience exchange whilst promoting a greater public awareness of women's achievements and greater potential. We are proud to work with PepsiCo to promote stronger diversity policies and good governance in the region. AIWF Exclusive Benefactor Partner, **PepsiCo**, is a **Company** participant of the UN Global Compact.

UN Global Compact Principles Supported in this Partnership

Principle 6: Businesses should uphold the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation

Principle 7: Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges



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Partnership Outcomes

By partnering with some of the world's largest companies, and working closely with governments, AIWF has members in over 40 countries and seeks to promote investment in youth through education, training and the development of leadership skills, building new levels of competency and confidence in young Arab women leaders. We do this by connecting key change agents from across the Arab world with their international counterparts, always addressing how governments and the private sector can work together to ensure that skills education and workforce development becomes a permanent priority on the Arab economic agenda. PepsiCo is AIWF's longest standing supporter and our exclusive Benefactor. It is with PepsiCo's generous support that AIWF is able to carry out its mission and vision of *Building Bridges, Building Business*.

PepsiCo has made a series of commitments with a focus on human, talent and environmental sustainability, all of which are underpinned by the company's Performance with Purpose strategy. In PepsiCo's Asia, Middle East and Africa (AMEA) sector, the company is scaling sustainability efforts to impact key markets across the region. AIWF and PepsiCo have collaborated closely on the development of key themes and objectives for each Annual Programme in this reporting period, including AIWF's Anniversary Programmes in 2014, 2015 and 2016 which featured high-level networking and business events that connected the City of London with the Arab World and the International Community. PepsiCo, as Benefactor Partner, is a key partner in the Young Arab Women Leaders initiative together with PwC as our Global Conference Partner. On *Young Arab Women Leaders* and all AIWF initiatives, PepsiCo makes important contributions to the development of Annual and Special Programmes, designed to encourage our valued members and partners to create dialogue and action regarding issues that affect women in all sectors of business, professions, public life and civil society.

AIWF and PepsiCo share a common determination to break stereotypical views of women and create greater public awareness of their capabilities and potential internationally. We come together as a major force in upholding strong diversity policies, assisting and encouraging the region's emerging female business talent to participate and make a difference in all aspects of economic and public life in the Arab world.



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Pfizer

AIWF Global Platinum Partner

Pfizer became a Platinum Global Annual Partner of AIWF in 2010, formalising joint efforts to work towards economic opportunities for women to progress in the STEM sectors in the region. **Pfizer** is a **Company** participant of the UN Global Compact.

UN Global Compact Principles Supported in this Partnership

Principle 6: Businesses should uphold the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation

Partnership Outcomes

As a company that is committed to sustaining and expanding a culture of Diversity and Inclusion, Pfizer supports AIWF in its advocacy and development of key programmes to advance the prospects of women in small business, as entrepreneurs and in the healthcare, technology and biopharmaceutical sectors in the region. Pfizer is a leading partner of AIWF in its mission to encourage more women into the STEM sectors in the Arab world, and AIWF looks forward to continuing its work with Pfizer to organise highly specialised initiatives in the region and internationally to address challenges and opportunities for women in medicine, technology and science.



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Shell

AIWF Global Platinum Partner

A Global Platinum Partner of AIWF, Shell actively works with AIWF to address key development challenges of human capacity building in the region. Shell and AIWF share the belief that a diverse staff and inclusive work environment is vital to building relationships with employees, customers, suppliers, partners, governments and other stakeholders, and the aim of increasing women's leadership in the oil and gas sector in the Gulf and broader MENA. **Shell** is a **Company** participant of the UN Global Compact.

UN Global Compact Principles Supported in this Partnership

Principle 6: Businesses should uphold the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation

Partnership Outcomes

AIWF and our members have benefited from Shell's input, support and representation on all AIWF initiatives, conferences and programmes. For example, Shell in Qatar was a key supporter of the *Young Arab Women Leaders* initiative and Shell continues to generously support AIWF initiatives and programmes in the region with a view to collaborating on energy-specific initiatives in the near future to encourage more young Arab women in the region into the oil and gas sector.



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WillisTowersWatson

Willis Towers Watson

AIWF Global Platinum Partner

Willis became a Global Platinum Partner of AIWF in 2013. Willis and AIWF share the common objective of facilitating strong business cooperation and mutually beneficial alliances between Arab, British and international business partners in all sectors and industries, but specifically in trade, finance and investment. Since 2013, AIWF and Willis Towers Watson have worked to connect Arab business women with their counterparts in the United Kingdom and the international community who are seeking to develop commercial relationships and leverage market potential between the two regions, identifying common challenges and exploring partnership opportunities in financial services, law, health and education, technology and media, retail and tourism, energy and infrastructure. **Willis Towers Watson** is a **Company** participant of the UN Global Compact.

UN Global Compact Principles Supported in this Partnership

Principle 6: Businesses should uphold the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation

Partnership Outcomes

Since 2013, Willis Towers Watson has generously given invaluable support and input into the development of key AIWF programmes and expertise on key challenges for women in the region, working closely with AIWF to foster initiatives and outreach activities that highlight new opportunities for investment and partnership in the MENA region. To give one example, the AIWF Annual Conference 2014, *From Partnership to Prosperity: Women in the Arab World, the UK and the International Community*, was held in partnership with Willis Towers Watson at its HQ in the City of London.



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مجلس سيدات أعمال الشارقة
Sharjah Business Women Council

Sharjah Business Women Council

AIWF Global Platinum Partner

AIWF and the SBWC are highly committed to developing the future generation of young women entrepreneurs and empowering them to break new grounds in entrepreneurship as well as in public life. Joint initiatives, such as the Seminar on *Partnership for Innovation in Entrepreneurship* recently held in London (July 2016) to give just one example, aim to enhance the ability of young Emirati women to provide and mainly pioneer new business ideas, solutions and products in a gender-neutral business environment.

UN Global Compact Principles Supported in this Partnership

Principle 6: Businesses should uphold the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation

Partnership Outcomes

Through this partnership, AIWF and SBWC work closely together to highlight education, leadership training, capacity building and self-development for young women entrepreneurs, and encourage them to be more innovative and adaptive to the changing business environment.



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Dubai Land Department

AIWF Global Platinum Partner

AIWF is proud to contribute resources and support to initiatives in the region that promote a sustainable approach to economic, social and environmental challenges. AIWF's partnership with the Dubai Land Department is testament to AIWF's commitment to working with partners in all sectors – public, private and civil sectors – to contribute to sustainable development at every level.

UN Global Compact Principles Supported in this Partnership

Principle 8: Businesses should undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility

Principle 9: Businesses should encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies

Partnership Outcomes

AIWF's partnership with the Dubai Land Department has delivered numerous opportunities for AIWF to contribute and participate in initiatives in the region that promote sustainability in economic development; one such example in this reporting period was AIWF's participation in the Dubai Sustainable Cities Summit, launched by the Dubai Land Department in partnership with UNEP in December 2015. The summit shed light on the most important outcomes, international efforts and decisions of COP21 and was the first regional event to raise awareness about the UN's seventeen SDGs, the UAE being the only Arab country to have signed a commitment to achieve these goals.



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PwC

AIWF Global Diamond Partner

AIWF and PwC are committed to nurturing the next generation of young women entrepreneurs, helping to empower them as they break new ground in business and in public life. PwC has supported AIWF in the *Young Arab Women Leaders: The Voice of the Future* initiative since it was launched in 2011, a partnership that emerges from a genuine mutual belief in the mission that AIWF stands for, and AIWF is exceptionally proud to have worked with PwC on the Young Arab Women Leaders initiative from the very beginning. **PwC** is a **Company** participant of the UN Global Compact.

UN Global Compact Principles Supported in this Partnership

Principle 6: Businesses should uphold the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation

Partnership Outcomes

The joint initiative of AIWF and PwC launched in 2011, *Young Arab Women Leaders: The Voice of the Future*, achieved significant momentum in this reporting period. Please see Section 3.2 for AIWF's report and outcomes on the Young Arab Women Leaders initiative.



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Institutional Partnerships: Arab British Chamber of Commerce, Hawkamah Institute for Corporate Governance, Mudara Institute of Directors & The Pearl Initiative

AIWF Institutional Partners

AIWF has signed a landmark agreement with the **Arab-British Chamber of Commerce**, a Memorandum of Understanding creating a powerful coalition to jointly promote trade and intercultural exchange within UK and the Arab world with a special emphasis on fostering women's entrepreneurship.

AIWF has a very special cooperation with two much respected MENA-based institutes with which we carry out programmes of training and skills building in the region and the Mudara Institute for Directors. In March 2013, AIWF was pleased to confirm that the active cooperation in a close working relationship that AIWF has enjoyed with the **Dubai Business Women Council (DBWC)** over a number of years has now been recognised by both organisations as a formal Institutional Partnership.

AIWF Institutional Partner **Pearl Initiative** is a **NGO Local** participant of the UN Global Compact. The Pearl Initiative, developed in cooperation with the United Nations Office for Partnerships and in programme collaboration with the United Nations Global Compact, is a growing network of business leaders committed to driving joint action, exhibiting positive leadership and sharing knowledge and experience in order to positively influence the entire regional business and business student community. Since mid-2011, the Pearl Initiative has been leading programmes and producing regional insight in areas such as anti-corruption, corporate governance, family governance, gender diversity in leadership, integrated reporting and responsible business practices.

UN Global Compact Principles Supported through Institutional Partnerships

Principle 1: Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights

Principle 2: Businesses should make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses



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Principle 6: Businesses should uphold the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation

Principle 8: Businesses should undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility

Principle 10: Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery

Institutional Partnership Outcomes

Both the AIWF and the **Arab-British Chamber of Commerce** and their Global Partners are able to benefit from the MOU through fostering new opportunities for trade and expanding our outreach and partnership with key players and stakeholders with special emphasis on women-led businesses as key to social and economic development. Key initiatives involving membership and partners of both organisations and high profile players in the City are arranged.

AIWF's partnership with the **Hawkamah Institute for Corporate Governance** serves to advocate corporate sector reform and strengthen corporate governance for women entrepreneurs with business and investment in the MENA region. The partnership of cooperation with **Mudara, Institute of Directors** is vested in encouraging professional directorship, the training capacity of institutions, good corporate governance regimes and communication strategies. The joint efforts of AIWF and the **Dubai Business Women Council** in their alliance create greater awareness of the strategic issues and challenges that affect women and business in the Arab world.

AIWF looks forward to working with its key institutional partners in the MENA region and to broadening and enhancing its network of institutional partners throughout both the international community and the Arab States to help women create new, sustainable jobs and improve their communities and futures through entrepreneurship.



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2013 – 2016

3.2 Young Arab Women Leaders: Objectives & Outcomes



AIWF believes that it is critical to empower young women leaders now to act as agents for sustainable development and lasting prosperity in the Arab world in the future. To directly address concerns for women in MENA countries over job creation, the regulatory and cultural framework for women's entrepreneurship, and the economic and political engagement of women through education, enterprise and public service, the *Young Arab Women Leaders: The Voice of the Future* initiative was launched in 2011 by AIWF in partnership with PwC and all AIWF Global Partners, as a platform for young aspiring Arab

women to support, engage and network with mentors in political, economic and social leadership roles in the Arab world.

Through this initiative, its conferences, mentorship and peer networking events designed to closely examine sustainability, leadership, technology, education and training, AIWF and PwC are jointly committed to equipping young women leaders with the skills to start, grow and lead successful and sustainable businesses, increasing access to technical and professional education, broadening their leadership, financial and interpersonal skills, cultivating a diverse and inclusive world view among the next generation of women leaders, promoting cross-border collaboration and learning, and strengthening business links between women in the UK and the MENA.

An inaugural Conference was held in the City of London in 2011 and thereafter, AIWF extended this initiative to the Arab region. Since then, outstanding events have been held in Amman, Beirut, Dubai, and in Birzeit, Palestine, prior to returning to the City of London in 2014 and then heading to Doha for the 7th YAWL conference, AIWF's first ever in Qatar, in October 2015. The 8th YAWL conference of the series was held in Kuwait in October 2016.

AIWF's Global Conference Partner on the YAWL initiative, **PwC**, is a **Company** participant of the UN Global Compact.



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UN Global Compact Principles Supported

Principle 6: Businesses should uphold the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation

Programme Objectives

The objective of this programme is to cultivate and nurture the next generation of successful young women entrepreneurs, community leaders and change agents in the MENA region, and increased participation of young women in positions of leadership and on corporate boards across the Arab world.

The Young Arab Women Leaders conferences directly address how government, civil society, media and academic sector can help these young people in business achieve their potential by launching and growing scalable, profitable businesses that will create jobs and positively impact national economies and the Arab economy overall.

The Young Arab Women Leaders Conferences aim to recognise and celebrate the contribution of business women in the Arab world and to inspire the next generation of young Arab women leaders to realise their full potential and make their best contribution to the development of their economies and to MENA economic growth overall. The programme focusses on women in business and in public life across the Arab world and brings speakers from government, business, NGOs and some of the region's most prominent women in business together with young women who aspire to community, business and political leadership. We aim to assist young women to optimise and strengthen their personal, networking and business skills and encourage long lasting contributions to their economies and communities at large.

All YAWL events are structured to include keynotes, panel discussions, workshops designed to address business, financial and interpersonal issues that our participants have indicated are among their primary challenges, to facilitate introductions to valuable business connections, and the exchange of experiences, lessons and best practices.



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Interactive sessions explore opportunities for collaboration between the MENA countries and the international business community, looking at the role of women business leaders in growing the national economy; the importance of ICT skills building for women in business; and the role of social media in mobilising awareness of women's successes. The programme also addresses challenges and opportunities for our young women leaders who are breaking gender barriers in the region in unprecedented ways, breaking through as innovators with passion, drive, intellect and ideas and finding creative ways of overcoming discrimination and the regulatory and cultural barriers that hold women leaders back.

AIWF works with key partners and participants to form solid recommendations for further action and reform based on developing policies to promote attitude changes in society about women in business; coming together to train, support and nurture women entrepreneurs; and creating special programmes to leverage the experiences of established business owners in mentoring young entrepreneurs.

The agenda of the seminars in this series are carefully developed with the involvement of a number of young women leaders in the region. During the conference, participants support, engage and network with other women in political, economic and social leadership; learn from others about ways of transforming challenges and barriers into success stories and opportunities for development; and learn about the qualities of leadership as the next generation of women leaders.

Topics covered in past conferences are directly related to Principle 6 and have included:

- **Work / Life Balance vs The Glass Ceiling: Transforming Barriers into Opportunities**
- **Mentorship & Gender Diversity Management**
- **Young Women Leaders and Why They Matter**
- **Young Women Leaders & The Transformative Power of New Media**
- **Women & ICT: Skillsbuilding, Training & Trends**
- **Reflections on Leadership: My Story**

Individual participants

AIWF aims to close the leadership, gender and opportunity gaps in the MENA region by helping to cultivate skilled, educated, and well-connected young Arab women leaders in the public, private and



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civil spheres and sectors. Arab women have long been prominent in business and the world's media and leading development organisations have made note of the many leading businesswomen within the region who are self-made, successful, motivated, talented and truly inspirational. These women are poised to serve as role models for the next generation of Arab business women leaders, and AIWF brings them together with the next generation of Arab business women leaders to facilitate mentorship, leadership development and experience exchange in a supportive environment.

Young Arab Women Leaders conferences are heavily subscribed to and attended by women from across the region and internationally. In every YAWL conference held to date, AIWF has welcomed members, guests and delegates from over 40 different countries, including the US, UK, the EU countries and all Arab States. We learn from all participants about the ways in which they personally have transformed challenges and barriers into success stories and opportunities.

At every Young Arab Women Leaders event, we are delighted to welcome Guest Speakers who are all prominent and accomplished business and professional leaders who stimulate discussions, help us bring our conference objectives to life, and help us to understand more about personal accountability, leadership and confidence building by sharing their own personal success stories, experiences and expertise. Speakers at the YAWL events are leading female CEOs, company founders, thought leaders, community leaders and change agents in the public, private and civil sectors. Speakers are invited to offer mentorship to young women business leaders and are frequently matched up both during the event and during post-event follow-up with young entrepreneurs and professionals whose interests, fields or career path have resonance with their own. The mentorship aspect of the YAWL initiative is largely responsible for the growth of the programme within the MENA region, and feedback from participants is that this is one of the most valuable outcomes of attendance at a YAWL conference or event.

Partner organisations

AIWF is proud to have the support of all AIWF Global Partners and especially Conference Partner **PwC**, an AIWF Global Partner and a **Company** participant of the UN Global Compact, to deliver outstanding opportunities for young Arab women leaders to train, grow and network effectively through the Young Arab Women Leaders initiative.



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Other supporting partners for *Young Arab Women Leaders* events have included the **Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World** at the Lebanese American University; the **Dubai Business Women Council** at the Dubai Chamber of Commerce; **Birzeit University Palestine**; the **Qatar Business Incubation Centre**, **Qatar Chamber of Commerce**, and the **Qatar Businesswomen Forum**.

Programme Outcomes

Actual outcomes of the Young Arab Women Leaders conferences to date have reinforced AIWF's long-held belief in the importance of education, training, peer networking and mentorship in supporting and developing the business leaders of tomorrow.

Building bridges, building business

Through this initiative AIWF has successfully helped young women leaders in the region to build valuable links and new business alliances with their regional and international peers, resulting in tangible, results-based partnerships and lucrative new business for many participants.

Development and mentoring of young Arab women

AIWF is proud to develop and mentor many of the young women who attend the Young Arab Women Leader conferences, directly assisting in introducing them to role models and mentors and offering them support and internships at our offices in London and with our global network of partners in the private sector and the international development community.

A new initiative to empower Arab women business lawyers

Our partnership with the International Bar Association was a direct outcome of a key recommendation that emerged from a Young Arab Women Leaders conference – that more needed to be done to encourage young Arab women to enter into the legal profession and to support and empower Arab women business lawyers in the region to realise their potential.



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2015 – 2016

3.3 IBA / AIWF Initiative for Women Business Lawyers in the Middle East: Objectives & Outcomes

One of the key recommendations to emerge from the *Young Arab Women Leaders* initiative, launched jointly by AIWF and PwC in 2011 with a series of conferences and events in the UK and MENA, was that the low participation of Arab women in the legal professions urgently needed to be addressed for institutional, legal and regulatory frameworks to be more effectively reformed and gender parity to be supported at the highest levels.



This recommendation was acted upon in the form of a partnership AIWF launched in 2015 with the **International Bar Association** to promote and develop leadership skills among women in commercial law in the Arab region. AIWF is deeply committed to its Initiative for Women Business Lawyers in the Middle East programme, which aims to empower Arab women lawyers, build skills and awareness of global standards and encourage women to aspire to positions of leadership in the legal profession.

This is an especially timely partnership with the International Bar Association because it follows on from over a decade of advocacy on the part of AIWF to promote empowerment and enhanced opportunities for women not only in the legal profession but in public life, in parliament, in the judiciary and at the highest levels of the legislature in the Arab world.

AIWF's partner on the *IBA / AIWF Initiative for Women Business Lawyers in the Middle East*, the **International Bar Association**, is a **Business Association Global** participant of the UN Global Compact.



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UN Global Compact Principles Supported

Principle 1: Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights

Principle 2: Businesses should make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses

Principle 6: Businesses should uphold the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation

Principle 10: Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery

Programme Objectives

In September 2015, the Arab International Women's Forum was pleased and proud to partner with the **International Bar Association** (UN Global Compact **Business Association Global Member**) and the **Arab Women's Legal Network** to host the Conference ***Jordanian Women in Legal Professions: Challenges and Opportunities*** in Amman. Jordan.

The primary aim of the Women Business Lawyers initiative which was to bring together lawyers from across the Middle East to discuss standards and trends in the practice of law and strategies for developing an international legal practice. Aimed chiefly at lawyers in commercial law practice, the Amman event attracted the participation of more than 100 speakers and delegates primarily from Middle East countries. The line-up of speakers brought an extensive range of expertise to discussions from diverse sectors including government, civil society, private practice and corporate counsel. This successful inaugural event was followed by a second conference in March 2016, when the IBA and AIWF held a *Women Business Lawyers Initiative* conference in Beirut, Lebanon at La Maison de l'Avocat in full partnership with the Beirut Bar Association, titled *Women in Commercial Law in Lebanon*. More conferences are planned for this initiative in 2017.

The objectives of the *IBA / AIWF Initiative for Women Business Lawyers in the Middle East*, to empower Arab women, build skills and awareness of global standards and encourage female



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lawyers to take up leadership positions in their industry, are very much in line with AIWF's own mission of promoting education, leadership training, capacity building, self-development and networking for women and youth in all sectors of business and professional life.

Interactive sessions explore opportunities for collaboration between women lawyers in the MENA countries and the international legal community, addressing challenges and opportunities for young women lawyers and aiming to encourage more young Arab women to enter into the legal profession.

Topics covered in both the Amman and Beirut conferences were directly related to Principles 1, 2, 6 and 10. For example, sessions in the Amman conference included:

- **Which path to take: in-house, private and public sector practitioners**
Panellists explored the distinctions between in-house, private and public sector practitioners and will discuss challenges, advantages and routes of entry for each path.
- **All lawyers are not litigators: on practice areas and specialisations**
Panellists discussed the challenges and advantages of being a general practitioner and how to transition from being a general practitioner to focus on a particular practice area or specialisation.
- **Sitting at the table: how to access and be engaged in the high level decision making process**
Panellists discussed how to effectively advance a career as a global commercial lawyer and gain access to senior decision making positions.
- **Effective networking and making connections**
Panellists discussed how to network effectively, overcome gender stereotypes and grow a network in culturally conservative environments.
- **Marketing and business development**
Panellists discussed the marketing of legal services and how to develop the business side of the practice. They also looked at strategies and best practices for lawyers to market their



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firms and connect with potential clients in new and innovative ways, including the use of social media.

- **International lawyers and anti-corruption**

Panellists discussed the anti-corruption legal framework and its importance for international business lawyers.

- **Law firm management**

Panellists discussed basic principles of effective law firm management, including best practices, talent management, professional development, partnerships and practice growth with a particular focus on challenges for women in law firms.

Individual participants

Both AIWF / IBA conferences were heavily subscribed to and attended by senior women lawyers from across the region and internationally. Speakers and delegates representing government, private practice and in-house backgrounds bring an extensive range of expertise to the AIWF / IBA conferences. Both the Amman and Beirut conferences attracted the participation of more than 100 speakers and delegates mainly from Arab countries, and brought together lawyers from across the region to discuss standards and trends in the practice of law and methods and strategies to develop an international legal practice.

Partner organisations

AIWF is proud to partner with the International Bar Association, a **Business Association Global** participant of the UN Global Compact, to deliver outstanding opportunities for young Arab women lawyers to train, grow and network effectively as part of the international legal community.

Programme Outcomes

Globally, there is a persistent and universal gender gap in the legal profession, one that is by no means unique to the MENA legal community. In most countries throughout the MENA region there



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are very few obstacles to women's participation as lawyers or judges, but other challenges remain. These include training, lack of promotion opportunities, the significant gender pay gap and a lack of mentorship and professional networks in the region. For the Arab legal community, the growing number of women graduating with law degrees and entering legal practice is not enough to shift the gender imbalance or eliminate gender bias in the profession. More women entering the legal talent pool will not automatically equate to a corresponding increase in the number of women reaching the very top of the legal profession in the Arab world.

What is needed is more access to legal and professional development skills training and continued professional development initiatives tailored to meet the needs of women lawyers, those who are just starting out in legal practice and those who are established in practice but in need of updated skills training. Networking and business development are important tools in every female lawyer's toolkit for advancement because the confidence that these skills engender in women lawyers can help them take ownership of their success in the legal world. It is necessary to cultivate these skills, compete effectively and level the playing field for this and the next generation of Arab women lawyers.

AIWF's partnership with the International Bar Association follows on from over a decade of advocacy on our part to promote empowerment and enhanced opportunities for women not only in the legal profession but in public life, in parliament, in the judiciary and at the highest levels of the legislature in the Arab world. AIWF is therefore deeply committed to the *Initiative for Women Business Lawyers in the Middle East* programme and to its partnership with the IBA, and will commit further resources in 2017 and beyond to the development of this initiative to empower Arab women in the legal professions and in public life.



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Part 4. AIWF Programmes, Conferences & Initiatives (2001 – 2012)

The following is a summary of AIWF's Programmes and Initiatives from our founding in London in 2001 to December 2012.

10 December 2012

Young Arab Women Leaders: The Voice of the Future, Dubai, United Arab Emirates

The conference in Dubai was held on 10 December 2012, the third *Young Arab Women Leaders* event in 2012 with the support of Conference Partner PwC, AIWF Global Benefactor Partner PepsiCo, and all AIWF Global Partners, was held in cooperation with and hosted by the Dubai Business Women's Council and the Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry. It served as a platform for the young aspiring Emirati women to support, engage and network with other women in pioneering political, economic and social leadership roles and gain insights into best practices that transform challenges and barriers into success stories and to learn about the qualities of leadership for women in the Arab world in the 21st century.

20 September 2012

Young Arab Women Leaders: The Voice of the Future, Beirut, Lebanon

AIWF co-hosted a one-day interactive conference, in partnership with AIWF Global Partner PwC and with the Institute of Women's Studies in the Arab World (IWSAW), which was entitled 'Young Arab Women Leaders: The Voice of the Future' at the Riyad Nassar Library, Lebanese American University in Beirut, Lebanon. The focus of the conference was to encourage young professionals to enhance and optimise their contribution to society and business and to understand more about personal accountability, leadership and building confidence leading towards a new network of young professionals interested in the MENA region. The event brought together eminent speakers from government, business and international organisations and an impressive 130 strong audience of high profile participants, the majority among them being young women leaders from Lebanon.



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26 June 2012

Young Arab Women Leaders: The Voice of the Future, Amman, Jordan

AIWF held a conference on 26 June to launch an initiative in partnership with PwC within the Arab region entitled Young Arab Women Leaders: The Voice of the Future at the Middle East Public Sector Institute in Amman, Jordan on Tuesday 26 June 2012. As the first of a series of events planned for the year and beyond, the debut event was attended by nearly 80 participants from Jordan, Palestine, Iraq, Lebanon, UAE, Egypt, USA and UK, and witnessed the participation of several prominent figures and guest speakers from the corporate, NGO and Government sectors.

15 – 17 May 2012

The AIWF Annual Conference 2012

The AIWF 2012 Conference, with the theme of 'Emerging Economies, Emerging Leaderships: Arab Women and Youth as Drivers of Change', was held from 15 – 17 May 2012, at one of the leading universities and centres of excellence in the Arab world, the American University of Sharjah with whom AIWF was proud to have co-hosted this important two-day conference. The Arab International Women's Forum was privileged and honoured that this event had the esteemed patronage of His Highness Sheikh Dr Sultan Bin Mohammed Al Qassimi, Supreme Council Member, United Arab Emirates, Ruler of Sharjah and Founder and President of the American University of Sharjah. An impressive gathering, of distinguished guest speakers, government representatives, international business leaders, academics and esteemed AIWF members and Global Partners from thirty four countries worldwide, came together in a unique assembly to participate in the formulation of AIWF's forward-looking programme, identifying and promoting factors which will create real opportunities and economic growth by placing the empowerment of women and youth at the heart of the sustainable development process for the region. On this occasion AIWF was in partnership with the Financial Times in the publication of their Special Report on The Arab Awakening.



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21 March 2012

The Arab International Women's Forum & the Arab-British Chamber of Commerce Joint Roundtable Dinner

The Arab International Women's Forum co-hosted two events with the Arab-British Chamber of Commerce (ABCC) at the Chamber's Headquarters in Central London, a Business Networking Reception on Tuesday 20 March followed by a Roundtable Dinner for 40 top businesswomen the following evening. The invitation-only Roundtable Dinner on Wednesday 21 March 2012, themed 'Common Vision for Sustainable Growth', brought together 40 women leaders from the UK and the Arab world for a valuable exchange on current challenges and opportunities for women business leaders.

20 March 2012

Arab International Women's Forum & the Arab-British Chamber of Commerce Joint Reception

The Reception was a unique opportunity for AIWF and ABCC members and guests to network and help further a greater understanding of factors and enablers for sustainable growth and economic empowerment for women in both the United Kingdom and the Arab world. The Reception was held at the Chamber's Headquarters, 43 Upper Grosvenor Street, London and brought together both organisations' members to network and create and support greater business and commercial partnerships as part of their Memorandum of Understanding, signed in July 2009.

11 – 13 May 2011

The AIWF Special 2011 Programme 'Building Bridges, Building Business: Emerging Economies, Emerging Leaderships'

The AIWF 10th Anniversary Special Programme held in London in May 2011 with three key events marking both a commemoration of the founding of the Arab International Women's Forum and the springboard for the AIWF remit and advocacy for the next decade. The Special Programme commenced with the Official Reception and Dinner held at the Mansion House, the City of London, on 11 May 2011, hosted by the Lord Mayor of the City of London, Alderman Michael Bear, Her



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Royal Highness, the Duchess of Cornwall as the Guest of Honour at the Reception and the RT Hon William Hague MP, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs as the Guest of Honour and Keynote Speaker at the Dinner. The AIWF 10th Anniversary Conference was held the following day, on 12 May, under the banner of 'Women in the Arab World, Africa and Asia: Emerging Economies, Emerging Leaderships Shaping the Future Together', at Lancaster House, St James London, set out the AIWF agenda for the next decade. Putting their concern with youth into action on the third day of the Programme, Friday 13 May, AIWF cooperated with global partner PricewaterhouseCoopers in co-hosting a successful one day conference, 'Emerging Arab Women Leaders – The Voice of the Future'.

14 – 17 May 2010

The Arab International Women's Forum (AIWF) first major conference in Damascus, Syria, entitled 'Prosperity through Partnership: Women Leaders in Modern Syria, the Arab World and the International Community'

Building upon the spirit of AIWF's groundbreaking conferences in Paris, Washington DC, London and Dubai, the Arab International Women's Forum was proud and delighted to bring delegations from 32 countries, comprised of Arab, European and International business leaders, together to meet with their counterparts in Syria for this unique and important event in May 2010. Eminent speakers – ministers, officials and leading women in business from Syria and across the Arab world, Europe and the international community – shared their experiences and best practices with high-level delegates; attended business to business networking receptions to explore alliance opportunities; and enjoyed a series of conference sessions that delivered cutting-edge business intelligence. Through this important event, AIWF succeeded in strengthening existing channels of partnership between women in Syria, the Arab world and the International Community; creating new avenues for investment and creating viable business opportunities for women in business and in public life, representing the world's most dynamic economies in the Arab region and internationally.



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22 February 2010

AIWF/ABCC Panel Discussion and Networking Reception at the Arab British Chamber of Commerce, London in cooperation with the Institute of Chartered Accountants of England and Wales

The Arab International Women's Forum (AIWF) and the Arab British Chamber of Commerce (ABCC) were pleased to hold their first joint event in 2010 when they joined forces with the Institute of Chartered Accountants of England and Wales (ICAEW) for a Panel Discussion on the topic of 'The Importance of a Strong Accounting Profession in the Middle East' at The Arab British Chamber of Commerce, Upper Grosvenor Street, London on Monday 22 February. Members of all three organisations with the support of AIWF Partner PricewaterhouseCoopers and guests from professional and business circles enjoyed a programme of presentations on the benefits of a chartered accountancy qualification and how it should be used to build a strong professional ethic and energise business growth in the Middle East.

28 January 2010

AIWF New Year Reception at The Connaught Hotel, London

Mrs Haifa Al Kaylani, Chairman, and the Members of the Board were delighted to welcome distinguished guests to the Arab International Women's Forum New Year Reception at the Connaught Hotel in London on Thursday 28 January. Among the guests were AIWF members, global partners, ambassadors and members of the Diplomatic Corps, peers and others representing government, business, institutions and universities, including some from overseas. This was a timely opportunity for Mrs Al Kaylani to launch the 2010 Programme Prosperity through Partnership and to announce the new Pepsi Co status on becoming the AIWF Benefactor at the Signing Ceremony in Dubai held in January, as well as the newly forged relationship with Deutsche Bank as the latest AIWF Global Platinum Partner. The Reception was a very successful business and social networking occasion providing a fitting opportunity for AIWF to maintain its close links with its valued members, partners and friends.



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4 January 2010

AIWF-PepsiCo Signing Ceremony, Dubai of exclusive agreement (Memorandum of Understanding) to make PepsiCo AIWF's first and only partner with Benefactor status

In January 2010, AIWF was delighted to announce an exclusive agreement to make PepsiCo AIWF's first and only partner with Benefactor status. The agreement was formalised through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) at a Signing Ceremony on 4 January 2010 in Dubai, UAE and signed by Mrs Haifa Fahoum Al Kaylani, Founder Chairman, the Arab International Women's Forum and Mr Saad Abdul-Latif, President PepsiCo AMEA in the presence of HE Sheikha Lubna Bint Khalid Al Qasimi, the UAE Minister for Foreign Trade and a valued founding Member of the AIWF Board of Trustees. On this significant occasion many colleagues and friends gathered in the Dubai headquarters of PepsiCo AMEA to witness an important milestone in the long-standing relationship between PepsiCo and AIWF.

October 2009

Seminar on Directorship, Development and Diversity: Challenges for Women in Governance, Amman, Jordan

Following on from a very successful inaugural event in Cairo in June 2008, AIWF hosted its second corporate governance seminar in Amman, Jordan, in October 2009. Directorship, Development and Diversity: Challenges for Women in Governance was the theme of this Seminar held by AIWF in collaboration with the Hawkamah Institute for Corporate Governance, DIFC and the Mudara Institute of Directors (IOD) and jointly hosted in partnership with the Business and Professional Women's Federation-Amman, Jordan and the International Women's Forum, Jordan Chapter, with the valuable support of AIWF distinguished Global Partners, DLA Piper and the World Bank.

July 2009

Signing of the Memorandum of Cooperation and Understanding between AIWF and Arab British Chamber of Commerce, London UK

In July 2009, AIWF and the Arab British Chamber of Commerce in London created a powerful coalition to jointly promote trade and enhance business co-operation between Arab business owners and their counterparts in Europe and to increase opportunities for trade in the MENA region



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for women in business in the UK, the Arab world's largest trading partner and the 22 states of the Arab League. The AIWF partnership with the ABCC provides for a number of collaborative projects, events and initiatives, within the UK and the Arab world, that will nurture and build connections and partnerships, strengthening the trading capacity of our respective members.

March 2009

AIWF Paris Conference: From Partnership to Prosperity: Women in the Arab World, France and the International Community, Paris, France

In March 2009, AIWF gathered for its annual meeting in Paris at the invitation of and under the Patronage of Madame Christine Lagarde, then the French Minister for Economy, Industry and Employment. The conference was hosted by the Greater Paris Investment Agency at the Paris Chamber of Commerce, led by Chairman Mr Thierry Jacquillat, and was attended by over 200 Arab delegates from 22 countries, including 7 Arab Ministers. The conference was also attended by two French Ministers, Christine Lagarde and Anne Marie Idrac, and enjoyed outstanding participation from French CAC 40 companies. Through this major conference, AIWF successfully strengthened channels of partnership between the Arab world and France, providing an understanding of the aspirations and challenges of French and Arab business leaders and encouraging business growth, innovation and intercultural collaboration between successful women representing two of the world's most dynamic economies – Europe and the Middle East – culminating in their mutual prosperity. The Greater Paris Investment Agency, PepsiCo and Total were proud Supporting Partners.

December 2008

AIWF Book Launch Domains of Influence at the Arab British Chamber of Commerce, London, UK

Following on from the Arab launch held in 2007 at the Dubai International Financial Centre and the USA launch held in Washington DC at the World Bank in June 2008, AIWF was proud to launch Domains of Influence at the Arab-British Chamber of Commerce at a gala reception in December 2008. Domains of Influence was the first book of its kind on women entrepreneurs in the Arab world, the combined contribution of the Arab International Women's Forum and the World Bank towards a better understanding of the changing realities of the Middle East and the impact of the vast economic and socio-cultural change that has irreversibly transformed the financial, social and family



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lives of Arab women. It is a unique testament to the impact of Arab women in today's global environment of entrepreneurship and empowerment, and to the vast economic reform that has revitalized Arab nations in recent years, depicting the dual role of the modern, accomplished Arab woman, both at home and at work, and provides a welcome antidote to current negative trends of marginalization and misrepresentation of Arab women in the contemporary media. In October 2012, Domains of Influence was shortlisted for the prestigious fourth Prix Pictet Award, the world's leading prize in combining photography and sustainability.

June 2008

Partners for Change: Realizing the Potential of Arab Women in the Private and Public Sectors Conference at The World Bank, Washington DC, USA

Representatives from both the public and private sector came together at the first U.S.-based conference of the Arab International Women's Forum (AIWF), hosted by the World Bank Middle East North Africa in Washington, DC on 22 – 24 June 2008, at the invitation and under the Patronage of Mr Robert Zoellick, President of the World Bank. The conference, titled 'Partners for Change: Realizing the Potential of Arab Women in the Private and Public Sector,' drew 180 participants from over 20 countries including government representatives, international business leaders, academics and esteemed AIWF members and Global Partners from the United States, Canada, Europe, and the Middle East. It gathered Arab and international policymakers in an attempt to stimulate dialogue aimed at removing roadblocks to women's gainful participation in Arab politics, economies and society. Distinguished international Guest Speakers successfully examined opportunities for the entrepreneurial, political, and economic engagement of Arab women in the Middle East, the United States and beyond. The conference also studied the role of women in public life; the challenges to their involvement in politics and the steps that Arab governments are taking to encourage their participation in the political sphere. In a session entitled 'Empowering Women through Education' the importance of education was stressed as the most effective means to overcoming socio-economic challenges and barriers and essential dialogue examined the roles of Arab women in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The Conference was supported by PepsiCo, PricewaterhouseCoopers, DLA Piper, and Shell.



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February 2008

10 Downing Street Special Reception to Honour AIWF Work – London, UK

A unique and very special occasion marked the start to the 2008 programme on Tuesday 12 February when Mrs Sarah Brown, wife of the UK Prime Minister, hosted an Evening Reception at their official residence, 10 Downing Street, in honour of the Arab International Women's Forum. Mrs Haifa Fahoum Al Kaylani, Chairman of AIWF, was delighted to present to Mrs Brown the Board and Members of AIWF, Global Partners and representatives of business, the corporate sector and leading Arab and international academic, economic and trade institutions from 21 countries. Also present were Baroness Vadera, Parliamentary Undersecretary for Competitiveness, Deregulation and British Business Council, and Mrs Maggie Darling, wife of the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

December 2007

Powering the Future – Arab Business Women in a Modern Economy at The Dubai International Financial Centre, Dubai UAE

The Arab International Women's Forum held its first conference in the United Arab Emirates on 10 and 11 December 2007 under the Patronage of HRH Princess Haya Bint Al Hussein, Wife of HH Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Vice-President and Prime Minister of UAE, Ruler of Dubai. Entitled 'Powering The Future - Arab Business Women in a Modern Economy', this outstanding event was the culmination of the AIWF 2007 programme focusing on key elements for economic success, namely the creation of an enabling environment for the development of private enterprise and overcoming the challenges and barriers to greater female participation in the Arab economies. The conference, held at the Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC) at the kind invitation of the Governor of the DIFC, developed widely and professionally the remit of the 2007 programme theme, 'Globalisation, Trade and Entrepreneurship'. The two day initiative provided a forum that brought together a high profile gathering of 250 people from over 35 countries, including 19 Arab countries, representing AIWF global partners, members, and other supporters, men and women who are engaged in significant roles within the global economy representing government, business, trade and academic and professional circles, and was supported by PepsiCo, Abraaj Capital, The Hawkamah Institute, Merrill Lynch, Shell, General Motors, Crescent Petroleum, The Dubai Business Women Council, MCM, DLA Piper, and the Jumeirah Group.



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June 2007

Special partnership with the Financial Times

Raising awareness and strengthening its connections with global media in the last twelve years, AIWF is proud also, since 2007, to have a special continuing partnership with the Financial Times (FT) which has resulted in a number of collaborations on FT Supplements, including Women in the Arab Awakening which was published especially to coincide with the first day of the May 2012 AIWF Conference in Sharjah, and more recently a fourth FT Special Report on Education in the Arab World to coincide with the October 2013 Conference in Berlin. In 2014, AIWF was featured in the FT Special Report entitled Women in Business Emerging Markets on the special occasion of International Women's Day.

March 2007

Globalisation, Trade & Entrepreneurship Enhancing Business Opportunities Between the City of London, the Arab World and the International Community, Mansion House, London

AIWF hosted a special dinner at the invitation of the Rt Hon Lord Mayor of the City of London, Alderman John Stuttard, with a theme of Enhancing Business Opportunities between the City of London, the Arab World and the International Community. Welcoming the distinguished gathering of 270 men and women representing governments, financial and business interests, international organisations from over forty countries, including 18 Arab countries. The event was supported by Shell, PepsiCo and PricewaterhouseCoopers.

January 2007

Women as Engines of Economic Growth – Moving Forward at The Foreign & Commonwealth Office, London UK

The purpose of the Roundtable, hosted by the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office in London, was to review the 2005 AIWF Programme Report & Recommendations, 'Women as Engines of Economic Growth in the Arab World' and to discuss its impact, assess the extent to which recommendations in the Report have been implemented by stakeholders and advocate their full implementation. Key partners, stakeholders and contributors to the 2005 Programme were invited to participate in the review. Leading European and Arab organisations were involved in the 2005



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Programme which featured two linked conferences: 'Ten Years After Barcelona: Empowering Women as Catalysts for Economic Development' held at the European Parliament in Brussels and 'Women and Integrated Rural Development' held at the League of Arab States in Cairo which culminated in the 2005 Report & Recommendations. The actionable recommendations that came forward at the conferences represented a significant body of opinion, with participants representing the World Bank, the League of Arab States and IBM.

April 2006

Building Bridges, Building Business Between the City of London, the Arab World and the International Community - 5th Anniversary Dinner at The Mansion House, London, UK

AIWF hosted a special dinner at the invitation of The Rt Hon Lord Mayor of the City of London, Alderman David Brewer CMG at which the AIWF 2006 Programme Launch was made on Thursday 20 April 2006. The venue was the Mansion House in the City of London for the occasion of the 5th AIWF Anniversary Dinner, with distinguished guests attending from 35 countries. Her Majesty Queen Rania Al-Abdullah of Jordan was the Guest of Honour. In his address the Lord Mayor highlighted the achievements that women are making in the Arab world and paid tribute to the work of AIWF in this regard.

September 2005

Report & Recommendations – Women as Engines of Economic Growth in the Arab World at The Foreign and Commonwealth Office, London UK

AIWF held this event to launch the Report and Recommendations, which published the findings of the 2005 Programme built around the two linked conferences held in Brussels (April 2005) and Cairo (June 2005). This third event held in London on 29 September, at the time of the UK Presidency of the European Union, at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office continuing its active support to the two conferences. This report became the impetus for AIWF and its partners to advocate the necessary economic and social reforms they have identified for the improvement in women's position in the economies of Arab countries. The Report was presented to the Ministers of the Euro – Mediterranean Partnership and Arab Governments at the time of the 10 years after Barcelona Conference in November 2005 and was also widely distributed as part of the AIWF advocacy campaign to seek the greater participation of women as positive agents of change to



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move the agenda for prosperity and peace. The event was supported by the UK Foreign & Commonwealth Office, Shell and IBM.

June 2005

Ten Years after Barcelona: Women and Integrated Rural Development at the League of Arab States, Cairo, Egypt

Under the Patronage of His Excellency Mr Amre Moussa, Secretary General of the League of Arab States, the AIWF programme continued with the valued cooperation of the League of Arab States and the support of the European Parliament, the Foreign & Commonwealth Office and the World Bank in hosting the second of a two-part series of conferences to mark the tenth anniversary of the Barcelona Process. AIWF hosted the second conference, Women and Integrated Rural Development, on 12-13 June 2005 at the prestigious headquarters of the League of Arab States, in Cairo. The programme was supported by the Fundación Promoción Social de la Cultura, a leading organisation in Spain renowned for its work with NGOs and rural associations in the Euro-Mediterranean region, along with local partners the Women's Strategy Group of Egypt's International Economic Forum. Supported by the League of Arab States, The Foreign & Commonwealth Office, UK, The European Parliament, the World Bank, Shell, IBM and the Commercial International Bank.

April 2005

Ten Years after Barcelona: Empowering Women as Catalysts for Economic Development at the European Parliament in Brussels

Under the Patronage of Mr Jose Borell, President of the European Parliament and European Commissioner for External Affairs Benita Ferrero-Waldner, the Arab International Women's Forum hosted two linked conferences as part of the 2005 AIWF programme, Women as Engines of Economic Growth in the Arab World. The first conference, 'Ten Years After the Barcelona Process: Empowering Women as Catalysts for Economic Development', was held 7-8 April 2005 at the European Parliament in Brussels with the valued co-operation of the European Parliament, the European Commission, the League of Arab States, the Foreign & Commonwealth Office and the World Bank, marking the anniversary of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. Empowering Women as Catalysts for Economic Development focused on women's role in business, in corporate life and



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in creating small and medium sized businesses in order to foster economic growth and development. The programme was supported by: The League of Arab States, The European Parliament, The Foreign & Commonwealth Office, UK, World Bank, Shell, and IBM.

June 2004

Women in the Arab World, Partners in the Community and on the World Stage at The League of Arab States, Cairo, Egypt

Under the Patronage of HE Mr Amre Moussa, Secretary General, The League of Arab States, and following on from two successful conferences in the United Kingdom, AIWF held its 3rd Annual Conference, Women in the Arab World: Partners in the Community and on the World Stage, in Cairo, 6-9 June 2004. This was AIWF's first conference to be held in the Arab world, and AIWF was delighted to be working in close cooperation with the League of Arab States, the first time that the League of Arab States had co-hosted a women's conference in the main Chamber of their headquarters. The Conference was also supported by HSBC, IBM, Orascom and Procter & Gamble.

October 2003

Women in the Arab World: Windows of Opportunity Opening Wider in Business and Public Life, London, UK

The Second Annual AIWF Conference, 'Women in the Arab World: Windows of Opportunity Opening Wider in Business & Public Life', was held at The Carlton Tower, London on 22-24 October 2003. It followed the tremendous success of AIWF's inaugural conference in 2002, and combined a series of informative and stimulating sessions and panel discussions as well as offered participants the crucial opportunity to network with a wide array of speakers, members and sponsors. Her Highness, Sheikha Sabeeka bint Ibrahim Al Khalifa, Wife of His Majesty The King of Bahrain, Chairperson of the Supreme Council of Women was Guest of Honour among an impressive list of distinguished speakers. PepsiCo, Procter & Gamble and Jumeirah International were Supporting Partners.



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April 2002

Women in the New Economic Order: The Increasing Role of Arab Women in Business and Society, London UK

Under the Patronage of HM Queen Rania Al Abdullah of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, AIWF's first annual conference held in London, 'Women in the New Economic World Order: The Increasing Role of Arab Women in Business and Society', was attended by over 140 delegates and guests from as many as 25 countries, including 15 Arab countries. The conference sessions reiterated the message that Arab women had a major role to play in bringing prosperity and peace to the region, as well as making a huge contribution to international business.



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About the Arab International Women's Forum

The Arab International Women's Forum (AIWF), established in early 2001 as an independent not for profit development organisation, is a unique network linking Arab women with their international counterparts and serves as the voice for Arab women, showcasing their development, ability and competence in business, professional and public life, promoting cross cultural diversity and creating greater global awareness of women's success and prospects in the Arab world.

Fulfilling its mission of *Building Bridges, Building Business*, the Arab International Women's Forum has been an agent of change for women in the Arab region encouraging their potential to take greater leadership roles and reach higher levels of responsibility in all sectors of business, public life and in civil society whilst contributing to the progress and prosperity of their families and communities.

The Arab International Women's Forum has been recognised for its vision and successful achievement of groundbreaking and timely initiatives. By bringing together civil society organisations, the corporate sector and governments, and interacting with the media, AIWF has created an unrivalled forum that has built a powerbase of strong advocacy for women in MENA to become engines of economic and social growth taking as its priority areas, education, entrepreneurship and employment equality.

AIWF continues to work in collaboration and increased connectivity with both private sector and government contacts at the highest level globally and with its partners, to promote women in the Arab world to be empowered and use their leadership abilities to come up with sustainable solutions to the region's most critical development challenges, AIWF's priority aim is to make a difference in helping to build economic development in the Arab world as part of the global community.