Gender equity model, Egypt: Promoting women’s economic empowerment and fighting gender-based violence

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BACKGROUND

Gender based violence (GBV) is a major issue for Egyptian women. According to the 2014 Egypt Demographic and Health Survey (EDHS), 30% of ever-married women aged 15-49 have experienced inter-spousal violence. In addition, one third of ever-married women believe that a husband can be justified in beating his wife. There is however evidence that married women’s economic and social inequity are in Egypt is associated with rejection of wife beating. Whether a protective or a risk factor, wage work is not easily accessible for women in Egypt. Labor force participation rate for population aged 15-59 was 24% for Egyptians in 2014, but 50% for Egyptians in urban areas. Barriers to entry for women into the private sector are due to a number of factors, including stereotypic and restricted mobility. Egypt’s recent economic crisis is expected to impact women gender barriers as well. In the labor market in Egypt, men favor work in men’s roles. It hence works on both the supply and demand sides of labor. Egypt’s Ministry of Manpower (MoM) and Egypt’s Ministry of Manpower’s Social Research Center (SRC) of the American University in Cairo (AUC) are collaborating on a research project. The GEME Intervention

OBJECTIVES

1. Develop the specifics of an intervention for gender equity in private firms incorporating a focus on GBV prevention, to be piloted in selected urban communities in Egypt. The intervention will target Egypt’s economic empowerment with mitigating the risk of increasing domestic violence and employing GBV prevention.

2. Assess the effectiveness of the developed intervention, with regard to gender sensitivity in employment and to impact on attitudes towards women’s work and GBV, and preventing gender-based violence.

3. Based on the lessons learnt, modify the intervention in preparation of its eventual national expansion.

METHODS

The project has two components: (1) developing and implementing an intervention and evaluating the impact of the intervention. The GEHE intervention

The intervention adopts two modes of targeting. It targets women workers in private firms in addition to targeting private firms that employ women, or could employ, from within the targeted communities. This phase works on both the supply and demand sides of labor.

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a) Establishing gender equity taskforce within participating firms, to identify gender equity issues and possible entry points for change.

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d) Providing tailored training to the members of the established gender equity taskforces and the ombudsmans with zero tolerance of sexual harassment and gender-based discrimination and complaints.

e) Performing baseline gender audit within participating firms, to identify gender equity issues and possible entry points for change.

f) Establishing gender equity taskforce within participating firms, to identify gender equity issues and possible entry points for change.

g) Performing a baseline in-depth study of the gender role dynamics and the attitudes towards gender-based violence in the selected communities.

h) Holding awareness sessions to address misconceptions regarding gender roles, domestic violence and sexual harassment, with support and participation from religious and social leaders.

i) Building, or buttressing from existing, community-based networks to match employment seekers and available jobs in the participating private firms.

The Monitoring and Evaluation Study

A controlled quasi-experiment design will be used in order to monitor and evaluate the impact of the proposed GEME intervention. Matched communities and matched firms are to be selected and divided into treatment and control units. Pre- and post-intervention data will be collected to test for baseline equivalence between the two groups and to assess the impact of the intervention through a differences-in-differences approach. Main outcomes to be investigated are: changes towards gender roles from men’s and women’s perspective; changes towards gender-based violence; changes towards gender-based harassment and discrimination complaints.

TIMELINE

Months 1-4: Developing the detailed design of the intervention and detailed M&E plan

Month 5: Selecting the intervention and control communities and firms

Month 6-7: Carrying out the pre-intervention baseline survey

Month 8-18: Implementing the intervention, and its monitoring

Month 19-20: Carrying out the post-intervention survey

Month 21-22: Data analysis and report writing

Month 23-24: Dissemination of results

IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE

The results of the monitoring and evaluation study and the lessons learnt through the pilot stage will inform evidence-based redesign of the intervention for further expansion. Globally, the data provided by the study will contribute to the literature on the interrelationship between women’s economic empowerment and GBV in low and middle income settings.

References available on request.