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BUSINESS FOR A BETTER CANADA



TALKING GLI IN THE MENA

Leveraging Finance for Social Change!

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Mini-certificate in Inclusive Investment Strategies to Advance Gender Equality and Promote Informed Decision Making



OVERVIEW

A first of its kind in the region free of charge mini-certificate program on Gender Lens Investing (GLI) and the opportunities of its implementation in the MENA region. This program will empower investors, capital providers, employers, and executives in a rapidly changing regional economic environment.

We are embarking on the second iteration of this mini-certificate program, building upon the resounding success of our inaugural run that accepted 339 participants out of 572 applicants. During our initial implementation, we welcomed participants from diverse backgrounds across eight MENA countries (Algeria, Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, and Tunisia) and various sectors (Banking, Education, Healthcare, Public sector, CSO/NGO and STEM). This diversity enriched the experience and allowed us to further develop our executive modules. Now, as we run the mini-certificate program once again, we are excited to see how we can further build upon this strong foundation and continue to foster collaboration and encourage the application of GLI in the MENA Region.

Comprised of three hands-on modules, this program equips participants with a comprehensive understanding of GLI both globally and in the MENA region. It empowers them with relevant strategies, action plans and indicators they can be applied to their businesses to promote GLI within the region. Today, the world's most successful organizations must innovate, adapt and change. The rapidly evolving global market, driven by technological advancements, presents challenges and opportunities. The workplaces across the world are rapidly changing. In the MENA, greater efforts are needed to establish more diversified economies to support strategic growth and regional development. A critical component of this growth involves harnessing the potential of women in the region.

Unfortunately, the representation of women in decision-making roles across the MENA region is below 20% (KIP index 2022). To achieve strategic growth, it is imperative to create equitable and dignified opportunities for women's recruitment, retention and promotion in regional organizations.

Following a tumultuous couple of years, the prospect of enhancing the formal economies of the region hinges significantly on providing women with secure dignified employment for women.

Gender Lens Investing (GLI) is an approach to investing that targets and improves investment processes and structures to advance women's inclusion in the workforce. GLI aims to direct investments towards employers that are making serious efforts to become more inclusive, supporting women through their careers. This is not simply about philanthropy or basic regulatory compliance, but rather an opportunity to unlock economic power, and drive market development, achieving financial return and value creation while delivering a quantifiable impact for gender parity. The main purpose of the modules is to demonstrate that finance and investments can be tools to advance positive changes beyond only targeting women, such as: addressing growing business opportunities and achieving economic growth, sustainable development, and social impact. GLI can play a significant role in addressing the challenges that women as consumers, employees, and entrepreneurs contend with, such as lack of access to finance, social biases, and inequality in opportunities, among others. While GLI has shown some success in developed countries, there is a need to promote the practice and contextualize underlying strategies for application in developing countries, which is the goal of these modules.

WHO SHOULD ENROLL?

The program is designed for investors, capital providers, employers, and executives. Based on the evidence that local challenges can be best addressed by evidence-based local solutions, this program is designed to provide state-of-the-art and forward-thinking solutions to dignified economic empowerment through gender lens investing. We also extend our invitation to human rights defenders and activists to actively participate in our Gender Lens Investing modules. Their unique perspectives and experiences in the realms of economic empowerment and social change can significantly contribute to the success of the program.

WHY THIS MINI-CERTIFICATE?

A first of its kind, the program focuses on GLI and its strategies. Comprised of three modules, the first two provide participants with an in-depth understanding of GLI and how to enhance it in the MENA region. This is done through two key approaches: 1. Providing a general overview of GLI and how to further advance the implementation of GLI in the region. 2. Providing recommendations on how to initiate and advance GLI implementation for employers, investors, and women-owned businesses. Module 3 is a panel that will bring together converging perspectives, where we uncover the transformative power of GLI across finance, sustainability, and social responsibility. The program is suited for those who have ideas around leading change and want to amplify the potential of women in the workplace. Delivered by world-class experts and renowned academics, the program will inform, engage and connect investors, capital providers, publicly listed employers, and executives using solution-driven and tailor-made content for the region.

LANGUAGE OF DELIVERY

The language of instruction for these modules will be English with simultaneous interpretation into Arabic and French.

MODULES

MODULE 1

Hands-on overview of GLI and implementation prospects

- Introduction
- GLI definitions
- GLI importance
- Drivers of GLI
- Overview of GLI in the MENA region
- Current practices in the MENA region
- Gaps, challenges, and opportunities
- Relationship between environmental, social, and governance issues (ESG) and corporate social responsibility (CSR)
- Ways forward

MODULE 2

Co-creating a roadmap for GLI practices and metrics

- Introduction
- GLI Definitions
- GLI Categories
- The need for policies and action plans for investing in GLI
- Strategies for employers
- Strategies for Investors and capital providers
- Indicators used empirically to explore the potential impact of women-related factors on financial returns while being socially responsible
- Global and local funding opportunities
- Ways forward

MODULE 3

Unveiling the Transformative Power of GLI

- Comprehensive understanding of GLI strategies and impact
- Awareness of challenges and opportunities in GLI
- Strategies for promoting gender equality through policies and investment decisions
- Understanding the application of GLI in the MENA Region

PROGRAM SPEAKERS

Dr. Charlotte Karam / Professor and Ian Telfer Professorship in Inclusive Human Resource Systems, Telfer School of Management, University of Ottawa Adjunct Professor, American University of Beirut (AUB)



Dr. Charlotte Karam is a scholar activist on responsible business. Her work contributes to overlapping conversations in HR, business ethics, public policy, and feminist praxis. In addition to her numerous academic publications Dr. Karam leads a team of 26 team members at SAWI securing and overseeing over \$8.5 million in international funding. Awarded by the Arab Fund Distinguished Scholar Award, named a Global Gender Champion by the U.S. Department of State, and recognized on the Bath University's #Thinklist 30 Women's List. Dr. Karam is a leading figure on women's dignified economic participation.

[Read more here.](#)

Dr. Wassim Dbouk / Director of the Investment Management Program Associate Professor of Finance / Lead in Empirical Finance, Suliman Olayan School of Business / Co-PI on KIP and SAWI



Dr. Wassim Dbouk is an academic, researcher and expert with almost 30 years of experience in the fields of Finance, Capital Markets, and Investment Management. Dr. Dbouk is the Director of the Investment Management program at AUB where he oversees the asset allocation of a 1 million dollar fund. He has been leading the Gender Lens Investing work package as the Co-principal Investigator. He served on numerous committees and tasks forces with the Olayan School of Business and AUB at large. Dr. Dbouk is the facilitator of the development and delivery of various Executive Education programs and C-Level training workshops. He also trained and mentored numerous teams of Finance students that won awards in CFA competitions and in Portfolio Management.

[Read more here.](#)

Dr. Fida Afioni / Associate Professor of HRM, Suliman S. Olayan School of Business Associate Provost, American University of Beirut



Dr. Fida Afioni is an HR & Gender expert in the Middle East. She is currently working on developing and implementing gender equality plans in higher education institutions and serves on the steering committee of the diversity, equity, and inclusion office at AUB, in addition of being a Title IX deputy and a trained investigator in sexual harassment and discrimination. Her publications, at the intersection of HRM, careers, and gender, have won multiple awards and appeared in leading journals in her field, the most recent being in Gender, Work, and Organization, the Journal of Vocational Behavior, Human Resource Management Journal, Business Research Quarterly, Career Development International, and the International Journal of Human Resource Management. Fida currently serves as HRM section co-editor in the journal of Business Ethics, and as Associate Editor in the International Journal of Human Resource Management. She is also an editorial member in Career Development International and Human Resource Management Journal.

Dates

Module 1	12 October, 23	2:30 pm - 5:00 pm (Beirut Time) 7:30 am - 10:00 am (EST)
Module 2	26 October, 23	2:30 pm - 5:00 pm (Beirut Time) 7:30 am - 10:00 am (EST)
Module 3	9 November, 23	2:30 pm - 4:00 pm (Beirut Time) 7:30 am - 9:00 am (EST)

CONTACT

For more information about the program kindly contact:
gli@aub.edu.lb

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GENERAL DISCLAIMER: The materials related to the Gender Lens Investing Initiative are intended to assist investors, capital providers, employers, and executives as they strive to improve investment processes and structures in order to advance women's inclusion in the workforce. The information provided by the GLI team, and partners must be understood as a tool for adopting a gender lens in investment decisions, rather than legal obligations, which are defined by statute, regulations, and standards of their local industry standards, and national legislative landscape. Likewise, to the extent that this information references practices or procedures that may initiate and advance GLI implementation for employers, investors, and women-owned businesses, but which are not required by a statute, regulation, or standard, it cannot, and does not, create additional legal obligations. Finally, over time, regulators may modify rules and interpretations in light of new technology, information, or circumstances; to keep apprised of such developments, or to review information on a wide range of GLI and inclusive HR topics. All information, toolkits, templates, and other related material under the GLI initiative is provided therefore as a free of charge guide, and is, therefore «as is» without warranty of any kind of risk.