THE POWER OF GENDER PARITY IN DIPLOMACY: FOUR PILLARS OF CHANGE

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Sarah is a second year MA Candidate in Middle East Studies and International Economics at the Johns Hopkins University’s School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS). Sarah is a Fouad Ajami Fellow and wrote her master’s thesis on challenges faced by intermediary cities in the Middle East and best practices for their development. Her field work was conducted in the city of Byblos, Lebanon. In her free time, she is the ESL Program Director for No One Left Behind, a non-profit serving Afghan and Iraqi SIVs. Sarah is also a Tillman Scholar.

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Azhin is currently a graduate student at the Johns Hopkins University’s School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) where she is enrolled in a dual concentration program studying International Economics and Conflict Management with a focus on International Development. Prior to joining graduate school, she studied at the American University of Sulaimani – Iraq, where she graduated with a bachelor’s Degree in International Studies and a minor in Economics. Azhin hopes that her experience in the Middle East and abroad as well as her studies in the Conflict Management and Development field can equip her to bring about positive changes to the region in light of the events that have been taking place.
Philip Charlemagne

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Executive Summary

- As part of the research partnership between SAIS Women Lead and the Emirates Diplomatic Academy to increase women in leadership and diplomacy across East and North Africa (MENA) region, the SAIS Women Lead research team discovered four common indicators: professional networks, family and domestic policy, institutional policy, and capturing gender indicators, are enablers of a robust and long diplomatic career, but also create structural barriers for women in the diplomatic field.

- **Capturing Gender Indicators:** Quantitative and qualitative gender indicators derived from credible sex disaggregated data are among the most powerful tools for creating effective gender parity policies, both within the diplomatic field and in all professional sectors.

- **Professional Networks:** For a diplomat, networking is the single most important indicator of upward career mobility. A diplomat’s ability to negotiate is fundamentally dependent on their ability to build relationships with foreign national representatives and international institution experts.

- **Family and Domestic Policy:** Implementation of policies that enable female diplomats to balance family and work life are most likely to extend their careers and increase the number of women in ambassadorships and minister roles.

- **Institutional Policy:** Institutional change implemented in the areas of law enforcement, family law, paternity leave, and the practice of gender sensitive budgeting translate into women’s ability to pursue career ambitions in foreign policy.

- **Quantitative Recommendations:**
  i. Establish and/or Improve National Statistics Collection
  ii. Conduct Data Driven Self-Assessment and Evaluation
  iii. Establish and/or Improve Procedures for the Dissemination of Collected Statistics

- **Qualitative Recommendations:**
  i. Holistic Approach to Career-Building Domestically
  ii. Holistic Approach to Career-Building Abroad
  iii. Acknowledgement of Barriers to Gender Power Parity
  iv. Facilitation of Mentorship Programs within Foreign Policy Institutions
The Power of Gender Parity in Diplomacy: Four Pillars of Change

Introduction:

This study addresses the gap in the global literature regarding progress and challenges facing female participation and power in foreign diplomacy. At the behest of the project client, the Emirates Diplomatic Academy (EDA), the study seeks to bridge the gap between the promotion of women in diplomacy and true positions of power. The progress made on a global scale regarding women's participation in security and peace creates a new lens through which to analyze women’s retention in similar fields. It addresses issues of inclusivity, labor force participation, women’s rights as human rights, and male attitudes are all discussed.

In discussions with ambassadors and young diplomats across the MENA region, we discovered four common themes emerged that are both enablers of a robust and long diplomatic career but also bring structural barriers and positive outcomes for women in the field.

Every layer of society matters when discussing gender parity in the diplomatic workforce; from family to domestic policy to normalizing female leaders in government. First, captured gender indicators, such as performance outcomes, retention rates and gender responsiveness, serve as guideposts regarding how far a nation has overcome to reach gender parity, as well as what more work needs to be done. Second, professional development is an integrated part of a strong diplomatic career. Third, family and domestic policies of a home country contribute to attitudes within a society as well as individual spousal discussions. Fourth, institutional policies within foreign ministries as well as a nation’s federal government impact the success of a female diplomat’s career, including her interest in the field, retention rates and promotion ability.

Selected Case-Study Countries:

This report specifically addresses key individual leaders in the empowerment of women in diplomacy as well as the progress made by MENA countries. A cross-section of MENA country initiatives on the particular topic of gender parity in diplomacy was selected to discuss the unique challenges, as well as universal barriers, within the diplomatic field in the countries listed. It was important to capture data from countries making significant progress in achieving power parity, but might not have received comparable media attention or acknowledgement from the international community. The study also includes particularly innovative case studies outside the MENA region in order to broaden the scope and dialogue for our research. As the study progressed, it became clear that it is impossible to highlight all the big and small positive changes occurring within the diplomatic field in a wide-range of countries. This paper seeks to open the door to what should be a continued investigation of best practices around the globe for increasing women’s leadership in diplomacy.

A toolkit of best practices to be implemented by the EDA as strategic partners in the MENA region for Fall 2018 is found in the concluding recommendations.
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Pillar I: Capturing Gender Indicators
Case Studies: Bahrain, Mexico, Uganda

I: What Are Gender Indicators?

Indicators are a way of measuring progress that capture quantitative and qualitative criteria and changes over time in a way that is meaningful to the pursuit of specific goals. Achievable goals are characterized as being measurable goals, and the use of indicators provides specific benchmarks against which to evaluate success. While indicators may be quantitative in nature, such as numbers and similar data, qualitative indicators are able to evaluate changes in perceptions and opinions.

In situations where gender parity is being examined the effective use of gender indicators are a contributing factor to overall success. By looking at quantitative indicators that are rooted in “sex disaggregated statistical data,” researchers are able to see the difference between measurements for males and females. For example, one would be able to see the number of male diplomats versus the number of female diplomats, or, the average length of career by gender. Such measurements are helpful in determining performance or predominant presence of one gender group over another. Qualitative indicators are better suited for capturing opinions, perceptions, experiences, attitudes, and feelings. Measurements are derived from events such as group discussions, social mapping, and other participatory events, like surveys.

In the 1950s, the Delphi technique emerged. Developed primarily by Dalkey and Helmer at the RAND Corporation, the technique is now widely used and accepted as a credible means for achieving convergence of opinion on real world knowledge by seeking opinions from subject experts through group communications. Through detailed discussions of specific issues, policies, and future events, the Delphi technique tries to ascertain, ‘what should be’ rather than ‘what is.’ The main objectives that can be accomplished by the technique are:

1. To determine or develop a range of possible program alternatives.
2. To explore or expose underlying assumptions or information leading to different judgments.
3. To seek out information which may generate a consensus on the part of the respondent group.
4. To correlate informed judgments on a topic spanning a wide range of disciplines.
5. To educate the respondent group as to the diverse and interrelated aspects of the topic.

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2 OCED, 1.
4 Hsu, 1.
II: Why are Gender Indicators Important?

As gender indicators allow measurements of change to be examined based on gender, there are several benefits for gender initiatives who choose to use indicators in their planning and programming. In general, measurement prioritizes gender issues. By collecting data and evidence, indicators are able to be used as a means to show the importance of specific gender issues and provide the necessary substantiation to back up declared importance. In terms of planning, indicators are able to display how well an organization’s programming is measuring up to established standards of success and allowing for redirection when barriers are exposed. Indicators hold institutions and organizations accountable for their commitments to gender issues by demonstrating existing gaps through data. Finally, indicators can help initiate change by raising awareness through the data collection process and inspiring discussion and recognition of prevailing challenges and shared experiences.⁵

III: What to Measure?

In choosing what to measure with indicators, the answer will inevitably vary according to institution and organization. However, it is critical to pursue indicators that will be most helpful in achieving specific goals. The use of gender indicators comes with a set of unique challenges organizations must consider when choosing what they will measure.⁶ Lack of substantive data may cause certain indicators to be deemed useless. If particular data sets are impossible, or near impossible for an organization to obtain, whether through a preexisting study or their own study, they may be better off choosing another indicator to measure success against. Choosing what to measure is oftentimes linked to the needs and priorities of the organization, rather than the needs and priorities of those the program benefits and partner nations. It is critical to evaluate whose priorities the indicators serve. In some instances, particular changes will be “fuzzy”, and an organization will not be able to determine which factors in particular have contributed to such a change. While this may be discouraging, change that seems to have ambiguous attribution is an opportunity to recognize that multiple factors can shift gender issues.⁷

With these challenges present, the careful design of gender indicators becomes even more important. Concentrating on adapting gender indicators to fit the regional context in which they will be employed, rather than relying on standard indicators, will increase chances of success. In the same way, creating indicators through direct interaction with the population the program is meant to benefit will allow the indicators to accurately reflect the gender circumstances experienced and provide for more meaningful changes. Additionally, in the process of developing gender indicators organizations must examine preexisting information, national indicators that may be utilized, legal structures that inhibit gender equality, whether partner governments are willing to participate in data collection and what their inputs are, the size of changes being measured, how data will be shared, and if there are other indicator frameworks already in use that are available for modification. In this process it is necessary to consider both regional and international frameworks for gender indicator development.

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⁵ OCED, 1.
⁶ OCED, 2.
⁷ OCED, 3.
**IV: The Importance of Gender Indicators in Evaluation Women’s Participation in Diplomacy**

Fortunately, women’s participation in diplomacy may be evaluated with both qualitative and quantitative gender indicators, increasing chances of setting measurable goals for success. Collecting gender specific data and examining gender indicators in relation to diplomacy allows nations to work toward the measurable goal of gender parity in the diplomatic field. While the number of female diplomats and women employed in the diplomatic field can be gauged by quantitative indicators, other measurable factors influencing women’s participation are better measured by qualitative indicators. Examining attitudes and perceptions of both men and women surrounding the participation of women in the diplomatic field and workforce at large, as well as attitudes towards how family should influence the career of women, are particularly useful qualitative measures to note. Nations that are willing to collect and utilize qualitative and quantitative data to inform their gender parity programs are setting themselves up for greater success in achieving their goals.

In the effort to increase women’s participation in the diplomatic field, as in all gender parity efforts, access to reliable data is invaluable. Gender parity goals are more likely to be achieved when they are measurable, as there is a benchmark for success. Unfortunately, in many scenarios there is a decided lack of credible data available for the accurate evaluation of gender policies. Women are frequently left out of statistical systems, and this impacts the ability to create effective, measurable policies for both genders. Recognizing the challenge faced in collecting credible data, the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women has recognized that, “improving the availability and use of gender statistics to inform policy was crucial for achieving the 2030 Agenda.” The Commission has called for an alliance between governments and national statistical institutes to ensure that there are quality statistics available for the evaluation of gender policies. They have also called for improved collection and sharing of such gender data.

**V: Challenges**

While the implementation of gender data collection measures and the use of gender indicators to inform policy is critical for increasing women’s participation in diplomacy and other gender parity efforts, organizations will often face several challenges. Lack of credible sources of data and lack of data collection are two commonly cited challenges in collecting gender-based data. While efforts are now being made by many governments and national institutions to collect gender specific data, historically, the majority of gender specific data has been collected through grassroots studies and NGOs. With small sample sizes from distinct populations within nations, this sort of data is not necessarily useful on a national scale to inform policy. Data sharing is another area where challenges frequently arise. Gender based data that is collected is often not shared beyond the scope of its collection (regional, national, local) creating

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difficulties in seeing trends and changes on a large scale. As previously mentioned, the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women has called for nations to prioritize the collection and dissemination of credible gender statistics.

VI: What Success Looks Like: Case Studies from Bahrain, Mexico and Uganda

The Kingdom of Bahrain

The Kingdom of Bahrain has implemented national data collection in an effort to inform their gender parity efforts. The Supreme Council of Women (SCW), led by her royal highness Princess Sabeeka bint Ibrahim al Khalifa, has taken an active role in the collection of gender specific data collection to document the advancement of gender parity efforts and inform the SCW of areas that require improvement.

The SCW regularly publishes a report entitled “Bahraini Women in Numbers.” Through cooperation with other ministries, the SCW collects data on all possible aspects of life for Bahraini women; marriage, education, employment, and more. This data is then made publicly available to inform gender parity policies. To provide further data dissemination, the SCW developed a gender parity application that is available on both iOS and Android platforms. The application provides easy access to critical data surrounding the status of Bahraini women and is available in Arabic and English.

The data collected by the SCW and other ministries in Bahrain has been used to inform the 2013-2022 National Action Plan for the Advancement of Bahraini Women. Through the use of positive indicators, the Kingdom of Bahrain assessed: “that the total achieved objectives based on the National Plan was 26%. Whereas the total achieved priorities in the National Plan (decision making, economic empowerment and family stability) was 56%. This indicates that focusing on specific fields and concentrating efforts to achieve them would lead to better results.” By using targeted, qualitative and quantitative indicators to gauge progress, the Kingdom of Bahrain was able to create effective benchmarks against which to measure their advancement toward gender parity goals.

Mexico

Mexico identified within its foreign service, the Secretaria de Relaciones Exteriores (SRE), that they were not achieving gender parity. This required the SRE to conduct a self-assessment to identify the reasons why women were not already present in equal numbers to men in ambassadorships and minister positions. The 2011 establishment of the Office of Gender Equality within the SRE and their subsequent 2012 diagnostic survey of gender equality confirmed the lack of gender parity within the Ministry and established 240 gender focal points that operate within Mexico’s Embassies and Consulates, and within the Ministry itself in Mexico City. Driven by the findings of the diagnostic survey, the SRE set a goal of having 50% of the

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SRE’s ambassadors and ministers be women. At the request of the President for ministries and federal agencies to work for the benefit of Mexican women, the SRE inaugurated the 2015-2018 Program for Equality between Women and Men, designed to, “guide, integrate and facilitate institutional efforts to achieve substantive equality between both genders.”

As part of the 2015-2018 Program for Equality between Women and Men, the SRE used the previously collected data to implement policies that will strengthen the position of women within the ministry. They found that while there was not a lack of female applicants to the SRE, they were typically not as successful as male applicants on entrance exams and in other testing events. The SRE also identified that during the minimum of 10 years it takes for an incoming diplomat to reach the level of minister, responsibilities to family and other life events often removed female diplomats from service in the SRE, resulting in the percentage of women ministers being only 20%, whereas 38% of third secretaries are female. Such discoveries led the SRE to implement several policies to increase gender parity within the ministry and work toward their goal of having 50% female ambassadors and ministers. The SRE created a mandate that required all incoming cohorts to the SRE to be 50% female. The SRE has also taken a critical look at sexual harassment within the ministry, as a result of reporting from the 2012 diagnostic survey and has installed mechanisms to report incidents of abuse and harassment to improve the working environment for women. Such gender parity supporting policies are the direct result of self-assessment conducted using quantitative and qualitative gender indicators.

Uganda

Uganda has been one of the most successful nations in terms of implementing sex disaggregated data for the advancement of gender equality. Uganda recognized the challenges it faced in terms of gender inequality across all sectors and knew that a solution was necessary. “Uganda was among 17 countries in Africa that had ratified the African Charter of Statistics, which focused on achieving gender-related statistics. With support from UN-Women, it had developed national priority gender equality indicators, anchored in the 2030 Agenda. There were 106 priority indicators that helped the country fast-track progress in attaining gender equality.”

Critical in Uganda’s collection and dissemination of gender statistics is UBoS, or, the Uganda Bureau of Statistics. UBoS has been key in compiling a comprehensive report of gender responsive indicators by sector: education and sports, local government, public service, health, agriculture, environment and natural resources, and justice law and order. UBoS uses gender responsive indicators as measures of performance to: address gender gaps, make national and local level recommendations, make sector level recommendations, and establish national programs and policies.

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12 Del Rio. 7.
13 UN DESA

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The reports compiled by UBoS have been used to inform gender equality policies and programming across sectors and promote the advancement of Ugandan women. Uganda remains committed to the development of gender statistics, as advocated for in many international and regional frameworks including, the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA), Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Sustainable Development Goals and the AU Agenda 2063.

VII: Recommendations:

1. **Establish and/or Improve National Statistics Collection**

   In order to collect credible gender disaggregated data, nations must have a method of national statistic collection that works in full cooperation with government, non-government, and private sector partners. Oversight of gender disaggregated data collection and recommendations on the types of data to be collected can and should be made by partners with the mission to advance women within the nation.

2. **Conduct Data Driven Self-Assessment and Evaluation**

   Government, non-government, and private sector partners should be encouraged to conduct data driven self-assessments and evaluations of their organizational culture and practices as related to gender parity. Honest self-assessment and evaluation will aid organizations and institutions in identifying gaps and establishing goals for improvement in gender parity practices.

3. **Establish and/or Improve Procedures for the Dissemination of Collected Statistics**

   Organizations responsible for national statistics collection on gender disaggregated data and gender issues must establish a method for disseminating data to partners and the public in a way that is accessible, transparent, and centralized. Collected data is only useful if it is shared to those who will benefit from its use.
Pillar II: Professional Networks
Case Studies: Bahrain, Kurdistan Region of Iraq, Turkey

I: Why is Professional Networking Important to the Diplomatic Field?

Networking is the connection of individuals in order to make progress within society. Building trusted relationships with individuals in and outside the office takes time, precision and skill. The majority of professional networking opportunities occur before and after standard business hours. Example are internal meetings on budgeting and performance, or events celebrating the achievements of key negotiators across multiple nations.

For a diplomat, networking is the single most important indicator of upward mobility in a career. A diplomat’s ability to negotiate is fundamentally dependent on their ability to work with foreign national representatives or international institutions experts. Diplomacy is a business development, operations manager, and marketing lead role all into one position. If diplomats are not at their desk and thus engaging and building rapport with key individuals, then they are effective professionals. Consistent outreach, follow up, and discussion with opposing sides are all indicators of the same objective: a more peaceful and prosperous world for a nation’s constituents and allies. The diplomatic field requires individuals who possess a deep understanding of opposing viewpoints; these beliefs can only be fully understood through dialogue and authentic engagement.

Certain careers require flexible and nonconventional schedules from entry-level to decision-making leadership. Diplomats are expected to build a career trajectory that requires both the representation of the home country abroad and on-call expectations. Popular on-call roles include journalism, public safety and healthcare. Diplomacy for all nations also falls into a 24/7 mindset. Both men and women in diplomacy, from consular administrator to ambassador, are evaluated on their ability to negotiate and build consensus with selected interests.

II: Findings and Qualitative Explanations

Multiple ambassadors and mid-level diplomats from a cross-section of MENA nations from October 2017 to April 2018 offered their perspectives on captured gender indicators, professional networks, domestic policies and institutional policies. The team asked a variety of women and men in the diplomatic service to share their qualitative experience specifically regarding their ability and inhibitors of building relationships within and outside the office. All interviewees welcomed discussion regarding industry-related requirements such as frequent travel, non-standard business hours and legacy position appointments. Simple yet telling questions such as “how many women do you interact with on a daily basis” and “are you occasionally the sole female within meetings?” were also asked. The answer? Not many.

All interviewees were at a policy-making level and do not answer for young professionals, especially young women or minority populations within a nation. Gaining new contacts, building relationships and persuading third parties lead to different barriers for women of color.
III. Foreign Affairs & Networking: Family Priorities and Professional Needs

Women’s personal priorities and triumphs for careers changed throughout professional and personal inflection points. Major life milestones, such as advanced education, marriage, children and promotion, all contribute to an individual and family prioritization of after-hour and externally-facing events. All interviewees agreed that maintaining an internal rolodex within institutions is just as critical as building outside contacts for career trajectory and performance evaluations.

As described by Bayan Sami Abdul Rahman, Kurdistan Regional Government Representative serving in Washington, D.C., diplomats are “essentially on call, all the time.” As a former journalist, Ms. Rahman was accustomed a fluid professional role and demanding employer obligations. However, she does admit that when she became a mother, she reprioritized and consciously (and unconsciously) became increasingly selective within the evening diplomatic discussion circuit. Reprioritizing professional demands to meet family obligations is not unique to diplomacy.

Oftentimes research interviewees acknowledged unwavering support of their spouse and deliberate division of child and home responsibilities. One solution for generating more opportunities for after-hour professional connections starts with family communication. As discussed by a Turkish Ambassador of a sub-Saharan African nation, “we really divide the responsibility at home.” Both her and her spouse work in foreign affairs and thus both face many after-hours professional obligations. Oftentimes both parent work schedules are dictated by unforeseen circumstances and events.

One suggestion of how institutions can better facilitate positive family-work relationships is provided by Shaikh Abdullah bin Rashed bin Abdullah Al Khalifa, Bahrain Ambassador to the U.S. Due to the nature of a diplomatic career, spousal support and involvement is key for employee retention. When individuals join the foreign service, it is a commitment by every family member to go abroad where it is needed. After many discussions with his wife, Shaikh Al Khalifa instituted a new policy of having spouses contribute to the diplomatic mission. This holistic approach provides more adaptability for both female and male diplomats when building diplomatic careers. Shaikh Al Khalifa’s spouse is often interviewed and speaks independently of her husband on issues pertaining to Bahrain foreign policy. The popular program and organizational change began as a simple experiment because his spouse just, “wanted to be a part of what he was doing,” said Shaikh Al Khalifa.

However, despite much progress since the “marriage ban” ended in the Western world in the 1970s, “women have to be double or triple times committed and perform better than men” and “still have double the challenge of a man to be noticed,” one ambassador noted. As pointed out by a Turkish ambassador, encouraging application and women’s interest in foreign affairs is easy, but there are plenty of institutional barriers within bureaucratic systems that prevent women from gaining leadership positions. “There are lots of state structures that can be discouraging,” she said.
IV: The Importance of Mentorship

Mentorship is defined as a more experienced individual providing guidance to junior colleagues and associates. Professional mentorship, including mentors and mentees, are common throughout the private, public and academic sectors. In order to receive promotion from mid-level management to decision-making positions, applicants require heavy advocacy from senior leadership. Mentorship is critical for professional evaluation and advocacy.

In all parts of the world, many men in positions of power worry about perception or are uncomfortable if they meet individually with a junior female colleague, especially outside the office or after workday hours. In fact, one in six men actively do not seek mentorship relationships with female colleagues; no matter their position, age or expertise. Women can also be penalized for not facilitating one-on-one dinner meeting with a team member or speaking with a counterpart privately at a reception.

V: Structural Barriers: Mentee Women & Cultural Norms

The diplomatic community is inherently unique for advancing productive and intimate mentorship relationships. As described by the Turkish Ambassador interviewed, “our ministry has senior and junior colleagues working as a small group of people abroad. Everyone knows each other, and we form larger families within each embassy. In this environment, you listen, learn and build lessons. This environment works as a mentorship tool.” Advocating for a diplomatic ecosystem that promotes formal and informal mentorship across gender lines should be a priority for every nation in order to achieve gender parity.

After conducting multiple interviews with men and women on the subject, it was discovered that the diplomatic sector within MENA nations have yet to address the issue of institutional mentorship and the cultural stigma associated with professional advisory relationships. Impactful mentorship is an institutional barrier to a woman’s professional success in the diplomatic field, particularly for MENA women. How are junior female diplomats able to begin a career trajectory equal to their male counterparts if societal barriers prevent them from engaging in meaningful relationships with the predominantly-male senior leadership team? An organization that does not directly promote strong mentorship programs specifically for young female diplomats will not be successful. An organization must support informal networks for males and females to engage in order to contribute to a more power parity future workforce.

14 Ang, Katerina. “Sheryl Sandberg says this is the secret ingredient to solving gender inequality at work.” Moneyish. (7 February 2018).
Pillar III: Family and Domestic Policy  
Case Studies: Bahrain, Germany, Iraq, Japan, Sweden, UN  

I: Introduction  

Family and domestic policies that countries adopt play an integral role in the participation of women within the diplomatic realm. In response to, “Could you tell us some of the difficulties that you have encountered in your work, and some of the issues that you feel should be addressed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA)?” Four of the five female diplomats in Japan’s MOFA explicitly mentioned balancing work and family, with specific mention of childcare and elder care responsibilities. Work-life balance is not special to only the Japanese MOFA, but is a frequent response that we encountered on multiple occasions with a variety of female ambassadors and diplomats.  

It is a reality that women encounter in every job and not just the diplomatic service. It is especially true with diplomacy due to the amount of travel and relocation involved in foreign countries. As a result of balancing family life, a large number of working women tend to quit their jobs before marriage or after having children. Oftentimes the difficulty for women diplomats to striving for both a thriving professional career and a happy family is unobtainable.  

The relationship between the participation of women in diplomacy and family life is something that has not only been a hindrance in balancing the two but on an institutional level as well. Up until the 1970s, there was a "ban on marriage". This meant that when a woman got married she had to quit her job within the ministry of foreign affairs in countries such as the United Kingdom (U.K.), United States (U.S.), etc. This hindered the involvement of women in diplomatic fields to a great degree. Because the ban was removed, the percentage of female participation has risen. But it’s still lagging behind the number of men in the diplomatic positions. The tables below provide a picture of the difference in female and male ambassador appointed and received.  

Figure 1. Share of women (%) of ambassador appointments in 2014  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
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<td>84</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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II: Innovative Policies

There have been several policies taken by global leaders to address and increase the role that women play in diplomacy through domestic and family policies within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well as the rest of the government.

Quotas

Up until 1971 only 4% of Swedish employees in the MOFA were women. In 2014, meanwhile the situation in 2014 is quite different since women make up 59% of the workforce. In the Scandinavian countries, major improvements took place with the introduction of the quota system, which aimed at combatting structural disadvantages. Making inequality visible is the first step towards the introduction and ratification of quotas. Quotas have also been introduced in South Korea. But the quota system has the downside of creating issues of legitimacy. There are concerns about the qualifications of women and their merit. But there are reasons it should be called for as well since there have been previous laws that have specifically been directed at excluding women with families then including new laws with quotas should not be out of the question. In our interview with Kurdistan Regional Government’s representative, Bayan Sami Abdulrahman encouraged quotas as a means of normalization of seeing women in decision-making positions in society.

Gender Equality

There is a gender equality issue which needs to be recognized so that change can take place with inclusion of more female leaders in all professional fields. This is something that the German government has realized. In regards to diplomacy, they have placed a gender equality position in their MOFA with the purpose of examining the recruitment processes of the training program. Furthermore, the Foreign Office arranges visits to universities, where women diplomats have the opportunity to tell students about their experiences in the field. Besides allowing women diplomats to become role models, the office has also included gender mainstreaming


18 In the Kurdish Regional Government, there is a 30% quota dedicated to women. In the rest of Iraq, there is a 25% quota for female inclusion in the parliament.
questions in the entrance exams to increase awareness of gender issues. The Gender Equality position within the ministry had a major effect on the participation of female diplomats. For the first time ever in 2004, an equal number of women and men were entering the diplomatic training program in Germany due to the Gender Equality Position in the Foreign Ministry.19

Spouse and Child Considerations

Diplomatic life requires that spouses and children move frequently and with no guarantees that the spouse will find work at postings abroad, let alone develop and sustain a career. Since viewing women with families in the diplomatic service was not allowed until the 1970s in several countries, the idea of creating specific policies oriented towards the spouses and children for women was not a priority. In fact, the Swedish MOFA, since the 1970s, was criticized for not doing enough to secure the professional development and the pensions of the partners who accompany the MFA staff abroad. This was due to the unfound assumption that the partner, who was almost always a woman, would be content as a housewife during the family’s stay abroad. However, as the public debate in Sweden became more focused on gender equality and women became more important actors on the labor market, the MOFA was pushed to take steps to mitigate the negative effects that a foreign placement has for the partner’s professional career and pension.20

While talking to the Bahraini Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the first female undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Bahrain, Shaikha Rana Bint Isa Bin Duaij Al Khalifa22, the institution emphasized what acts have been taken in regards to family and spouse accommodations. It is important to note that this is not only for women but for male diplomats as well. It is just a factor that has a greater effect on the female diplomats than the male diplomats, so having such policies in places accommodates their needs in a more comfortable way. The policies that the Bahraini MOFA has include the following.

First and foremost, in order to make the relocation of families easier since it is one of the main challenges they face when relocating, the education of the children is paid for by the ministry for all years while abroad and for four more years when back into the country of their residence. Second, if the spouse, whether it be a man or a woman relocates with the husband, then they have the option of continuing their jobs once they are back in the country and will continue to receive their pension as a form of guarantee. This is in aim of having a career that can be sustained when back home since it is a major issue most spouses when accompanying their diplomatic spouses. Finally, maternity leave for female diplomats is three months but once they are back to work, they have the option of leaving two hours earlier for the duration of six months.

In Germany, to make the combination of work and family life easier for the employees in the diplomatic field, part-time schedules have been adopted as an option for several of the German diplomatic positions. The United States is especially known for this family policy but when putting families where both parents are in the diplomatic service, they will aim at putting them in neighboring countries so that they can be in proximity to each other when relocating.

Furthermore, when going through the United Nations Blue Book missions for Geneva and New York for the years 2017, we noticed that more than 40 percent of the missions that had a high number of female diplomats had their spouses in the mission. The observation was made through the last names. It was helpful to talk to a Middle Eastern Foreign Ministry such as Bahrain because they stated that they take that approach as well but is it harder to notice in Middle Eastern countries since the women’s last name stays as it is and does not change to her husband’s.
Pillar IV: Institutional Policy  
Case Studies: Bahrain, Canada

I: Introduction

At the beginning the research project, our team hypothesized that women’s participation in diplomatic fields was a direct cause and effect of policies implemented by their respective foreign policy institutions. However, our interviews and research led us to understand that there are cultural and systemic changes that occur as a result of policy. This section will address institutional policies that support women in society and how they translate into women’s ability to pursue career ambitions in foreign policy. Some of the most pronounced institutional changes encountered throughout research are law enforcement, family law, paternity leave, and the practice of gender sensitive budgeting.

II: Law Enforcement

Institutions have the ability to create the acceptance of new ideas, especially when they know how to implement policies with a local flavor. In the domain of law enforcement, one can find unique examples in the Muharraq Governorate Police Department in city of Muharraq in the Kingdom of Bahrain. The Supreme Council of Women (SCW) worked as a consultant with the Muharraq Governorate Police Department to develop a program geared towards supporting families in a way that is acceptable in Bahraini society. Prior to the collaboration between the SCW and the Muharraq Police Department, women’s access to the justice system was stigmatized because Bahraini society is very close knit and rumors of being inside a police station are viewed negatively. This stigma was so pronounced in Bahraini society that women would avoid accessing the justice system even when approaching law enforcement was in their best interest.

As a solution the SCW and the Muharraq Police department created a pilot program called the Bureau of Family Protection. The program was able to enhance community policing by recruiting and training a specialized group of officers in social work in order to prepare them to mediate family issues from a law enforcement standpoint. They were able to find practices that were necessary in the context of Bahraini society:

- Requiring officers in the Bureau of Family protection to sign a confidentiality agreement prohibiting them from discussing their cases with unauthorized personnel.
- Requiring that families that are accessing the justice system for domestic disturbances to sign an agreement that permits the officer to investigate sensitive topics within the family.
- Providing women and children who are victims of domestic disturbances a cell phone that is property of the police department to keep open communication with the police department.

Security is a basic need that has to be fulfilled to foster self-actualization. Women’s confidence in the justice system is critical in supporting more ambitious goals that include serving their respective country.

III: Family Law

Institutions that work with family law should pivot to addressing cultural changes in society rather than imposing traditional views that no longer resonate with the public. In 2017, the SCW was able to establish the Family Courts Complex (FCC). The FCC looks to mediate family matters and help both parties either reconcile or end the marriage on peaceful terms. It is worth noting the prior to the FCC, women were willing to relinquish their rights in a divorce to forgo arbitration because the stigma of being in family court. \(^{25}\)

The SCW and the FCC were able to work together to remove this stigma by making the following changes:

- Creating a different entrance for women that fosters anonymity
- Creating a family friendly play area for children in the male and female waiting areas
- Providing pre-counseling to couples before moving on to the divorce proceedings
- Providing anonymity to couples accessing counseling
- Reducing the waiting time for a divorce from 3 – 4 years to 4 – 6 months

The family court also created an alimony fund. This fund is to assist women in the case that their former spouse can no longer pay child support as a result of death, loss of income, or any other inability to pay. \(^{26}\)

As a public policy, Bahrain understood the potential psychological impact that struggling marriages have on the household—namely children. Facilitating a healthy family life allows both parties in a divorce to move forward with their lives. As earlier noted, women were willing to forego their rights in a divorce because it had such a social stigma. This also means that women were more likely to suffer disproportionately in a divorce prior to the reforms made in family policy.

IV: Paternity Leave

Paternity leave is a topic that is becoming more popular throughout the world. It is simple to overlook its linkages to supporting women returning to the work place after maternity leave. Although there are many examples of countries successfully implementing a paternity leave program; the Quebec Province of Canada stands out as a unique case study.

Introduced on January 1, 2006, Quebec Parental Insurance Plan (QPIP) is an employment insurance program managed by the Province of Quebec in Canada. It includes maternity, parental,

\(^{25}\) Johns Hopkins Student Visit to the Kingdom of Bahrain: Family Courts Center 2018., edited by Philip Charlemagne, Azheen Ishan Fuad Family Courts Complex (March 21).

\(^{26}\) Johns Hopkins Student Visit to the Kingdom of Bahrain: Family Courts Center 2018., edited by Philip Charlemagne, Azheen Ishan Fuad Family Courts Complex (March 21).
and adoption benefits for residents and it is a replacement to the Employ Insurance (EI) program. QPIP’s approach to maternity and paternity leave is unique to other parental leave programs because it not only provides leave to the mother, but it provides leave to the father that cannot be shared between a couple. As Patnaik points out, “[P]rior to the reform, fathers only had access to ‘shared’ parental leave with their spouses, and leave-takers were compensated with little over half their wages up to strict cap so that household incomes were hit hard when fathers took leave (3).” It is believed that the way to encourage men to make use of the paternity time is to market it directly to fathers as time that cannot be shifted between spouses. It is believed that this approach is effective because men did not use the paternity time available to them previous to EI.

Under the EI program, over 60 percent of mothers who took maternity leave did not use all of the maternity time requested; therefore, they did not use all of the time they were entitled to use.27 Although spouses were entitled to use the remaining maternity leave that was not used, fathers did not use this time. It is believed that men did not use the remaining time because of attitudes towards men being home, rather than working to support their families.28 Moreover, there are social stigmas towards men using a policy that is perceived to be for women. This belief indirectly puts the more responsibility on women in the home and reduces their role as professionals. The QPIP’s success is in that fact that it realized that if the leave policy is negotiable between spouses, not designated for men, and does not have the correct insurance compensation amount—fathers will be apprehensive to use it. By improving father’s participation in parental leave, governments and institutions would be supporting women return to the workforce faster and reduce the gender biased discrimination that married women face during job interviews and throughout professional careers.

V: Gender Sensitive Budgeting

Gender Sensitive budgeting (GSB) is the practice of effectively raising and using public finances to implement strategies to advance gender equality and women’s empowerment. Programs such as the QPIP, which has provisions that support women’s ability to return to the workforce, are made possible through the financing it receives through payroll taxes.29 It is critical that governments plan out a clear strategy when implementing GSB and seek guidance when necessary because a failed GSB program can leave a negative public perception when in reality can empower improve an overall country.

One of the most overlooked practices to successfully implement GSB practices is through creating a legal framework—making the policies based on consensus.30 In the case that a strong consensus does not prevail, it is likely that gender specific initiatives will be overlooked in the budgeting process. Among the advanced countries, none of the G7 countries currently implement GSB practices into their legal framework.31 Austria, a non G7 country, presents one of the best examples of implementing GSB into its laws. In fact, its constitution mandates that all ministries

28 Patnaik, 8.
29 Patnaik, 6.
31 Ibid, 19

Abdella-El Kallassy, Abdulkarim, Charlemagne, Koeppen
that receive a budget are required to have one gender-based initiative as part of their annual metrics.\textsuperscript{32}

\textsuperscript{32} Ibid, 19.
Conclusion & Qualitative Recommendations

Gender power parity in the diplomatic field is critical for fostering a more peaceful and prosperous world. This study analyzed successful case studies from MENA and non-MENA countries were gathered regarding empowering, promoting and retaining women in the foreign service. Four key pillars of the diplomatic service, including captured gender indicators, professional networks, domestic/family policy and institutional policy, were discovered across countries that indicate barriers to gender power parity and serve as opportunities for organizations to foster a more inclusive workplace and organizational mission.

In order to encourage women to remain and be promoted to positions of power in the diplomatic corps, national foreign ministries in MENA and non-MENA countries should enact four particular initiatives.

**Holistic Approach to Career-Building Domestically**

When thinking about institutional change, nations must begin at the domestic policy and family policy levels. Encourage spousal input, thus reflecting progressive cultural shifts within families regarding work-life balance should be encouraged by all national governments. More spousal support will create better work-load bearing homes and ultimately happier families. This will further retention rates as well as the opportunity for a more diverse pool of candidates for policy-making positions.

Moreover, countries should look deeper into paternity leave practice that address social stigmas in regarding to using paternity leave. When implemented correctly, paternity leave has a potential secondary effect of supporting women returning to the workplace. It can also promote shared workload in the home and help emphasize women’s roles in the workplace.

**Holistic Approach to Career-Building Abroad**

When serving abroad or in hardship posts, organizations should place more resources towards executing a family unit methodology within the diplomatic corps. Spouses should be encouraged by organizations to become more involved within the embassy community abroad. An institution promoting an inclusive approach to a diplomat’s career will also encourage stronger family support systems and commitments by spouses to load-sharing.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF BARRIERS TO GENDER PARITY

Formal mentorship of senior diplomats with junior staff members within a foreign affairs ministry should be encouraged. Due to cultural norms, mentorship must be formalized and encouraged in order to achieve gender parity and build a more inclusive, representative workforce. Mentorship is a tangible outcome to discovering top talent and future leaders of a nation.

In order to foster better mentor-mentee relationships that achieve gender parity, organizations must encourage employee engagement specifically for employee mentorship within work hours. Maintaining work-hour standards for leadership and professional evaluation meetings will create a welcoming environment for more male-female mentorship pairings, a simple yet significant way to have more diverse candidates a part of promotion candidate cohorts.

ORGANIZATIONS: ROLE IN PROMOTING GENDER PARITY

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Facilitation of mentor Programs within the Foreign Policy Institute

Organizations must acknowledge that men and women have different strengths and succeed in different professional settings. Organizations should formally encourage women to build meaningful professional networks by incorporating technology into professional expectations, while also providing forums for junior staff members. Through workshops and brown-bag lunches, senior leadership can easily demonstrate, without extra cost, why building internal and external networks is necessary for having an impactful and robust diplomatic career.

Organizations must also encourage women in particular to network at industry events as well as engage with colleagues of various ranks within the office. Junior staff members should be encouraged by senior staff members regarding how and why professional connections with international institutions within the home nation, as well as foreign counterparts are not only critical to personal growth and success, but also professional promotability. Alternatives, such as utilizing technology for remote meetings should be encouraged.
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