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The Strategic use of Gender Quotas in the Arab World

by Bozena Chrisina Welbourne Hybl Research Fellow, University of Colorado



IFES Fellowship in Democracy Studies

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William and Kathy Hybl Democracy Studies Fellowship Paper

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2010

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# **Table of Contents**

Acknowledgements	5
Abstract	6
Introduction	1
Literature Review: Quotas Explored	3
A Quantitative Exploration of Gender Quota Adoption in the Arab World	8
The Model	8
Influences on the Adoption of Gender Quotas in the Arab World	9
Supply and Demand-side Factors	11
The Results	14
Conclusion	19
Bibliography	21

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# **Abstract**

The 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) renewed debate on proposed mechanisms to increase women's presence in the public sphere across the developing and developed world. One of the most controversial, yet important tools to promote women into the political arena has been the gender quota. This paper explores the mix of incentives seen in the variation in gender quota adoption within legislatures across the Middle East and North Africa. I use event history analysis to estimate which factors predict gender quota adoption across 22 Arab League countries from 1990 to 2009. This paper posits and finds that the increasingly economic nature of international influence exerted through development assistance consistently impacts the probability of adopting gender quotas in Arab legislatures.

"Investing in gender equality and empowerment of women is smart economics." The World Bank

#### Introduction

Why are levels of gender representation and gender-related policy reform in Morocco higher than in Lebanon? Lebanon has long boasted a cosmopolitan, educated culture and was hailed the "Paris of the Middle East" up until the civil war. Furthermore, its reputation as a "progressive" Arab republic gave Richards and Waterbury (2008) sufficient leeway to proclaim it one of the few quasi-democracies in the Middle East and North Africa, alongside Israel and Turkey. Lebanese women won the right to vote and participate in national elections in 1952, two decades before that same right would be extended in Switzerland. Even public awareness of genderrelated issues is substantially higher in Lebanon than in Morocco, however, only 17 women have ever served in Lebanon's parliament. Morocco, conversely, is a constitutional monarchy hosting some of the world's highest rates of illiteracy across both genders yet it has arguably experienced greater levels of women's political representation. Currently, there are 34 female parliamentarians out of a total of 325; 30 of whom have been elected via a voluntary party gender quota adopted in 2002. Furthermore, Morocco's moudawana reforms have been hailed as a landmark example of gender policy reform because of their progressive content and the truly grassroots nature of the movement that successfully put the proposal on the government's agenda.<sup>3</sup>

Modernization theorists from Lipset (1959) to Inglehart and Norris (2003) would lead us to expect more "progressive" gender outcomes and policies in "cosmopolitan" Lebanon rather than Morocco, so what explains this discrepancy?<sup>4</sup>

This paper argues that international financial incentives, usually seen in development assistance, have a significant impact on the types of gender empowerment strategies chosen by Arab nations. These adopted strategies can also be seen as a by-product of Arab governments' attempts to attain "democracy" benchmarks set by the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, rather than to truly enfranchise women. The contrasting outcomes in Lebanon and Morocco corroborate the previous claim as Morocco received much higher levels of targeted

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The total illiteracy rate is 55.6% according to the World Development Indicators' latest online data (2010).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Abdul-Latif and Serpe (2010).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> The *moudawana* law is a revision of Morocco's family code passed by the Moroccan Parliament in 2004 granting women substantial rights vis-à-vis their spouses. Women are now allowed to obtain and dispute a divorce on equal terms in civil courts, polygamy has been circumscribed, the legal age of marriage was raised to 18 from 15, sexual harassment is now an offense punishable by law, etc. More details on the Moroccan Ministry of Justice's website: http://www.justice.gov.ma/MOUDAWANA/Codefamille.pdf

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Samuel Martin Lipset (1959) maintained that education specifically moderated men and women by broadening their social outlook and thus rendering them more tolerant of disenfranchised groups such as women, leading to the liberalization of the political system overall. Recently, Inglehart and Norris (2003) ventured modernization blurred gender roles, increasing equality across the workforce, the hearth, education, and representative government.

development assistance than Lebanon over the past 19 years (see Figure 1 below). These aid disbursement patterns remained steady until the last half of the new millennium when the rates of money flowing into Lebanon and Morocco merged around 2004. Interestingly, the idea of implementing a gender quota emerged as a central topic of Lebanese parliamentary and cabinet debate in 2005. That year a national commission drafted a new electoral law recommending a 20 percent gender quota for the legislative assembly, subsequently rejected by the legislative and executive offices. This rise in levels of foreign aid directed at Lebanon deliberately coincided with and, in fact, galvanized a renewed discussion in 2005 of mechanisms to formalize women's political participation. Renewed discussion on the gender quota was not an accidental development, but an indication of a broader pattern in the Middle East and North Africa.

Aggregate Levels of Development Assistance for Morocco and Lebanon from 1990-2009 (\$ U.S. Dollars)

1400000000.00

100000000.00

400000000.00

1990 1991 1992 1993 1994 1995 1996 1997 1998 1999 2000 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009

Figure 1 | Patterns of Aid Allocation to Lebanon vs. Morocco (1990-2006)

World Bank Development Indicators 2010

For this paper, I restrict my focus to this Muslim-majority region to control for the effect of Islam. This allows for an exploration of structural and institutional elements beyond religion or culture that contribute to the choice of gender policy in Arab countries. The following section gives an overview of the literature on gender quotas, touching on the nuances of gender quota adoption in the Middle East and North Africa. This section also highlights the importance of the shift in gender empowerment rhetoric from advocating women's political incorporation as an explicitly humanitarian and legal issue to an economic necessity. I argue this creates financial incentives for popularizing cosmetic gender-related policy reforms for representational institutions. The second section introduces a statistical model geared towards exploring factors most consistently predictive of gender quota adoption. I present results from two discrete-time event history models, focusing on the impact of development assistance on the diffusion of this policy across 22 Arab League member states from 1990 until 2009. The final section considers the ramifications of these statistical results and clarifies how aid dependency plays into the choice of Arab policymakers' gender promotion strategies and commitment to credible gender reforms. Ultimately, this research highlights the strategic and explicitly economic motivations behind an unexpected policy trend in the Arab world.

### **Literature Review: Quotas Explored**

Over the last two decades, there has been a significant diffusion of gender norms globally; first via the Convention on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (1979), then the Beijing Platform for Action (1995),<sup>7</sup> and, newly, the Millennium Development Goals (Krook 2006). In the last decade, gender quotas emerged as the most widespread gender policy *and* electoral reform with over 100 countries implementing some type of gender quota (Krook 2009). The following section traces the diffusion of this particular policy trend across the world, while discussing the possible dynamics underlying the choice to adopt gender quotas in the Middle

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> In any analysis of majority Muslim countries, the traditional subordination of women in the Islamic faith—usually varying with degree of religiosity—often serves as an explanation for women's lack of political opportunity and policies which limit political participation (Unifem 2005, Donno and Russett, 2004, Inglehart and Norris 2003, Fish 2002, Ahmed 1992). In fact, cross-national statistical analysis often uses a "Muslim dummy" as a method to control for this phenomenon. Steven Fish (2002) emphasizes that the political manifestation of Islam impedes women's access to resources and by default economic and political power. Importantly, Islam is not uniformly practiced across Arab nations and is certainly not the primary factor impeding women's participation in the aforementioned Lebanese example. If the effect of Islam were constant across the Arab world we would not see any variation in women's political participation or in patterns of political incorporation. In fact, the percentage of women in national legislatures irrespective of gender quotas ranges from above 20 percent in the United Arab Emirates to zero in the cases of Qatar, Oman, and Saudi Arabia; all in the *same* sub-region of the Arab world (the Persian Gulf). This lends credence to the importance of alternative explanations.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> The 22 Arab League Member states are: Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Palestinian Authority, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Yemen.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> The Beijing Platform called for direct government participation in diverting resources to and creating a supportive environment for the complete inclusion of women into public society with the aid of women's ngos, feminist groups, and the private sector—the first clear international promotion of gender mainstreaming. *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

#### East and North Africa.

Krook and O'Brian (2010) venture that more than three quarters of proposals to adopt gender quotas have been introduced in the last 15 years, which directly follows the rise of *gender mainstreaming* from the U.N.'s 4<sup>th</sup> World Conference for Women in 1995 through to the Millennium Summit in 2000 (Krook and True 2008, Hafner-Burtin and Pollack 2002). Dahlerup (2003) ventures that a country's international image has become more and more important across the international and national context, pushing countries to effectively market themselves as modern and innovative. Gender empowerment has quickly become a popular and timely way to promote just such an image to the world. Furthermore, the goals of the Beijing Conference (1995) and the Millennium Development Goals (2000) explicitly promoted the idea of women's importance for economic development. This new rhetoric rapidly created an economic incentive to institutionally incorporate women into the political systems of countries with oftentimes less-than-stellar reputations for upholding women's rights (such as Sudan or Afghanistan).

In recent years, there has been an important shift within the multilateral community to go beyond safeguarding women's rights within legal frameworks and strive to factor for endemic gender discrimination within national budgets, as well—what Kantola and Squires (2008) term market feminism. While earlier scholarship expected gender empowerment to be the by-product of development, a reverse view now contends that empowering women leads to development—a shift that happily coincides with the global promotion of gender quotas. The Fourth World Conference on Women (1995) which introduced the Beijing Platform for Action, the 23<sup>rd</sup> special session of the General Assembly (2000), the Millennium Summit (2000) and the 2005 World Summit highlighted government and international organizations' commitments to financing gender equality and empowerment to promote economic (via the term "development") and political interests. The Beijing Platform for Action, in particular, served as a template for the allocation of resources across all sectors to help achieve this goal. In 2002, the parties to the International Conference on Financing for Development adopted the Monterrey Consensus<sup>8</sup> which included gender-sensitive development and gender mainstreaming across all sectors as part of its prescriptions. Furthermore, the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005) incorporated consideration of gender equality into its suggestions for the harmonization of efficient and substantive funding practices across donor countries (Bakker 2007). Finally, even the Bretton Woods institutions recognized "the potential multiplier effect of gender equality...as key for realizing the Millennium Development Goal targets in 2015" and openly claimed that,

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> The Monterrey consensus specifically references the issue of gender in the following paragraphs: "These refer to a holistic and interconnected approach to financing for development that is gender sensitive (para. 8); good governance, sound economic policies and the importance of gender equality for realizing such goals (para. 11); empowering women in the context of appropriate national policy and regulatory frameworks (para. 12); investments in basic social and economic infrastructure that is gender-sensitive (para. 16); microfinance, particularly for women (para. 18); capacity building that includes gender budget policies (para. 19); business frameworks that are sensitive to the gender implications of their undertakings (para. 23); and, calls for governments to "Mainstream the gender perspective into development policies at all levels and in all sectors" (para. 64) (Bakker 2007, pg. 7)

"investing in gender equality and empowerment of women is smart economics" (Bakker 2007, 7). The possibility of funding opportunities via gender-related development assistance from multilateral organizations in exchange for appropriate institutional reforms is not a negligible consideration in much of the developing world.

Overall the new framing of gender empowerment as important for economic development and increasing funds associated with it have received scant attention in the literature on quotas; yet this may, in fact, represent a powerful incentive for governments to adopt them. It may be the most powerful incentive for conservative Muslim Arab governments when considering such a controversial policy since increases in women's political representation are seen as a much-lauded and rewarded sign of democratization by donors in the West (Bakker 2007, Inglehart and Norris 2003). Eleven of the 22 Arab League member states have adopted gender quotas since 2000 despite the region's abysmal track record in women's political representation overall (see Table 1 below). In fact, the quota trend is largely responsible for the increase in the world average for women's legislative representation from approximately 12 percent in 2000 to close to 20 percent today (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2010). The Arab world itself has seen an astonishing rise from a regional average of four to nine percent in women's legislative representation since the turn of the millennium; a shift that coincided with the spread of gender quotas in the region (see Figure 2).

Table 1 | Arab League Countries with Gender Quotas

Country	Type	Adoption Timeline	Electoral System	Latest Parliamentary Results		
Algeria	Political party quotas	2002-	List PR	8%		
Djibouti	Reserved seats	2002-	PBV	14%		
Egypt	Reserved seats	(1979-1986) 2009-	TRS	2%		
Iraq	Legal Candidate quotas	2004-	List PR	26%		
Jordan	Reserved seats	2003-	SNTV	12%		
Mauritania	Legal Candidate quotas	2006-	TRS	22%		
Morocco	Political Party quotas	2002-	List PR	10.8%		
Palestine	Legal Candidate quotas	2005-	Parallel	13%		
Somalia	Reserved seats	2004-	N.A.	8%		
Sudan	Reserved seats	(1973-1984) 2005-	FPTP	25%		
Tunisia	Political Party quotas	2004-	Parallel	28%		
Both Sudan and Egypt have previously implemented quotas for the time periods indicated in parentheses.						

Global Database for Women (2010)

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> The Middle East ranked the lowest on the Inter-Parliamentary Union's regional averages for women's legislative representation with an average of 9.1 percent in 2010.

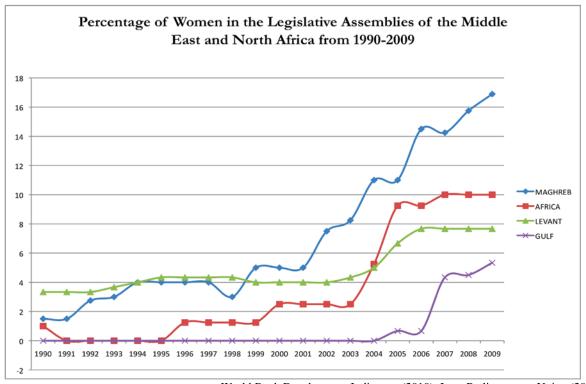


Figure 2 | Sub-Regional Patterns of Women's Legislative Representation

World Bank Development Indicators (2010); Inter-Parliamentary Union (2010\*

A significant amount of scholarship delved into the nature and rapid diffusion of gender quotas, as well as the substance of their outcomes across Europe (Kittilson 2006, Dahlerup & Friedenvall 2005, Kunovich 2003, Caul 2001, Bergqvist et al 1999,) and Latin America (Jones 2009, 2004, Baldez 2004, Araujo 2003). However, the regional experiences of Africa, the Middle East, and Asia remain under-explored. Civil society, the state, and international as well as transnational organizations usually working in tandem tend to be the primary actors conditioning gender quota adoption (Krook 2009). Often grassroots women's organizations see quotas as a mechanism to increase and institutionalize gender representation; while political elites recognizing the strategic value of the quota (usually for inter-party or coalition advantage); and of course quotas are promulgated through international norms and transnational sharing (True and Mintrom (2001). Similar factors influence quota adoption in the Arab world, yet with some important nuances. Islam, as well as conservative tribal culture, has a role in conditioning the acceptance of women in the political arena and associated institutional changes (Donno and Russett 2004, Fish 2002, Lewis 2002). Yet opposition to gender quotas comes from both secular

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<sup>\*</sup> The regional typologies can be broken down into the following countries: Maghreb=Algeria, Tunisia, Mauritania, Morocco, Egypt; Gulf=Saudi Arabia, Qatar, UAE, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman; Levant=Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestinian Authority, Iraq; Africa=Somalia, Sudan, Djibouti, Comoros.

feminists and Islamists alike; the first criticizing the cosmetic nature of the policy, while the latter tend to attack the injustice of quotas privileging a specific group, especially when that group represents women. Finally, gender quotas have often been inspired or at least sanctioned by "progressively-minded" Arab monarchs (such as King Abdullah of Jordan or King Mohammad VI of Morocco) or dictators (President Zine el Abidine Ben Ali of Tunisia) interested in curing favor with international donors and investors. Consequently, this policy usually represents a top-down decision brokered by the state (i.e. *state feminism*) rather than a response to legitimate social pressures (Sabbagh 2007, Brand 2002).

Still, grass-roots promotion of gender quotas does exist. Local women's organizations partnering with transnational women's networks promoted legislative gender quotas in several countries, including: Morocco, Egypt, Tunisia, Lebanon, Jordan, and even Yemen. Unsurprisingly, the aforementioned countries all receive significant levels of development assistance (Moghadam 2004, Carapico 2003, Schwedler 2002). Quotas are often promoted by party elites to expand voter share in a bid for earmarked funding from international NGOs and national governments, to band-wagon with other parties once such reforms are implemented, or to revamp a stale image, as was the case in Morocco and Algeria. Where prominent left-wing parties exist (Algeria, Yemen, Morocco), they have promoted gender quotas as measures to attain social equality both within the party apparatus and beyond as in the West (Opello 2006). Despite initial opposition, once gender quotas are adopted, Islamic parties tend to be some of the most successful actors in parlaying them toward greater Islamist representation in legislative assemblies, as in the case of the Jordanian Islamic Action Front and the Moroccan *Parti de la Justice et du Développement*. Finally, in the instance of Iraq we see gender quotas institutionally imposed by international actors (Norris 2007).

As mentioned previously, while many Arab governments actively discuss adopting gender quotas, only 11 Arab nations in fact implement such a policy: Algeria, Djibouti, Iraq, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Somalia, Sudan, Tunisia, and newly Egypt. In the following section, I consider which factors positively predict the likelihood of adopting gender quotas in the region. This area-specific statistical analysis may allow for a broader comparison of geographic areas in the future, helping scholars and policymakers alike dissect how regional specificities influence the diffusion of gender quotas and gender-related policies.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> The *Union Socialiste des Forces Populaires* of Morocco has five women on its 21-member central board via an internal quota; the Yemeni Socialist Party has an internal quota mandating 30 percent of candidates must be women. *Front de Llibération Nationale* of Algeria mandates two out of the first five names on a candidate list must be women.

# A Quantitative Exploration of Gender Quota Adoption in the Arab World

## The Model

I analyze the diffusion of gender quotas using event history analysis, a statistical procedure commonly used to model regional policy diffusion in the United States (Mooney 2001, Mintrom 1997, 1992; Berry and Berry 1990). Event history or survival analysis has previously been used to model the diffusion of gender quotas (Caul 2001) and of gender mainstreaming (True and Mintrom 2001) in advanced industrial economies. Here, I expand the application of survival analysis to modeling the likelihood of adopting of gender quotas in the developing world. In this case the dependent variable is the adoption of any type of gender quota within a respective Arab legislature and is coded as a binary variable. 11 Gender quota adoption is interpreted as the failure or right-censoring event, so sample countries drop out once they adopt a quota and thus mitigate the risk of inflating the significance of my results.

I use two discrete-time event history models to estimate the dependent variable: a logistic regression incorporating time-varying covariates (year dummies) to control for potential correlation over time and a Cox proportional hazards model as a robustness test. 12 The coefficients in both models are interpreted as hazard ratios reflecting the likelihood or "risk" of gender quota adoption. Effectively, these two models focus on the survival time to quota adoption and which factors precipitate this event.

The data for the dependent variable are gathered from the University of Stockholm's Global Database for Women<sup>13</sup> with the model below illustrating the primary factors affecting the likelihood of gender quota adoption. The independent variables in regular script represent the base model; supply-side variables (see Paxton, Kunovich, and Hughes 2007) in cursive are incorporated into an expanded model. The conceptual dependent variable is the probability that country i will adopt a gender quota in year t assuming the country has not adopted a gender quota

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> The Arab world actually hosts three different types of gender quotas: political party quotas, legal candidate quotas, and reserved seats An additional research project considers the likelihood of adopting these particular gender quotas separately through multi-nomial logistic regression and a competing risks model.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Discrete-time models are more appropriate for modeling quota adoption as opposed to continuous-time models (such as parametric event-history models) since we have the expectation of the chosen event happening within a specific time period—from 1990 until 2009. The data set-up for a discrete-time event history model treats each year as a separate observation for each individual case, thus allowing us to more accurately and rigorously model the respective event in a panel data environment (see Hoffman 2004, Box-Steffensmeier and Jones 1997).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> I use additional data from Pippa Norris' 2010 Democracy Dataset's Fast-track policy variable, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the International Foundation for Electoral Systems, and Krook and O'Brian (2010). In cases, where the descriptions of the quota type diverge between these sources, I opt for the Quota Project's coding. In the case of Palestine, Krook and O'Brian claim there are legal candidate quotas in place, while the Dahlerup et al claim they are reserved seats. There is also a discrepancy in the case of Djibouti where Krook and O'Brian claim the country uses reserved seats, while Dahlerup et al maintain legal candidate quotas are in place. Please refer to Table 1 in the Appendix for more details on the discrepancies in coding. Most of these authors are actually party to and moderate the QuotaProject, which renders the discrepancy in coding interesting. See http://www.quotaproject.org/ for more details and Table 1 in the Appendix for an overview of quotas implemented in the Middle East and North Africa.

prior to this point. Observations up until the year of quota adoption are coded zero.

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ADOPT _{i,t} = \Phi (constant) + \beta_1 Development assistance _{i,t} + \beta_2 Foreign direct investment _{i,t} + \beta_3 Economic development _{i,t} + \beta_4 Electoral system _{i,t} + \beta_5 Democracy _{i,t} + \beta_6 Fertility rates _{i,t} + \beta_6 Gulf dummy _{i,t} + \beta_8 Women's labor participation rates _{i,t} + \beta_9 Women's secondary education rates _{i,t} + \beta_{10} Women's legislative representation _{i,t} + e
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## Influences on the Adoption of Gender Quotas in the Arab World

Primary Variables of Interest: Two Iterations of International Financial Incentives

The literature on women's global political participation often cites international influence and norms diffusion as salient alongside domestic factors to the rapid spread of gender quotas worldwide (Paxton, Kunovich, and Hughes 2007, Paxton & Hughes 2007, Paxton et al 2006, Krook 2006, Dahlerup & Nordlund 2004, Krook 2004, True and Mintrom 2001). Krook (2006) highlights international organizations and the transnational connections they foster as one of the vehicles for the spread of quotas. She ventures a multiplicity of organizations such as the United Nations, the European Union, the African Union, the Commonwealth, the Council of Europe, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, and the Organization of American States encourage members to strive for at least 30 percent female representation within their political institutions, which further contributes to the global acceptance of gender norms. Keck and Sikkink (1998) demonstrate international non-governmental organizations have occasionally been successful at holding nations accountable to such contracts. Most quota literature recognizes the roles played by international organizations via legal or reputational mechanisms; however, much of it ignores the importance of economic incentives wielded by multilateral organizations and bilateral donors.

Since the end of the Cold War, many donors linked funding with improvements in social conditions, particularly women's issues in the Middle East (Coleman 2004, Moghadam 2003, Carapico 2002, Abu-Lughod 1998). Even a cursory look at the development projects funded by the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in the Arab region reveals a heavy focus on gender. One of the least politically costly and most cosmetic ways to show a commitment to "democratic development" is by implementing a gender quota. The artificial increase in gender representation also happens to translate well into development and governance indicators and most Arab governments figure conservative norms will ensure no real

change of the *status quo*. During my interviews with public officials as well as leaders of state-sponsored non-profits and international organizations across Jordan, Yemen, Morocco, and Bahrain (from 2007-2009), my interlocutors universally hinted that the primary reason for gender reform lay in satisfying donor objections to current policies and attracting more development assistance.

Importantly, foreign economic influence may also be manifested in the level of formalized institutional commitment to gender empowerment. There are three different types of gender quotas utilized in the region (political party quotas, legal candidate quotas, and reserved seats) and they can easily be ranked relative to their level of formalized commitment to gender representation. Reserved seats regulate the number of women elected to the legislature, while political party quotas and legal candidate quotas set a minimum number for women on candidate lists. 14 Both legal candidate quotas and reserved seats represent legally binding reforms mandating women's presence at distinct stages in the election process. Thus, voluntary political party quotas represent minimally institutionalized guarantees for women in politics, while reserved seats encapsulate the most binding commitment to formalizing gender participation within legislative assemblies (Dahlerup 2003). Krook's (2009) analysis affirmed that reserved seats and legal candidate quotas tend to be utilized in developing countries particularly vulnerable to international pressures for policy reform on gender. In fact, the countries implementing reserved seats tend to have a limited number of females in the legislative assembly prior to quota adoption. Thus, the question arises why such countries would introduce policies that explicitly and controversially forced them to integrate women into their politics. Pressure from foreign donors arises as a likely and plausible explanation for the adoption of such an unpopular measure. <sup>15</sup>Consequently, my primary hypothesis is as follows:

H1: An upsurge in development assistance will increase the likelihood of adopting a gender quota in a given Arab state.

Importantly, development assistance does not have as much sway in the petroleum-rich Arab countries of the Persian Gulf, but the last decade has seen a multitude of gender policy reforms—specifically the extension of universal suffrage rights in Kuwait (2000), Qatar (1997), Bahrain (re-instated in 2002), Oman (2003), and the United Arab Emirates (limited 2006). The case of Bahrain was particularly interesting since my Bahraini interview subjects openly stated the government was not as concerned with development assistance as it was with foreign direct

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electoral law).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Reserved seats guarantee women a certain number of seats in the parliament, independent of the electoral result, whereas legal candidate quotas mandate a certain percentage of women on the candidate lists. In both cases, the voters decide which of the women candidates are elected, but under the reserved seats system, women are guaranteed a certain number of seats. The political parties themselves enforce party quotas internally, while legal candidate quotas and reserved seats are usually enforced through a formal legal requirement (the constitution or

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> The Western nations that "tie" their hands by implementing gender quota prefer *to limit* their own gender commitment to the less formally binding voluntary political party quota.

investment and broadcasting an image of a progressive, stable, and ultimately investment-worthy nation. Empowering women was deemed an integral part of the struggle to revamp the country's image. Previous work exploring the link between foreign direct investment and gender empowerment found mixed results (Bakker 2007, Braunstein 2006). However, in the context of the Middle East foreign direct investment should not be ignored since it may significantly increase the likelihood of adopting gender quotas as Arab governments struggle to rehabilitate their image in the wake of September 11<sup>th</sup>. Thus, my secondary hypothesis is as follows:

H2: Rising levels of foreign direct investment increase the likelihood of adopting a gender quota since the latter represents another low-cost method of promoting a progressive and stable image to the world, and so sustaining levels of international investment.

There is an important, subtle difference, however, in the mechanism behind the posited effect of these two types of foreign capital. Development assistance tends to have conditions associated with its disbursement and often requires metrics for assessing progress in attaining pre-specified goals. Consequently, devising ways of signaling credibility to the donor becomes an important skill for the recipient country since a *de facto* bargaining process underlies the allocation of aid. Foreign direct investment has no such strings attached. In fact, the importance of investment lies in Arab policymakers' beliefs regarding what investor-friendly traits entail, rather than specific mandates from corporations. Certainly property rights and contract enforcement would rank highly on any list of worthy traits, but so do stability and development, two concepts that can easily encompass gender empowerment. I use official development assistance per capita and foreign direct investment flows as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product from World Development Indicators to approximate the effects of these two different types of foreign capital.

### Supply and Demand-side Factors

Paxton, Kunovich, and Hughes (2007) note that traditional researchers of women's political representation distinguish between *supply-side* and *demand-side* factors with culture as an alternative consideration influencing the beliefs and attitudes that characterize both (Inglehart & Norris 2003, Paxton& Kunovich 2003, Norris 1997, Paxton 1997, Randall 1987). I control for culture by situating the analysis in the Arab Muslim world. *Supply-side* factors represent the pool of women available for candidacy and most closely approximate socio-economic considerations such as women's education, labor-force participation, and access to income. *Demand-side* elements comprise institutional mechanisms conditioning the likelihood of women's election, such electoral system and regime type.

# A. Socio-economic factors Supply-side Factors Economic Development and Fertility

A number of scholars claim that levels of economic development and modernization lead to more liberal policies and politics (Alvarez, Cheibub, Limongi, and Przeworski 2000, Diamond 1999, Przeworski and Limongi 1997, Arat 1988, Lipset 1959). This would also impact whether the government and broader population are receptive to gender policies, such as quotas. In this instance, we can also consider it a proxy for the kind of ideological change that would allow the acceptance of women in politics within conservative Muslim societies. Modernization is often seen as leading to a weakening of traditional values, decreasing fertility rates, and increased urbanization with greater educational and labor force participation by women, alongside attitudinal changes in perceptions of women's roles within society (Inglehart and Norris 2003, Matland 1998). In addition, fertility rates potentially showcase how much power women have over their own bodies within a given society. Assuming lower birth rates indicate women's growing control over their person and private life, we can venture this bodes well for a societal shift towards greater acceptance of female roles within public life. I use standard indicators such as GDP per capita and fertility (total births per woman) from the World Bank's Development Indicators as proxies for these concepts. I expect increases in GDP per capita and a reduction in total births per woman to increase the likelihood of adopting a gender quota.

### Women's Labor Participation and Education Levels

Structural explanations aligned with modernization predict women's education levels and participation in the labor force should positively affect women's representation and incentives for incorporation, though results have often been mixed (Rule 1981, 1987; Norris 1985, 1987; Moore & Shackman 1996; Paxton 1997; Matland 1998; Kenworthy & Malami 1999). Putnam (1976) identified education as a key feature for the selection of political elites. Not only does educational attainment increase the pool of qualified women for office, but it may also play an important role in spurring voter turnout. Increased female labor force participation, especially in professional sectors, should also result in a larger pool of potential applicants for political positions (Norris 1996a). A rise in women's labor force participation and education should both broadly relate to their capacity and willingness to mobilize and have political influence within their respective societies as their economic importance grows. This may manifest itself in the promotion of gender policies such as quotas. While the Middle East has made incredible strides in closing the gender gap across basic income and education over the last 30 years (Moghadam 1998)<sup>16</sup>, it hasn't translated into levels of political engagement or even predicted levels of labor participation, a "development deficit" highlighted in the seminal Arab Human Development Report of 2002 (World Bank 2004b, UNDP 2002). I control for the aforementioned concepts through the percentage of economically active women as well as the percentage of women with

12

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> The ratio of male-to-female years of schooling fell from 2.5 in 1960 to 1.4 in 2000 (UNDP 2002). Female participation in the labor force has rise from 25 percent between 1960 and 1980, to 35 percent in the present.

secondary education—both statistics garnered from the World Bank's Development Indicators. These data are only used in expanded versions of the base model and for robustness checks, as there is incomplete information over time for both variables.

#### B. Demand-side or Institutional Factors

#### Electoral System

Quota adoption is often conditioned by the electoral system in place; i.e. whether a country has a proportional system or a plurality-majority system. The system determines how votes cast in elections translate into party or individual candidate seats. It also controls whether quotas can be seamlessly integrated into the political substructure. Abundant research has found that proportional systems tend to be more conducive to the election or appointment of women, as well as to gender quota adoption (Caul 1999, Matland and Studlar 1996). The conduciveness of proportional regimes to the election of women was theoretically established as far back as Maurice Duverger (1955) and further corroborated by the research of Wilma Rule (1981) and Pippa Norris (1985), as well as a slew of other scholars (Paxton et al. 2006, McAllister & Studlar 2002, Reynolds 1999, Kenworthy & Malami 1999, Paxton 1997). Certainly, the presence of quotas in conjunction with a particular electoral system can prove beneficial or impede women's participation. Dahlerup (2006a) furthers this contention claiming quota systems that do not match the electoral system in place tend to be only symbolic (Dahlerup 2006a). I control for electoral systems' influence by incorporating a dummy variable capturing whether a country uses a majoritarian electoral system derived from Pippa Norris' Democracy Dataset. I expect countries with majoritarian systems to decrease the likelihood of adopting a gender quota.

## Regime Type

Scholars legitimately wonder about the substance of women's political participation in non-democratic contexts (Goetz & Hassim 2003). Alternatively, other researchers argue that the position of the parliamentarian is visible and carries prestige in *all* contexts, providing women with symbolic power in democracies and non-democracies alike (Paxton & Kunovich 2003). Ultimately the nature of the regime will determine whether its institutions are representative of the popular will or even the population itself. It may be safe to assume that democracies have more of an imperative to be representative, hence why gender quotas are often more prevalent in countries with democratic or even "democratizing" regimes (Krook 2009, Bauer and Britton 2006). That said, many transitioning nations are using gender quotas to reify a progressive image so the association of quota adoption with particular regime type may be an unclear one. I use Ted Gurr's POLITY IV scores to operationalize level of democracy. I formally expect higher democracy scores to increase the likelihood of adopting a gender quota.

Women's prior presence within the legislature likely bodes well for gender quota implementation since there are persons within the parliament who have a direct interest in lobbying for quotas to ensure incumbency. However, in my interviews with Arab women parliamentarians in Jordan, Bahrain, and Morocco this was not always the case. An equal number of women criticized the quotas affording them a seat in parliament as anti-democratic and not necessary to combat cultural obstacles, which prevent female political participation. Importantly, prior female legislative representation sets a precedent for hosting women within political institutions and may condition men to accept their presence within the public realm. Once in office, women's roles within politics are demystified for political cohorts and the public, potentially rendering the promotion of gender policies such as quotas less controversial. I use a lagged variable encompassing the percentages of women in legislative assemblies to measure this concept, collecting the data from the Inter-parliamentary Union, the International Foundation for Electoral Systems, and the World Bank's Development Indicators. I expect higher numbers of women's legislative representation prior to the onset of the quota to be predictive of the likelihood of gender quota adoption.

#### The Results

The coefficients presented in Table 2 are maximum likelihood estimates obtained through logit estimation and directly reflect whether a variable increases or decreases the probability of gender quota adoption over time. These results are exponentiated in the following analysis to reflect the change in the hazard rate for a unit increase in the respective covariate. Table 3 presents the results of a Cox proportional hazards model and thus the coefficients can be directly interpreted as hazard ratios. The results presented in Table 2 and Table 3 confirm the *first hypothesis* with both demonstrating that development assistance is significantly predictive of gender quota adoption, alongside fertility, democracy, level of economic development, and electoral system across the *base model* and the two expansions of the base model. The *base model* lacks the supply-side controls and prior women's legislative representation. The following analysis focuses on the substantive results presented in the *base models* of Table 2 and Table 3, and treats the subsequent models as robustness checks, while considering all the covariates that strongly influenced the likelihood of quota adoption.

In the first table, as expected, each one-unit increase in development assistance is associated with a 6.11 unit increase in the odds of adopting a gender quota. Additionally, each one-unit increase in fertility rates results in a 10.91 unit increase in the odds of quota adoption. A one-unit increase in GDP per capita is associated with a 3.9 unit increase in the odds of quota adoption, while each one-unit increase in democracy on the Polity scores results in a 1.34 unit increase in the odds of quota adoption. Conversely, the presence of a majoritarian electoral system decreases the odds of quota adoption by a factor of 0.0004. The second expanded logistic regression model incorporates a lagged indicator for women's legislative representation; significantly impacting

the likelihood of adopting a gender quota (increases odds 1.44 times). It also brings out the significance of foreign direct investment, which increases the odds of adopting a gender quota 7.61 times. Consequently, we can assume foreign direct investment and legislative representation work hand in hand. My forthcoming work demonstrates that foreign direct investment has a significant impact on increasing women's legislative representation in the Arab world. I maintain there is a temporal effect where investment stimulates representation through its impact on societal mores and expectations rather than through the explicit shaping of policy.

Table 2 | Logit Maximum Likelihood Estimates for Event History Analysis of Gender Quota Adoption

Hazard of Gender Quota Adoption	Model 1 (Base)	Model 2	Model 3
	Coef./Z score	Coef./ Z score	Coef./ Z score
GDP per capita (logged)	1.38	1.73	11.42
	(1.51)*	(1.70)*	(2.59)***
Fertility	2.39	3.04	9.18
	(3.31)***	(3.72)***	(2.49)**
Majoritarian Electoral System	-7.69	-8.05	-16.56
	(-4.92)***	(-4.66)***	(-2.59)***
Polity IV	0.30	0.34	0.92
	(2.51)**	(2.64)***	(2.29)**
Foreign Direct Investment	0.06	0.01	-0.04
	(1.47)	(2.64)***	(-0.50)
Official Development Assistance (logged)	1.81	2.03	6.62
	(3.82)***	(3.80)***	(2.47)**
Women's Labor Force Participation	_	_	0.27 (1.46)
Women's Secondary Education	_	_	-0.02 (-0.59)
Percentage of Women in	_	0.37	0.57
Legislative (lagged)		(3.07)***	(2.26)**
Gulf Dummy	Dropped*	Dropped	Dropped
Observations	221	211	88
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	0.59	0.65	0.71

Note: Asterisks indicate statistical significance at the p<0.05 (\*), p<0.01 (\*\*), and p<0.00 (\*\*\*) level. Countries in sample=22. Estimated using robust standard errors.

\* The Gulf dummy perfectly predicts failure to adopt the gender quotas and is automatically dropped from the model.

15

The Cox proportional hazards model (see Table 3 below) serves as an additional robustness test. This estimator generates coefficients that already represent hazard ratios and the ensuing results serve to confirm findings of the logistic regression. Yet again, development assistance has a significant finding and increases the odds of quota adoption 3.89 times, alongside fertility, which increases the odds 5.36 times. Each one-unit increase in democracy results in a 1.19 unit increase in the odds of quota adoption, while GDP per capita raises those odds by a factor of 9.8. Again, a majoritarian electoral system decreases the hazard of quota adoption by a factor of -0.04 in the base model. In the second expanded model, a one-unit increase in women's legislative representation results in a 1.27 unit increase in the likelihood of gender quota adoption.

Table 3 | Cox Proportional Hazards Event History Model of Gender Quota Adoption

Tuble 6   Con 11 oportion			
Hazard of Gender Quota Adoption	Model 1 (Base)	Model 2	Model 3
	Hazard Ratio/Z score	Hazard Ratio./Z score	Hazard Ratio/ Z score
GDP per capita (logged)	9.48 (1.89)*	12.84 (1.62)*	16.12 (1.33)
Fertility	5.36 (3.68)*	8.78 (1.66)*	163.84 (0.98)
Majoritarian Electoral System	-0.04 (-2.68)**	-0.02 (-1.65)*	-0.00 (-1.10)
Polity IV	1.19 (1.83)*	1.44 (1.53)*	2.26 (0.71)
Foreign Direct Investment	1.02 (0.20)	-0.97 (-0.12)	1.16 (0.37)
Official Development Assistance (logged)	3.28 (3.84)***	4.07 (1.91)*	26.33 (1.02)
Women's Labor Force Participation	_	_	1.07 (0.52)
Women's Secondary Education	_	_	1.02 (0.47)
Percentage of Women in Legislative	_	1.27 (1.81)*	1.53 (0.69)
Gulf Dummy	$Dropped^*$	Dropped	Dropped
Observations	243	243	128
No. Subjects	19	19	18
No. Failures	7	7	7

Note: Asterisks indicate statistical significance at the p<0.05 (\*), p<0.01 (\*\*), and p<0.00 (\*\*\*) level. Countries in sample=22. Estimated using robust standard errors.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Table 6. In the Appendix shows that the hazards were proportional for the independent variables, thus allowing the use of the Cox proportional hazards model. Unsurprisingly, in both the logistic regression and Cox proportional hazards model, the Gulf dummy perfectly predicts failure to adopt gender quotas and is thus automatically dropped from both models.

<sup>\*</sup> The Gulf dummy perfectly predicts failure to adopt the gender quotas and is automatically dropped from the model.

Overall, the results showcase the importance of structural (levels of aid, fertility, economic development) and institutional factors (electoral systems in conjunction with regime) in conditioning gender quota adoption and commitment to more formalized iterations of gender representation. Both estimation techniques and the expanded models confirm the first hypothesis positing that aid is predictive of gender quota adoption. The second hypothesis, which maintains foreign direct investment increases the likelihood of gender quota adoption, is confirmed only when women's prior legislative representation is incorporated into an expanded model. Only when women's prior legislative representation is incorporated into an expanded model.

In the case of fertility, the persistent yet counter-intuitive relationship where increases in fertility are associated with the greater likelihood of adopting a gender quota might be an artifact of the chronically high rates of population growth in the Middle East (only exceeded by those of sub-Saharan Africa) (Richards and Waterbury 2008, 71). Iraq, Jordan, Libya, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Palestine, Syria, the United Arab Emirates, Yemen, and Somalia are all countries with population growth rates above two percent (United Nations 2005). High fertility rates likely attract development assistance aimed at curbing problematic demographic outcomes—an issue squarely within the realm of gender empowerment policy. According to this logic, gender quotas arise as a salient policy response to pressure from the outside world to find coping strategies for women-specific demographic issues such as infant or maternal mortality. Finally, significant results for development assistance also hint at the bargaining mechanism underlying gender quota implementation. Broadly, international pressures can sway countries to modify their legal infrastructure to promote gender outcomes espoused by the West when financial rewards are dolled out.

Yet, questions remain whether the significant and positive relationship between development assistance and gender quota adoption is endogenous—i.e. did the adoption of progressive gender policies attract development assistance as a reward for undertaking suggested reforms and not *vice versa*. Anecdotal historical data illustrates that most Arab countries adopted gender quotas in the new millennium (see Table 1), yet foreign aid has been flowing into the region for the entirety of the past two decades (see Figure 3). Furthermore, the important shift in framing development as a gendered *economic* process spearheaded by the Beijing Conference and later the Millennium Development Goals, explains why previous financial inputs did not result in a similar policy shift towards gender quotas. Simply, implementing gender policies has become a lucrative endeavor in the new millennium due to the Bretton Woods' institutions, as well as

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Future research will incorporate more social indicators in the hope of capturing the effect of local women's lobbying capacity and grassroots pressure.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> This article if part of a broader dissertation project in which a corollary chapter discussed the effects of foreign direct investment on women's legislative representation and statistical analysis had significant positive results for FDI influence on gender representation over time. It seems the type of political incorporation is particularly salient for whether FDI is a significant predictor or not. Consequently, this comparison of the effects of aid vs. FDI across particular contexts and measures for promoting gender is a cornerstone of the dissertation analysis.

bilateral donors, increasingly conflating progress on gender issues with "development" and rewarding countries that do the same.

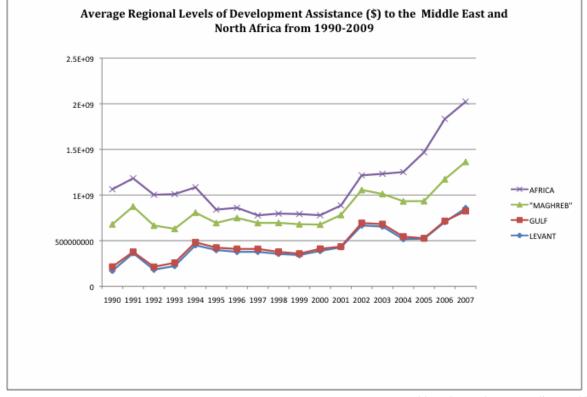


Figure 3 | Sub-regional Patterns of Development Assistance

World Bank Development Indicators 2010

Ultimately, these empirical results reflect a dramatic instance of gender policy diffusion spearheaded through foreign aid and multilateral efforts to promote economic development and democratization via gender empowerment. Here, international influence is modeled using financial incentives, which arguably have more teeth than legal frameworks. In fact, international financial incentives promote and directly predict "binding" policy changes such as the adoption of gender quotas insomuch as depending on the type of quota, they often require amending preexisting legislation or even the constitution. Broadly, these findings also hint that development assistance is less fungible in the context of gender programming efforts, although it is likely extended under a broad "democratization" rubric where gender empowerment appears among the most "innocuous" reforms Arab policymakers envision. <sup>20</sup>

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<sup>\*</sup> This chart excludes Iraq and Egypt so as to showcase regional averages in more detail. Otherwise, the substantial level of development assistance allocated to these two countries disallows a closer examination of regional trends. Maghreb=Algeria, Tunisia, Mauritania, Morocco; Gulf=Saudi Arabia, Qatar, UAE, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman; Levant=Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestinian Authority; Africa=Somalia, Sudan, Djibouti, Comoros.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Consider how loathe Arab "reformers" are to touch media laws or even religious freedom, yet gender is quite often used as a tool to "democratize", as well as a vessel through which governments address other controversial topics such as religion (as in the case of family laws).

#### Conclusion

The previous analysis explored factors influencing the adoption of gender quotas across the Arab world, focusing on a neglected element—foreign capital in the guise of foreign direct investment and development assistance. A majority of scholarship focuses on the influence exerted through international legal frameworks promoting gender empowerment. Consequently, research exploring the economic incentives informing such controversial policy choices for Muslim and Arab majority countries is severely lacking. The strategic calculus behind quota adoption becomes especially important when considering the shift in framing gender empowerment from a political to an economic good by many international and transnational organizations. Foreign aid, in particular, is consistently predictive of gender quota adoption, alongside a host of rival factors such as the level of democracy, level of economic development, fertility rate, and the type of electoral system in place. To reiterate, it is no accident that foreign donors influence the adoption of often constitutionally mandated policy reforms, which can have unpredictable, substantive, and long-lasting impacts on existing institutions. The fact that women in Djibouti, Jordan, Morocco, Sudan, Tunisia, and Iraq still win legislative seats outright even with gender quotas coupled with the rapid increase in female candidates in countries using quotas implies there may yet be a substance, often unintended by its initiators, to this policy.<sup>21</sup>

Evidence from other transitioning countries may prove prescient in the Arab case—especially as the world looks to the Jasmine Revolution in Tunisia and the current proto-revolutionary events in Egypt as potentially harkening the Arab world's 1989 or a new round of institutional changes. Olga Shvetsova's (2003) article on the consequences of the strategic choice of electoral rules in transitioning post-Communist Eastern Europe illustrates how new institutions once in place can become embedded within the political system in ways unanticipated by their original progenitors. She describes how the electoral reforms promulgated by the formerly Communist "brokers" of democratic transition in Poland, Russia, and Hungary often resulted in those selfsame individuals voted out of power. Yet, the original intent was to conserve their incumbency through revised threshold requirements for national parliamentary elections or manipulating the size of electoral districts. Thus, a degree of institutional inertia and incomplete information resulted in "unintended consequences". Per Shvetsova, "the connection between the strategic choice of institutions and the consequences of these institutions is anything but direct when information is incomplete." 23

<sup>23</sup> Shvetsova 2003, 201.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Figures published by the Moroccan Ministry of the Interior show that percentage of female candidates on supplemental lists had risen from 4.8% in 2003 to 15.7% in 2009. In Jordan, the number of women campaigning for the six reserved seats within parliament rose from 54 in 2003 to 199 in 2007.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> See Shvetsova's(2003) descriptions of parliamentary elections in Poland, Russian, and Hungary in the 1990s for more information (pp. 201-203). A miscalculation of voter discontent or policy effectiveness usually compromised the electoral chances of these formerly Communist Transition Brokers.

An Arab parallel for these "unintended" consequences of institutional choice played out in Jordan during the 2003 parliamentary elections. A small local tribe in the conservative second district of Tafilah overwhelmed the dominant district tribe's male candidates by unexpectedly and pragmatically using the gender quota to elect the female parliamentarian, *Insaf Khawalde*, thereby guaranteeing the community access to parliamentary rents through a woman's legislative mandate. Such a development may not seem controversial on the surface, but knowing the rigid tribal hierarchies of Jordan (see the work of Linda Layne or Andrew Shryock), much less how staunchly conservative the *Tafilah* district is, highlights the novelty of such an event. A woman elected to represent the primary source of income for a small, conservative town in the Jordanian desert is not a trivial development. It was certainly not an intended consequence of the gender quota "sanctioned" by a Jordanian parliament dominated by larger tribes who had no expectation of smaller tribes using it to become more electorally competitive. The countries of the Gulf are wary enough of the transformative power of gender quotas in that they refuse to consider implementing such a measure. The continuing diffusion of such "hazardous policies" may yet bode well for Arab women—as the proverbial saying goes, "where there is smoke, there is fire"—and we can only hope quotas are the hint of broader gender empowerment measures to come.

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