



**musawah**

For Equality in the Family

# Musawah Vision

Issue 9: July 2012

*An update on Musawah issues and activities*

## Issue in Focus: Women and the Arab Spring\*

Dear Friends,

This new issue of *Musawah Vision* is dedicated to **Cassandra Balchin**, an ardent supporter, champion and fierce lover of Musawah. The movement lost Cassandra on 12 July 2012 when she passed away peacefully after losing her battle with cancer. Although Cass is gone, her spirit continues to move us and propel us forward in our collective battle for equality and justice for Muslim families worldwide. The important contributions that Cass made shall not go to waste. Musawah shall stand testament to this in carrying on with the work that Cass helped start.

Cass, we salute you and all that you stood for.

With love,  
Musawah



Marwa Sharafeldin:

“Egyptians need to reclaim religion in the same revolutionary spirit by which we reclaimed our country on the 25th of January.”

- [Egypt Independent](#)

Mulki Al Sharmani:

“Those calling for the repeal of the *khul'* law [in Egypt] use faulty arguments... Fear Allah over the female citizens of Egypt.”

- [Shorouk News](#) [Arabic]



*\*Musawah Vision is now a monthly newsletter highlighting news and updates on family laws and women's rights in Muslim contexts. This special edition is the first of many quarterly issues that will explore a topic or trend in depth.*



Zainah Anwar:  
“The Arab Spring has opened up a window of opportunity for women in the region.”

- [Today's Zaman](#)

Ziba Mir-Hosseini:  
“There are many grounds for hope... The younger generations know that democracy and patriarchy are incompatible.”

- [openDemocracy.net](#)



## Updates by country

### Algeria:

- 140 women (31.6%) in Algeria's new parliament - [Reuters](#)

### Bahrain:

- Amnesty International calls on Bahrain to release female activist - [Women's Views on News](#)

### Egypt:

- The "hareem" of the new Egyptian Constitution - [Egypt Independent](#)
- Responses [in Arabic] to calls for repeal of the *khul'* law by our very own [Marwa Sharafeldin](#) and [Mulki Al Sharmani](#).
- Why women are at the heart of Egypt's political trials and tribulations - [Hania Sholkami](#)
- What does Morsi's presidency mean for Egyptian women? - [Altmuslimah](#)

### Iran:

- Iranian responses to the “Arab spring”: appropriation and contestation - Ziba Mir-Mosseini - [openDemocracy](#)

### Libya:

- New electoral law secures 20% quota for women in the Assembly - [LWPP](#)

### Syria:

- Syrian women on the frontlines, determined not to be sidelined - [Daily Star](#)

### Tunisia:

- Tunisian Women Turn Revolution Into Opportunity - [NPR](#)
- Tunisia's Revolution is Just Beginning - [IPS](#)

### Yemen:

- Yemen's Wave of Feminism: Women's Growing Role in Politics - [Albawaba](#)

## Reports and studies

- Women and the Arab Spring: Taking their place? - International Federation for Human Rights ([FIDH](#))
- Narrating the Arab spring from within – [Hoda Elsadda](#)
- Unveiling the Revolutionaries: Cyberactivism and Women's Role in the Arab Uprisings - [Courtney Radsch](#)
- Reflections on Women in the Arab Spring - [Wilson Center](#)
- What the Women Say: The Arab Spring & Implications for Women - [ICAN Brief](#)
- Coming 'guerrilla battle' between women and political Islam? - [Democracy Digest](#)
- Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy's 13th Annual Conference: 'The Arab Spring: Getting It Right' - [CSID Report](#)
- Women's Rights in Transitions to Democracy: Achieving Rights, Resisting Backlash - [WLP](#)
- The Arab Awakening and Women: A Symphony of Great Potential - [Aslan Media](#)
- Women of the Arab Spring give voice to their hopes and aspirations - [The National](#)
- Feminism and Islamic Perspectives: New Horizons of Knowledge and Reform - [Women and Memory Forum](#)

## Musawah Events and News



### **Musawah decodes the “DNA of Patriarchy” in Muslim family laws**

Ziba Mir-Hosseini and Zainah Anwar wrote: 'Why and how did verse 4:34, and not other verses in the Qur'an, become the foundation for the legal construction of marriage? Why are *qiwamah* and *wilayah* still the basis of gender relations in the imagination of modern-

day jurists and Muslims who resist and denounce equality in marriage as alien to Islam? How can we Muslim women reconstruct the concepts?’

Read the full article ‘Decoding the “DNA of Patriarchy” in Muslim family laws’ [here](#).

Read an overview of the Knowledge Building Initiative on *Qiwamah* and *Wilayah* [here](#).

### **Musawah presents groundbreaking research at AWID Panel**

As part of AWID’s 2012 global forum in Istanbul, Turkey in April, Musawah participated and presented in several sessions as well as organized our own panel [session](#) on ‘Men as Providers: The Unmaking of A Legal Fiction in Muslim Family Laws.’ In rethinking and challenging the concept of *Qiwamah* in Muslim family laws, the panel presented some of the groundbreaking findings of the *Qiwamah and Wilayah* [research project](#). Moderated by Musawah Director, Zainah Anwar, the session included presentations by Ziba Mir-Hosseini, Nani Zulminarni and Marwa Sharafeldin, followed by questions and answers.

### **The Global Life Stories Project meeting in Bali**



The Musawah Knowledge Building Working Group organised and hosted a methodology workshop in Bali from 7-11 April 2012 for the teams participating in the Global Life Stories Project. The project kicked off in 2011 as part of the [Musawah Knowledge Building Initiative on \*Qiwamah\* and \*Wilayah\*](#). Thirty-two participants representing the 12 national teams taking part in the project came from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Canada, Egypt, Gambia, Indonesia, Iran, Jordan, Malaysia, Nigeria, Philippines, and the United Kingdom. Alimat (Musawah Indonesia), which planned and implemented a year long pilot study for the Global Life Stories Project helped shape the workshop’s goals and programme. Apart from discussing the technical aspects of the project’s planning and implementation, the workshop helped participants grasp the theoretical knowledge needed to engage with the concepts of *Qiwamah* and *Wilayah* from a theological perspective as well as a critical feminist perspective.

## Contact Us

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#### **VI. Young Women's Caucus**

Facebook page: [YWC](#)

**To submit advocate updates, write to Musawah at:**

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