Impact. Falling within the Equitable Access to Sustainable Development in the GCRF Challenges Areas, the project is concerned with gender and dynamics of inequality in three world regions, with specific focus on (a) the interplay of economic structures, policies and institutions as the determinants of women’s access to employment and (b) patterns of women’s economic participation as key drivers of inequality. As such, the strategic network supports activities to identify innovative disciplinary and inter-disciplinary research agendas on female labour and dynamics of inequality in developing countries, to shape policy discourse and practice.

The network focuses on eight countries in the three regions of the Middle East (Iran, Turkey), North Africa (Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia), and South Asia (Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka). It consists of researchers who have made major contributions to the understanding of gender and social inequality in their respective regions as well as non-academic participants and policy-makers from developing countries and relevant international institutions. The network also includes social scientists from Europe who have contributed to the literature on gender and inequality, but might not directly work on international development issues, in order to exchange ideas with our core group.

Monitoring of the network activities takes place internally in two stages; (1) from January to May 2017, the PI and Co-Is were responsible for eliciting and receiving the short country-based concept papers for each region; (2) from June to Nov. 2017, the Co-Is in charge of the four thematic research/policy areas identified at the June 2017 workshop were responsible for eliciting and reviewing contributions for the Dec 2017 conference in Morocco. Evaluation takes place internally through email exchanges and workshop discussions, circulation of the workshop reports, presentations at external meetings, and continuous reporting of activities and outcomes to the ESRC.

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Members of the network Dynamics of Gender Inequality in the Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia gather for a group photo following the 9-10 June 2017 workshop, which was hosted by the London Middle East Institute and brought together 35 academics from across the three regions and Europe. The second workshop that will be hosted by Mohammed V University in Rabat in December 2017 will discuss innovative research proposals with international and national policy makers and NGOs. The second workshop is co-sponsored by the FEMISE network and is planned to bring together more than fifty academics and representatives from national and international policy making institutions NGOs.