Women’s Rights in Islam Dialogue 3
Advancing Gender Equality in Islam

About Women’s Rights in Islam Dialogues

Al-Azhar University, Muhammadiyah and Faith to Action Network aim to enable Islamic scholars’ and Muslim faith leaders’ access to faith literacy on women’s rights in Islam. The three institutions recognise that engaging Muslim faith actors on women rights issues is crucial because faith actors play an important role in shaping and influencing behaviours of the communities they serve.

Therefore, they have organized a series of six dialogues that aim to create a safe space for Muslim faith actors to share perspectives and insights on Women’s Rights in Islam. The meetings will give a theological grounding and understanding on what Islamic texts say about women’s rights.

The 1st dialogue was held on 31st May, 2022 and covered the topic on Islamic Perspective on preventing violence against women and girls. The 2nd dialogue was held on 2nd August, 2022 and covered the topic on Islamic perspective on promoting women’s rights to bodily integrity. The 3rd dialogue was held on 31st August and covered the topic on “Advancing Women’s Property Rights”. Faith to Action Network will coordinate the 4th dialogue on 3rd October, 2022, Time: 3:00 PM EAT|12:00 PM GMT|7:00 PM WIB. The dialogue aims to meet the following objectives:

- To create a safe space for faith actors to share perspectives and insights on gender equality in Islam.
- To give a theological grounding and understanding on what Islamic texts say about gender equality.
- To give women’s rights advocates knowledge and information to champion for gender equality in Islam.

Background

Faith to Action Network, Al-Azhar University, Muhammadiyah acknowledge that there are obstacles that have aided in the prejudice against gender equality in Islam. The distortion of religious texts, which have been used to legitimize discrimination, inequality, and the violation of women’s rights, is one of the obstacles. The blending of cultural and religious norms is another hindrance to women having equal rights. The lines separating cultural rituals from religious ones are frequently blurred in
most societies, and vice versa. This ambiguity has been exploited to rationalize wrongdoing by classifying it under a religious umbrella.

Faith to Action Network, Al-Azhar University, Muhammadiyah have enabled the creation of theological and practical papers on women’s rights in Islam in order to aid in providing clarity. The three institutions have developed theological explanations on a range of women’s rights topics and facilitate a dialogue process on the following topics:

- Concept of gender equality in Islam
- The question of women’s participation in private, public, and political life in Islam
- A critical look at sexual and gender-based violence and domestic violence
- Status of women’s property rights in Islam
- Right of custody to children in Islamic law
- Women and the right to bodily integrity in Islam

Faith to Action Network has also invited many Muslim institutions and authors to prepare practice papers on the same topics, to illustrated faith-based advocacy for women’s rights in Islam. Thereafter, hold a series of 6 dialogues through where the discussion papers will be presented and discussed by representatives from faith organisations including institutions of higher learning, civil society organizations and Muslim Women Networks.

A key product of the dialogue process will be publications of the theological explanations on each of the above topics. These publications can be used by faith leaders and scholars to reference and guide discussions with communities on women’s rights. The publications will also be used by faith-based advocates when targeting faith-inspired decision makers in developing policies and strategies.

The purpose of equipping faith leaders and scholars with these publications is to facilitate conversation that can trigger changes in social norms which impede the realization and fulfilment of women’s rights. Quran 4:124 states: "If any do deeds of righteousness be they male or female and have faith, they will enter Heaven, and not the least injustice will be done to them."

Webinar Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Platform</th>
<th>Zoom: <a href="https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Bwd7rtzlTuadJHpXdy13jg">https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Bwd7rtzlTuadJHpXdy13jg</a></th>
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<tr>
<td>Interpre</td>
<td>Both in Arabic and French will be available.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>3rd October, 2022</td>
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<td>Duration</td>
<td>2 hours: 3:00 PM EAT</td>
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<td>Programme</td>
<td>Opening Prayer (3 minutes)</td>
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<td>Introduction to the process (7 minutes)</td>
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<td>4 Panellists (15 minutes each)</td>
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<td>Moderated Dialogue (40 minutes)</td>
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<td>Moderator’s summary (5 Minutes)</td>
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<td>Closing Prayer (5 minutes)</td>
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<td>Participants</td>
<td>The meeting will attract Muslim organisations, Muslim faith leaders, Muslim CSOs and women’s rights institutions concerned with women’s rights in Islam. The representation will aim for fair representation by region, age and gender.</td>
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Speaker’s Bios

🎨 Ani Zonneveld

Ani Zonneveld is President and Founder of Muslims for Progressive Values (MPV), the oldest progressive Muslim organization in the U.S. Through her work at the U.N. she has secured MPV’s ECOSOC status, serves on the U.N. inter-agency task force’s Faith Advisory Council, and was commissioned by the U.N. Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect to create an anti-hate speech workshop for Muslim societies. Ani has used MPV as an engine for producing theological, cultural, and legal educational content and curriculum in promoting an inclusive and human rights-based interpretation of Islam. The initiatives that Ani leads take place at grassroots level in multiple countries. Ani has led workshops for youth and experts, forums at the U.N. and the Human Rights Council, talks at places of worship, book festivals, in friendly and hostile public forums, at small community gatherings and for audiences as large as 650,000. Ani also spearheaded the founding of the global umbrella organization Alliance of Inclusive Muslims in 2017 in Tunisia. Ani gave her TEDx talk titled – Islam: As American As Apple Pie, is the subject of an award winning documentary titled "al-imam". As a Grammy certified songwriter, she utilizes the power of music and the arts in countering radicalism.

👨‍🏫 Prof. Alimatul Qibtiyah

Prof. Alimatul is a commissioner at National Commission on Violence against Women (Komnas Perempuan) and professor on Gender Studies at Da’wah and Communication Faculty, Islamic State University (UIIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, Indonesia). She has been actively involved at the Center for Women’s Studies, Kalijaga Institute for Justice as well as at CisForm (Center for Islam and Social
Transformation). At the community level she is a leader of Research and Development and a member of Tarjeh and Tajdid Division at National Board ‘Aisyiyah and Muhammadiyah (2015-2022).

She is a speaker at various national and international seminars and conferences on gender, feminist, and women’s issues (around 26 Countries). She is the author of Feminis Muslim di Indonesia and her current book chapter (2021) is Gender Contention and Social Recognition in Muslim Women’s Organizations in Yogyakarta in Indonesian Pluralities: Islam, Citizenship, and Democracy. She is the founder of Academi Feminis Muslim

Dr. Mervat Mahmoud Mohamed

Dr. Mervat Mahmoud is an assistant director of the International Islamic Center for Population Studies and Research (IICPSR). Additionally, she teaches biomedical research at the Human Reproductive Research Unit and serves as secretary general of the semi-annual journal "Population Sciences," which is financed by the International Islamic Center with UNFPA's assistance. In order to dispel misconceptions about reproductive health components among religious leaders, Dr. Mahmoud has contributed to publications and curriculum/training materials of the IICPSR. She has also participated in the implementation of all TOT trainings for RLDS from the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Al-Azhar University students. She also oversees the IICPSR's Rural Branch and coordinates initiatives for WHO, USAID, UNICEF, and the UN Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA).

She formerly worked as the Visionary Leadership (VLP) program coordinator for the project "Considering Religious as a Positive Change Factor for Leadership in Population and Reproductive Health" to create an intensive and thorough training module for future leaders chosen from Sudan and Nigeria. Additionally, she oversaw the project "Support to Muslim Religious Leaders for the Promotion of Reproductive Health and Family Planning Among the Muslim Community of Partner Countries" in order to sustain improvements in Reproductive Health for the collaborating organizations: FPAB (Family Planning Association of Bangladesh), CFPA (China Family Planning Association), FPAI (Family Planning Association of India), and PPAT (Planned Parenthood Association of Thailand).

Sandra Iman Pertek

Sandra Iman Pertek is a SEREDA Research Fellow and gender specialist with expertise in faith and gender-based violence (GBV) with over a decade’s experience in international development and migration. Her research integrates an intersectional and ecological analysis to explore the intersection of GBV and religion in forced migration, intersectionality and resilience. She is a mixed-methods researcher and an active contributor to networks dedicated to gender, GBV, faith and forced migration. She leads the Untold (Forced) Migrant Stories project and led the Forced Migration, SGBV and COVID-19 study. She has consulted on behalf of governmental and non-governmental organisations on integration of gender, GBV and faith sensitivity into policy and programmes, and previously served in a leading humanitarian organisation as Senior Policy Adviser on Gender.
Moderator’s Bio

Farida Abdulbasit

Farida is a program coordinator working in Kenya Muslim Youth Alliance (KMYA), a non-profit organization working towards youth empowerment and promoting participation in national development processes. Farida has over 5 years’ experience working with non-profit organizations in the programs and monitoring and evaluation sectors. She has profound skills in program management, developing and implementation of civic education, leadership and counter violence programs.

With a key responsibility in monitoring program design and implementation and taking a lead in developing tools for evaluating quantitative and qualitative data, Farida utilizes her skills and experience in data collection and analysis to ensure that information shared within and beyond the organization is accurate and consistent.

Farida has participated in different national and regional campaigns such as State of African Women, Right by Her Campaign and other local programs for the empowerment of youth and women. She utilizes her free time to read both fiction and non-fiction books as well as educative and entertaining films.