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Gender Profiles of the Neighbourhood South Countries

# LEBANON

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**Disclaimer**

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# Lebanon Gender Country Profile

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## Table of Contents

List of Acronyms .....	4
1. Summary .....	8
2. Background .....	11
3. Country Context.....	13
4. Socio-Economic Country Profile.....	17
5. Sector Analysis .....	25
6. Institutional and Legal Framework.....	31
7. Actors.....	34
8. Analysis of National Statistical Capacities - with a specific focus on gender.....	36
9. Main Findings and Recommendations.....	38
 Annex I - Gender Statistical Profile Lebanon .....	 44
Annex II - Country Matrix State of Play Gender Equality and Priority Sectors.....	47
Annex III - Documents consulted Lebanon .....	53
Annex IV - References.....	53
Annex V - Country Mission Meetings.....	53
Annex VI - Guideline Questions for Stakeholders.....	53
Annex VII – Additional Graphs and Tables – Lebanon .....	53

## List of Acronyms

ABAAD	Resource Center for Gender Equality (Lebanese NGO)
AL-Majmoua	The Lebanese Association for Development
ALVF	Lebanese Association for Combating Violence against Women
AUB	American University in Beirut
CAS	Central Administration of Statistics
CAT	Convention Against Torture
CBL	Central Bank of Lebanon
CCPR	Convention on Civil and Political Rights
CDR	Council for Development and Reconstruction
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women
CERD	Center for Educational Reform and Development
CESCR	Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRTDA	Collective for Research and Training on Development-Action
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
ECHO	European Community Humanitarian Aid
EMMA	Emergency Market Mapping and Analysis
ENI	European Neighbourhood Instrument
ENPI	European Neighbourhood Policy Initiative
ESCWA	(UN) Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
ESFD	Economic and Social Fund for Development
EU	European Union
EUDO	European Union Democracy Observatory on Citizenship
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FHH	Female-Headed Households
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GDI	Gender Development Index
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEM	Gender Empowerment Index
GFP	Gender Focal Point
GoL	Government of Lebanon
HDI	Human Development Index
HRC	Human Rights Council
ICCPR	International Convention on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR	International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
IDP	Internally displaced persons



IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural development
IFC	International Finance Cooperation
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMC	Inter-Ministerial Committee
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IOM	International Organization for Migration
KAFA	NGO name, based on an Arab neologism meaning “That’s enough”;
LBP	Lebanese Pounds
LCW	Lebanese Council for Women
LDWG	Lebanese Democratic Women Gathering
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MoE	Ministry of Environment
MoEHE	Ministry of Education and Higher Education
MoET	Ministry of Economy and Trade
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoIM	Ministry of Interior and Municipalities
MoL	Ministry of Labour
MoPH	Ministry of Public Health
MoSA	Ministry of Social Affairs
MPs	Members of Parliament
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
NCFUWI	National Committee for Follow Up on Women’s Issues
NCLW	National Commission for Lebanese Women
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NHDR	National Human Development Report
NOWARA	National Observatory for Women in Agriculture and Rural Areas
NWMs	National Women’s Machineries
OCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation for Development
OHCHR	(UN) Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OMSAR	Office of the Minister of State for Administrative Reform
PAPFAM	Pan Arab Project for Family Health
PCM	Presidency of the Council of Ministers
PHC	Primary Health Care
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
PwD	People with Disability
RC	Resident Coordinator (UN)

SCR	Security Council Resolution
SME	Small & Medium Enterprises
SSF	Single Support Frame
SWMENA	Status of Women in the Middle East and North Africa
TVET	Technical Education and Vocational Training
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	The United Nations Development Action Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCHR	United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
UNHCR	United High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFIL	United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
VAW	Violence against women
WB	The World Bank
WHO	World Health Organisation

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# 1. Summary

The present Country Gender Profile of Lebanon forms part of a series being undertaken under a EuropeAid Regional Project of gender profiles in the Neighbourhood South Countries. It is based on a triangulation approach, with study of documentation and available statistics, consultation through individual and focus group discussions with a number of concerned stakeholders from the government, civil society and international donor community in Beirut, and validation of findings.

## 1.1. Contextual characteristics impacting on gender equality

The Lebanese Constitution of 1926 clearly sets out the equality of all citizens, which is understood to be inclusive of gender equality. However, the Constitution also provides for maintaining and respecting the freedoms of the different confessional communities and ensuring their inclusion in all matters pertaining to government. There is therefore a constitutionally protected form of power-sharing between the 18 recognised confessional communities which also reinforces patriarchal cultural and traditional norms related to gender roles, responsibilities and status that are not in keeping with gender equality in either the political or the social spheres. The resulting sectarian systems that define representation in the legislative and executive structures of the government are very complex, and bear within them many elements that effectively constitute barriers to gender equality. Putting into question many legal provisions and social practices that have discriminatory effects tends to trigger acute fears of risks to the fragile balance of power between the constituent confessional communities in the country. As the recent Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) report points out: *“it is the nature of the sectarian system to marginalize equality between individuals in favour of equality between sects.”*<sup>1</sup>

Lebanon’s history as a state has been marked by a series of crises, not least a fifteen year long civil war, and waves of refugees (Palestinian, then also Iraqi and currently Syrian as well) placing pressure on services, space, infrastructure and employment. Each crisis places major stress on the fragile sectarian balance, generating fears of a fractured society. Decision makers and leaders tend to put aside considerations of gender equality for later attention, believing these to be of lower priority than other urgent challenges and failing to recognise the extent to which gender rights are intrinsic to human rights and the disabling effect of such discrimination on Lebanon’s capacity to overcome the setbacks to sustainable economic development.

## 1.2. Main findings and key considerations for EU programming

In function of their programming needs, the EU Delegation in Lebanon identified three sectors as priority for exploring gender equality dimensions<sup>2</sup>:

1. Socio-economic situation of women;
2. Political participation and representation in decision-making structures;
3. Justice and human rights.

The study of evolving gender relations in Lebanon points to growing opportunities and critical constraints which, addressed effectively, could have a significant impact in progress towards gender equality and empowerment of women. The broader gender analysis of the socio-economic context is discussed in detail in Section 4. Although the discussion here (and in Section 5) addresses the three sectors prioritised by the EU Delegation, it should be borne in mind that changes in one sector can have a domino effect on

<sup>1</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> CEDAW Report 2014, para 36

<sup>2</sup> The Delegation also specified that the focus should be on the Lebanese population, excluding refugee populations.



other sectors, creating additional opportunities or, if not recognised and action tailored accordingly, reinforcing existing constraints and barriers. Planning must allow for such considerations.

In the **social and economic sector**, traditional patriarchal attitudes often constitute continued discriminatory social and economic constraints faced by women, even where they enjoy equal rights. Growing opportunities for advancing gender equality and women's empowerment are found in the changing patterns in education, with diminishing stereotyping of domains of study "suitable for women". These impact positively on employment opportunities for women, especially in the public sector where there is no gender discrimination in salaries paid. However, gender discrimination still exists in social benefit regulations. Furthermore, mismatches between education (especially technical and vocational education and training) and viable labour market opportunities, greater gender differences in informal vocational training, and gender insensitivity in such labour market information as is available contribute to gender differences in employment, especially in the private sector, and in awareness of opportunities. Gender-related barriers also inhibit access to finance for women entrepreneurs.

While women are as active as men in voting, serious challenges face women in the **political participation and decision-making sector**, especially at national level. Patriarchal traditions combine with sectarianism and clientelism to exclude to a large extent women membership in the National Assembly, which is very limited. While many human rights and women's organisations call for a gender quota to be introduced for national elections to increase the participation of women in the legislature, the challenge is complicated by existing sectarian quotas. Gender quotas for political party lists could provide an entry point, and could facilitate greater participation of women as candidates at municipal election level, where sectarian quotas do not present the same challenge as at national level. Women's participation in local politics and leadership has been increasing, but changing mindsets both of potential candidates and of voters needs further advocacy, capacity development and support, building on existing successes where women have demonstrated their capacity as effective representatives.

Gender concerns relating to the **justice and human rights sector** fall into two categories. Firstly, there are laws that discriminate against women, especially but not only in most of the personal status (family) laws. Concerted efforts by the National Council of Lebanese Women and many civil society organisations have led to draft amendments to laws and regulations (including ones related to social benefits), but despite considerable mobilisation of support, few reach adoption. Even those that do have often undergone adjustments that tone down the hoped-for changes. Secondly, effective application of revised legal instruments requires widespread understanding of the implications of these – by judges, and by law enforcement and security staff.

The key findings lead to highlighting some priority considerations for EU programming in Lebanon, presented here in relation to partners.<sup>3</sup>

The EU should encourage and support **government** efforts to develop further dynamic systems to allow improved and gender-sensitive matching of education/training with real market and labour opportunities. Furthermore, the government should be encouraged to ensure integration of concepts related to gender-sensitive principles of human rights and civil responsibilities in intermediate, secondary and legal education, as well as in all orientation and training provided to judges and law enforcement bodies.

The EU should encourage and support **government and civil society** efforts to increase women's political participation and leadership at national and municipal levels. This should include identification of viable means of adopting quota systems for elected bodies and encouragement of political parties to apply quotas in decision-making bodies as well as candidate lists. Recognising civil society's valuable input in mobilising public awareness and support concerning gender discriminatory aspects of laws and regulations (social, economic and pertaining to human rights), the EU should also encourage and support

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<sup>3</sup> For more details on recommendations, please see Section 9 of the main report.

complementary efforts to ensure that legislative changes be fully understood by both concerned officials and the general public.

The EU should further encourage and support *civil society's* efforts to advocate for changes in attitudes towards women's full participation in economic and political life, and provide capacity development support to enable women's optimal participation in the economy and in local and national government, with special attention to avoidance of exclusion of vulnerable groups

The **EU Delegation** should take steps to ensure that gender analysis be systematically required in all technical advisory and programmatic inputs in Lebanon, to ensure that gender differences are duly recognised and allowance made for them across all technical, social, economic, governance and justice-related fields. Particular attention should be paid to ensuring full and equitable inclusion of female entrepreneurs in EU efforts to spur entrepreneurship in urban and rural areas.

At the **Regional level**, the EU should support pertinent exchanges and study visits between Neighbourhood South countries facing similar challenges in amending and applying laws that contain aspects that run counter to traditional values. They should also support strengthening of networking in support of women entrepreneurs.



## 2. Background

This Gender Country Profile of Lebanon forms part of a series of such profiles<sup>4</sup> being undertaken in the Mediterranean Neighbourhood South region, the global objective of which is to provide a sound baseline that can inform policy dialogue and gender mainstreaming in the design of future actions in the Neighbourhood South countries at bilateral and regional level within the new European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI).

Within their Single Support Framework for European Union support to Lebanon (2014-2016)<sup>5</sup>, the European Union Delegation (EUD) in Lebanon has identified their priority intervention sectors as:

1. Justice and Security System Reform;
2. Reinforcing social cohesion, promoting sustainable economic development and protecting vulnerable groups;
3. Promotion of sustainable and transparent management of energy and natural resources.

Within this framework, they identified the following as the three specific priority sectors to be covered by the **Gender Country Profile**:

1. Socio-economic situation of women.
2. Political participation and representation in decision-making structures.
3. Justice and human rights.

**Methodology:** A triangulation approach was adopted, whereby study of documentation was validated through consultation with concerned stakeholders in Beirut and further verification through data provided. In order to ensure an overall coherency in coverage of discussions across all Gender Country Profiles in the series, a set of guidelines<sup>6</sup> was developed to provide orientation for the discussions with different categories of stakeholders. An initial desk review of documents and statistics<sup>7</sup> available from a range of sources, including documents provided by the EU Delegation, was undertaken. Meetings were arranged as far as possible with concerned stakeholders in Beirut, using a mix of focus groups and individual discussions. Further documentation made available by stakeholders was also studied in the process of analysing and validating information provided.

The strategy of grouping civil society representatives for Focus Group Discussions along the main sectoral themes identified by the EUD was adopted where possible, to include a greater representation of civil society perspectives, while individual meetings were held with government representatives.<sup>8</sup> Several UN Agency representatives met jointly with the team. Although all meetings were held in Beirut, several stakeholders participating in meetings, and especially those from civil society, have networks of contacts across the country and were thus able to provide insights from most, if not all, parts of the country. Desired meetings with other international donor representatives failed to materialise. Nevertheless, stakeholders provided the team with valuable insights that complemented information available from documentation studied.

**Constraints:** It proved difficult to arrange meetings with many pertinent stakeholders, both governmental and from civil society, within the short time allocated to the field visit<sup>9</sup>. Various factors contribute to some uncertainty about demographic statistics in Lebanon, which constitutes a constraint. First and foremost: the last population census took place in 1932. Periodic household surveys are used to collect demographic, social, economic and health-related data, but it is widely recognised that these give only indicative findings. Furthermore, the most recent poverty survey dates from 2004 and the latest Living Standards Survey from

<sup>4</sup> Countries included in this series are : Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine and Syria

<sup>5</sup> European Commission Directorate General For Development And Cooperation - EuropeAid (2013), "Programming of the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) - 2014-2020: Single Support Framework for EU support to Lebanon (2014-2016)"

<sup>6</sup> See Annex V

<sup>7</sup> See Annex III for a list of key documents consulted

<sup>8</sup> For the full list of organisations and stakeholders met during the field mission, see Annex IV.

<sup>9</sup> The challenge was aggravated by a public holiday being declared shortly before the mission started. However, several organisations and individuals accepted to meet despite this event.

2007.<sup>10</sup> The national household surveys do not include the refugee camp populations. UNRWA keeps detailed statistics of ID (Palestinian) refugees, but non-ID (Palestinian) refugees are not necessarily counted by any authority. UNHCR statistics include only those non-Palestinian refugees who register for assistance; numbers of Iraqi and Syrian refugees who do not require support are not known. It is important to bear in mind, therefore, that care is necessary in use of formal statistics for Lebanon.

It should be noted that this Gender Country Profile covers only Lebanese citizens and does not take into account refugee populations in the country.

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<sup>10</sup> Information from CAS. Also, see Strategic Needs Assessment Project (SNAP) 2013, Lebanon Baseline Information, p3 [http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/lebanon\\_baseline\\_information\\_october\\_2013.pdf](http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/lebanon_baseline_information_october_2013.pdf)



### 3. Country Context

Located in the middle of the eastern edge of the Mediterranean, with Syria to the North and East, and Israel/Palestine to the south, the Republic of Lebanon has a total surface area of little over 10,400km<sup>2</sup>, extending 217 km from North to South, and no more than 80 km wide at its widest point. The country is divided into four zones running north-south: a coastal strip, the Lebanon and the Anti-Lebanon mountain ranges, and the plateau of the Bekaa valley between these ranges. The country is divided into six administrative governorates or *Mohafazat* (Beirut, Mount Lebanon, Nabatiyeh, South Lebanon, the Bekaa and North Lebanon); these are subdivided into divisions (*Caza*), of which there are 25. The population of Lebanese and resident foreigners (excluding refugee communities) was estimated to be 3.76 million at the time of the last household survey (2006). Lebanon's long history as a crossroads of culture, trade and migration (both outwards, establishing communities in other countries, and incoming of both trading people and refugees seeking a haven from crisis in their places of origin) has given the country a rich multi-religious and multi-cultural character which is both a strength and an area of vulnerability. Understanding gender dimensions of laws and of legislative decisions in Lebanon, as well as the social impact of these, requires at least a brief overview of how this multi-cultural and multi-religious mix impacts on Lebanon's governance.

From the founding of the State of Lebanon in the 1920s, under French Mandate, a potentially divisive issue was that of national identity. Christian communities identified with Lebanon and its Phoenician heritage, and by extension with the West, while Muslim communities identified with the Arab world. Although it was anticipated that a common national identity would evolve, this has not been the case. Attributing, recognising (or refusing) of Lebanese citizenship has tended to occur with attention to political impact on the officially recognised "demographic balance" between the different religious communities, and any administrative decision that could affect this balance can trigger strong negative reactions, including civil conflict (as occurred in 1958 and 1975-1990). A European Union Democracy Observatory (EUDO) on Citizenship report comments on the challenges of even agreeing on the dimensions of acquiring and loss of Lebanese citizenship, concluding that "citizenship is one of the main grounds of battle and delay in Lebanese politics as well"<sup>11</sup> This issue has implications for gender relations, and underpins Lebanon's reservation on CEDAW concerning nationality.

The Lebanese Constitution of 1926 set out clearly the principles of equality of all citizens in Article 7<sup>12</sup>. It also defines religious freedoms in Article 9<sup>13</sup>, which established both the rights of the religious communities to have their own religious courts to apply their own laws on matters related to their creeds (especially those concerning family relations and personal status) and laid the base for the principles of proportional inclusion of the recognised religious sects<sup>14</sup> in the Government (also addressed under Articles 24 and 95<sup>15</sup>). These principles led to the "consociational", or confessional, structure of government (*al-nizam al-taejfi*). The national censuses of 1921 and 1932 provided the reference base for

<sup>11</sup> European Union Democracy Observatory on Citizenship (2012), *EUDO Citizenship Observatory Country Report: Lebanon*, by Melkar el-Khoury & Thibaut Jaulin, <http://eudo-citizenship.eu/docs/CountryReports/Lebanon.pdf>, P23

<sup>12</sup> Article 7 "All Lebanese are equal before the law. They equally enjoy civil and political rights, and assume obligations and public duties without any distinction among them." *constituteproject.org*, "Lebanon's Constitution of 1926 with Amendments through 2004"

<sup>13</sup> Article 9 "Freedom of conscience is absolute. In assuming the obligations of glorifying God, the Most High, the State respects all religions and creeds and safeguards the freedom of exercising the religious rites under its protection, without disturbing the public order. It also guarantees the respect of the system of personal status and religious interests of the people, regardless of their different creeds." *Ibid*

<sup>14</sup> The recognised sects, or "18 spiritual families" consist of 12 Christian groups (**Maronite**, Latin Catholic, **Greek Catholic**, Armenian Catholic, Chaldean Catholic, Syriac Catholic, Protestant, **Greek Orthodox**, Armenian Orthodox, Syriac Orthodox, Assyrian Church of the East, Copts), 4 Muslim groups (**Sunni**, **Shi'a**, Alawite, Isma'ili), **Druze** and Jewish communities. (Major groups are shown in bold type)

<sup>15</sup> Article 95 "As a temporary measure ... and for the sake of justice and concord the religious communities shall be equitably represented in public employment and in the formation of the Cabinet without causing harm to the interests of the State." (Cited in "Lebanon: Constitutional Law and the Political Rights of Religious Communities", <http://www.loc.gov/law/help/lebanon-constitutional-law.php>) This Article has been revised on the basis of the Taif Accord (1989) (See *constituteproject.org*, "Lebanon's Constitution of 1926 with Amendments through 2004") and the Doha Declaration (2008) to specify more firmly a process to eliminate political sectarianism, with abrogation of the rule of sectarian representation. However, little progress has been made towards implementing the amended Article.



establishing the proportional representation frame for distribution of all public positions (by election or appointment, in the legislature or the administration). The politics of confessional demography were more specifically negotiated in the “informal” oral National Pact (*al Mithaq al Watani*) that paved the implementation of Lebanon’s independence in 1943, defining by majority sect the top government positions. The resulting political structure ties citizens to their familial roots and communities of origin. Following the civil war, the Taif Accord (1989) led to some reduction in specificity of representation, as a first stage of eliminating sectarianism. However, no significant progress has yet been made towards abrogation of the rule of sectarian representation.

The formal pluralistic sectarianism reinforces and is reinforced by two other traditional characteristics of Lebanese society, both of which contribute to gender inequalities. Lebanese society is strongly marked by patriarchal culture, across all the religious communities, and this is echoed in political representation. Interweaving with patriarchal traditions is a form of patronage system, evolved from feudal relationships between overlords and their dependent communities, that is particularly pervasive in Lebanon: “*Zuama* clientelism<sup>16</sup>”, under which a critical aspect is the ability to access power and influence (*wasta*). *Zuama* clientelism and *wasta* play a role not only in formal politics, reinforcing patriarchal confessionalism, but also in the economy and in traditional conflict resolution.

The interaction of these support and perpetuate male domination in most areas of politics and decision-making; women seldom find a place in politics unless as representative of a powerful family. In effect, the equality of all citizens’ civil and political rights and responsibilities guaranteed under Article 7 is undermined by such interweaving clientelism and patriarchal confessionalism, which creates vested interests in resisting many legislative amendments necessary for eliminating existing discrimination in legal instruments and social practices. Many draft laws, often formulated and promoted through active civil society involvement, become victim to such resistance in the legislative process, either being negotiated down to more limited changes or rejected. Despite formal state endorsement of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)<sup>17</sup>, amendments essential to eliminating gender discrimination usually encounter such obstacles, particularly in relation to family personal status, related aspects of the Penal Code and sensitive issues surrounding citizenship and the Nationality Law. (These are discussed further in section 6.) As stated in Lebanon’s third CEDAW report: ***“Whichever denomination she belongs to, a Lebanese woman is a victim of gender discrimination in her contact with the personal status laws.”***<sup>18</sup>

A sizeable number of Lebanese are found scattered round the world, having migrated for trade or professional reasons and settled in Africa, and the Americas but retaining close links with their community of origin. Estimates of Lebanese living abroad range between four and six million (possibly even twice as many as Lebanese citizens resident in Lebanon) and many expatriate Lebanese are reportedly still registered on electoral lists in their villages of origin. Lebanon has also seen many waves of refugees arrive and settle in its land over the centuries, including Armenians, Palestinians, and more recently, Iraqis and Syrians fleeing conflict in their countries. While accurate figures are not available, estimates suggest that more than a third of the estimated approximately 5.5 million persons currently living in Lebanon are refugees from Syria<sup>19</sup>, numbers of which continue to rise, and Palestinians<sup>20</sup>. Such refugee populations strain Lebanon’s resources and, moreover, trigger sectarian sensitivities over the prickly issue of demographic balance and politics of numbers.

<sup>16</sup> For more extensive discussion of clientelism in Lebanon, see *Zuama Clientelism*, <http://countrystudies.us/lebanon/78.htm>

<sup>17</sup> “Reservations on CEDAW: The Government of the Lebanese Republic enters reservations regarding article 9 (2), and article 16 (1) (c) (d) (f) and (g) (regarding the right to choose a family name). In accordance with paragraph 2 of article 29, the Government of the Lebanese Republic declares that it does not consider itself bound by the provisions of paragraph 1 of that article.” [https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=IND&mtdsg\\_no=IV-8&chapter=4&lang=en#top](https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=IND&mtdsg_no=IV-8&chapter=4&lang=en#top)

<sup>18</sup> Government of Lebanon / Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (2006), “Consideration of reports submitted by States Parties under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women Third periodic report of States Parties - Lebanon\*”, CEDAW/C/LBN/3, para 78

<sup>19</sup> The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that in January 2015 there would be 1.44 million Syrian refugees registered with UNHCR for assistance in Lebanon (<http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49e486676.html>) Note: not all Syrian refugees are registered with UNHCR.

<sup>20</sup> The United Nations Relief and Works Agency, specifically mandated to provide support and assistance to Palestinians made refugees in 1948 (and by extension, their descendants), reports approximately 450,000 Palestinians with UNRWA identification papers, <http://www.unrwa.org/where-we-work/lebanon>, with an additional more than 53,070 Palestine refugees from Syria (PRS) (April 2014 figures) <http://www.unrwa.org/prs-lebanon>



For more than 40 years, Lebanon has moved from crisis to crisis, both internal (civil war, assassinations of leading personalities, collapse of governments) and external (invasions, occupation, flows of refugees into Lebanon), with each crisis triggering emergency conditions. With the pervasive sense of instability in an unstable region, management of these crises and reconstruction and rehabilitation of damaged infrastructure in order to facilitate rapid economic recovery, are seen by those in power to be of highest priority for allocation of time and of available resources; although human rights (and to a lesser extent, gender rights) are recognised as important, they tend not to be seen as integral to such concerns and it is often said that these will be attended to once the crises are brought under control. The challenge that this represents is reflected systematically in the identification of obstacles faced in relation to each section of the national 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Periodic Report on CEDAW.<sup>21</sup>

Since the end of the civil war, Lebanon has adopted neither an integrated National Development Plan nor a Poverty Reduction Strategy. Two types of national planning have been followed: several Ministries have developed their own sector-related national action plans – and sometimes, topic specific action plans, and the Council for Development and Reconstruction has undertaken planning that places priority on infrastructural development that is intended to facilitate economic revival. Neither approach addresses the need to for a holistic national development plan based on common vision and strategies across all sectors to reduce poverty in a coordinated way. Successive Donor Conferences, addressing Lebanon's development and reconstruction needs, supported an emphasis on economic development that would enable integration of Lebanon into the international economy; only with the Paris III Conference in 2007 (following the very destructive war with Israel in 2006) was attention paid to another dimension - securing the basic socio-economic rights of the Lebanese.<sup>22</sup> However, despite efforts by the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) working in collaboration with other Ministries<sup>23</sup> to formulate a National Social Development Plan, national planning is still not holistic. An Economic and Social Reform Action Plan, 2012–2015 was formulated by a previous government, but stakeholders indicate that this has effectively been put on hold due to crises of government. As stressed by the EU in the latest Single Support Framework: “Major political and economic reforms remain stalled by the lack of political consensus.”<sup>24</sup> Efforts to ensure gender equality and women's empowerment depend on adequate overall planning, in which they need to be integrated. Several civil society organisations (CSO) are mobilising around the need for a coherent and comprehensive National Development Plan that addresses the needs of all Lebanese citizens rather than numerous uncoordinated plans focussing in on sector or specific population groups' concerns, which are seen as often serving patriarchal and sectarian interests.<sup>25</sup>

Civil society has a long history and plays an important role in Lebanon, both as service providers and as catalysts for change. While some associations are “communal”, serving family networks and needs, many are “civil”, addressing issues and challenges that cut across confessional lines, and many of these mobilise around rights – human and/or women's – to tackle critical issues together.<sup>26</sup> This enables civil society organisations (CSO) to mobilise quite widespread public support around selected causes, such as the Nationality Law (which discriminates against Lebanese women by denying them the right to pass their nationality to their children) and gender-based violence. Groups tend to coalesce effectively round specific themes for campaigns – for example, when seeking to promulgate changes in law – then revert to their own priority work. While most if not all “communal” associations reflect confessional ties and often have

<sup>21</sup> Government of Lebanon / Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (2014), “Consideration of reports submitted by States Parties under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women Fourth and Fifth periodic report of States Parties - Lebanon\*”, CEDAW/C/LBN/4-5. Hereafter referred to as “4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> CEDAW Report”

<sup>22</sup> For further discussion of this process, see Cynthia Abi Rached (2008), “The “Paris III Conference” and the reform agenda”, <http://www.socialwatch.org/book/export/html/11084>, and *Annual Progress Reports of the Council for Development and Reconstruction* (most recent available, 2013)

<sup>23</sup> Ministries of: Social Affairs; Education and Higher Education; Public Health; Labour; Interior and Municipalities; Finance; Economy and Trade

<sup>24</sup> European Commission Directorate General for Development and Cooperation – Europeaid (), *Programming of the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) - 2014-2020: Single Support Framework for EU support to Lebanon (2014-2016)* P2

<sup>25</sup> Led by the Lebanese Center for Public Information (CPI). See <http://daleel-madani.org/project/lnbp-lebanese-national-development-plan-2014-2017>, <http://www.cpi-lebanon.org/> and <http://www.ma-study.net/index.html>

<sup>26</sup> For more detailed insights into the complexities of Lebanese Civil Society, see UNDP (2009), *Lebanon National Human Development Report: toward a citizen's state*, [http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Lebanon/Lebanon\\_HDR\\_2009.pdf](http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Lebanon/Lebanon_HDR_2009.pdf)

links to political groups, more than three quarters of the “civil” CSOs are non-sectarian. However, even these are often beset by the challenges of sectarianism and nepotism found in society at large, and civil society can only make a difference among decision-makers when it has been *“able to bypass their primal identities as members of religious communities”*.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> UNDP (2009), Lebanon National Human Development Report: toward a citizen's state, p28-29



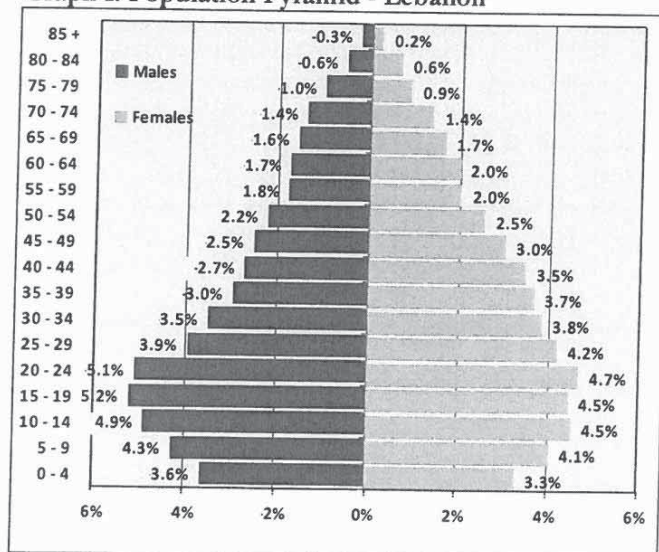
## 4. Socio-Economic Country Profile

Socio-economic characteristics impact on, and are impacted upon by, gender relations that are changing. In Lebanon, the already complex dynamics reflected in this interaction are further complicated by the complexity of the patriarchal and sectarian sensitivities and influences that shape culture, politics and the economy. While some challenges constitute active gender barriers today, others still having some impact are the result of gender discrimination in the past; it is important to understand and to differentiate between such factors in order to tailor most effectively strategies to achieve greater gender equality.

### 4.1. Demographic dimensions influencing gender relations

Lebanon's population pyramid is very distinctive (See Graph 1). It reflects a disproportionately larger young male population (under 25 years of age) and a disproportionately larger female population in the age groups 25-64<sup>28</sup>. This means that women are more numerous than men in the age groups where economic activity and political participation are significant. Contributory factors include the impact of the civil war on male mortality, and probably reflect greater male than female emigration for further studies and for work, while according to the Central Administration for Statistics (CAS), 80% of immigrant workers are female<sup>29</sup>.

Graph 1: Population Pyramid - Lebanon



Source: CAS (2007), *Living Standards Survey 2007*, Table 4.a

Of the 56% of the Lebanese residents<sup>30</sup> aged between 20 and 64 years, women constitute 29.4% and men 26.6%. However, women only constitute a quarter of the labour force, while they constitute almost three quarters of the economically inactive population aged 15 years or more. This is a reflection of continuing influence of perceptions that married women's place is in the home unless economic pressures force them to work, although in practice, these norms are changing rapidly. However, at the time of the Living Standards Survey 2007, only 34% of employed women were currently married, while 59% had never been married yet; among employed men, only 36% were not yet married, while 62% were currently married.<sup>31</sup>

The fifteen different Family Laws do not provide a common minimum age for marriage. Some allow marriage to be licensed for girls as young as at 9 years (Sunni, Shi'a) and 12.5 (Jewish); however, there is differentiation between recognised marriageable age and age at which marriage may be licensed, with norms moving the marriageable age away from child marriage and reducing gender differences in marriageable age.<sup>32</sup> Almost all the laws set 18 as the marriageable age for boys; most confessional groups indicate between 14 and 17 years for girls. In reality, the actual average age of marriage has been increasing steadily in all confessional communities over recent decades, and is currently estimated to be around 28 years of age, slightly higher for men than for women. However, some conservative communities still allow

<sup>28</sup> CAS (2007), *Living Standards Survey 2007*, Table 4.a, p133

<sup>29</sup> CAS (2011), "The Labour market in Lebanon", by Najwa Yaacoub and Lara Badre, *Statistics In Focus (SIF)*, Issue No 1, p15

<sup>30</sup> CAS data exclude residents of Palestinian refugee camps

<sup>31</sup> CAS (2007), *Living Standards Survey 2007*, Table 87b, p251

<sup>32</sup> The 3<sup>rd</sup> CEDAW report presents detailed gender analysis of marriage-related aspects of the main Family Laws. See Government of Lebanon / Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (2006), "Consideration of reports submitted by States Parties under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women Third periodic report of States Parties - Lebanon\*", CEDAW/C/LBN/3 (hereafter referred to as "3<sup>rd</sup> Report"), paras 326-360



child marriage. The 2009 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) findings suggest that around 2% of women in the 15-49 age group had been married before age 15, with rates of up to 3% reported in more rural districts of the North, the Bekaa and the South, and a further 13% had been married before reaching the age of 18 years<sup>33</sup>. These findings have triggered widespread concern about child marriage, leading to efforts to tighten restrictions on early marriage. Such concern has been aggravated by suggestions that Syrian refugee families (of which there are concentrations in cazas of the North and the northern Bekaa where early marriage has been more accepted) are proposing their young daughters for marriage to Lebanese men, causing an increase in early marriage.<sup>34</sup> This is a concern that needs to be verified through careful study of current and first marriage characteristics, which are not included in summaries of vital statistics data collected centrally.

With marriage often taking place later, fertility rates are reportedly falling. According to CAS in a 2012 report: "In 2004, the total period fertility rate (that is a measure of the number of children per woman) was 1.9 children (for the 5 years previous to the survey, that is years 1999 to 2003)." <sup>35</sup>

Official figures indicate that 15.5% of households are headed by women<sup>36</sup>. It is not clear to what extent there is a distinction between the formal household head and the effective head of household – for example, when a husband is working abroad, or in case of incapacity of the formal head of household to manage the household due to health or disability problems. Culturally, a woman would not easily be recognized as the household head if an adult male is part of the household – even if the man is seldom present; available figures suggest that most recognized female heads of household are widows or divorcees. There appears to be considerable variation across the country, with higher rates in Beirut than in more conservative areas.

Inevitably, there are variations in demographic characteristics across the country, with some local communities that are more conservative, arrange marriages earlier, and have larger families than are found in other parts of the country. Such communities also tend to reflect stronger patriarchal attitudes, have greater problems of access to basic services, and face greater poverty. Parts of Tripoli, Akkar, Hermel and Baalbek have particularly high concentrations of such communities, and these are also areas where the flows of Syrian refugees are greatest, aggravating already difficult conditions. CAS does not disaggregate data for rural and urban character – because no satisfactory definition for "rural" has been found that would allow consistent use of the term in Lebanon today<sup>37</sup>, but these disadvantaged and more conservative communities are largely found in rural areas.

#### 4.2. Gender dimensions of education

The fact that overall, 17.6% of the female population aged three years and above are illiterate, compared to 9.3% for the male population<sup>38</sup>, largely reflects major gender gaps in education several decades ago.

Numbers of children studying in pre-school, elementary and intermediate schools suggest a gender gap in education, with more boys than girls studying at these levels; however this does not take into account the larger numbers of boys than girls in these age groups. When this is borne in mind, there appears to be a "positive" gender gap, with proportionally more girls than boys in basic education. This trend becomes even more marked at secondary level, where although there are 117 boys per 100 girls in the 15-19 age group, there are only 97 boys per 100 girls in secondary school. Proportionately more boys are dropping out of school to work, while girls continue their studies. While enrolment in university studies appears to be equal in numbers, this also reflects a slightly higher proportion of the female than the male population

<sup>33</sup> CAS (2012), "Population and Housing Characteristics in Lebanon", by Najwa Yaacoub and Lara Badre, Statistics In Focus (SIF), Issue No 2, p 6; See also CEDAW 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Report, para 194.3

<sup>34</sup> No clear confirmation has been found of such a trend. A very few cases have drawn media attention. According to several stakeholders, there were about six cases reported in the media over the last year. Unfortunately, the civil registration system does not include data on the age of brides and grooms, rendering it difficult to track any changes in age at marriage.

<sup>35</sup> CAS (2012), "Population and Housing Characteristics in Lebanon", by Najwa Yaacoub and Lara Badre, Statistics In Focus (SIF), Issue No 2, p 6; Note: these are old data, but nothing suggests any significant change in reproductive behavior since then.

<sup>36</sup> Based on data in CAS (2007), *Living Standards Survey 2007*, Table 1a, p126

<sup>37</sup> Information provided by CAS staff members.

<sup>38</sup> CAS (2007), *Living Standards Survey 2007*, Table 69b p220



of the main tertiary education age groups.<sup>39</sup> It should be noted that there are significant regional variations in gender differences in education,<sup>40</sup> to a great extent reflecting poverty patterns in the country. The lowest enrolment rates in intermediate and secondary education, and the greatest inverse gender gap, are reported in the *cazas* of Akkar and Miniye-Danniyeh in the North (75% of girls and 59% of boys), where poverty is widespread<sup>41</sup>. In the largely poor Akkar *caza* in the North, for example, boys drop out early from school, to seek work (particularly on construction sites) in order to bring in more family income, while most girls stay on in school; many boys join the army as soon as they can – with gender implications for the political candidate patterns in the area, since the military are not eligible for election.

It is often stated that there is marked gender discrimination in choice of type of schools to which families send their children, with priority given to boys for enrolling in private schools, believed to be of higher quality, while girls are more often sent to the public schools. The 2007 CAS survey suggests that this gender bias does exist but is less marked than expected: only a 5% difference (44% of girls and 39% of boys were studying in public institutions).<sup>42</sup>

Changing trends in education are contributing to changing norms about women working – all the more so because a decision in the 1990s to encourage establishment of University campuses around the country has overcome a barrier to higher education for girls from more conservative parts of the country.

Gender stereotyping in choice of fields of study is reportedly decreasing; if the “classic” female domains such as teaching and nursing are still gender-linked, women are also choosing to study subjects long considered “male” domains – such as engineering, law, finance, business management etc. (Figures were not found to establish the extent that this is changing, and there is nothing to indicate any inverse trend of male students opting for “female” domains.)

#### 4.3. Gender dimensions of employment

Women account for a quarter of the employed population. There are not significant gender differences in patterns of employment between the public and the private sector (both formal and informal) as reflected in the statistics: 15% of the female labour force and 16% of the male labour force are engaged in the public sector. However, it should be noted that there are strong probabilities that a part of women’s contribution to economic activity remains invisible in formal statistics, being seen either as secondary or as an extension of household activity. This is particularly applicable to work in the agricultural sector.<sup>43</sup>

Micro-, small and medium enterprises constitute a large part of private sector businesses in Lebanon, relatively few employing as many as ten persons, and family businesses account for some million jobs; women constitute only an estimated 17% of such entrepreneurs.<sup>44</sup> Stakeholders pointed out that in a patriarchal society, family businesses tend to be owned by male family members. The services sector accounts for almost half of all employment (41.6%) and is the main sector for economically active females; women engaged in the services sector constitute 15.8% of the total labour force. A third of the small number of persons engaged in financial services (including insurance and intermediation) are women, and around a sixth of all employees in trade and in industry – reflecting proportionately less

<sup>39</sup> CAS (2007), *Living Standards Survey 2007*, Tables 62a p213, 4.a. p133

<sup>40</sup> The Palestinian refugees in Lebanon do not reflect the same pattern. While UNRWA ID refugees have access to free basic education through UNRWA schools, non-ID refugees have less access. Figures are not available for non-ID refugees, who are stateless and have no formal access to any UN Agency assistance for education, health or any other services. (Non-ID Palestinian refugees include the children of ID refugee women who have married non-ID Palestinians; UNRWA applies the Lebanese Nationality Law principles that do not allow a woman to transmit her nationality – or, in this case, her UNRWA ID status.) Other factors contributing to lower education enrolment include the poverty that requires young people to seek work, and the fact that even with full qualifications, Palestinians are barred from filling professional posts, leaving less incentive for many to attempt to continue studies further; the legal restrictions have been reduced slightly in recent years.

<sup>41</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> CEDAW Report, paras 123; 196.4 - 196.6

<sup>42</sup> CAS (2007), *Living Standards Survey 2007*, Table 65b p217

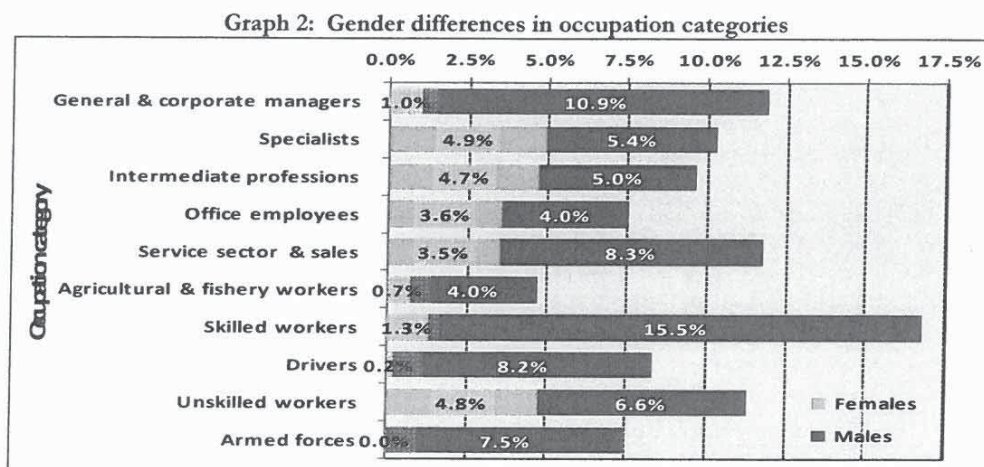
<sup>43</sup> See, for example, a recent study by NOWARA: National Observatory for Women in Agriculture and Rural Areas (NOWARA) (2011), *Status Of Lebanese Women In Rural Areas: Roles And Perspectives Statistics*, [http://www.nowara.org/assets---Study\\_Women\\_in\\_rural\\_areas\\_2011.pdf](http://www.nowara.org/assets---Study_Women_in_rural_areas_2011.pdf), which found that in almost half the villages surveyed, in reality the main activity of women was in the agricultural sector although this was viewed as part of household duties..

<sup>44</sup> UN Women Arab States Regional Office (2011), *Country Gender Equality Assessment – Lebanon*, by E. Bazalgette, pp12-13



engagement of women in these last sectors. Construction and transportation remain male-dominated sectors.

There are strong gender differences in the type of occupational activity. Women tend to be engaged in a narrower range of occupations, with 26% working in professional occupations (compared to only 8% of working men), and a further 12% in technical and associated occupations (compared to 5% of men) and clerical, while men constitute most of the labour in craftwork, skilled and semi-skilled labour occupations, and the armed forces.<sup>45</sup> The result of these gender differences in occupational choice constitutes an almost eliminated gender gap in employment in professional and related occupations – and, at the other end of the scale, among unskilled labour – as can be seen in Graph 2. However, women constitute less than a tenth of general and corporate managers, reflecting the challenges faced by women to reach positions of decision-making influence.



Source: Data from CAS (2007), *Living Standards Survey 2007*, Table 90a, p255

Just over half (51.8%) of the currently employed population are employees receiving monthly wages; women receiving monthly wages constitute three quarters of employed women (18.5% of all the currently employed population). Of the 23.3% of the labour force who are self employed, working alone or getting help from family members (with or without wage), only 2.5% are women, and relatively few women are employers hiring labour, while women are proportionally slightly more likely than men to be working (with or without wages) for family or relatives.<sup>46</sup>

CAS estimates an overall gender gap in earnings of only 6%, but identifies a range between a high of 38% in the transport, post and telecommunications sector and a low of 6.2% in the services sector in which a majority of the labour force is engaged.<sup>47</sup> The higher estimates reflect mainly practices in the private sector: stakeholders pointed out that the Civil Service and the banks have salary scales that are applied irrespective of the sex of the employee<sup>48</sup>. The Civil Service salaries are relatively low – and a growing proportion of female civil servants is due at least in part to the fact, pointed out by stakeholders, that women tend to accept lower salaries, but value certain working conditions in the Civil Service, such as: working hours that facilitate balancing family reproductive duties and work; stable work; and related employment benefits. Such advantages are not systematically available in private sector employment. In contrast, men prefer work that pays better, in keeping with the traditional role of men as bread-winners of the family. It should be noted that World Economic Forum (WEF) reports an overall major gender difference in earnings, a different finding to that reported by CAS: WEF estimates that women are only paid 68% of male wages for an equivalent position.<sup>49</sup> The discrepancy in estimates may reflect differences

<sup>45</sup> CAS (2011), "The Labour market in Lebanon", by Najwa Yaacoub and Lara Badre, *Statistics In Focus (SIF)*, Issue No 1, p6

<sup>46</sup> See also Table 3 in Annex VI

<sup>47</sup> CAS (2011), "The Labour market in Lebanon", by Najwa Yaacoub and Lara Badre, *Statistics In Focus (SIF)*, Issue No 1, pp6-7

<sup>48</sup> In the Public Sector, the right to equal remuneration for work of equal value irrespective of sex is acknowledged and guaranteed in Legislative Decree No. 112/59 (Public Sector Staff Regulations).

<sup>49</sup> World Economic Forum (2014), *Global Gender Gap Report 2014*, p236 (Based on responses to the survey question, "In your country, for similar work, to what extent are wages for women equal to those of men?" in the World Economic Forum, *Executive Opinion Survey*, 2014.)



in ways of taking into consideration equivalence of work; the greater concentration of women in professional positions would have an impact on average wages for women, increasing the overall average, while the greater proportion of men in skilled and unskilled occupations might reduce the overall male average wage.

It should be noted, however, that if there is no gender discrimination in pay in the public sector, there are still discriminatory regulations concerning social benefits and tax that are rooted in perceptions of man as the breadwinner. For example, while a man's social security benefits are unconditionally payable to his wife, a working woman's are not paid to her husband unless he is over 60 years old or disabled; a working, insured man receives a family allowance for a non-working spouse but a woman does not receive such an allowance for an uninsured non-working spouse; when both parents are working and affiliated to the Social Security Fund, the father receives the family allowance for children (unless the mother has sole legal custody). Not only women lose through such inequities; the family as a whole loses. In this context, one should also note that the Commerce and Bankruptcy Law holds that a woman's property rights derive from her husband, and are therefore forfeit in case of a husband's bankruptcy, while the inverse does not apply. Considerable effort has been exerted by both NCLW and civil society to bring about change in such discriminatory regulations and articles of law. Some amendments have been adopted; revisions to a number of others are awaiting endorsement at parliamentary level.<sup>50</sup>

An area of some concern is that of child labour, in which there is also a distinct gender and poverty factor. An ILO 2004 survey indicates labour force participation rates for the 15-19 age group of 20.7% (rising to 35% in poor households) among boys and 4.9% among girls<sup>51</sup>. However, findings also suggest that in fact there are also girls working who are not visible in these figures, because they may be combining work with studies especially if their labour input is seasonal agriculture-related. The ILO study suggests that as boys reach 15, they migrate for work, being replaced for work in or close to home by their sisters or younger siblings<sup>52</sup>. Child labour is found in a range of activities, including a number which are considered harmful.

#### **4.4. Gender and leadership**

As already mentioned, women are noticeably under-represented in general and corporate manager positions (See Table 1 – Annex VI). In the public sector, this is due at least in part to promotion requirements related to length of service. Some stakeholders pointed out that the increasing access to higher education by women is ensuring that more women have qualifications necessary for promotion to top positions, but, as pointed out by some stakeholders, there is a fifteen year service requirement that relatively few highly qualified women in the public sector have yet completed. The situation is changing: between 2004 and 2009, the proportion of women in tenured Grade One positions rose from 6.56% to 10.53% of all tenured civil servants.<sup>53</sup> Under-representation in the civil service leadership might well not be – or not only be – due to a glass ceiling, (although the only Grade where there is equality of numbers of women and of men is Grade Four). It should also be borne in mind that the demands of fulfilling women's reproductive roles also cause interruptions in the accumulation of required numbers of years of employment. In the private sector, relatively few women are self employed or employers.

<sup>50</sup> CEDAW 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Report, paras 8.3-8.4, 182, 186; see also <http://www.llwb.org/advocacy.php>

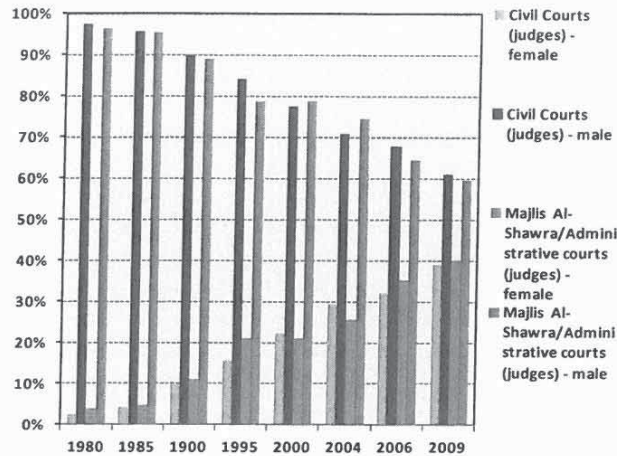
<sup>51</sup> UNDP (2008) Poverty, Growth and Income Distribution in Lebanon, p71

<sup>52</sup> ILO and Partners for Development (2004), Gender, Education And Child Labour In Lebanon

<sup>53</sup> Based on data from detailed Civil Service Council lists (2010), collected by Dr Marguerite Helou, Governance Consultant and Professor at the Lebanese University.

A marked movement towards gender equality is clearly visible in the judiciary (see Graph 2). In 1980, only 2.51% of the Civil Court judges and 3.84% of the Administrative Court judges were women. By 2009, the situation was approaching gender equality, with women constituting 38.94% of Civil Court judges and 40.38% of Administrative Court judges<sup>54</sup>; in 2013, the proportion in the Civil Courts had reached 41%<sup>55</sup>. Furthermore, in 2009 women constitute 25% of heads of section and 28.57% of the counsellors in the Financial Courts (Audit Office).<sup>56</sup> The same is not true for the religious courts, which are almost entirely a male domain, irrespective of confessional group; stakeholders referred to a single female judge, in the Evangelical courts. This underlines the close ties between patriarchal and confessional attitudes towards the place of women, and inevitably impacts on the way that personal status issues related to women are handled by the courts.

Graph 2: Judges in civil and administrative courts 1980-2009, distributed by sex



Source: Marguerite Helou, Data provided by the Director General of the Ministry of Justice Omar Al-Natour in 2009.

The confessional quota system is applied to government appointments, for the Cabinet, for the Regions and for administrative positions. Since 2004, most Cabinets have included at least one woman as Minister – mainly in domains more traditionally associated with women's concerns. Women have been appointed only twice as Minister of a domain usually considered "male" – Industry, in 2004-2005, and Finance (2009-2011). To date, only men have been nominated as Governors in the *Mohafazat*. However, according to CAS data women have been appointed to *Caza Qaimaqam* (District authority) positions in Mount Lebanon and in the North, and now constitute 16% of *Qaimaqam* post holders.<sup>57</sup>

#### Ministerial positions held by woman

Dates	Ministry
2004-5	Minister of Industry
2004-5	Minister of State of Health
2005-8	Minister of Social Affairs
2008-9	Minister of Education
2009	Designate Minister of Administrative Development
2009	State Minister for Women and Children
2009-11	Minister of Finance
2014-	Minister of Immigrants and Displaced

Sources: CAS information provided in meeting; <http://www.guide2womenleaders.com/Lebanon.htm>

Few political parties make a concerted effort to ensure participation of women in mainstream politics; some create women's wings – which tend to work against women reaching party leadership, since such wings can then be perceived as women's places in the party, often assigned responsibility for social issues (perpetuating gender stereotypes) and not involved in other aspects of the party's institutions or decision-making. Only three parties have a woman in their executive bodies, one of these (the Green Party) with a woman as Vice President.

The recent CEDAW Periodic Report points out: "despite the relative increase in the participation of women in union activity in recent years, their presence in the leadership committees of federations, unions and associations is still weak."<sup>58</sup>

<sup>54</sup> Information shared by Dr Marguerite Helou, data provided by the Director General of the Ministry of Justice Omar Al-Natour in 2009.

<sup>55</sup> CAS, during a meeting with the team.

<sup>56</sup> Information shared by Dr Marguerite Helou, data provided by the Director General of the Ministry of Justice Omar Al-Natour in 2009.

<sup>57</sup> Data provided by CAS; see Annex VI

<sup>58</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> CEDAW Report, para 151



#### 4.5. Gender, poverty and vulnerability

Lebanon has been hit by the global economic crisis at the same time as by waves of Syrian refugees, while still struggling to emerge from the destruction of the civil war and the 2006 war with Israel. Emphasis for rehabilitation and reconstruction has been largely on establishing the infrastructure necessary for a thriving economy, rather on social development. Accurate information on the real poverty situation is sparse, the most recent survey findings available dating from 2004. The Millennium Development Goals report for 2013-2014 indicates an overall 36.6% of the population living below the national poverty line of \$4 per day, based on 2004 data, with almost half the households in Nabatieh, the North and the South living with their basic needs unsatisfied.<sup>59</sup> The Syrian crisis not only adds pressure of refugee populations – many of which cluster in areas where poverty levels are already high, but also impacts on earning opportunities since trade with Syria was an important part of the economy. A World Bank Economic and Social Assessment of the crisis in 2013 estimated that by 2014, some 170,000 additional Lebanese would have been pushed into poverty as a result of the Syrian crisis, and unemployment would be doubled to above 20%, mostly unskilled youth.<sup>60</sup>

Stakeholders stress that the situation has deteriorated markedly with recent crises, especially that of Syria and the refugee influx, and offer estimates ranging up to 80% of the population living either at risk of dropping below the poverty line or already below it. Part of the reason is inflation of prices without imports from Syria and with increases in demand for basic supplies. However, they also stress the impact of Syrian skilled and unskilled workers who, by accepting minimal pay for work, are pushing down wages. An Emergency Market Mapping and Analysis (EMMA) of impact of the crisis on refugee and host community livelihoods in the North and the Bekaa, led by the International Rescue Committee in 2013, showed around a 50% drop in monthly income of agricultural workers, which impacts on women in food processing and seasonal labour, and marked drop in employment and wages of Lebanese labour, especially young men, in the construction sector.<sup>61</sup>

The 2004 data indicated that 36% of female-headed households – mainly those of widows – are considered deprived, compared to 23 percent of male-headed households.<sup>62</sup> It should be borne in mind that not all female-headed households are vulnerable: some receive remittances from male family members working abroad.

It was pointed out by stakeholders that when families face difficulties in finding paid work, the traditional values of men's role as breadwinner mean that women will not compete for wage labour unless the men of the household are already employed, even when they are as well, if not better, qualified. This has greatest impact on women in poor families.

When economic difficulties cause bankruptcies, women are particularly vulnerable. Unless they are able to provide proof of their own source of income and property ownership, their moneys and property are included in the bankruptcy process of their husbands, by law. The inverse is not true: men's property and moneys are not touched in case of a woman's business going bankrupt.

Lebanese women married to non-Lebanese men resident (legally or not) in Lebanon form a specific vulnerable group due to the discriminatory Nationality Law that prevent them from transferring their nationality to their spouse and children. The residence status and right to work of their families depends on maintaining permits that can be refused (forcing either migration or split families), and which represent a drain on budgets of poor families. Access to health, education and social support services is through private sector, forming additional budget constraints. Widows, divorced and separated women from such families see such problems compounded. The challenges are aggravated when the husband is a Palestinian without UNRWA ID status: her children are born stateless. Ironically, a foreign woman married to a Lebanese has more rights: she and her children even of a prior marriage can procure Lebanese nationality

<sup>59</sup> Lebanese Government and the United Nations in Lebanon (2014), *Millennium Development Goals report for 2013-2014*, pp22-24

<sup>60</sup> World Bank (2013), Lebanon - *Economic and social impact assessment of the Syrian conflict*, p2 [http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/Economic and social impact assessment of the Syrian conflict/PDF/.pdf](http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/Economic%20and%20social%20impact%20assessment%20of%20the%20Syrian%20conflict/PDF/.pdf)

<sup>61</sup> International Rescue Committee et al (2013), Lebanon Emergency Market Mapping and Analysis (EMMA), <http://cskc.daleel-madani.org/sites/default/files/resources/a.pdf>; Emergency Market Mapping and Analysis (EMMA) of the Service Sector in North and Bekaa; Emergency Market Mapping and Analysis (EMMA) of the Construction Labor Market System in North and Bekaa.pdf

<sup>62</sup> Lebanese Government and the United Nations in Lebanon (2014), *Millennium Development Goals report for 2013-2014*, p24



and hence rights of a citizen. Equally ironically, illegitimate children of a Lebanese woman also enjoy the rights of a citizen; she can transfer her nationality when there is no identified father.

#### 4.6. Gender Based Violence

Discussion of Gender Based Violence (GBV) has been subject to strong taboos until relatively recently – not least because much of it takes place within the family environment and is considered within the domain of family private matters and/or has an impact on family honour. The taboos have been falling, except in relation to sexual GBV towards children (boys as well as girls), which remains a topic largely enshrouded in taboos. Combating violence against women is one of the main action areas of the National Strategy for Women in Lebanon 2011-2012.

Civil society has made enormous efforts, through joint national campaigns, to call attention to the vulnerability of women and young people to violence due to legal frameworks that permit corporal punishment, and social attitudes that accept if not actively endorse violence within the family. Not only do most of the Personal Status (Family) Laws implicitly or explicitly accept physical and psychological violence by men in the family, loopholes in the Penal Code allow impunity of perpetrators of such violence as is not protected by Family Law – such as “honour crimes” and cancellation of accusation of rape where the perpetrator marries the victim. Some such loopholes have now been reduced or closed off, as a result of amendments that have finally been adopted, but others are proving more difficult to block.

The acceptance by the National Assembly of a draft Law on the Protection of Women and Other Family Members from Domestic Violence in April 2014 has proved a disappointment to many activists and civil society groups, as a number of revisions negotiated during the process of approval by pertinent government committees have considerably diluted the text concerning acts that are considered as domestic violence (not recognising, for example, marital rape) and have weakened the proposed mechanisms for protecting women and children from violence<sup>63</sup>. This law has yet to enter into force.

Subsequent steps will then entail ensuring that the Penal Code is amended, and amendments applied. The Anti-Trafficking Law of 2011, which addresses sexual trafficking, and the pertinent Articles of the Penal Code, have yet to be applied in practice.

Although the sectarian sensitivities related to Personal Status Laws do not carry the same weight in relation to sexual harassment in the workplace, amendments to the Labour Law that would provide for punishment for such actions are still pending approval by the Council of Ministers. (It should be noted that the Labour Law would not extend such protection to domestic migrant workers, mainly females, until and unless laws are modified to provide coverage for seasonal and migrant workers.)

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<sup>63</sup> The CEDAW report notes that “when the bill received the consent of the Council of Ministers (6 April 2010), the following was added to article 26, paragraph (first): ‘In the event of conflict between the provisions set forth in this law and the provisions of the personal status laws and rules of jurisdiction of the religious, spiritual and sectarian courts, the provisions of the latter pertaining to each subject shall be applied’. 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> CEDAW Report, para 212.5



## 5. Sector Analysis

The EU Delegation identified three sectors of particular importance for their next programming period:

- 5.1 Socio-economic situation of women;
- 5.2 Political participation and representation in decision-making structures;
- 5.3 Justice and human rights.

### 5.1. Socio-economic situation of women

Cultural discriminatory perceptions of gender roles and responsibilities in the family and the community are accorded formal support through the sectarian Personal Status Laws, despite formal commitment to equality of all citizens. Efforts to eliminate discrimination inevitably become mired in the hypersensitivities that surround confessionality.

As discussed in Sections 4.2 and 4.3, gender gaps are inversing in secondary and higher education, and women are becoming specialised in a broader range of fields than in the past. This is opening the way to relative gender equality in employment in technical and specialist occupations. However, perceptions of women's primary role within the family impact negatively on equality of rights to optimise the opportunities offered by the considerable improvement in women's educational status. As discussed earlier, there is still a significant gender gap in overall participation in the labour force, which represents under-utilisation of female human resources; this reflects the strength of social perceptions and pressure concerning women's primary role as being in the home and the challenges of balancing work and family life.

It is widely recognised that there is a mismatch between labour market needs in Lebanon and the skills with which youth are equipped through education and training. Gender stereotyping in orientation of young people for further education and technical/vocational training is decreasing. Although, it is still present in options offered to girls in more conservative communities and rural areas, but the mismatch is affecting growing numbers of women as well as men. The mismatches make themselves most felt in the private sector, where employers then have to invest in filling gaps, and are often more reluctant to do so for female employees – where they see a risk of conflict between work and family demands as liable to diminish the returns on their investment, both through absenteeism for family emergencies and the probability of having to accord maternity leave if not resignation in order to raise children.<sup>64</sup>

The greatest mismatches tend to be found in technical education and vocational training (TVET) offered, especially in courses offered through social centres and civil society groups working at community levels. Stakeholders also mention greater tendencies towards gender stereotyping in training options offered at this level than in formal TVET programmes. Potential market opportunities exist that are not being optimised due to a combination of gaps in knowledge, skills and organisational factors; some of these have particularly high potential for improving women's socio-economic situation. For example, recent studies identify high potential for food and agro-processing business, a production area of potential interest for rural women – although care is necessary not to make assumptions based on stereotyping.<sup>65</sup>

As discussed in section 4, gender differences are more marked in the private sector than in the public sector. Pay scales ensure equal pay for equal work in the public sector although regulations concerning social benefits are still discriminatory. Qualification and willingness to accept relatively low pay rather than gender are the driving forces in recruitment, and the increasing numbers of qualified women are reflected in growing numbers of women in the civil service. Changing gender differences in top level management positions in the public sector may well be partly due to eligibility requirements relating to length of service rather than a glass ceiling preventing promotion of women. In contrast, the private sector tends to reflect

<sup>64</sup> UN Women Arab States Regional Office (2011), *Country Gender Equality Assessment – Lebanon*, by E. Bazalgette, Section 4.B

<sup>65</sup> Euro-Med @Change (2013), *Business Opportunities in the Mediterranean: Focus on Agrifood in Lebanon* [http://www.animaweb.org/uploads/E@C\\_Lebanon\\_Agrifood\\_Final\\_EN-web.pdf](http://www.animaweb.org/uploads/E@C_Lebanon_Agrifood_Final_EN-web.pdf). The study does not explore gender dimensions beyond reporting that women constitute 40% of the farm workers. The NOWARA study (op. cit) looks closer at potential benefits for rural women of strengthening their capacity to organize and respond to market opportunities.



greater discrimination in employment and in pay. Women are also more likely to be employees (paid or unpaid) than self-employed or employers.

Stakeholders say that although women are increasingly moving into the domain of business management studies at university level, they face particular challenges when choosing to create businesses. Many stress the necessity of having family approval and support, a consideration not expressed by men. Access to finance, especially for start up phases, presents difficulties since women seldom have required collateral for loans; the support of husbands or fathers in the form of guarantees becomes necessary for borrowing from formal credit sources. It is more common for women to start businesses with personal funds and informal personal loans than with formal loans. This can have an impact on adequacy of start up investments and in consequence on the scale of business. In addition to raising adequate financing, women entrepreneurs also report facing harassment, difficulties with marketing, with securing contracts, and with finding a place in relevant business associations and networks.<sup>66</sup>

A number of business and civil society organisations are starting to address the challenges of barriers to funding faced by women entrepreneurs. Some focus on micro-finance and related advisory services, while others provide a broader range of business support, including identification of market opportunities, feasibility studies and networking. Far from all providing or facilitating financial and support services address only women, but many organisations addressing access to finance implicitly or explicitly include women entrepreneurs in their clientele; few address only the needs of women.<sup>67</sup> However, stakeholders point out that many women tend to keep their borrowing to more limited sums than do men – suggesting that in Lebanon, as often observed elsewhere, there is a stronger tendency towards aversion to risk among women than men. Data monitoring on reliability concerning reimbursement was not found; it is therefore not possible to know whether gender-related variations in credit-worthiness often observed elsewhere apply also in Lebanon.

It is noticeable that reports on potential for development of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) in Lebanon seldom consider gender dimensions when identifying opportunities for developing and strengthening entrepreneurship.<sup>68</sup> This is particularly marked in assessments designed to provide guidance for potential investment, which appear to consider that entrepreneurship is gender neutral, except in terms of sex-disaggregation of data concerning workers in pertinent sectors. Failure to recognise and take into consideration gender differences in challenges facing entrepreneurs and in ways of working can lead to bias in the approach by potential partners that can unwittingly overlook opportunities for female entrepreneurs.

A number of specific elements in laws relating to employment, social security and benefits have been specifically identified as discriminatory. As discussed earlier (Section 4.3), rights pertaining to employment benefits, taxation and social security have tended to reflect perception of men as the primary earner of the household and tend to minimise or exclude working women from certain advantages accorded to working men<sup>69</sup>. Although women's ownership of property and financial assets is legally recognised, assumptions are made in applications of law that, unless proven otherwise, a wife's property and contributions to family owned property and assets have been obtained through her husband, and are therefore vulnerable to being seized to settle his debts in case of his going bankrupt. Efforts are being exerted to promulgate appropriate revisions of pertinent laws and regulations – with mixed degrees of success, since justifications often impinge implicitly if not explicitly on personal status.

As mentioned earlier, it seems probable that not all economic activity is being captured by official statistics. Survey respondents' identification of the primary activity of household members can render invisible contributions to economic activities, due either to seasonality or to perceptions of the work as being an extension of other (mainly household) duties. This impacts on visibility of contributions of male

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<sup>66</sup> UN Women Arab States Regional Office (2011), *Country Gender Equality Assessment – Lebanon*, by E. Bazalgette, Section 4.B

<sup>67</sup> For example, Al Majmoua and the Lebanese League of Business Women,

<sup>68</sup> For example, Euro-Med @Change (2013), *Business Opportunities in the Mediterranean: Focus on Agrifood in Lebanon* [http://www.animaweb.org/uploads/E@C\\_Lebanon\\_Agrifood\\_Final\\_EN-web.pdf](http://www.animaweb.org/uploads/E@C_Lebanon_Agrifood_Final_EN-web.pdf)

<sup>69</sup> It should be noted that some such exclusions also have negative impact on men. A widower receives no pension from his deceased wife; a disabled husband cannot benefit from family allowances as they are not accorded to his working wife where a woman would benefit from her husband's allowance.



and female youth who are both continuing their studies and undertaking economic activities (paid or unpaid) outside study time, but more importantly, it renders invisible a large part of real engagement of housewives whose contributions to family economic activity are considered an extension of household responsibilities, particularly in rural areas.<sup>70</sup> Limited research has been undertaken to shed more light on the invisible parts of the economy. It should also be borne in mind that such invisibility contributes to relative exclusion from health and social security support systems.

It should be noted that “peasants” (agricultural workers) and migrant labour are not as yet covered by the Labour Law. Draft amendments to the Labour Law address this gap, but have yet to be approved by the Council of Ministers.

It is important to be aware that the changing balance in educational level and economic status being achieved by women, with an accompanying increase in their independence, is contributing to some conflicts and stresses, especially in more conservative communities where tradition has always supported the belief in male superiority and authority. A 2011 study by Kafa and Oxfam of attitudes in a Bekaa village revealed that many men perceive women’s changing capacities and roles as threatening to men’s position in the family, and some can revert to violence in attempts to exert their authority.<sup>71</sup> Some stakeholders point out the importance of concerted efforts to tackle issues of masculinity, enabling men to recognise the benefits of gender equality and mobilising their active support against discriminatory legislation that impedes such equality.

## 5.2. Political participation and representation in decision-making structures.

Neither legal nor constitutional gender-based barriers to political participation exist per se in Lebanon, which in 1953 was the first country in the Arab Region to accord women equal rights to participate fully in politics.<sup>72</sup> However, Lebanon has a complex sectarian quota system for political representation, designed to ensure representation of the eighteen “spiritual families” that are recognised in the Constitution of Lebanon, which reinforces social and cultural barriers to gender equality. Article 95 of the revised Constitution addresses steps to be taken to reduce the weight of sectarianism in politics, but progress in applying these continues to be minimal. The recent CEDAW report points out: “*it is the nature of sectarian system to marginalize equality between individuals in favour of equality between sects.*”<sup>73</sup>

Formal participation is linked to the place of registration of eligible participants, candidates and voters, and this is established by a 1951 law<sup>74</sup> as being the “place of origin” of the family, not the place of residence – effectively inherited through the male line. Upon marriage, a woman’s “place of origin”, and hence her place of political participation, becomes that of her husband’s family. This typifies the tight interweaving of religion, patriarchal values, traditional “clientelism” and family links within the political structure. Although the first woman was elected to the National Assembly in 1963<sup>75</sup>, few women are candidates for the National Assembly – and most successful female candidates are described as “women in black”, close relatives of deceased male family and party leaders. Furthermore, as pointed out by stakeholders, in politics “women do not represent women”. Currently, women constitute only 3% of the members of the National Assembly. Widespread calls by civil society for a quota for women in the National Assembly are usually met with resistance, not least with reference to how a second quota could be applied given the complexity of the confessional quota system. Nevertheless, many stakeholders believe that some form of quota for women could, and should, be introduced for the National Assembly, in order

<sup>70</sup> See, for example, a recent study by NOWARA: National Observatory for Women in Agriculture and Rural Areas (NOWARA) (2011), *Status Of Lebanese Women In Rural Areas: Roles And Perspectives Statistics*, [http://www.nowara.org/assets---Study Women in rural areas 2011.pdf](http://www.nowara.org/assets---Study%20Women%20in%20rural%20areas%202011.pdf), and ILO and Partners for Development (2004), *Gender, Education And Child Labour In Lebanon*

<sup>71</sup> Christine Sylva Hamieh & Jinan Usta (2011), *The Effects of Socialization on Gender Discrimination and Violence: A Case Study from Lebanon*, Oxfam GB Research Report, March 2011, <http://www.kafa.org.lb/StudiesPublicationPDF/PRpdf46.pdf>

<sup>72</sup> UNIFEM (2009), *Arab Women Parliamentarians Evaluation Report*, by Camillia El Solh and Evelyn Bazalgette, p84 [http://gate.unwomen.org/resources/docs/genderequality/229 UN%20Women Evaluation%20Report%20UNIFEM%20Arab%20Women%20s%20Parliamentarian%20Project%20Arab%20States 2009.pdf](http://gate.unwomen.org/resources/docs/genderequality/229%20UN%20Women%20Evaluation%20Report%20UNIFEM%20Arab%20Women%20s%20Parliamentarian%20Project%20Arab%20States%202009.pdf)

<sup>73</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> CEDAW Report, para 36

<sup>74</sup> Personal Status Records Registration Law (1951, amended)

<sup>75</sup> Mirna Bustany was elected in 1963, in the place of her deceased father [http://www.elections-lebanon.org/elections/docs/6\\_G\\_6\\_6a\\_11.aspx](http://www.elections-lebanon.org/elections/docs/6_G_6_6a_11.aspx)



to open the way for better representation of women.<sup>76</sup> A study by IFES found around two thirds of respondents – irrespective of sex of respondent – supported the idea of a gender quota.<sup>77</sup>

The very low numbers of women who register as candidates for national elections might lead one to make the mistake of thinking that women in Lebanon are far less engaged than are men in political matters. This might be true of political party membership: data have not been found on this. Stakeholders mentioned that women – especially younger women – have little interest in finding themselves marginalised through assignment to roles that the parties tend to assign to female members: “women’s wings” or to committees focused on concerns related only to women and children.

However, data from the national elections between 2000 and 2009 suggest that there is very little gender gap in registration for voting, and in the proportions of registered voters who actually cast their votes – close to 2.5 at the most in elections between 2000 and 2009.<sup>78</sup> Reportedly, there are more distinct differences between geographic locations, and between confessional groups, than between men and women within these groupings.<sup>79</sup> Furthermore, stakeholders commented that in 2009 there were massive efforts to ensure voter turnout, including provision of travel costs for Lebanese living abroad, to reach polling stations; for families abroad with children, priority was almost certainly accorded to the husband travelling, while the wife stayed at home with any children. This could explain a marked rise in male registration and voter turnout in 2009.

If participation of women in the national elected bodies is severely restricted by not only tradition but also the existence of a complex quota system, other entry points for increasing participation of women in political decision-making do exist. Municipal level elections are not tied to confessional quotas, and women are starting to find some voice at this level. Where there were only 336 female candidates participating in municipal elections in 1998 (of which 41% won seats), in 2004, the number of women standing for election rose to 514 (and 43% were successful, with seven women heading municipal councils) and in 2010 the number doubled, to 1080 female candidates, with 528 who won seats. Although this represents only 4.7% of all municipal seats, it is worth noting that the success rate of female candidates is high – 48.2% of female candidates won seats overall, with highest success rates in regions viewed as conservative: 51% in the North and 58.4% in the South.<sup>80</sup> Furthermore, now more than a third (37.7%) of municipalities have at least one woman on the council, and women are mayors in 39 municipalities – 14 of these being in the North<sup>81</sup>. Figures are not readily available to compare success rates of male candidates, but it would appear from the increasing success of women candidates over time that demonstrated capacity of women at municipal levels is changing attitudes towards their participation in politics – at least at local levels.

It could be valuable to assess what factors are contributing to such changes in attitudes, and build on success stories to reinforce such change. Comments by stakeholders suggest that female municipal councillors can be seen as more accessible for raising problems encountered by their local constituents, and hence increasing responsiveness to citizens’ needs including, but not exclusively, the needs of women. Furthermore, anecdotal evidence suggests that women mayors have found strategies that allow their municipalities to respond to constituents’ needs despite centralisation of decision-making at national levels. Factors enabling successful performance of women in municipal councils merit further exploration, since such experience could prove valuable in advocating greater participation of women in politics.

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<sup>76</sup> Several alternative ways were referred to by proponents of the idea. The most frequently mentioned was that of reserved seats for women.

<sup>77</sup> International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) (2010), “Focus on Lebanon | Civic & Political Participation Topic Brief, The Status of Women in the Middle East and North Africa (SWMENA) Focus on Lebanon, p6

<sup>78</sup> Information shared by Dr Marguerite Helou, Governance Consultant and Professor at the Lebanese University. Note: data on voter turnout were only available from segregated polling stations; approximately 15% of polling stations are not segregated. See Annex VI, Graph V

<sup>79</sup> Information shared by Dr Marguerite Helou

<sup>80</sup> Data from 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> CEDAW Report, para 104. For details, see Table IV, Annex VI

<sup>81</sup> Note: as discussed earlier, young men in the North often opt to join the armed forces, and are therefore not eligible to election. This might well be a contributory factor of the relatively high participation of women in municipal elections and as mayors in the *Mohajazat*. However, there must also be a growing recognition that they can be good councilors, or the success rates would not be growing.



Constraints related to mobilizing funding for campaigns reflect gender differences in areas such as ownership of property that can be used as collateral for loans, and will of family to support actively the candidacy of women in the family. Female candidates face particular challenges in finding funding and political support for their candidacies, both at national and at municipal levels – especially if they are not nominated by a political party with influence in their area. Furthermore, traditional perceptions by both women and men tended to place women in the home rather than in politics, and/or doubted their capacity to perform as well as men; such views are still reflected by around a third of women rejecting the idea of gender quotas.<sup>82</sup> The changing gender pattern in standing for municipal elections reflects concerted efforts to encourage candidature in recent municipal elections: national and international civil society groups provided training, mentoring and advocacy efforts, especially in 2010. Furthermore, there appears to be a ripple effect, with effective female municipal council members and mayors demonstrating that they can and do respond to practical concerns of the electorate, and hence convincing their constituents that female candidates merit their support. It should be noted that some stakeholders suggest that results could have been even better had such efforts been better coordinated between organisers; some areas received less attention than others, and several resource persons noted some duplication in requests for their inputs.

It must also be borne in mind that women face a particular challenge in relation to participation in local elections. As referred to earlier, under the Personal Status Records Registration Law of 1951, when a woman's marriage is registered, her name is automatically removed from the lists of her own place of origin and entered in those of her husband's place of origin – making her ineligible for serving on the municipal council in her place of origin even if she is still resident in the municipality.<sup>83</sup> If she wants to continue to participate in municipal affairs, she has to win a seat in the council of her husband's place of origin – where she is less known and does not have the same credibility even if her husband's family backs her candidature.

As discussed earlier, women are under-represented in leadership and decision-making bodies in political parties. Although they constitute between 29% and 40% of the memberships of different parties, only 12-16% of party executive officers are female.<sup>84</sup> Only one political party has a female Vice President (the Green Party) and a woman is a member of the executive body in each of two other parties. Perception of women's leadership role tends to be restricted to Women's Wings – which are assigned responsibilities related to social welfare and the well-being of women and children, an extension of traditional responsibilities of women, and relatively marginalised from mainstream activities of the party. Stakeholders point out that many women who might otherwise be interested in actively participating in parties are discouraged by such restrictions. Some stakeholders call for political parties to be required to apply quota systems to their executive bodies and to their lists of candidates for election, to break this narrow role of women in the parties. Similar under-representation is also observed in many unions, professional bodies and business associations.

### 5.3. Justice and Human Rights

The autonomy of religious authorities in relation to personal status legislation, combined with strong patriarchal culture and traditions shared by most, if not all, the official religious communities in Lebanon, create a judicial environment that fosters gender inequalities not only in the Personal Status Laws but also in laws that relate to status within the family. This was perhaps most clearly presented in an on-line article by Maya Mikdashi, who expresses the challenge in a two-part online article entitled "A Legal Guide to Being a Lebanese Woman", based on four years researching the histories and the applications of the Lebanese legal system: "*Lebanese citizenship is constituted through these two registers of recognition; the sexed and the sectarian. In fact, sex is a more legally salient category than sect because sex-based differentiation saturates most branches of Lebanese law, whereas sect-based differentiation is more legally contained.*"<sup>85</sup>

<sup>82</sup> International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) (2010), "Focus on Lebanon | Civic & Political Participation Topic Brief, The Status of Women in the Middle East and North Africa (SWMENA) Focus on Lebanon p6

<sup>83</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> CEDAW Report, para 211

<sup>84</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> CEDAW Report, para 104 Table 4

<sup>85</sup> Maya Mikdashi, (2010), "A Legal Guide To Being A Lebanese Woman" in *Jadaliyya* [http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/376/a-legal-guide-to-being-a-lebanese-woman-\(part-1\)](http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/376/a-legal-guide-to-being-a-lebanese-woman-(part-1))  
<http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/410/a-legal-guide-to-being-a-lebanese-woman-part-2>

While application of principles of independence of the judiciary from the executive power might be more straightforward for purely civil law, the interface of patriarchy, politics, clientalism and confessionalism keep the domain of personal status law far from any such independence. The legal structure is discussed in more detail in the following section (6).

As discussed elsewhere, extensive popular support has been mobilised for freeing various aspects of personal status from the sectarian authorities, particularly those related to roles and relationships within marriage. A popular call for a “19<sup>th</sup> confession” (non-sectarian) is an example of this: full introduction of such a category would entail a civil personal status law that people could opt to come under, as Lebanese citizens rather than as members of a confessional family.

A cascade of amendments to laws has been set in motion to diminish, if not eliminate, discrimination against women under the law.<sup>86</sup> Many of these are still pending necessary endorsements and have not yet succeeded in reaching a final approval stage, appearing in the Journal Official and entering into force. Some, such as the Domestic Violence Law, have undergone extensive revisions during the approval process that prevented some revisions considered critical by proponents of the amended law from being retained – and some of these still have come to a standstill before being brought into force.

Amendments and revisions of law are a necessary but not a sufficient condition for ensuring reduced discrimination and greater respect for human and gender rights in justice. It is equally critical to ensure that those applying the rule of law fully understand and respect the principles of equality under the law. As stressed by a number of stakeholders – those responsible for enforcing the law are themselves a product of the patriarchal and confessional cultures. This can and does impact on interpretation and application of the law. Considerable work remains to be done in order to sensitise those involved in application of law concerning implications of gender inequities and discrimination against women.

As discussed earlier, the rapid growth in numbers of women studying law and becoming judges has brought the situation close to gender equality in the judiciary – except in the religious courts, only one of which has one single female judge. However, presence of women in the judiciary does not automatically guarantee gender sensitivity.<sup>87</sup> Patriarchal, sectarian and political ways of thinking can overwhelm awareness of human rights and gender equality principles, particularly in the volatile context of Lebanon.

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<sup>86</sup> An extensive list can be found within pertinent sections of the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> CEDAW Report.

<sup>87</sup> A prime example of this would be a case where in 2009 a judge (male) found in favour of a Lebanese widow's plea for her children by her deceased foreign father to be recognized as Lebanese. However, a woman judge quashed the ruling in the Court of Appeal (2010); the case is still before the Court of Cassation. 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> CEDAW Report, para 114.4



## 6. Institutional and Legal Framework

Although non-discrimination based on sex is not specifically mentioned in the Lebanese Constitution, it is systematically stressed that Article 7 of the Constitution refers to both female and male citizens: “*All Lebanese are equal before the law. They equally enjoy civil and political rights, and assume obligations and public duties without any distinction among them.*” Furthermore, international instruments concluded by Lebanon, which include the Convention on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) acceded to by Lebanon in 1997, officially take precedence over domestic laws before the courts.

However, as discussed often here and frequently stressed in reports and by stakeholders, there are specific aspects and implications of the Constitutional position on freedom of religion and of sectarian roles in government that run in direct contradiction to such guarantees of equality under the Constitution. As stated in the recent CEDAW report: “*the Lebanese State leaves issues of personal status exclusively to the care of sectarian legislation*”.<sup>88</sup> Lebanon’s reservations on CEDAW<sup>89</sup> Articles 9.2<sup>90</sup> (related to nationality of children) and Article 16 (related to equality in marriage and family relations, more specifically in relation to marriage and dissolution [c]<sup>91</sup>, responsibility for children [d, f]<sup>92</sup> and right to choose a family name [g]) ensue directly from implicit discriminations anchored in patriarchal traditions of the different confessional groups and protected by Article 9 of the Constitution.

The tangled web of laws that are affected by these discriminations, and their far-reaching discriminatory impacts, cannot be described and analysed adequately in a few paragraphs. Amendments to one law can be, and often are, perceived as impacting on the interface between personal status and the stability of the State – due to the spiny issues of confessionalism and citizenship. The multiplicity of Personal Status Laws (Family Laws), coming under the autonomous control of the recognised “18 spiritual families”, further reinforce the complexity of this web. Attempts to amend or replace laws that are clearly discriminatory often reach the last stage before adoption, only to be set aside “in the higher interests of the State”.

The confessional Personal Status Laws define matters relating to marriage, divorce, child custody, inheritance, and by extension, relationships and roles within the family. Set out before close attention was paid to human rights issues, these laws can, and do, impinge on domains covered by human rights conventions, for example: minimum age of marriage (distinguishing between boys and girls, and accepting early marriage); inheritance (unequal treatment of heirs – reflecting gender differences in traditional responsibilities and roles); child custody; divorce; acceptable punitive behaviour within privacy of the home). All these points discriminate against females in the family.

Considerable effort on the part of civil society has gone into mobilising public opinion concerning an increasingly popular call for the possibility to opt for civil personal status instead of coming under the confessional laws of one’s family. There are calls for a “19<sup>th</sup> confession” – no confessional identity. It is now possible to have one’s confessional identity removed from identity cards – which has opened the

<sup>88</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> CEDAW Report, para 207.1

<sup>89</sup> “Reservations on CEDAW: The Government of the Lebanese Republic enters reservations regarding article 9 (2), and article 16 (1) (c) (d) (f) and (g) (regarding the right to choose a family name). In accordance with paragraph 2 of article 29, the Government of the Lebanese Republic declares that it does not consider itself bound by the provisions of paragraph 1 of that article.” UN Treaty Collection, Status of IV-8 CEDAW, <https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetailsIV-8lang=en#top>

<sup>90</sup> CEDAW Article 9: “2. States Parties shall grant women equal rights with men with respect to the nationality of their children.”

<sup>91</sup> CEDAW article 16: “(c) The same rights and responsibilities during marriage and at its dissolution;

(e) The same rights to decide freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children and to have access to the information, education and means to enable them to exercise these rights;

<sup>92</sup> CEDAW Article 16: “(d) The same rights and responsibilities as parents, irrespective of their marital status, in matters relating to their children; in all cases the interests of the children shall be paramount”; “(f) The same rights and responsibilities with regard to guardianship, wardship, trusteeship and adoption of children, or similar institutions where these concepts exist in national legislation; in all cases the interests of the children shall be paramount”.



door to inter-confessional marriages in Lebanon rather than having to travel abroad and be married under another legal system. However, issues related to how inheritance can be handled in such marriages remains a legal challenge, since again, most Family Laws specify acceptable inheritance patterns, effectively tying them to marriage within the same confessional group..

The Penal Code sets out the penalties applicable by law. Articles in the Penal Code relating to personal status matters covered by religious laws have to be accepted as coherent with these Family Laws. This has been, and continues to be, a major challenge in efforts to legislate against many forms of domestic and related violence – including honour crimes. The recent passage (March 2014) of a law on domestic violence, after three years of intensive debate and negotiation, has involved many compromises and exclusions that leave activists frustrated with the resulting Law on the Protection of Women and Other Family Members from Domestic Violence.

In the interest of the sectarian political structure established by the Constitution, the Personal Status Records Registration Law (1951) defines voting rights in relation to the place of origin, not the place of residence. Upon registration of marriage, a woman's record is automatically legally transferred from the place of origin of her father's family to the place of origin of her husband's family, and her name removed from the electoral role in her place of origin – whereupon she loses eligibility to stand for local election in the place where she is known and may have political support.

Several of the Personal Status Laws allow for conditions to be included in marriage contracts that are directly contradictory to Article 7 of the Constitution. These can impact on women's economic and social rights, including the right to work without approval of her husband. Until 1994, women of some confessions could not engage in business without similar authorisation; amendments eliminated this condition for Lebanese wives, although foreign wives married under these laws are still subject to such restriction. Restrictions are applied to women wishing to open bank accounts for their children, as an interpretation of personal status laws: NCLW has sought ways of circumventing the interpretation, by negotiating a circular from the Association of Banks in Lebanon<sup>93</sup> which has eased the restrictions although stakeholders indicate that not all banks are zealous in its application – and not all women are aware of either the constraint or the Circular.

There are also discriminatory articles in existing laws that directly or indirectly are linked to confessional concerns, or are perceived as being inter-related through their reflection of patriarchal values upheld under personal status laws. A number of discriminatory articles of law related to married women's rights have been amended in recent years, but some remaining contradictions include: women's rights to personal property, and the Commerce Law that considers that a woman's property derives from her husband (being thus forfeit in case of bankruptcy); working women cannot claim family allowances from the Social Security Fund in case of an unemployed husband. It is not possible to explore here all relevant ways in which patriarchal values and Personal Status Law interpretation lead to discrimination. All discussion of gender in Lebanon inevitably draws back to the sensitivities that surround and reinforce discrepancies between equality as guaranteed under Article 7 and the patriarchal sectarian political sensitivities that are enshrined in Article 9 and elsewhere.

The Nationality Law discriminates on the right of a spouse to transfer nationality to spouse and children: men's Lebanese nationality is automatically transferrable to a foreign spouse and their children, but children of a Lebanese mother are not Lebanese unless their father is unknown. This is in line with most confessional groups' position of *ius sanguinis* – transfer and inheritance by (paternal) bloodlines. In addition, any change to equal rights is perceived as threatening the demographic balance – because marriage could be with (Palestinian) refugees with either UNRWA or no ID status, and hence be a challenge to "the higher interest of the Lebanese State". Active mobilisation by civil society has mustered extensive popular support for revision of the Nationality Law, several bills have been extensively

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<sup>93</sup> Circular no. 305/2009 of the Association of Banks in Lebanon



discussed, negotiated with different interest groups, presented and debated in Parliament – only to be rejected, lost in a sectarian and political inertia.

In addition to CEDAW, Lebanon has acceded to or ratified several international conventions that are pertinent to gender equality and women's rights<sup>94</sup>. These include the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1972) and the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1972), application of which has not necessarily been sensitive to gender differences. The 1987 Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT) (2000) and its Optional Protocol (2008) include issues that are viewed by a number of human rights activist groups as relevant, particularly in relation to harassment and gender-based violence. The 1990 Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) with two of its Optional Protocols that impact on the rights of girls; and the 2000 Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, especially its Optional Protocols addresses forms of abuse to which women and children can be particularly vulnerable - trafficking in persons and related smuggling of migrants.

Security Council Resolutions 1325 (the core "Women Peace and Security" Resolution) and 1889 (which focuses on ensuring women's participation in building peace) are particularly relevant to Lebanon's situation, given the need to enable women to participate actively in peace and security programmes. The National Strategy for Women in Lebanon 2011-2021 incorporates related concerns in its strategic goals and NCLW ran a programme (Women Empowerment: Peaceful Action for Security and Stability" - WEPASS) inspired by SCR 1325 in areas impacted by the 2006 war, with support from UNFPA. This contributed to election of women in local councils, and impact continues after the end of the WEPASS project in 2010, with support from civil society: one of the demining teams engaged in the cleaning of agricultural areas affected by the 2006 war is entirely composed of women<sup>95</sup>.

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<sup>94</sup> See Annex II for details on Lebanon's signatory status on some relevant International Conventions

<sup>95</sup> Norwegian People's Aid (NPA). <http://www.npaid.org/-/Courageous-women-clear-cluster-munitions>

## 7. Actors

The main national women's machinery in Lebanon is the National Commission for Lebanese Women (NCLW), a body attached to the Presidency of the Council of Ministers with responsibility for advisory, coordinating and executive duties related to the status of women and gender equality. NCLW Restricted by limited budgets, NCLW has depended extensively on donor funding to build its structure and carry out its duties, which have included developing the National Strategy for Women in Lebanon (2011-2021) and Action Plans for implementation of the Strategy. It has therefore taken a long time to mobilise and strengthen the capacity of a network of Gender Focal Points in line Ministries, necessary for executing gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment across all sectors, but its efforts are finally beginning to bear fruit.

With its own resources being limited, NCLW has been building a growing network of cooperation with governmental, non-governmental, academic and professional institutions, which include critical resources such as several universities and the Bar Association. It should be recognised that networks and collaboration with civil society is important to NCLW, as civil society can open up discussion and actions in areas where NCLW, as a quasi-governmental body, faces challenges related to the political sectarian sensitivities. Once popular mobilisation occurs around specific issues, NCLW can then move the discussion across to the appropriate legislative, administrative and executive arenas within the government. This role of coordination and facilitation of dialogue between public and private actors is a vital part of NCLW's role in enabling and supporting action on gender equality and women's empowerment, an essential element of implementing the National Strategy. Lebanon's periodic report on CEDAW (2014), commissioned by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is an able demonstration of how NCLW works with such networks to advance dialogue and collaboration on achievements and challenges faced in developing gender equality.

Lebanon has a large, dynamic and complex civil society. More than 8,000 Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) are officially registered with pertinent Ministries. Some distinction is made between two types of NGO. "Communal" associations are those focusing on family-related networks and needs, while "civil" associations address the concerns of broader groups. While around one fifth of civil society organisations are sectarian, most are explicitly non-sectarian. Among those with confessional affiliations, a number often also become part of the power-base of patriarchal politics, even serving as social and economic wings of political parties.<sup>96</sup>

Civil society groups often play critical roles in Lebanon. They fill gaps where government services are unable to respond to needs (such as health, education, social welfare, shelters for victims of domestic violence, legal advice, environment), undertake awareness creation among concerned sections of the population about both rights and responsibilities of citizens, and mobilise actions in favour of legislative change where there are discrepancies between human rights and the legislation. A detailed analysis of civil society and its role in moving towards a citizens' state formed a significant part of the 2009 National Human Development Report, which noted that groups formed after the civil war tend to focus on specific human rights, environmental or other issues, or specific vulnerable groups and work towards building consensus between different sectarian and political positions on their area of focus. They form coalitions to tackle issues of common concern – such as the nationality law, domestic violence, calls for a civil personal status law and specific amendments to other laws – through national campaigns or special programmes, then revert to their own priority issues.

There are many women's NGOs, often established in response to a specific identified unmet need or vulnerable group lacking access to necessary support. Some come together in unions or networks, or under an umbrella organisation (the Lebanese Women's Council, formed in the 1950s and bringing

<sup>96</sup> UNDP (2009), Lebanon National Human Development Report: toward a citizen's state, [http://planipolis.iicp.unesco.org/upload/Lebanon/Lebanon\\_HDR\\_2009.pdf](http://planipolis.iicp.unesco.org/upload/Lebanon/Lebanon_HDR_2009.pdf)



together some 170 member women's NGOs nationwide); some establish branches to extend their outreach around the country. However, far from all the civil society groups who are active in working for gender equality or making concerted efforts in support of economic and political empowerment of women are women's associations. Most of the human rights groups include gender rights or women's rights; some focus on specific rights-related issues such as domestic violence, migrant domestic workers' rights or combating trafficking in persons.

It is not possible to name here even all the most significant active civil society groups that play an important part in efforts to advocate and support gender equality and empowerment of women. It would be misleading to name some and omit mention of others. A valuable tool for those seeking to find appropriate partners would be an interactive directory of civil society groups engaged in gender and women's rights that goes beyond a listing according to primary interests to include detailed identification of categories of specific focus and activities of each pertinent group.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> The Daleel Madani directory ( <http://daleel-madani.org/directory>) and UNDP's on-line directory of all the civil society groups it works with, (<http://portal.undp.org.lb/ngo/ngoindex.cfm>) are good starting points.

## 8. Analysis of National Statistical Capacities - with a specific focus on gender

The greatest challenge to development and use of national statistical capacities in Lebanon lies in the fact that statistics are experienced by the socio-sectarian leadership as being a threat to the fragile confessional balance of the country. Technical capacities exist, but the space to exercise these capacities is severely restricted by political will – or, more accurately, lack of will. The iconic illustration is the fact that the last national census took place more than 80 years ago. All demographic, labour, social, health, budget and poverty data collected by the Central Administration of Statistics (CAS) are based on household sample surveys, with sampling on the basis of a census of buildings (last undertaken in 2004), selection of “ilots” then verified for number of dwellings which form the sample for the survey. There are no regular censuses to allow verification of the representativeness of such surveys. All calculations for planning or information purposes have to rely on “probable” figures – in a country that since the last full national census has seen abnormal mortality due to the civil war, wars with Israel and major population displacements both internally and to other countries. The lack of a reliable periodic total head count of residents impacts on planning tools such as poverty surveys and gender responsive budgeting.

Other systems of data collection concerning the Lebanese population include Civil Registration of births, marriages, divorces and deaths. Such records could enable CAS to monitor patterns such as age of marriage, and hence verify validity of rumours such as those currently circulating about increases in early marriage. However, while the manually maintained registration logs in the 53 Civil Registration Centres around the country contain data that could allow sex and age disaggregation, the formats for reporting do not call for such information to be extracted systematically. Only sex-disaggregated numbers of vital events are reported routinely to the Ministry of the Interior, who shares the data with CAS. Donors, including the EU, have allocated funding for facilitating the transfer of the data collection from registration books to a computerised system, but all such projects come to a standstill against deep resistance by the decision-makers whose authorisation is essential for such projects’ implementation.

There is therefore an urgent need to develop further dialogue with planners, decision-makers and civil society concerning how reliable data could be collected and analysed while addressing and allaying the fears of the patriarchal and sectarian political leadership who are exceedingly sensitive to how such data could upset the “fragile balance” of government.<sup>98</sup> If they can be brought to recognise publically the benefits of reliable statistics, and to identify acceptable mechanisms for handling issues that are perceived as “destabilising”, it should then be a lesser challenge to prepare popular opinion to accept revised forms of more complete data reporting and collection – from civil registration vital events records and through regular national censuses.

While access to CAS’ gender disaggregated statistics is relatively open to interested stakeholders, other Ministries and organisations have data that are less easily accessible. It is difficult to tell from available data to what extent these are recorded in forms that allow sex-disaggregation and gender analysis. The annual Statistical Yearbook, compiled by CAS with data from CAS records and from other Ministries, includes little information on gender beyond the vital statistics reports; a section on “Women and Men in Lebanon” in this Yearbook could be a valuable addition, particularly if it were to include some gender analysis in addition to description of the situation reflected in the figures. CAS does include some gender dimensions in the Statistics in Focus series, drawing mainly on CAS survey data. The Ministry of Agriculture has recently (2008) launched a National Observatory on Women in Agriculture and Rural Areas (NOWARA), which combines research and support for developing women’s role in agriculture-

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<sup>98</sup> A range of possible activities suggested by stakeholders could contribute to clear recognition of concerns and hence to identifying acceptable ways of collecting more complete data. These could include round tables with pertinent stakeholders, debates, formation of task forces in concerned organisations such as the Ministry of the Interior and its Civil Registration Centres.



related business. Other sources of statistics from research include several of the universities, but locating data and analysis can be challenging.

As mentioned earlier, it appears probable that women's full contribution to the Lebanese economy is still underestimated in official statistics due to the invisibility of some aspects of economic activity. The challenge is particularly marked for rural populations, although there may well also be invisibility in relation to informal sector activities in urban areas also. Seasonal activities tend not to be captured, particularly when other activities are perceived as primary (as, for example, girls combining studying and seasonal labour where boys more often drop out from school to work, discussed earlier in relation to child labour in the 2004 ILO study). Both field and food-processing activities of women tend to be seen as an extension of household responsibilities in rural areas, as pointed out in the more recent NOWARA study of rural women. Development of means of making these contributions more visible is a challenge that needs to be tackled.

It should be noted that certain challenges surround the concept of "rural". CAS identifies the difficulty of agreeing on a clear and applicable classification of "rural" in Lebanon today, while others carrying out research use their own definitions of what constitutes "rural". Since there are clearly certain issues that relate to communities with non-urban characteristics – for example in more isolated areas, and those engaged in agriculture – it would strengthen analysis were a standardised classification to be applied to research.

Stakeholders pointed out that a number of organisations, including observatories, UN Agencies, the World Bank and civil society, carry out surveys and studies, and that it is not always easy to know what gender-disaggregated information is available. Greater accessibility of gender-sensitive data can contribute significantly to improved gender mainstreaming in assessments of potential areas for development support. One of the roles that NCLW would like to play would be to provide a centralised hub for links to statistical and other data concerning women and gender from all sources in Lebanon. There would be considerable value were NCLW and CAS to work jointly to produce an annual or bi-annual gender statistical compendium pulling together data from different Ministries, and organisations engaged in research. However, production of this could require considerable investment of time and effort in establishing adequate data collection and flow systems between concerned Ministries and organisations. Pending such a reference base, a lesser but still useful compilation could be added as a section of the Annual Statistical Yearbook.

## 9. Main Findings and Recommendations for gender mainstreaming in programming and the design of future actions

Certain challenges faced concerning gender equality cut across the priority sectors identified by the EU Delegation. The strong influence of patriarchal culture and traditions pervades the confessional lines that make efforts to bring about changes in laws and support structure so hyper-sensitive. Often, behind the defence of autonomous religious rights as embodied in the multiple Personal Status (Family) Laws lies a common defence of the gendered status quo and a shared distrust of what changes might imply for the parallel patriarchal power structures in the different “spiritual families”. Stakeholders often stress the need to bring about change in mindsets as a precondition to making progress towards gender equality in any sector.

Civil society plays a critical role in advocacy action; complementing efforts of NCLW in areas pertaining to gender equality. However, while they mobilise together to tackle common concerns at moments critical for advocacy action, much of the time they focus on their own particular chosen areas of action. Given the competition between them for donor funding, combined with donors’ own needs to report back to their constituents concerning effective use of the funds they are allocated, there are times when efforts are duplicated in some areas, while others receive less than adequate attention. Existing directories list organisations by category, but do not tag them by specific types of interventions in which they are engaged. Greater overview of all actions and better coordination could considerably enhance the sum of their different impacts, improving cost-effectiveness and avoiding overlap of actions.

**Cutting across the priority sectors identified, it is recommended that the EU Delegation:**

1. Support development and dissemination of advocacy materials across all the media that demonstrate successful assumption by women of roles traditionally perceived as male domains: politics, justice, the labour market, private entrepreneurship, academia etc. The messages conveyed should be one of viable complementarity and partnership between women and men, in the interest of everyone.
2. Support advocacy and encourage development of a consensus that would allow more complete gender and age-sensitive Civil Registration reporting to be established using the electronic data collection approach already approved for funding.

**Possible actions** could include:

1. Support for conferences and round table debates on importance of accurate data for efficient targeting and planning of services
2. Support mapping of civil society actions and plans, both geographically and by types of activity, could provide a frame that would allow optimisation of resource use (human and financial). Possible actions could include:
3. Support for a Gender Observatory, possibly linked to NCLW.
4. Development and maintenance of an interactive on-line directory of interventions and organisation involved in actions having an impact of women’s political and economic empowerment. This would be of value to actors, donors and potential investors.
5. Support strengthened coordination between donors in order to maximise complementarity between interventions of partner organisations.



## 9.1. Gender action in support of socio-economic situation of women;

### Key findings

Decreasing gender gaps in education are not having an automatic knock-on effect on employment. Youth unemployment is higher among young men, due to greater shift of young men from education to the labour force while female youth are tending to continue their studies. However, a disproportionate number of women are either outside the labour force or are invisible in statistics concerning economic activity. Women constitute only a quarter of the (visible) economically active population aged 15 years or above, although they are more numerous than men in the age groups where economic activity and political participation are significant. Challenges of balancing work and family life are intensified by norms that still tend to emphasise women's primary responsibilities being family-related, as is evidenced by the fact that 59% of the female labour force are unmarried<sup>99</sup>, compared to only a third of the male labour force.

While there is no discrimination in salaries in the public sector, where growing numbers of women are finding employment as a result of meeting education requirements and being willing to accept low government salaries because working conditions allow better balance between work and family life, discrimination still exists in financial benefits and allowances due to laws and regulations related to social security and labour. There is also still a gender gap in decision making and top management levels in the public sector, although this is at least partly a product of requirements concerning length of service which women seldom meet as yet, rather than an institutional glass ceiling.

Far greater discrimination is found in the private sector, where reluctance to hire waged female employees is often marked (largely due to expectations of unreliable presence due to demands of family life), inequities in pay for equivalent work are common and enterprise ownership tends to be male. Women face different and greater barriers to starting up and running their own businesses than do men. These include access to financing, business advisory services, networking and marketing.

Mismatching between education (and more particularly, technical / vocational training) and both the labour market and the markets for products has a negative impact on employment, productivity and economic success.

The need for information systems that can feed and shape both labour markets and niches that provide real business opportunities has been widely recognised<sup>100</sup>. Reliable and frequently updated information, in a form that reflects both offers and demand, both within Lebanon and abroad, would be valuable for everyone, but care would be needed to ensure that gender differences in information needs be taken into account. Assumptions of gender "neutrality" can be misleading.

Donor interest in promoting an enabling environment for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), encouraging investment and innovation, could spur female entrepreneurship, providing efforts are made to draw attention to gender dimensions of the Lebanese business context. Guidelines for potential investors could, and should, include information that enables them to ensure that gender is taken into consideration in assessments

### Key Recommendations

The EU supports the **government** in:

1. Development of a dynamic Labour Market Information System for National Employment Offices that includes data collection and sharing in a gender sensitive way. This should build on work already started with support from the International Labour Organisation and the Canadian International Development Agency and should ensure that linkages with education and TVET (for female and male youth) are in place in order to improve alignment between labour market needs and the capacities being developed through the formal and informal education/ training systems;

<sup>99</sup> CAS (2007), *Living Standards Survey 2007*, Table 87b,

<sup>100</sup> Including within the EU Lebanon's Single Support Framework 2014-2015

2. Development of a dynamic information sharing system that facilitates identification and monitoring of market niches and opportunities; attention should be paid to ensure that such information be readily accessible to youth and women seeking to start up or expand businesses. This should also be linked to the Labour Market Information System and to education and TVET systems.

The EU support **government and civil society** in:

1. Elimination of gender discriminatory aspects of laws and regulations related to economic activity. It is critically important to ensure that plans for legislative changes are systematically accompanied by plans for sensitising and orienting those responsible for application of such modifications and for ensuring that the general population is aware of changes in their rights. (This links to recommendations concerning the justice sector)
2. Inclusion of vulnerable sections of the population, including rural women and women with disabilities, in efforts to overcome barriers to female entrepreneurship (such as access to business advice and training, loans and support networks).
3. Promotion of female role models, as a form of advocacy for changing mindsets and generating greater acceptance and support of women's economic and leadership capacity.

Potential specific actions could include:

- Constitution of a database of successful women (integrating and building on a number of existing partial lists) for profiles and as potential human resources for mentoring in their special fields;
- Orientation and training of media (electronic and classic) producers and writers in gender sensitivity;
- Production of materials for advocacy purposes.

The **EU Delegation** take steps to ensure:

1. Full and equitable inclusion of female entrepreneurs in EU efforts to spur entrepreneurship by addressing clearly and specifically, in all related technical advice and support activities, barriers inhibiting their inclusion.

Potential specific actions could include:

- Terms of Reference could and should require gender analysis; pertinent briefing materials could be made available, and developed where documentation is inadequate. This could and should be applied across all technical, social, economic, governance and justice-related fields, to ensure that gender differences are duly recognised and allowance made for them.
- Promoting dialogue with government and civil society concerning specific barriers to women's starting up micro and small businesses
- Supporting networks that provide business advisory services and marketing assistance to women's enterprise development
- Development of briefing materials concerning gender dimensions of business in the Lebanese context, addressing potential investors and business consultants. Such a kit should include guidelines and information pertinent to adequate gender analysis in related impact assessments.
- Requiring consultancies related to The Small Business Act for Europe and Think Small First to include explicitly a section of gender analysis of opportunities and constraints

The **EU Delegation and the Neighbourhood South Region** facilitate:

1. Strengthened business networks supporting female entrepreneurs across the Neighbourhood South Region and with European networks.



## 9.2. Political participation and representation in decision-making structures

### Key findings

Stakeholders, especially in civil society groups, call for gender quotas to be introduced for election to political positions, and seek support of the international community in advocating such a step. Although the subject arises mainly in discussions of the National Assembly composition, it is also mentioned in the context of political parties and their lists of candidates, and in relation to municipal elections.

Effective action to overcome present gender inequities in political participation could take many years if not given the kind of “jump start” offered by quota systems. However, gender quotas alone cannot ensure effective participation by women. Not only do these have to take into consideration the challenge of identifying and advocating for alternative methods whereby a gender quota could be integrated within the complex sectarian quota structure of politics at national level, there are also two equally essential areas in which strategies need to be developed with great care.

On the one hand, on-going efforts to tackle the challenges of patriarchal traditions and mindsets need to be supported and reinforced, in order to create more space for acceptance of and respect for female candidates. As some stakeholders point out, even significant progress on eliminating the sectarian structure in keeping with principles accepted in the Taif Accord (Article 95) would not guarantee greater opportunities for women’s participation in leadership and politics; patriarchal attitudes are, to varying degrees, implicit in all the confessional families. Target groups for efforts to overcome and change such mindsets have to include the political parties, members of the National Assembly and all the communities that constitute the general population.

On the other hand, many potential female candidates for forthcoming elections need support and capacity development both to enable them to participate effectively in the electioneering process and to equip them so that they can effectively fulfil the role of elected representatives if, and when they win seats. Lessons from past experience in encouraging and developing capacity of women candidates should be brought to bear on designing action for the next elections. Impact could be enhanced through greater coordination and collaboration between civil society groups who engage in such actions.

Municipal level participation is not subject to the same sectarian complexity as found at national level. Barriers to women being elected to municipal councils are thus reduced. Although there are still practical discriminatory factors, such as access to campaign funding, and legal discrimination related to personal status in that a married woman’s eligibility can be affected by her husband’s place of origin if this is not the same as her place of residence. Experience suggests that demonstrated success in leadership by women encourages voters to reconsider assumptions that women cannot be effective as leaders in the community, and there have been considerable increases both in women standing for election and in numbers elected to municipal councils.

The growing presence of women in municipal councils and federations of councils provides potential opportunities for developing fact-based advocacy materials to bring about further changes in mindsets that perceive women as not having a place in government and decision-making roles. Sharing successful experiences from the perspectives of elected women, fellow councillors, and the electors could go a long way towards convincing those women and men who think that men represent better than women their constituents that this is not necessarily the case. Concurrently, such experiences could encourage other women to consider standing for election, and provide them with ideas on how they could serve their constituents effectively.

### Key Recommendations

The EU encourages and support **government and civil society** in:

1. Advocacy and further dialogue between decision-makers and civil society on gender quotas, including: adoption of these by political parties for their executive bodies and for their lists of candidates for elections at both national and local levels; and identification of acceptable mechanisms that would allow a gender quota to be introduced in elections to the National Assembly.

The EU support **civil society**'s efforts to advocate for women standing for election, through:

1. Identification and dissemination of information about successful women decision-makers and leaders in private and public sectors, to counter traditional perceptions of women's leadership competencies and to provide role models for potential women leaders. This would also facilitate constitution of a roster of potential mentors in business and political leadership.
2. Capacity development efforts aimed at enhancing women's effective political participation. These should include training and mentoring of potential female candidates on campaigning and on how to become an effective representative of their electorate (national or local level), with mentoring continuing over at least a year for new successful candidates.
3. Note: such efforts would require promotion and support of close mapping and monitoring of coverage of civil society support to gender sensitive election processes at municipal level, to minimise exclusion of some localities and duplication of efforts in others

### **9.3. Justice and human rights sector**

#### **Key findings**

Legal education and training could and should provide opportunities to develop recognition and understanding of how legislation and its application contributes to either perpetuation or elimination of discriminatory practices that are counter to the Lebanese Constitution's clear statement of equality of all citizens. Gender awareness and analysis of the implications of gender discrimination in the law could be included systematically as a component of all education and training of the judiciary, religious court judges, police and security forces.

Promulgation, amendment and revision of legislation call systematically for guidance in how the judiciary and the forces of law and order should integrate the new elements in application of the law. Experience with existing amendments and promulgation of new laws suggests that not all judges grasp fully the underlying principles of the revisions, not least for reasons related to sectarian politics and principles enshrined in the Personal Status (Family) Laws.

Such guidance could systematically include analysis of gender dimensions and their implications for justice and equality, as well as clarifying the interface between sectarian concerns and human rights commitments. Ongoing creation of space for dialogue concerning human rights and women's rights as an integral part of these is an essential precondition for developing awareness of common ground across the sectarian and political divides.

Clearer grasp of the discrepancies between the constitutional guarantee of equality and the inequalities found within laws and statutory regulations could facilitate the advocacy efforts undertaken to eliminate all discrimination. Not only should the subjects be integrated in basic legal education and in training for those involved in application of the law, it would be valuable to include components of human rights, and women's rights as an integral part of these, in school curricula.

#### **Key Recommendations**

The EU encourages and supports the **government** in:

1. Integration of study of human rights, including women's rights, and civil responsibilities in intermediate and secondary education curricula. Topics could and should include pertinent Conventions such as CEDAW. This process could include development and production of pertinent text books.
2. Systematic integration of women's rights in all legal education and all training programmes targeting persons engaged in law enforcement and security.



The EU encourages and supports the **government and civil society** in:

1. Development of gender-sensitive guidelines on instrumentation and implementation of new and amended laws and on pertinent international conventions such as CEDAW, for use in orientation and training programmes for judges, law enforcement and security bodies in application of new or amended laws. (By extension, this includes organisation of such training programmes to ensure all pertinent persons understand implications of changed laws for their own work.).

At a **Regional level**, it is recommended that the *EU* facilitate:

1. Organisation of exchange programmes for legislators, judges and law enforcement with other Neighbourhood South countries facing similar challenges in amending and applying laws that contain aspects that run counter to traditional values (such as honour crimes, child marriage, categories of crime related to family relationships, nationality, etc.)

## Annex I - Gender Statistical Profile Lebanon<sup>101</sup>

*NOTE: Lebanon's last census was carried out in 1932. Demographic data is based on projections and household surveys; sample sizes being based on housing units, projected total population figures, and civil registration records.*

Key Indicators		Year	Source	Notes <sup>102</sup>
<b>Gender Indices</b>				
Gender Development Index: - * rank	110	2014	UNDP <sup>103</sup> (2014) <sup>104</sup>	
Gender Development Index: - * value	0.900	2014	UNDP (2014) <sup>105</sup>	
Social Institutions and Gender Index – 2014 Category <sup>106</sup>	High	2014	SIGI <sup>107</sup>	Level of discrimination
Social Institutions and Gender Index - value	0.289653	2014	SIGI	
Gender Inequality Index - rank	80	2014	UNDP (2014) <sup>108</sup>	
Gender Inequality Index – score	0.413	2014	UNDP (2014)	
Overall Gender Gap - rank	135	2014	WEF <sup>109</sup> GGGR 2014	
Overall Gender Gap - score	0.592	2014	WEF GGGR 2014	
<b>Basic Demographics Indicators</b>				
Total population	3.8 <sup>110</sup>	2007	UNDP (2014) <sup>111</sup>	Excluding refugees
Overall population sex ratio (male/female)	0.95 1.05 at birth		WEF UNDP (2014),	56% of population is female; especially in age groups over 25 (2007) <sup>112</sup>
Percent urban (%)	N.A.		CAS information given	No definition of “rural” agreed <sup>113</sup>
Life expectancy at birth F/M (years)	82.3 /78.1	2014	UNDP (2014), <sup>114</sup>	NB: Healthy LEB = 64 /60 WEF The Global Gender Gap Report 2013 pp 254-5

<sup>101</sup> Sources:

UNDP (2014), *Human Development Report 2014. Sustaining Human Progress: Reducing Vulnerabilities and Building Resilience*, <http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr14-report-en-1.pdf>

World Economic Forum (2014), *The Global Gender Gap Report 2014*, [http://www3.weforum.org/docs/GGGR14/GGGR\\_CompleteReport\\_2014.pdf](http://www3.weforum.org/docs/GGGR14/GGGR_CompleteReport_2014.pdf)

CAS (2007), *Living Conditions Survey 2007*, <http://www.cas.gov.lb/index.php/demographic-and-social-en>  
CAS (2008), *Lebanon in Figures-2008* (Population estimates from the *Living Conditions Survey*), <http://www.cas.gov.lb/images/PDFs/Lebanon-Figures-2008.pdf>

<sup>102</sup> Tips for periodic updating of the statistical data and/or information on how regular data is collected by the source reference, etc.

<sup>103</sup> UNDP Human Development Report 2014: **Sustaining Human Progress** Reducing Vulnerabilities and Building Resilience

<sup>104</sup> Human Development Report 2014, Table 5

<sup>105</sup> Human Development Report 2014, Table 5

<sup>106</sup> SIGI categories : SIGI <0.04 very low discrimination in social institutions; 0.35 > SIGI = **very high** discrimination in social institutions <http://genderindex.org/content/2014-categories>

<sup>107</sup> <http://genderindex.org/country/lebanon> SIGI <0.04 very low discrimination in social institutions; 0.35 > SIGI = **very high** discrimination in social institutions

<sup>108</sup> Human Development Report 2014, Table 4

<sup>109</sup> World Economic Forum, (2014), *The Global Gender Gap Report 2014*, pp 238-39

<sup>110</sup> WEF 2013 estimates: 4.26

<sup>111</sup> Human Development Report 2014, Table 15

<sup>112</sup> Population estimates from the Living Conditions Survey, CAS, 2007

<sup>113</sup> CAS has been unable to develop a common accepted definition of “rural” for use in surveys (Information provided by CAS)

<sup>114</sup> Human Development Report 2014 Table 5



Key Indicators		Year	Source	Notes <sup>102</sup>
Fertility rate (total births per woman)	2	2011	UNICEF Child Protection and Gender Equality Profile	
Legal minimum age for marriage (F/M)	Variable <sup>115</sup>		WEF 2014 GGGR SIGI	NB: 5% women married at 15-19 (Early marriage)
Singulate mean age at marriage, years (F/M)	28/32		WEF 2014 GGGR	
<b>Economic Participation and Opportunity</b>				
Labour force participation rate by sex (%) of population ages 15-64) F/M	26/76		WEF 2014 GGGR	
Unemployment rate F/M (%) (sex specific, % of labour force)	10.1/8.6		WEF 2014 GGGR	78,9% F economically inactive; 56,6% M&F <sup>116</sup>
Employment to population ratio F/M (%)	11.58% F/ 33.66% M	2007	CAS Living Standards Survey 2007	Population aged 15 +
Employment share in Agriculture F/M (%)	1.1/6.1	2007	CAS Living Standards Survey 2007	% of all employed
Employment share in Industry F/M (%)	2.5/11.3	2007	CAS Living Standards Survey 2007	% of all employed
Employment share in Services F/M (%)	15.8/ 25.8	2007	CAS Living Standards Survey 2007	% of all employed
Vulnerable employment share F/M (%)	5.8/19.6%	2007	CAS Living Standards Survey 2007	% of all employed in non-declared private business (UNDP 2014 – 33.9%, not disaggregated)
Self-employment F/M (%)	10.0% of F/27.7% of M	2007	CAS Living Standards Survey 2007	
<b>Political Participation &amp; Empowerment</b>				
Women in government at ministerial level (as % of total)	0		WEF 2014 GGGR	NB Changes often; seldom more than 1 out of approx 25
Seats in National Assembly held by women (% of total)	3.13%	2013	IPU Parline <sup>117</sup> ; WEF 2014 GGGR	Ranks joint 146 <sup>th</sup> place (with Belize & Iran)
Seats in Upper House held by women (% of total)	NA			Unicameral system
Proportion of seats held by elected women in both houses combined	3%		WEF 2014 GGGR	Unicameral system

<sup>115</sup> NB – Different Personal Status Laws for different confessional groups. Some only identify “maturity”; some can allow from age 9 for girls, some are more standard (18) but allow exceptions.

<sup>116</sup> Population estimates from the Living Conditions Survey, CAS, 2007

<sup>117</sup> International Parliamentary Union (2014), Women in National Parliaments Oct 2014, <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>

Key Indicators		Year	Source	Notes <sup>102</sup>
Female legislators, senior officials and managers (as % of total)	1.00%F, 10.87% M 11.87% total <sup>118</sup>	2007	CAS Living Standards Survey 2007	Table 90b
<b>Health, Reproductive Health and HIV/AIDS</b>				
Adolescent fertility rates per 1,000 adolescent among girls (15-19 years)	12.0		WEF GGGR 2014	
Maternal mortality rate (death per 100,000 live births)	16 (9-29)		WEF GGGR 2014	Estimates range between 9-29
Infant mortality rate per 1000 live births (F/M)	8/10	2009	CAS/UNICEF MICS 3 <sup>119</sup>	Table CM-1
Adult HIV prevalence (aged 15-49) (%) F/M				Not found
Number of people living with HIV/AIDS				Reported levels minimal
Number of women (aged 15+) with HIV/AIDS				Reported levels minimal
Number of AIDS related deaths				Reported levels minimal
<b>VAW</b>				
Prevalence of intimate partner violence (%)				Not available
Prevalence of non-partner sexual violence (%)				Not available
Perceive wife-beating as justifiable	9.7% F (M n.a.)	2005-12	UNDP (2014) <sup>120</sup>	In lieu of above
<b>Educational attainment</b>				
Adult literacy rate 15 and over (%) F/M	99/99		UNDP (2014) <sup>121</sup>	
Illiterate adults (total)				
Adult female illiterates (%)	14%		WEF GGGR 2014	
Adult literacy rate Gender Parity Index F/M	0.92		WEF GGGR 2014	
Primary Education Net Enrolment ratio (%) F/M	90/97		WEF GGGR 2014	
Primary Gender Parity index	0.93		WEF GGGR 2014	
Total Secondary Gross Enrolment Rate (%) F/M	68/67		WEF GGGR 2014	NB figures differ greatly from 2013 report; no explanation
Secondary Gender parity index	1.00		WEF GGGR 2014	
Total Tertiary Gross Enrolment Rate (%) F/M	48/45		WEF GGGR 2014	NB figures differ greatly from 2013 report; no explanation
Tertiary Gender parity index	1.07		WEF GGGR 2014	

<sup>118</sup> Firms with female top managers (% of firms) 29%; Firms with female participation in ownership (% of firms) 34% : WEF The Global Gender Gap Report 2013 pp 254-5

<sup>119</sup> CAS/UNICEF(2009), Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 3, <http://www.cas.gov.lb/index.php/demographic-and-social-en/childrensituation-en>

<sup>120</sup> Human Development Report 2014, Table 12

<sup>121</sup> Human Development Report 2014, Table 9



## Annex II - Country Matrix State of Play Gender Equality and Priority Sectors

Legal instruments and relevant international standards of particular importance to women's human rights and gender equality	Year signed (s) ratified (r) acceded (a)	Reservations	Action plan for implementation Yes (year)/No	Opportunities / Challenges
Convention on the Political Rights of Women (1952)	-			
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) <sup>122</sup>	1972 a			
International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966)	1972 a			
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979) <sup>123</sup>	1997 a	yes <sup>124</sup>		
Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1999)	-			
1987 Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT)	2000a			
2006 Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment	2008a			
2000 Convention against Transnational Organized Crime	2001 s 2005 r			
2000 Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime	2002 s 2005 r			

### Priority Sectors Identified by EU Delegation:

- **Socio-Economic situation of women:** this would include analysis on the poverty situation from a gender perspective: Men's and women's different roles in the economy (both formal and informal), identify gaps in the participation levels in the labour market (formal and informal), working conditions, analysis of social services (e.g. provision, access to/use of services and resources in mainly health and education sectors).
- **Political participation and representation in decision-making structures** and ability to influence decision-making processes both at national and local level; information to be provided on government's capacity/willingness to create an enabling environment for women's political participation. Specific focus should be given to women's participation in local development process (e.g. participation in municipality election).
- **Justice and human rights:** legal framework focusing mainly on pluralism of law systems in Lebanon (e.g. religious laws and civil laws, inheritance, nationality law, labour laws), law enforcement and access to justice. Focus also must be on relevant international human rights instruments signed or adopted by Lebanon (e.g. CEDAW) on which Lebanon had reservations on some articles.

<sup>122</sup> Last periodic report on CCPR – 1997 [http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/TreatyBodyExternal/Countries.aspx](http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/TreatyBodyExternal/Countries.aspx)

<sup>123</sup> 4th & 5th (combined) periodic report on Lebanon submitted (Arabic only at present) in April 2014, for discussion 2015. [http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/TreatyBodyExternal/Countries.aspx](http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/TreatyBodyExternal/Countries.aspx)

<sup>124</sup> Reservations on CEDAW: The Government of the Lebanese Republic enters reservations regarding article 9 (2), and article 16 (1) (c) (d) (f) and (g) (regarding the right to choose a family name). In accordance with paragraph 2 of article 29, the Government of the Lebanese Republic declares that it does not consider itself bound by the provisions of paragraph 1 of that article.

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## Annex IV - References

The current CEDAW report was compiled by NCLW based on an intensive process of consultations between governmental, non-governmental organisations, academics and pertinent professional associations. The resulting document contains valuable details on the situation of women in Lebanon, and the status of a wide range of decrees, and amendments proposed to legislation and regulations. The previous (3<sup>rd</sup>) CEDAW Periodic Report can be viewed as complementary, especially for comparison of the Family (Personal Status) Laws.

The National Strategy for Women in Lebanon 2011-2021 is also an important reference document. Extensive consultation with civil society, government bodies and UN Agencies led up to its formulation, and further consultations with pertinent bodies of the National Assembly were necessary before the Strategy could be launched: it has not yet been formally endorsed by the National Assembly.

Several of the UN Agencies have carried out gender profiling work. The UN Women Gender Equality Assessment (2011) serves as a useful detailed source of information on gender equality across all sectors. UNICEF's Child Protection and Gender Equality Profile: Lebanon provides a rapid reference document.

The World Bank has undertaken some interesting work on differences between women and men entrepreneurs, their gender-specific challenges encountered and their modes of functioning

## Annex V - Country Mission Meetings

Organization	Type of meeting
	Focus Group/interview
<b>Government counterparts</b>	
Ministry of Social Affairs	Individual
Central Administration for Statistics	Individual
Ministry of Labour	Individual
National Commission for Lebanese Women	Individual
<b>National NGOs</b>	
<b>NGOs working on Economic Empowerment</b>	
The Lebanese Association for Development Al-Majmoua	Individual
AMEL association	FG
Najdeh Association	FG
Lebanese League for Women in Business	FG
<b>NGOs working on Political Empowerment:</b>	
The Lebanese Democratic Women Gathering	Individual
Lebanese Council for Women	Individual
National Committee for Follow Up on Women's Issues	Individual
Women in Front	Individual
<b>NGOs working on VAW</b>	
ABAAD	FG
KAFA	FG
<b>NGOs working on Legislations</b>	
Justice Without Frontiers (JWF)	FG
The Working Women League of Lebanon	FG
Arab Institute for Human rights	Individual
<b>Academic</b>	
Lebanese Association of Women Researchers	Individual
<b>UN Agencies</b>	
UNHCR	FG
UNRWA	FG
UNICEF	FG
Oxfam GB	FG
Norwegian People Aid	FG



## Annex VI - Guideline Questions for Stakeholders

*NOTE: The questions presented below are meant to provide guidelines for discussing issues on stakeholders' views during the meetings. It is not expected that stakeholders respond to the questions in writing. However, any written responses to one or more questions that stakeholders may wish to share are welcomed and appreciated.*

### I. NATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS

#### **GROUP ONE: Government Counterparts (ministries, national offices)**

1. What are the government priorities in Lebanon's national development planning in support of women's effective participation in the development process? What would you see as three key priority entry points relevant to the mandate of your government institution?
2. How do these key priority entry points contribute to achieving the MDGs (Millennium Development Goals) and implementing international conventions acceded to by Lebanon, such as CEDAW (Convention in Elimination of Discrimination Against Women) UNSCRs on Women, Peace and Security (1325, 1820, 1888, and 1889) and other relevant resolutions, as well as applicable peace agreement(s) pertinent to Lebanon?
3. What are the three key interventions in support of women's human rights in Lebanon, in particular in the priority sectors (Socio-Economic situation of women, Political participation and representation in decision-making structures, Justice and human rights) that have so far:  
3.1 worked well, had the desired outcome and impact? Why? What were the supporting factors? 3.2 worked less well, did not lead to the desired outcome and impact? Why? What were the key obstacles and challenges?
4. Are the key interventions in support of women's human rights in Lebanon supported by sex-disaggregate data and gender specific analysis, including gender budget analysis of the prioritized sectors? If so, to what extent is this information accessible to non-institutional gender stakeholders? If not, what are the capacity gaps?
5. Who are your key partners in addressing interventions in support of women's human rights, in particular in the priority sectors? How can other society members be mobilized in Lebanon to address and implement these interventions?
6. How can the development interventions in support of women's human rights in Lebanon, in particular in the priority sectors, be effectively monitored to ensure achievement of the MDGs? What mechanisms are available to achieve this? How can these mechanisms be strengthened?
7. Are there other areas and topics relevant to supporting women's effective participation in the development process in Lebanon that international agencies need to give attention to?
8. How are men supporting women's human rights in Lebanon? What are the current trends and challenges?

#### **GROUP TWO: National Women's Machineries**

1. How do current national priorities in support of women's human rights contribute to achieving the MDGs (Millennium Development Goal) and implementation of international conventions acceded to by Lebanon, such as CEDAW (Convention in Elimination of Discrimination Against Women)?
2. In the medium- to long-term, what should in your view be the key priorities in Lebanon's national policies and strategies in support of women's human rights?
3. Who are your key partners in addressing interventions in support of women's human rights, in particular in the priority sectors? (Socio-Economic situation of women, Political participation and representation in decision-making structures, Justice and human rights) How can other society members be mobilized in Lebanon to address and implement these interventions?
4. What are the areas of consensus in respect of debating women role and human rights (social, legal, economic, political) in Lebanon? What are the areas of disagreement?
5. What are the key interventions in support of women's human rights, in Lebanon in particular in the priority sectors that have so far:  
5.1 worked well, had the desired outcome and impact? What were the supporting factors? Who were the key actors?  
5.2 worked less well, did not lead to the desired outcome and impact? What were the key obstacles?



6. Are the key interventions in support of women's human rights in Lebanon supported by sex-disaggregate data and gender specific analysis, including gender budget analysis of the prioritized sectors? If so, to what extent is this information accessible to non-institutional gender stakeholders? If not, what are the capacity gaps?
7. Are there female population groups that are socially, economically and politically excluded in Lebanon? If so, who are these marginalized groups? What are the reasons for their exclusion? How could this exclusion be overcome?
8. How can the development interventions in support of women's human rights, in particular in the priority sectors, in Lebanon be effectively monitored to ensure achievement of the MDGs and implementation of human rights conventions? What are the support mechanisms to achieve this? Are there ways that these mechanisms could be strengthened?
9. Are there other areas and topics relevant to supporting women's human rights in Lebanon that require attention?
10. How are men supporting women's human rights in Lebanon? What are the current trends and challenges?

### **GROUP THREE: Civil Society, NGOs**

1. In debating women's role and human rights in society, the economy and political decision-making in Lebanon, what are the areas of consensus? What are the areas of disagreement?
2. Who are the key activists contributing to debates on women's human rights in Lebanon? What are the channels through which their voices are being heard?
3. What are the three key interventions in support of women's human rights, in particular in the priority sectors, (Socio-Economic situation of women, Political participation and representation in decision-making structures, Justice and human rights) in Lebanon that have so far:
  - 3.1 worked well, had the desired outcome and impact? What were the supporting factors? Who are the key actors?
  - 3.2 worked less well, did not lead to the desired outcome and impact? What were the key obstacles and challenges?
4. Are the key interventions in support of women's human rights in Lebanon supported by sex-disaggregate data and gender specific analysis, including gender budget analysis of the prioritized sectors? If so, to what extent is this information accessible to non-institutional gender stakeholders? If not, what are the capacity gaps?
5. Who are your key partners in addressing interventions in support of women's human rights, in particular in the priority sectors? How can other society members be mobilized in Lebanon to address and implement these interventions?
6. How has the approach of international agencies contributed to promoting women's human rights, in particular in the priority sectors, in Lebanon? What should this approach focus on in the future?
7. Are there female population groups that are socially, economically and politically excluded in Lebanon? If so, who are these marginalized groups? What are the reasons for their exclusion? How can this exclusion be overcome?
8. Are there other key areas and topics relevant to supporting women's human rights in Lebanon that require attention?
8. How are men supporting women's human rights in Lebanon? What are the current trends and challenges?

## **II. INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES**

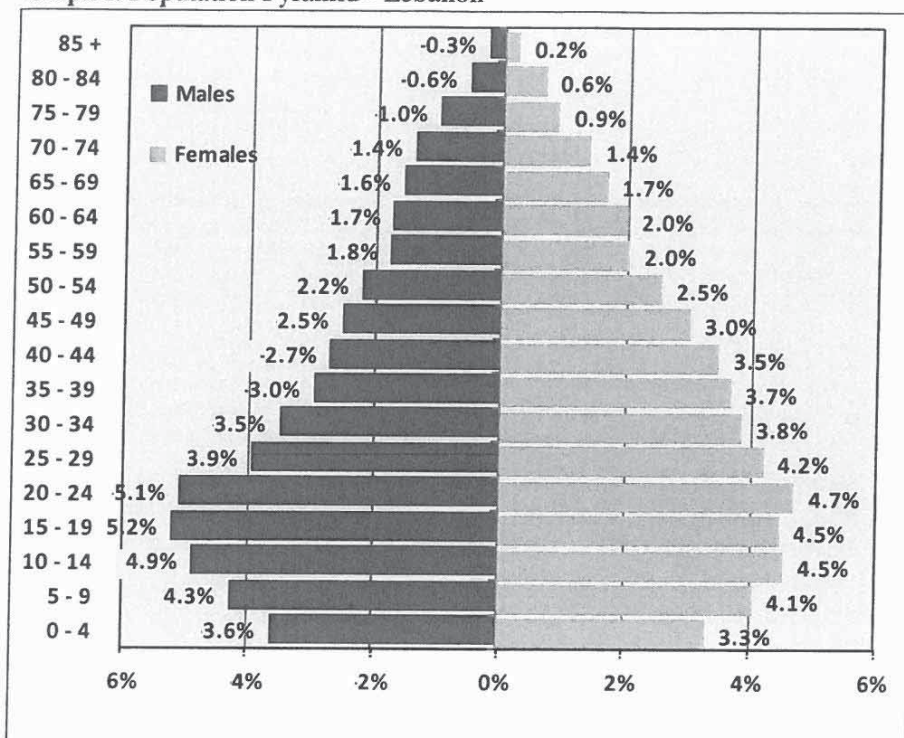
1. In the country you are covering, what are the areas of consensus in respect of debating women's role and human rights in society, the economy and political decision-making? What are the areas of disagreement?
2. How are debates on women's human rights being voiced in the country you are covering? Through which channels and mechanisms? Who are the key activists?
3. What are the interventions in support of women's rights, in particular in the priority sectors (Socio-Economic situation of women, Political participation and representation in decision-making structures, Justice and human rights) in the country you are covering that have:
  - 3.1 worked well, had the desired outcome and impact? What were the supporting factors? Who were the key actors?



- 3.2 worked less well, did not lead to the desired outcome and impact? What were the key obstacles?
4. What are key challenges to achieving the MDGs and supporting implementation of international human rights instruments in the country you are covering?
  5. If you could focus on only three specific interventions to support gender equality and women's empowerment, in particular in the priority sectors in the country you are covering, what entry points would you prioritize?

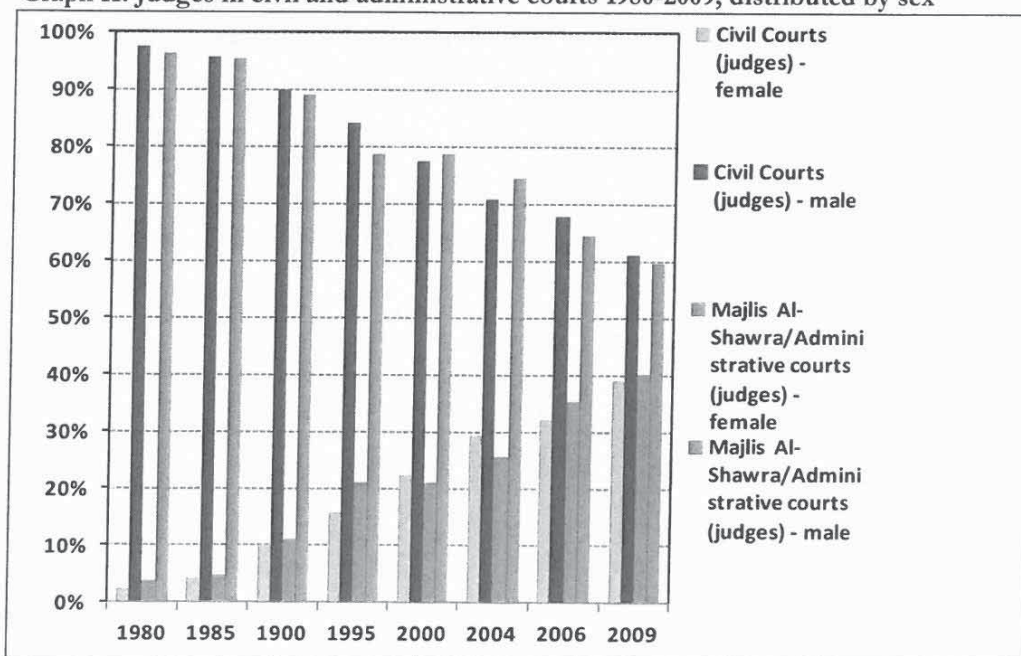
## Annex VII – Additional Graphs and Tables – Lebanon

Graph I: Population Pyramid - Lebanon



Source: CAS (2007), *Living Standards Survey 2007*, Table 4.a

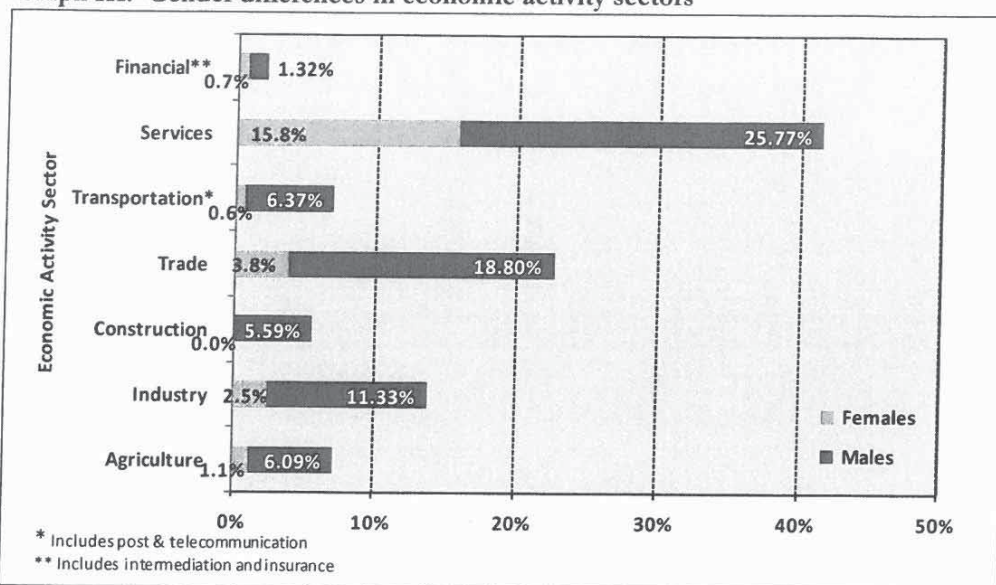
Graph II: Judges in civil and administrative courts 1980-2009, distributed by sex



Source: Marguerite Helou, Data provided by the Director General of the Ministry of Justice Omar Al-Natour in 2009.

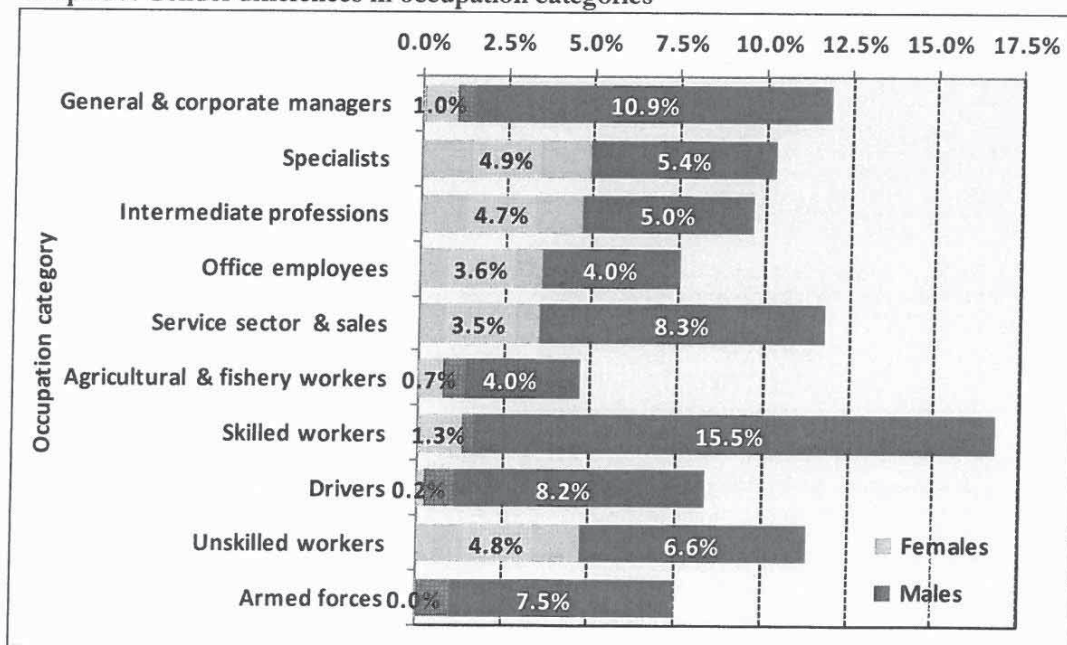


Graph III: Gender differences in economic activity sectors



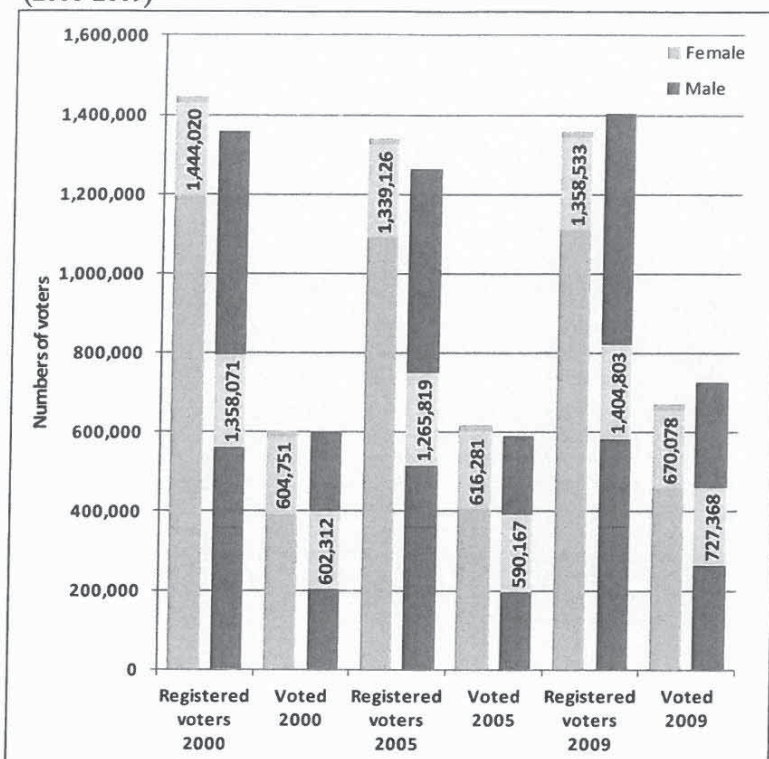
Source: Data from CAS (2007), *Living Standards Survey 2007*, Table 92a, p258

Graph IV: Gender differences in occupation categories



Source: Data from CAS (2007), *Living Standards Survey 2007*, Table 90a, p255

Graph V: Gender differences in Voter Registration and Turnout<sup>a</sup>  
(2000-2009)



<sup>a</sup> Note: data on voter turnout were only available from segregated polling stations; approximately 15% of polling stations are not segregated  
Source: Data collected and shared by Dr Marguerite Helou

## Tables

Table I: Gender differences in sector of economic activity

Economic activity sector	Sex		All employed
	Females	Males	
Agriculture	1.13%	6.09%	7.22%
Industry	2.49%	11.33%	13.82%
Construction	0.01%	5.59%	5.60%
Trade	3.84%	18.80%	22.63%
Transportation, Post and Telecommunication	0.63%	6.37%	7.01%
Services	15.79%	25.77%	41.57%
Financial intermediation and insurance	0.74%	1.32%	2.05%
No response	0.05%	0.05%	0.10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>24.68%</b>	<b>75.32%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Source: Based on data from CAS (2007), *Living Standards Survey 2007*, Table 92a, p258



**Table II: Gender differences in occupation**

Occupation	Sex		All employed
	Females	Males	
General & corporate managers	1.00%	10.87%	11.87%
Specialists	4.94%	5.38%	10.32%
Intermediate professions	4.71%	4.96%	9.66%
Office employees	3.56%	3.98%	7.53%
Service sector & sales	3.49%	8.31%	11.80%
Agricultural & fishery workers	0.69%	4.01%	4.70%
Skilled workers	1.28%	15.54%	16.83%
Drivers	0.22%	8.17%	8.38%
Unskilled workers	4.75%	6.58%	11.33%
Armed forces	0.03%	7.50%	7.53%
No response	0.02%	0.04%	0.05%
<b>Total</b>	<b>24.68%</b>	<b>75.32%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Source: Based on data from CAS (2007), *Living Standards Survey 2007*, Table 90a, p255

**Table III: Gender differences in work status**

Current work status	Sex		Overall employed
	Females	Males	
Employer hiring wage earners	0.43%	9.12%	9.55%
Self employed working alone or getting help from family members (with or without wage)	2.46%	20.86%	23.32%
Monthly paid employee	18.47%	33.33%	51.80%
Employee paid weekly, hourly or on the basis of productivity	1.66%	8.63%	10.29%
Worker with the family or relatives with wage or without wage	1.46%	2.98%	4.43%
Trainee Apprentice	0.21%	0.40%	0.61%
<b>Total</b>	<b>24.68%</b>	<b>75.32%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Source: Based on data from CAS (2007), *Living Standards Survey 2007*, Table 88a, p252

**Table IV: Women's participation in municipal councils according to Governorate (Muhafazat) 2010 election results**

Governorate (Muhafazat)	Total Municipal Councils <sup>a</sup>	Total members of Municipal Councils	Female Municipal Council candidates	Female Municipal Councillors	Female Municipal Councillors %	% of Municipal Councils with female members <sup>a</sup>
Beirut	1	24	10	3	12.00%	100.00%
Mount Lebanon	272	3519	367	184	5.00%	45.59%
North	236	2812	449	203	7.00%	49.58%
South	138	1662	101	65	4%	33.33%
Bekaa	152	1917	92	48	2.50%	21.05%
Nabatiyeh	116	1491	61	25	2.00%	21.55%
<b>Total</b>	<b>915</b>	<b>11425</b>	<b>1080</b>	<b>528</b>	<b>4.69%</b>	<b>37.70%</b>

Source: based on data from Ministry of Interior and Municipalities, Directorate General of Political and Refugee Affairs (cited in Lebanon 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> CEDAW periodic report 2014); <sup>a</sup> Data provided by Dr Marguerite Helou, Professor at Lebanese University, Governance Consultant.

**Table V: Gender differences in appointment of Qaimakams**

Caza Qaimaqam (District Officers)	Total	Sex	
		Females	Males
Mount Lebanon	5	1	4
North	5	2	3
South	2	0	2

Bekaa	4	0	4
Nabatiyeh	3	0	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>3 (16%)</b>	<b>16 (84%)</b>

Source: data provided by CAS