



*Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.*

365 days of a Gender Journey - 2019

FOREWORD

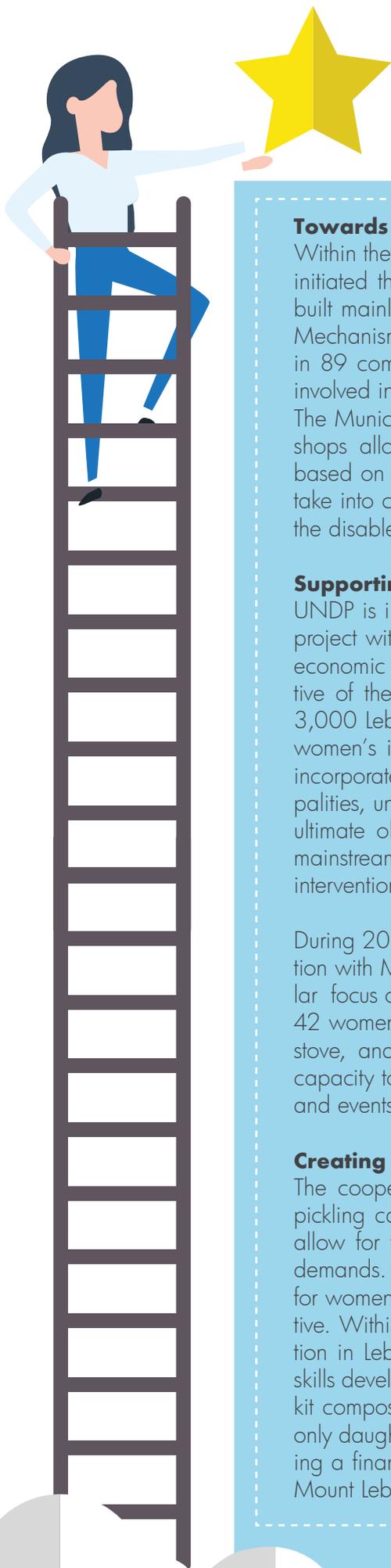
It is the third year that we are releasing our newsletter “365 Days of a Gender Journey” to mark the International Women Day.

The past twelve months have been critical in terms of women’s political participation in Lebanon, despite the legal apparatus in place. Our focus last year was on the Parliamentary elections, where we witnessed encouraging signs of change, following the unprecedented registration of 113 women’s candidates, among which 86 found their ways to the different lists. While this has not translated in a large representation of women at the Parliament, a momentum has been created – as evidenced by the inclusion of four women Ministers in the new cabinet, including in a key portfolio, the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities, a première in Lebanon and the Arab states. We hope that this will pave the way for increased female participation in Lebanon’s political sphere.

These transformations are encouraging and provide us with an important stepping stone to address many other entry points, including women’s economic participation, inclusion, access, and as well as in the peace and security field. In the past year, UNDP in Lebanon – working in close collaboration with other UN sister agencies – has been working at the national and local levels towards promoting these changes, through partnerships with the Lebanese Government, public institutions, and civil society, capacity building, knowledge creation, and support to legal and policy reforms.

We commit to maintain our efforts, placing gender at the center of our strategic engagement, as well as UNDP’s programmatic and operational strategies. To do so, we will abide by our global commitment to “Think Equal, Build Smart, Innovate for Change” to address the core issues faced by women and girls in Lebanon.

Celine Moyroud
UNDP Resident Representative, a.i.



Success Stories

Towards a Gender Inclusive

Within the framework of the Lebanon Host Community Programme (LHSP), UNDP initiated the Mechanisms for Stabilization and Resilience (MSR). The MSR was built mainly on merging the previous Maps of Risks and Resources (MRR), and Mechanisms for Social Stability (MSS) methodologies. The process was initiated in 89 communities and completed in 74 of them. Around 730 women were involved in the MSR workshops, representing 31% of the total participants.

The Municipal Plan produced by local groups of stakeholders during these workshops allows for the identification and implementation of Investment Projects, based on the priorities identified throughout the MSR process. All interventions take into consideration gender equality, youth engagement, and accessibility for the disabled.

Supporting Women Resilience

UNDP is implementing the “Strengthening Women’s Resilience in Time of Crisis” project within the LHSP’s framework to address the key constraints hindering the economic participation and leadership of women in Lebanon. The overall objective of the four-year project is to contribute to the economic empowerment of 3,000 Lebanese and Syrian women in Lebanon by improving the conditions for women’s integration, progression, and economic empowerment. The approach incorporates key value-chains and aims at strengthening the capacity of 20 municipalities, unions of municipalities, and local economic development agencies. The ultimate objective is to support women’s economic empowerment, and better mainstream gender considerations in local economic development strategies and interventions.

During 2018-2019, UNDP, through the value chain assessment and in collaboration with Ministry of Agriculture, provided support to cooperatives with a particular focus on women’s cooperatives or achieving economies of scale. A group of 42 women’s cooperatives have been equipped with a food truck (with a fridge, stove, and other necessary accessories for preparing food) to facilitate their capacity to market their products and participate in the various fairs, exhibitions, and events that benefitted more than 307 women.

Creating Job Opportunities for Women: 4 success stories

The cooperative in Deir El Ahmar was supported with the improvement of its pickling capacity through the provision of a cucumber sorting machine that will allow for the production of a larger number of pickles in response to market demands. The initiative benefitted 40 women. “We’re creating job opportunities for women who need them,” said Mira Sidnawi, the coordinator at the cooperative. Within the value chain approach, and in an aim to increase honey production in Lebanon, 44 women linked to beekeeping cooperatives benefited from skills development and beekeeping training and were also provided with a starter kit composed of five beehives and the needed equipment and tools. “Being an only daughter, the beekeeping training sessions were my first step towards becoming a financially stable, independent woman,” says Mirna Hassan from Gharife, Mount Lebanon.

“Being an only daughter, the beekeeping training sessions were my first step towards becoming a financially stable, independent woman”

In addition, UNDP through the “Building Bridges Amongst Youth in Lebanon” project is fostering positive interactions between 169 Lebanese females and 113 Syrian females in an aim to promote social stability and conflict resolution, as well as improve their employability through skills-training and job placement initiatives.

In terms of environmental sustainability and recovery, LHSP reforestation interventions engaged a total of 233 women. Additionally, 261 women were employed through labor-intensive projects implemented all over Lebanon.

Women and Climate Change

The UNDP Climate Change programme is one of 10 countries working globally on promoting the UNDP gender strategy within the Lebanese national climate change agenda. The work aims at empowering women in climate-related actions to promote sustainable development, and adopting a gender lens to ensure gender equality when combating climate change. This work fits under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change’s Gender Climate Action Plan which Lebanon is signatory to.

Practically, UNDP’s team of experts has undertaken a thorough analysis of the national action plans of the various ministries that include climate action. Related legislation and national decisions were analyzed, and interviews conducted with decision makers to identify gaps, in terms of the role of women. During 2019, concrete suggestions, recommendations, and trainings to push forward on gender-responsive action in the national plans on climate change will be proposed.

Better Conditions of Detention for Female Detainees

UNDP worked on the rehabilitation of the women prison of Baabda. 108 detainees benefited from the rehabilitation works conducted at the prison. The work included the rehabilitation of the prison’s kitchen and indoor social space. In 2019, UNDP will work with the ISF to enhance access to legal aid to female detainees.

Recruitment of Female Personnel as an Element of the Municipal Police Reform

In 2018, UNDP promoted the recruitment of both female and male agents as one of the 5 elements of the municipal police reform. Throughout the year, UNDP encouraged municipalities to recruit female municipal police agents through peer-to-peer presentations in Unions of Municipalities by the mayors of Bourj Hammoud and El Mina (both municipalities with female municipal

police agents). Municipalities such as Baalbeck, Majdel Anjar (Bekaa) and Batroun (North) committed to do so upon availability of funds; while the municipality of Antelias (Moutn Lebanon) has hired 3 female agents, following UNDP’s support. Recruitment of female personnel within municipal police is critical to challenge gender biases and guarantee equal opportunities to women and men in working for security institutions.

A Gender Sensitive Definition of SMEs

The Lebanese Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) strategy, launched in 2014, lists a number of initiatives as a roadmap to 2020, among which Women Entrepreneurship holds a prominent part. The initiatives traced by the strategy stressed on establishing a women-friendly business environment by supporting the development of women-led businesses through: dedicated and supportive policies and incentives, specialized training, women-to-women support networks and mentors, and backing of private sector initiatives and donors.

As such, the SME unit at the Ministry of Economy and Trade (MOET), supported by UNDP, presented a law for an SME national and unified definition aiming at organizing the SME activities and at creating policies to enhance their work environment and consequently facilitating their “doing business”. The definition proposed emphasizes on women’s activity and includes a suggestion for a definition of women-owned projects.

This law is drafted and its implementation is being followed up by the concerned entities.

Favorable Conditions for Women Entrepreneurship

Aiming at gathering relevant information, guiding, and helping entrepreneurs in their work, the SMEs unit supported by UNDP, updated the SME portal on the Ministry’s website with latest publications, and various information about the SME sector including initiatives related to women; this SME Portal is accessible at: <https://www.economy.gov.lb/en/services/support-to-smes>. A new section for “What’s in Lebanon for Women Entrepreneurship” is being designed to be launched as part of the portal. This section is intended to publish all women-related activities in the economy, precisely in the SME and entrepreneurship sectors. Stakeholders will be invited to contribute in the content of this page, thus creating a dynamic interaction and liaison between all actors in the ecosystem.

Testimonial



Talking to Ray Bassil: An athlete who broke all barriers

For Ray Bassil, UNDP's Youth and Gender Goodwill Ambassador, shooting is an instinct. Her story began with an idea fostered by her father, and which propelled the discovery of her talent in pulling the gun and becoming an expert markswoman.

Ray is an athlete who broke barriers and stereotypes, being the first Arab woman to compete in two Olympic games, and win three consecutive World Cup medals in trap shooting. The latter is a male dominated sport, where Arab women have no place. Ray is proud to have followed her passion, and challenged more than just herself, but the entire society to become what she is today. Ray's experience demonstrates that by not losing sight of one goals and following ambitions, every woman can break barriers. "I use my passion as a weapon; and my confidence as a bullet. I fire my way every day in an environment, that no so long ago was restricted to men I can proudly say, that my success and my voice have encouraged other Arab nations to allow women to take part and compete in this sport" she says.

She added "I am this accomplished shooter today, thanks to determination, hard work, and never giving up on my dreams". With UNDP, Ray wants to encourage every woman to take part in the sports and male dominated activities, and continue her fight for breaking barriers.

Through her journey, Ray realized that no obstacle should stand in the way of women. It is about time to show the world the equal capacities of women. Ray's mission is to create awareness in our culture, where the lack of knowledge can discourage women from reaching their full potential.



"I am this accomplished shooter today, thanks to determination, hard work, and never giving up on my dreams".

Partnering for Gender

UN Agencies Partnering for Gender Equality and to Address Sexual and Gender Based Violence

In partnership with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and under the UN Action against sexual violence in conflict (UNA), UNDP supported the development of a GBV curriculum for the municipal police, approved by the Internal Security Forces (ISF) academy. The curriculum addresses the findings of the municipal police perception study. It includes definitions of GBV, the local legal framework, the role of municipal police, and scripts /case studies to support municipal police in understanding and performing their roles when encountering GBV. The curriculum is included in the Protection Module, which also brings UNICEF and UNHCR in the process.

Through the partnership, an assessment of gender and GBV risks and needs of the targeted public vocational schools of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) was conducted. The assessment identifies recommendations (including physical space, infrastructure, educational system, transportation and gender and social perspectives), and ways forward to address risks that youth are facing in the schools.

Finally, the UNFPA-UNDP partnership led to training 60 to 80 media professionals (traditional and social media) working on Gender-SGBV issues. Six tips' sheets were developed as well, to support all media professionals on ethical and safe reporting, tackling gender and core concepts of GBV, survivor centered approach, rights based approach, and ethical and safe coverage.

Support to the Office of the Minister of State for Women Affairs Maintained

2 years through the partnership with the Office of the Minister of State for Women Affairs, the supported through capacity development, institutional and technical support, and high level advisory was maintained. This led to the Ministry to develop partnerships with UN agencies and successfully achieve long term targets for the country. As such, in partnership with UNFPA and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the Ministry launched the final version of the National Strategy to Combat Violence against Women. In addition, an Action Plan and an M&E Framework were annexed to the strategy. It was followed by further work on a study to estimate the economic cost of Gender Based Violence. Finally, a joint study was developed with the Ministry of Finance on Gender Pay Gap in the Private Sector, which will be released in 2019.

UN Agencies Partnering with the National Women Machinery for UNSCR 1325

In the framework of the partnership among UN agencies in Lebanon (UN Women, UNFPA, ESCWA, OHCHR, UNIFIL, and UNDP) supported the Government of Lebanon with the development of a National Action Plan (NAP) to implement United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security. The NAP was finalized based on thorough consultations and dialogue. It was submitted by the National Commission for Lebanese Women to the Lebanese Government for validation and adoption.



Sharing Knowledge

Transforming Commitment into Compliance: Engaging parliamentarians in improving women rights' status in Lebanon through the Universal Periodic Review (UPR)

In preparation for the upcoming Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of Lebanon in 2020, the UNDP and the General Secretariat of the Lebanese Parliament in partnership with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND), organized a workshop to present and discuss the joint stakeholders' mid-term report on six sectors, including women's rights. This was prepared by civil society organizations, on a voluntary basis, as per the recommendations put forward in 2015.

Representatives from civil society shared, with Members of Parliament (MPs), the status of the 18 recommendations around women's rights by the Government of Lebanon, and presented key messages and suggestions to accelerate the implementation process between reviews. The workshop enhanced the engagement level of MPs regarding the UPR's implementation and increased their awareness on the progress achieved by Government, and the required actions to improve the human rights' situation in Lebanon.

Closing Ceremony of the Awareness Sessions targeting Women Candidates & Voters

The UNDP Lebanese Electoral Assistance Project (UNDP) in partnership with UN Women, and Women in Front, organized the closing ceremony of the awareness sessions that were conducted for women candidates and voters in the regions of Lebanon. The session tackled relevant subjects including: the new electoral law and electoral calendar, required documents to run for elections, legal framework, pre-printed ballot papers, preferential vote, electoral campaign, how to include women in lists, negotiations and networking.

During the closing ceremony, 24 women candidates took the stage and shared their experience, expectations and challenges faced during the candidate's nomination period and the start of the electoral campaign. In this regard, it was observed that each candidate faced different experiences and challenges highlighting the complex and diverse nature of the Lebanese elections. Nonetheless, as a common feature, all the women candidates showed resilience and determination to bring about change and enhance women representation in the future parliament.



Tripoli Gender Workshop

The project participated in a workshop organized by UNDP - MOSA project "The Lebanon Host Communities Support Programme" entitled "Women's Participation in Political Life and Parliamentary Elections: Challenges and Prospects". It was attended by more than 40 participants from Tripoli and the north governorate. During the workshop, LEAP provided an overview of women political participation and representation over the parliamentary elections and the most prominent milestones in women's movement. The project also showcased the 2018 parliamentary elections key results, and figures from a gender perspective, and discussed the importance of lobbying and endorsing women's quota and temporary special measures for the next electoral cycle. The panel discussed women in political parties, the economic role and its impact on the participation of women in political work, the social impact on women's participation, women in municipal work and women and peace building. Furthermore, testimonials were given by women candidates describing their experience in running for the 2018 parliamentary elections.

Thematic Exhibition – Break All Frames

Under the patronage of His Excellency Mr. Saad Hariri, UNDP in partnership with the European Union and "Women in Front" launched a thematic art exhibition entitled "Break All Frames" on Friday 30 November, at "Beit Beirut" in Sodeco. The exhibition aimed at challenging stereotypes and shatter misconceptions of Lebanese women, through the exhibited work of artists whose different perspectives of women are displayed in their arts. The objective was to portray women as determined, expert, and strong individuals who have been breaking the shackles and tearing down the stereotypical image by reaching decision-making positions in both public and political life.

The exhibition displayed more than 50 pieces of art for 30 Lebanese artists - including 24 women artists- from different backgrounds and age groups. Each piece, being unique and different, shares the same theme of celebrating the power and uniqueness of women pushing boundaries and breaking stereotypes.

Gender Post-Elections Lessons Learned Working Group

UNDP organized a one-day post-election working group on September 25, 2018 with the aim to:

- evaluate the parliamentary elections from a gender perspective and identify challenges, best practices and lessons learned;
- exchange views and visions on the electoral reforms among main stakeholders; and
- to come forward with short term and long term recommendations to be part of the gender strategy for the next cycle

The meeting brought together national and international stakeholders who shared and debated views, suggestions and recommendations on the possible ways (TSMs and other affirmative actions) to increase the representation of Lebanese women as candidates, and to strengthen the fairness and inclusiveness of the next parliamentary elections.

More than 22 participants attended the workshop representing the seven main political parties, OMSWA, NCLW, WIF, LADE, MAHARAT, NDI, UNSCOL and UN Women.



By March 8, 2019 among the 412 staff members at UNDP, all contract modalities' considered, 213 women are employed by UNDP in Lebanon, versus 199 men. Women represent 51.7%

News from the County Office

UNDP Basketball Team Wins Cup

UNDP formed a women basketball team, bringing together staff members from the projects and the Country Office. After intensive training for several months, the team participated in the national corporate women basketball tournament, launched by Sports Mania in April 2018. The UNDP team had the chance to play and enjoy the tournament for the first time in a competitive environment. With the support of and motivation from the colleagues, the team won the 1st place of the competition. "We were very committed and strongly determined, and as such, we made sure to practice well and to follow the instructions of our coach who empowered us and believed in us", says Marielle Kalache, Governance Programme Assistant, and member of the team.

The team wanted to live again this outstanding experience, and therefore is currently practicing to partake in the tournament and bring again the cup "home".

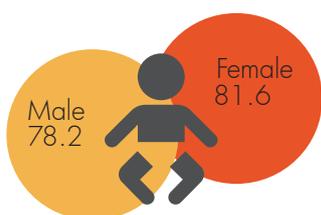


"We were very committed and strongly determined, and as such, we made sure to practice well and to follow the instructions of our coach who empowered us and believed in us"

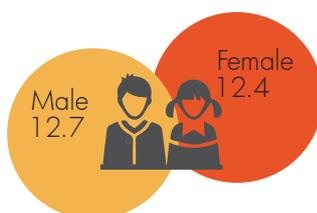
Reviewing the Structure of the Gender Focal Team

In July 2018, the Country Office revised the structure of the Gender Focal Team, to have a more inclusive membership. As such, the Chief Technical Advisor of the largest project the Lebanese Host Communities Programme, as well as the office's Monitoring and Evaluation Officer were included. The mandate of the team remains unchanged, and aims at further institutionalizing the activities related to gender equality and gender mainstreaming, as a cross-cutting programmatic and operational area, with additional focus on following-up on the Gender Seal requirements and process.

Lebanon's GDI for 2017



Life expectancy at birth
In Lebanon



Expected years of schooling



Mean years of schooling

Aiming for the Gender Seal

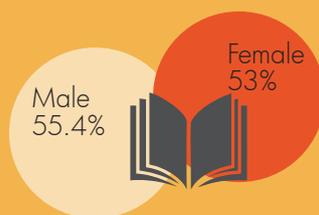
UNDP Lebanon was selected to participate in the 2018-2019 round of the Gender Equality Seal launched by our Headquarters in June 2018, with strong support from Senior Management. This initiative is an opportunity to showcase the office's work on gender equality, while at the same time, getting a realistic picture of where it stands, and which areas may need to be strengthened, to move forward. The Gender Seal certification process will take place over a year, with four different phases: nomination, online self-assessment, development and implementation of an action plan, and certification. While this work will be spearheaded by the gender team, this exercise requires the collective engagement, commitment and efforts across the programmatic and operations fields to ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment remain at the center of UNDP's work in Lebanon, and help in delivering results more effectively.

So far, the office completed the first phase, which consisted of an online self-assessment. The self-assessment was reviewed and scored by the gender team in New York, with an analysis and recommendations for improvement. Based on the recommendations, a global exchange inception workshop in Istanbul, and an in-house retreat supported by the Regional Gender Advisor, an action plan was developed. The plan will be the main guiding document until the end of the year (and beyond), aimed at scaling up focus and targeting gender equality and women's empowerment across the various streams of the office's work.

Lebanon's GII for 2017



Labour Force participation rate



Population with at least some secondary education



Female seats in parliament



Adolescent birth rate



maternal mortality ratio



GII Vallue



GII Rank

Publications and Campaigns

Reviews on “The Legislative and Oversight roles of the Lebanese Parliament towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals” for 2016 and 2017

The UNDP Project at Parliament, published two reviews based on the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the 169 targets, which include a mapping and analysis of all 2016 and 2017 initiatives undertaken by the Lebanese Parliament in relation to its legislative and oversight roles.

In relation to SDG 5: “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”, the reviews show that only six draft laws were submitted in 2016 whereas in 2017, two laws were adopted, three draft laws and two project laws were submitted to Parliament.

The reviews were a premiere in Lebanon, and the UNDP Project at Parliament aims to turn it into a yearly activity, as it constitutes a new methodology to monitor and orient parliamentary actions in Lebanon for the 2030 Agenda.

Thematic brochure - “2018 Lebanese Parliamentary Elections - Results and Figures”.

In the post-elections period, LEAP developed a thematic brochure on the 2018 parliamentary elections results entitled “2018 Lebanese Parliamentary Elections - Results and Figures”. The brochure included statistical data disaggregated by sex and by age such as the national turnout, the number of registered voters, the number of candidates who ran for the elections and the number of MPs. Furthermore, the brochure detailed the results by major districts and included comparative data between the 2009 and 2018 parliamentary elections. The data will serve as a reference and baseline for statistical analysis aiming at mainstreaming both gender and youth for the next cycle.

Safe Access to Justice for SGBV Survivors Supported

Jointly with UNFPA, UNDP and under the UN Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict (UNA) supported the development of Gender Justice report. This report identifies the strengths and weaknesses of the legal frameworks related to GBV/VAW in Lebanon, in addition to other Arab countries. The report provides in-depth analysis of laws, policies, and practices, and suggests related recommendations. The report has also mapped out all discriminatory laws against women and suggested clear recommendations to address them.

16 Days of activism against Gender-Based Violence (GBV) - 2018 Campaign

In the frame of the United Nations Gender Working Group (GWG) in Lebanon, co-chaired by the UNFPA and UN Women, the 16 UN participating agencies, including UNDP, jointly with the National Council for Lebanese Women (NCLW), marked the 16 Days of activism Against GBV by implementing an outreach activity in a collaborative manner. The selected theme for 2018 was around preventing and ending child marriage and advocating for passing a draft law to increase marriage age to 18. To this end, 16 messages around the campaign's theme were developed, infographics were developed and disseminated through the social media outlets of agencies. In addition, traditional media outlets were also used with TV spots, radio messages, and billboards. The campaign showcased child marriage as GBV, and leads to societal risks including school dropouts, increased poverty, physical, sexual, and psychological abuse, and consequences on the health of children.



The Way Forward: Plan of Action (2019-2020)

Based on the newly published global Gender Strategy and national priorities, as well as the Gender Seal Action Plan, and building on the previous years' achievements, UNDP Lebanon will, among other areas of intervention, focus on the following objectives:

- Update and revise the Country Office gender strategy, based on the global strategy, and updated priorities.
- Upgrade, whenever possible the Country Office's Gender Portfolio, by reviewing existing interventions, and suggesting entry points and alternative ways of doing business. For new interventions, the implementation of gender analyses to precede the design phase.
- Expand the provision of institutional and technical support to public institutions, to prioritize gender issues and mainstream gender in different areas of engagement, including policy and legal reform, provision of protection and security, and economic opportunities.
- Engage all stakeholder towards the advancement of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5- Gender Equality.
- Develop further common agendas among different areas of intervention, and addressing gender from an integrated perspective to maximize results.
- Tap into the national, regional, and global resources and partnership to enlarge the Country Office's gender agenda, exploring innovative solutions and different modalities to address gender equality and women empowerment.
- Enhance cooperation with UN agencies, using existing channels, for increased technical support, and sharing of tools and best practices. Actively participate in and contribute to the UNCT Gender Working Group, and other joint efforts.
- Encourage projects and country office to actively communicate gender results and contributions.
- Share the latest news and trends from the gender communities of practice with relevant CO and project colleagues.
- Implement further capacity building and training activities, for the Country Office on gender related concepts, analysis, and planning.
- Engage Country Office members in gender sensitive activities. Highlight gender objectives and enabling activities as part of the selected strategic priorities for the Country Office.
- Position the gender equality and women empowerment agenda as a key priority while consulting on the development of the Country Programme Document for 2021 and beyond.

