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Resilient nations.*

# UNDP Gender Strategy

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## Lebanon

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## Outline

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>I. THE NATIONAL CONTEXT: WOMEN IN LEBANON</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>A. WOMEN'S IMPEDIMENTS IN LEBANON</b>	<b>6</b>
1. <i>THE NATIONALITY LAW</i>	6
2. DOMESTIC, SEXUAL AND OTHER FORMS OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE	7
3. <i>POLITICS AND DECISION-MAKING</i>	7
4. MARRIAGE AND THE PERSONAL STATUS LAW	8
5. ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT AND GENDERED STEREOTYPES	8
<b>B. INTERNATIONAL TREATIES AND DISCREPANCIES</b>	<b>9</b>
1. <i>BINDING TREATIES</i>	9
2. <i>THE LEBANESE STATE'S RESPONSE</i>	12
<b>C. CONCLUSION</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>II. THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (UNDP)</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>A. AT THE INTERNAL LEVEL</b>	<b>14</b>
1. AN OVERVIEW OF THE OFFICE: WHERE DO WE STAND?	14
2. ORGANIZATION CULTURE AND GENDER PERSPECTIVES	17
3. <i>THE GENDER FOCAL POINT</i>	18
<b>B. AT THE EXTERNAL LEVEL: PROGRAMS, PROJECTS, AND OTHER UNDP ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>19</b>
1. GENERAL ASPECTS OF GENDER-MAINSTREAMING IN A PROGRAM	20
2. <i>PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS</i>	20
3. BREAKDOWN ANALYSIS: GENDER APPROACH IN THE DESIGN OF PROJECTS	26
<b>III. RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>A. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE INTERNAL STRUCTURE</b>	<b>28</b>
1. WHAT CAN BE DONE TO SENSITIZE THE PERSONNEL REGARDING GENDER EQUITY?	28
2. WHAT KIND OF ORGANIZATIONAL REFORMS CAN WE UNDERTAKE?	29
<b>B. AT THE EXTERNAL LEVEL: WHAT IS THERE TO BE DONE?</b>	<b>30</b>
1. <i>ECONOMICS AND LABOR FORCE</i>	30
2. <i>CULTURE AND STEREOTYPES</i>	30
3. <i>LEGAL ASPECTS</i>	31
<b>ANNEX I: UNDP LEBANON GENDER QUESTIONNAIRE 2015</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>ANNEX II: COUNTRY OFFICE'S COURSES RELEVANT TO GENDER EQUALITY</b>	<b>38</b>

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**INTRODUCTION**

*“Until women and girls are liberated from poverty and injustice, all our goals—peace, security, sustainable development—stand in jeopardy. Empowering women is an economic and social imperative.”*

- Ban-Ki Moon

The conceptualization of the difference between genders is a relative subject that is dependent on time and demographics and brings about various implications. Despite different perspectives, ignoring what respective genders entail and represent is a decision to ignore the irregularity that may result therein. Throughout the world, a gender perspective is a duty that cannot be understated and all organs of the United Nations are bound to respect this commitment to gender. However, this specific gender analysis will focus on the United Nations Development Programme’s Country Office (CO) in Lebanon, and will be based on a number of UN reports and strategies. Before adapting global concepts to the particularities of Lebanon, the relevant terms and concepts must be introduced and understood.

Gender is defined by UNDP as the “set of social, cultural, political, legal and economic characteristics socially allocated as a function of sex from birth onwards.” It results from and molds social constructions and it is also a volatile, dynamic concept. While gender equality pertains to the situation in which men and women’s aspirations and needs are equally promoted, a gender equity approach accounts for the different needs and treatments of men and women according to what their gender entails in the society they live in, so as to achieve gender equality. UNDP commits to the promotion of gender equality and women’s empowerment. In order to do so, it has chosen to follow a gender-mainstreaming strategy that integrates gender equity at all levels, from internal institutional culture and structural modalities to programme management, thereby contributing to minimizing the developmental gap between men and women.

The Millennium Development Goals inexorably covered gender-mainstreaming up until their end date, and it must now be made a priority for all UNDP country offices more than ever. In the post-2015 era and with global leaders agreeing on a common development path through the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the offices should among others focus on the 5th goal to “achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”. It accurately accounts for the vitality

of involving women in the development journey as agents of peace, prosperity, and sustainability. Development cannot and will not be effective if half of the population is excluded from the process: poverty considerations, growth, progress, decision-making, and political life must include an equal participation of women and recognize their full potential in order to achieve sustainable development. Gender equality is not only a developmental target - it is essential to development itself.

Within the same frame of thought, the design of developmental policies cannot overlook gender or neglect the greater vulnerability of women. At the global level, women's vulnerability is heightened by lower or uneven access to income<sup>1</sup>. They bear the greatest burden in times of conflict, and they are the first victims of crisis in the labor market. Today, UNDP recognizes that challenges of gender equality persist in the form of unequal access to resources, social and legal discrimination, limited economic-political empowerment, and uneven access to the labor market. With this, it is clear that an initiative aimed at enhancing development that is inconsiderate of gender issues loses efficiency.

Acknowledging the scarce consideration of gender issues in the global agenda, UNDP CO are encouraged to incorporate gender into their work and promote women's rights and empowerment. This can take place by identifying and establishing benchmarks and minimum standards at three levels: **the organization itself, the development intervention, and the larger national context**. The key elements targeted by UNDP deal with management of gender-mainstreaming, capacities and enabling environment of the CO, knowledge management, inclusion of gender streamlining within programmes and projects, partnerships built for coordination mechanisms of gender equality, and results/impacts of the CO's contributions. Therefore, a Gender Strategy at the CO level accounts for this gender design, assesses it, and designs a path of action relevant to it.

To date, the UNDP CO in Lebanon has in fact considered gender parity in its operations and assessments of concrete development projects in the country. However, implementation is loose and does not follow a concrete institutional framework with a solid long-term vision. In order to determine the causes and remedies of this deficiency, an assessment of the situation that targets the three aforementioned levels - namely the national context, and the interventions of the CO in Lebanon – is vital. A valid assessment provides the basis for the design of a Gender Strategy that accounts for the flaws and strengths of the CO's work as well as a plan of action to ensure that staff are held responsible for delivering gender equality results and are aware of the importance of doing so.

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<sup>1</sup> Raquel Lagunas and Neus Bernabeu, *Mapping of Gender and Development initiatives in Lebanon*

## Gender Strategy

The Gender Strategy, therefore, identifies the work already completed on gender-mainstreaming, as well as the loopholes, and the estimated required time and resources to realize the objectives. It is inspired by the guidelines and benchmarks set by the UNDP Gender Equality Strategy 2014-2017 and the guide on “How to Prepare a Gender Strategy for a Country Office,” in addition to helpful staff recommendations in order to isolate and target the deficiencies.

The assessment of the national context is based on literature reviews of documents produced by UNDP and other specialized agencies, drawing a clear map of the problems pertaining to gender in Lebanon.

In order to evaluate the office’s sensitivity to gender and the incorporation of gender-mainstreaming, questionnaires have been designed for UNDP staff aimed at evaluating responsiveness to gender-related issues and priorities. The employee composition at the office has also been evaluated in order to study the men to women ratio and their distribution within the hierarchy. For a more concrete assessment, questions were specifically designed for the Human Resources unit, the Gender Focal Point, and management. Finally, the incorporation of gender issues in the CO’s intervention has been assessed by conducting interviews with project staff working in all areas of intervention and analyzing their answers. Exhaustive documents retracing the CO’s activities on gender were accessed as well.

In the following document, the work undertaken at the aforementioned levels during the month of June 2015 are thoroughly presented and a plan of action is proposed.

## **I. THE NATIONAL CONTEXT: WOMEN IN LEBANON**

In order to understand the Country Office’s work pertaining to gender, in Lebanon it is fundamental to draw a clear map of the national issues and trace them back to the initiatives taken by UNDP. Conducting an intensive literature review isolates different categories of discriminations against women in Lebanon or other issues hindering their empowerment, which will be presented in this section. These deficiencies were contrasted with treaties endorsed by Lebanon, setting a path for recommendations.

### **A. Women’s Challenge in Lebanon**

*“If women continue to be marginalized with a fraction of economic wealth, productive capacity, political influence and administrative position, all will suffer stagnation, under-development and increasing international condemnation.”*

- Jan Egeland<sup>2</sup>

#### *1. The Nationality Law*

According to the Decree No.15 on Lebanese Nationality, January 19, 1925:

##### Article 1

“Is considered Lebanese:

Every person born of a Lebanese father (...)”

##### Article 5

“The alien woman who marries a Lebanese man becomes Lebanese, upon her request, one year after the marriage is registered within the census office.”

As a start, both articles clearly disclose the discrimination against women in Lebanon with respect to their nationality: Articles 1 and 5 respectively put forth the incapacity of a Lebanese female citizen to pass on her nationality to her children or her foreign husband, whereas a male citizen enjoys both rights.

Regardless of the references upon which these laws were based, they represent a violation of the basic principles of freedom and equality, contrary to the Lebanese constitution itself, as will be depicted at a later stage. The laws do not only affect women, but also the entire household: children cannot benefit from public education, the husband and children alike, if foreign, cannot access public health care (which is exclusive to Lebanese citizens), and the entire family may suffer from other societal ills that result from a feeling of alienation in one’s own country and crippling administrative complications. Attempts to change this law are faced with political motivations

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<sup>2</sup>Jan Egeland, *Women’s role in peace, development and humanitarian efforts*

legitimizing it by bringing up discourses related to stability, the balance between sectarian groups, the consideration of Palestinian settlement, and national and regional safety<sup>3</sup>.

## *2. Domestic, and sexual gender-based violence*

Until recently, domestic violence was not punishable by Lebanese law, which meant that women were even more prone to mistreatment. . A new law was passed by parliament in April 2014 that recognized the need to establish protection and legal resources for women subjected to abuse by their husbands or male relatives in the form of restraining orders, temporary shelters, and access to public prosecutors or family violence units. Although this is a considerable achievement, it remains insufficient. The cost and availability of restraining orders requested outside official court hours are not taken into consideration and significant complications exist that can nullify the effectiveness of the law.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, the law defines domestic violence as “an act, of omission, or threat of an act committed by any family member against one or more family members... related to one of the crimes stipulated in this law, and that results in killing, harming, or physical, psychological, sexual, or economic harm,” failing to account for other vital issues such as marital rape.

Actually, the very notion of “marital rape “remains nonexistent in Lebanese law: Article 503 of the penal code states that “whoever, with violence and threat, coerces (a woman) other than his wife to sexual intercourse, is punished with hard labor for no less than five years (...);” implying that such coercion is admissible within a marriage and setting sexual intercourse as a marital right. Article 522 states that “in the event a legal marriage is concluded between the person who committed any of the crimes mentioned in this chapter [including rape, kidnapping and statutory rape], and the victim, prosecution shall be stopped and in case a decision is rendered, the execution of such decision shall be suspended against the person who was subject to it,” and goes one step further by exonerating a rapist provided he marries his victim. In other words, and given that the implementation of the law remains fragile, work still needs to be done in this field in order to fully account for women’s rights in the country and protect them—not only from violence, but also from the impairments of the system which, in itself, fosters violations to women’s rights.

## *3. Politics and decision-making*

The ratio of female Lebanese members of parliament out of the total 128 is 3.1% as per the most recent parliamentary elections held in 2009. This represents one of the lowest ratios of women in parliament in the world, contrasting with a relatively high 52% voter turnout in parliamentary elections.<sup>5</sup> With this, the presence of women in decision-making processes and representative

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<sup>3</sup> Fahima Charafeddine, *Predicament of Lebanese women married to non-Lebanese*

<sup>4</sup> Human Rights Watch. *Lebanon: Domestic violence law good, but incomplete*, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2014/04/03/lebanon-domestic-violence-law-good-incomplete>

<sup>5</sup> UNDP Lebanese Electoral Assistance Project. “Elections Snap-shot”.

institutions at all levels remains scant. The need to include women in decision-making as agents of change—rather than victims of the system—is essential to achieve development objectives<sup>6</sup>.

Measures should be taken to empower Lebanese women to actively engage in decision-making processes, and be engaged at different levels of the Lebanese public administration. As such, women should have access to full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making to address social, political, economic challenges. Nurturing an environment that is prone to women participation would consolidate the democratic process in Lebanon. As such, the active participation of women in public life will help in reducing the corruption gap, as more measures for accountability of policies will be put in place. In addition, it is worth mentioning that women are strongly committed to peace building, given their vulnerability in conflict contexts. Reconstruction and reconciliation efforts take root more quickly and are more sustainable when women are involve. Finally, Lebanon would benefit from the participation of women in decision-making as women are strongly linked to positive developments in access to services including education, infrastructure and health, contributing in turn to enhanced livelihoods.

#### *4. Marriage and the Personal Status Law*

Within all eighteen religious confessions present in Lebanon, there is a distinguishable pattern of women having fewer rights regarding divorce, custody, and right to inheritance. For example, the personal status laws and religious courts make divorce less accessible to women than men. Even with the new law passed against domestic violence, the religious laws are not responsive to spousal domestic abuse. Moreover, following a divorce, women experience discrimination with regards to the distribution of marital property. As for child custody, it is the age and not the interest of the child that determines with whom he/she will reside.

#### *5. Economic empowerment and gender stereotypes*

Advocating women's rights cannot be separated from empowering women economically. In Lebanon, gender stereotypes are very much embedded in society and contribute to the economic marginalization of women, which also results from the failure of the aforementioned personal status law to recognize the woman's economic and non-economic contribution to the household. Because of conventional patriarchal economic "roles" attributed to men and women-in which the man bares the financial responsibility of the household and the woman's salary is a fortunate added value rather than a necessary asset-women tend to hit a "professional glass ceiling". They face limited career options and access to the private sector, which results in below-average professional skills, thereby hindering their economic empowerment.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> *Achievement gender equality, women's empowerment and strengthening development cooperation*

<sup>7</sup> *Mapping of gender and development initiatives in Lebanon*



This is illustrated by the fact that women represent only 25% of the labor force. While married women only have 34.1% chance of finding a job, single women have a higher chance of 58.7%. . The trend is reversed for men, however, with married men having a higher chance of finding work, verifying the perception of the man—not the woman—as the sole breadwinner of the household<sup>8</sup>.

The obstacles to women participating equally in the labor force are fourfold<sup>9</sup>:

First of all, in Lebanon, the main unit of society is considered the family rather than the individual which leads to the perception that men and women play more of a complementary role than an equal one within the household.

Secondly, and as previously stated, the man is considered as the sole breadwinner.

Moreover, tradition and reputation, that play substantive roles in the Lebanese society, greatly focus on the concept of a woman's "honor," to the point of even restricting interaction with men in certain milieus.

Finally, although the impediments discussed above can be considered related to the "private sphere," there are similar limits to women's access to the public sphere rooted in family or personal status laws.

Economic dependency is one of the core causes behind vulnerability and marginalization, and makes it more difficult for women to stand as agents of change in Lebanon and claim their rights. As an example, the decision to file for divorce is significantly skewed by the economic precariousness of women and the resulting vulnerability. In order to give Lebanese women their due rights, it is necessary to assign punishment to all forms of domestic violence. However, failing to account for the economic deprivation of women – that is promoted by the Personal Status Law, as mentioned - following a divorce is reductionist and counter-productive. Women are therefore trapped in a system that considers their economic development secondary thereby impacting their professional, private, and marital choices and undermining the articulation of their rights.

Promoting women's rights cannot be achieved without their economic empowerment, and this involves major interventions on societal perceptions of gender roles.

## **B. International treaties and discrepancies**

### *1. Binding Treaties*

#### The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

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<sup>8</sup> Nayla Geagea, *Women in the Labor Force, Current Legislative Framework and Proposed Recommendations*

<sup>9</sup> UNDP. *National Human Development Report: Toward a Citizen's State*. Beirut: 2008-2009.

Lebanon was a represented member in the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing from September 4 to 15, 1995, and recognizes the international norms and standards set forth by the Beijing Platform for Action.

It is worth emphasizing some key clauses of the Beijing Declaration, in order to note the discrepancy between Lebanon's commitments to these norms versus actual implementation:

“1. We, the governments participating in the Fourth World Conference on Women (...)  
7. Dedicate ourselves unreservedly to (...) enhancing further the advancement and empowerment of women all over the world (...)

We are determined to:

23. Ensure the full enjoyment by woman and the girl child of all human rights and fundamental freedom (...)  
24. Take all necessary measures to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and the girl child and remove all obstacles to gender equality and the advancement and empowerment of women (...)

The above clauses stipulate the unconditional obligation of member states to promote women's empowerment and ensure that men and women have equal rights.

In practice, it is very clear that this is not the case in Lebanon, as men are entitled to more rights than women; and women suffer from discrimination embedded in the national penal code (cf.: articles 503 and 522 of the penal code).

The strategic objectives set forth by the Beijing Platform for Action, to which Lebanon has committed itself directly, target the aforementioned problems of women. Objective F.5 draws the following plan of action: “Eliminate occupational segregation and all forms of employment discrimination”. In order for Lebanon to fulfill this objective, it is necessary to undertake measures that challenge the realities women face in their professional careers, as previously discussed.

Within the same line of thought, the strategic objectives directly target women's participation in decision-making, with the first promoting “measures to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision-making”.

At this point, it is worth recalling that the Beijing conference took place twenty years ago and was a major milestone on the path towards advocacy of women's right. Lebanon, having one of the lowest female participation in decision-making in the world *inter alia*, has still not been able to respect

its commitment to the Platform for Action. This also clearly suggests a general failure to respect the international binding treaties it has joined.

#### Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)

Lebanon ratified the CEDAW on April 16, 1997, binding the country to Article 2 (among others) which requires member states to:

“Condemn discrimination against women in all its forms, agree to pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating discrimination against women”

Lebanon, however, has applied reservations to articles 9 (on the woman’s rights to grant citizenship), 16 (on the rights of marriage), and 29 (on intrastate procedures).

Once again, Lebanon failed to realize international commitments and is far from completely condemning discrimination against women “in all its forms.”

#### Convention of the Right of the Child (CRC)

Lebanon ratified the CRC in 1989. Article 3.1, in specific, states:

“In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.”

This goes against the law that considers age to determine custody rather than the child’s “best interests”. In this case, there is also an obvious rift between national customs based on religious laws and international convention.

#### International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICCPR)

Lebanon is a state party to the ICCPR since 1983 and is therefore bound to its articles, including:

Article 3:

“The States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to ensure the equal right of men and women to the enjoyment of all economic, social and cultural rights set forth in the present Covenant.”

Similar to previously discussed cases, the aforementioned characteristics of women’s situation in Lebanon are not in line with Lebanon’s adherence to the ICCPR.

#### UN Security Council resolutions

Resolutions 1325, 1820, 1888 and 1889 all reaffirm the importance and the obligation to include women in decision-making, in blatant contrast with the low level of participation of women in parliament.

## From MDGs to SDGs

Lebanon committed itself to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 2000-2015, including goal number 3: “Promote gender equality and empower women”. However, the most recent MDG report submitted by UNDP and the Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR) “Lebanon Millennium Development Goals Report 2013” reveals that many gaps remain in the economic and political fields as a result of “*entrenched socio-cultural, political, legal and structural factors that contest women’s rights as equal citizens in Lebanon*”<sup>10</sup>.

Aiming at gender equality in Lebanon and Lebanese institutions without acknowledging the societal context is, therefore, doomed to failure.

Development is to be monitored through the implementation of the recently approved Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2015-2030. Promoting gender equality is still considered a global development priority, whereas Goal 5 specifically pinpoints the commitment to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. In order to achieve this goal, world leaders have set nine specific targets, including the elimination of all forms of violence, discrimination, and harmful practices against women and girls. In addition, the SDGs support the provision of tools and practices to empower women and allow them to actively participate in decision-making processes.

### *2. The Lebanese State’s response*

The dissonance between the treaties it has ratified and its actual initiatives is made clear by having recourse to the Personal Status Laws in Lebanon.

As previously analyzed, Personal Status Laws carry diverse forms of discrimination against women and contribute to the continuity of gender stereotypes, sometimes in direct violation of principles upheld by the United Nations and international treaties. Failing to pertain to all aspects of CEDAW, for example, displays an allegiance to the Personal Status Laws which describes the will to respect the customs and rules of the different sects as a means to peaceful coexistence. This, however, goes against the very constitution of Lebanon, as Article 7 states:

“All Lebanese shall be equal before the law. They shall equally enjoy civil and political rights and shall equally be bound by public obligations and duties without any distinction.”

Moreover, the UN Handbook for Legislation on Violence Against Women clearly states that:

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<sup>10</sup> UNDP. Lebanon Millennium Development Goals Report. Beirut: 2013.

“Where there are conflicts between customary and/or religious law and the formal justice system, the matter should be resolved with respect for the human rights of the survivor and in accordance with gender equality standards”<sup>11</sup>.

### **C. Conclusion**

Lebanon is still far from achieving the 2015 Millennium Development Goals of eliminating gender discrimination and empowering women. Although some progress has been noted, constraints remain deeply embedded in the socio-cultural system and the Personal Status Law, along with religious considerations and civil status. With the adoption of SDGs, Lebanon has for the coming 15 years a new plan of action that should guide its development objectives, and the country will need to align itself with the priorities and targets set forth by Goal 5, in order to meet its gender commitments. SDGs appear as an ideal platform to direct reform towards gender equality and empowerment, and the CO, guided by the global UNDP strategy will accompany the process. Any work aimed at improving the situation of women in the country must take this into account and target the deficiencies previously put forth. At this point, it is relevant to focus on the work that the UNDP Country Office has undertaken to deal with gender issues, and the progress it has reached.

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<sup>11</sup> *UN Handbook for Legislation on Violence against women*

## II. THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (UNDP)

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UNDP works all around the globe with the aim of eradicating poverty and reducing inequalities through cooperation with the countries in the development of policies, skills and abilities, institutions and resilience. The promotion of gender equality, then, is a natural field of work, “*central to the mandate of UNDP and intrinsic to its development approach*”<sup>12</sup>. UNDP works closely with agencies such as the UN Women, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender (IANWGE). It has three main areas of work: sustainable development, democratic governance and peace-building, and climate and disaster resilience. Every UNDP office is guided by gender policies, which highlights the priorities regarding gender-mainstream, included but not limited to: the Gender Equity Policy Note, displaying UNDP’s work towards gender equality; a guidance note on gender-mainstreaming; Policy on gender balance in management (which regulates Human Resources policies); and terms of Reference for UNDP Country Office Gender Focal Points. Most importantly, UNDP published the Gender Equality Strategy (2014-2017), the latest corporate tool to ensure that gender equality and the empowerment of women are integrated into every aspect of its work to support countries to eradicate poverty and reduce inequalities and exclusion.

In Lebanon, the UNDP Country Office (CO) builds its work around four thematic practice areas of intervention—also known as *portfolios* or *programmes*: Social and Local Development, Democratic Governance, Crisis Prevention & Recovery, and Environment & Energy. In order to evaluate the CO’s work on gender equality, we have undertaken an assessment at the internal and external levels, which will provide us with a clear picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the efforts built to date, as well as an outline of what remains to be addressed to enhance gender sensitive operations and programming.

### A. Institutionalization of Gender at UNDP Lebanon<sup>13</sup>

#### 1. An overview of the office: where do we stand?

Gender equity begins with the staff. The first and natural step in analyzing gender issues within the office would be to have a look at the staff composition (gender disaggregated) of Lebanon’s CO, looking for patterns. For this effect, we have used the organization chart of the CO—projects excluded—and tagged at each position the attribution of male (M) female (F), or unknown/unavailable (X), resulting in the following (the information was presented in June 2015;

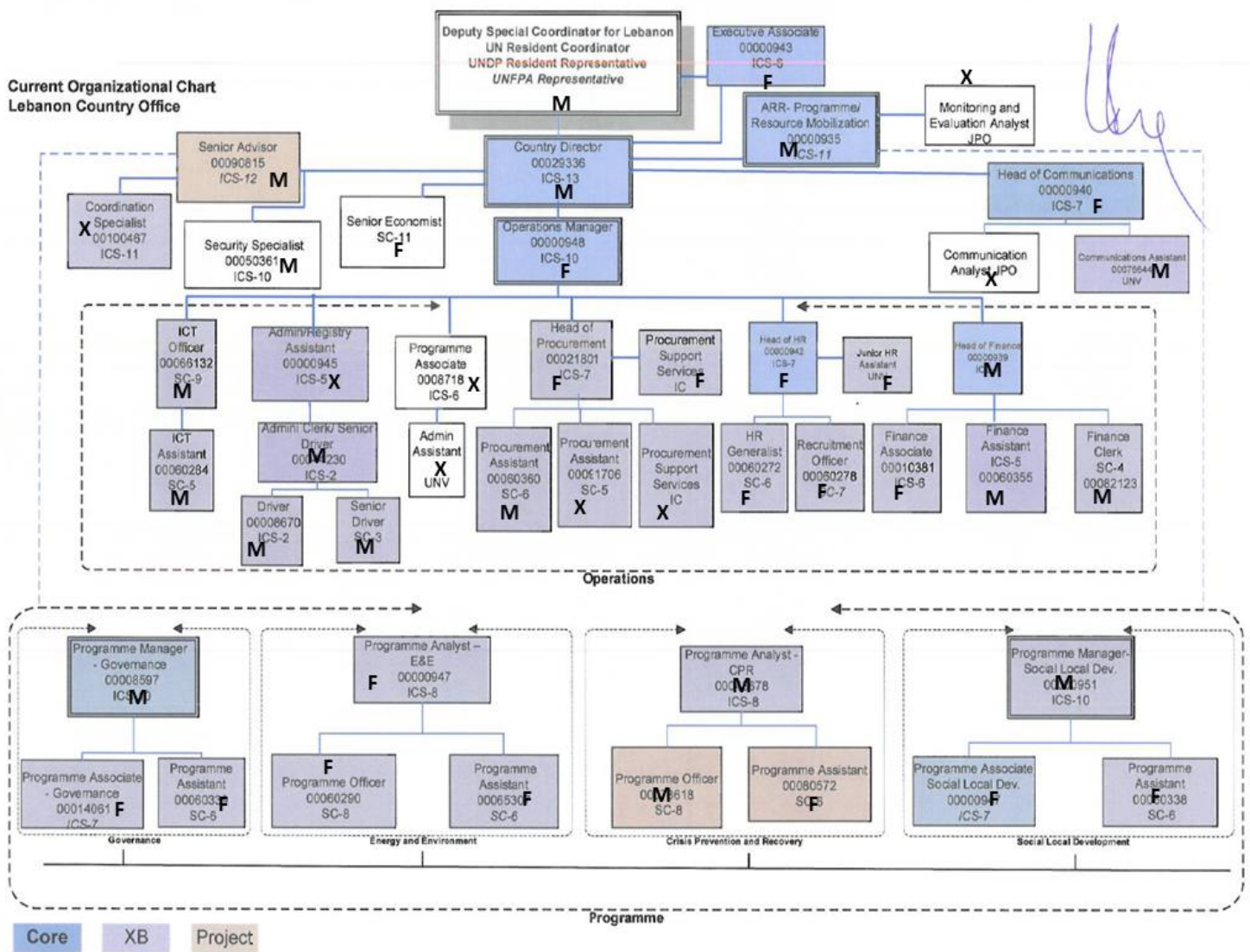
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<sup>12</sup> <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/gender-equality/overview.html>

<sup>13</sup> It is to be noted that the structure at the CO is very dynamic. It is also to be noted that UNDP employs more than 350 service contract holders within the different projects, and the same recruitment/contract management terms pertaining to gender apply.

## Gender Strategy

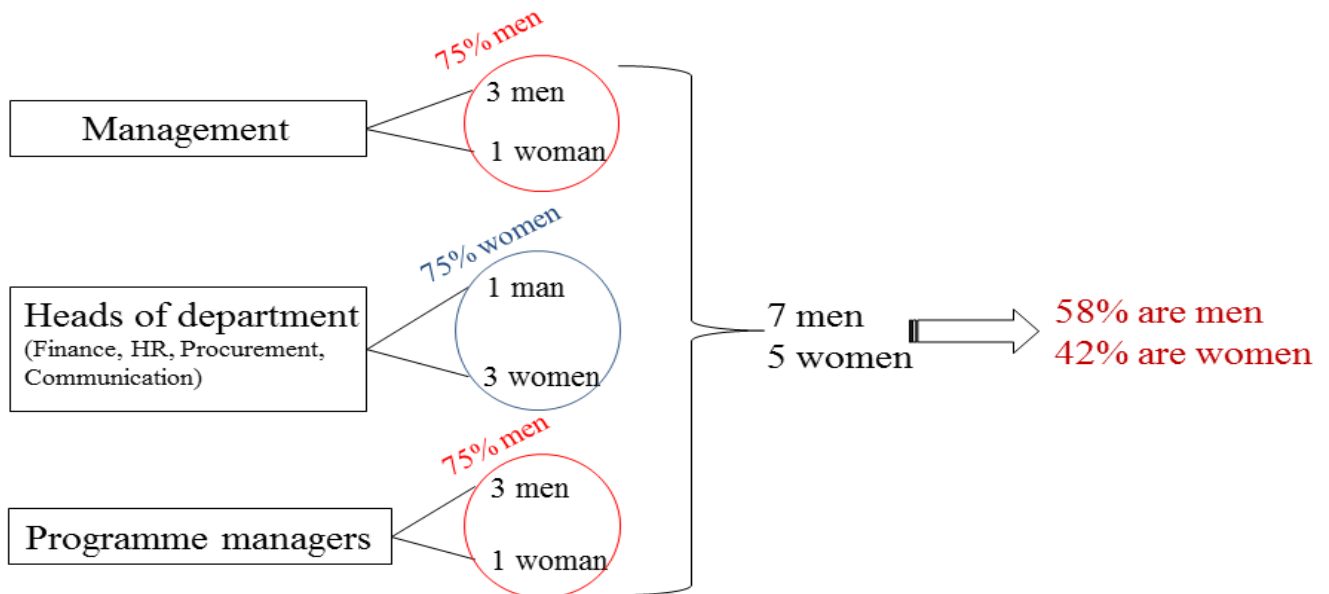
it is a dynamic structure that is subject to change based on recruitment and modification of structure for a specific period):



Excluding the (X) references, the CO is constituted of 38 members, divided equally between 19 men and 19 women. Quantitatively, therefore, parity is respected.

Qualitatively, however, it is worth looking at the senior positions. We examine the attribution of the Resident Representative, Assistant Resident Representative, Country Director, Operations Manager, as well as the heads of departments (i.e. HR, Procurement, Finance, and Communication) and the four programme managers.

Breaking down the results gives us the following segregation:



Overall, the gap between men and women at the highest positions is small but cannot be neglected, with 58% men and 42% women. Moreover, the Senior Management is constituted mostly of men, a fact that was pointed out by many staff members, but who agree this may be coincidence.

The allocation of high management position to men is never deliberate, especially since two recent former Resident Representatives were women. Generally, more than 80% of the UNDP staff (CO and projects) believe that men and women have the same opportunities to grow professionally within the organization.

At the recruitment level, UNDP Lebanon widely shares its commitment to gender equality, the clearest illustration being the job vacancy posts found on the website, applying to recruitment at both Country Office and projects' level:



**Working with UNDP /Jobs**

UNDP strongly encourages qualified **female** applicants for this position.

UNDP seeks to ensure that **male** and **female** employees are given **equal career opportunities** and that staff members are able to keep an appropriate balance between work and private life. UNDP is committed to achieving workforce diversity in terms of **gender**, nationality, and culture. (...)

Furthermore, the Human Resources department of the CO safeguards the organization's commitment to gender equality at different levels. On one hand, the recruitment process is fair, as it balances the number of men and women interviewers and puts in effort to guarantee a similar ratio of male to female candidates shortlisted, with no distinction in the modus operandi of interviews pertaining to sex, as long as it based on meritocracy. On the other hand, sexual harassment cases have never been recorded at the HR level, but the department is committed to engaging the ethics committee if it were to happen and to follow the standard CO guidelines.

Moreover, two gender courses are mandatory for all UNDP staff: the "Gender Journey – Thinking Outside the Box", a training to enhance awareness on gender equality and to understand the importance of gender equality to UNDP's mandate, and the "UN Programme on Prevention of Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Abuse of Authority" course which is meant to ensure that staff understand the consequences of harassment. Details about the courses can be found in Annex II.

*2. Organization culture and gender perspectives*

During the month of June 2015, interviews meant to examine the organizational culture and the gender perspectives of the CO staff were conducted and analyzed. The details of the questions and answers are found in Annex I.

Before presenting the conclusions, it is relevant at this point to recall the definition of gender-mainstreaming, as presented by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC):

“Gender mainstreaming in UNDP means integrating the gender equity approach across the board, throughout all our policies, strategies, programs and administrative/economic

activities, and even in our organization's institutional culture, in order to contribute genuinely to a change in the gender inequality situation.”<sup>14</sup>

Gender-mainstreaming, in other words, is involved in all fields of UNDP and this cannot be emphasized enough. The current perception at the CO is that UNDP is an organization that fosters gender equality, with women and men having the same chances to move up professionally or earn promotions—sometimes chances are even higher for women. .

An in-depth analysis, revealed two patterns: on one hand, the staff seems to be concerned with priorities other than gender, and on the other hand, some believed they are not equipped with enough experience and information to efficiently involve gender issues in their work. Occupied with the various concepts within their own work and projects, many consider gender issues an added value that cannot be considered without proper time and resources. We may argue, therefore, that the problem is not a rejection of gender consideration altogether, but rather the lack of capacity to incorporate it into the work—most probably due to a lack of gender experience and training—or to set it as a priority among other goals set forth by different portfolios. The staff repeatedly referred to their heavy workload when discussing gender, which is why it is necessary to include within the organizational culture the concept that gender is a *sine qua non* condition for development and a catalyzer for any effort towards progress.

The concept should be comprehensively embraced by all the CO staff in all positions: management, project managers, or programme/operations staff. Information regarding gender should be appropriately and regularly shared. Policy documents about gender should be effectively circulated in the CO. The concept of gender-mainstreaming should be understood by all and incorporated into daily work. Knowledge, accessibility, appropriation and perception of such documents must therefore be enhanced for a better internal incorporation of gender.

The will to become well informed of such methods should be enhanced in order to nurture the gender culture within the organization. Staff should have more technical knowledge of and exposure to activities carried out by UNDP involving gender. In addition to online corporate learning tools, a tailor made gender training should be provided to staff, depending on areas of expertise.

### *3. Gender Focal Point and Gender Team*

The role of the Country's Office Gender Focal Point (GFP) is crucial for gender-mainstreaming within the organization. Specifying the required profile for this role is essential within the internal evaluation.

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<sup>14</sup> *How to prepare a gender strategy for a country office*, 19

The GFP’s responsibility has been fulfilled by one of the Programme Associates (a G-7 post) for the past 7 years. The current scope of the position means that the capacity to fully focus on gender is limited only to 10-15% of the associate’s time. The GFPs did not receive any specific training on gender issues—apart from online courses and daily lessons through work experiences—which inevitably narrowed down the scope of action in the office. The GFP collaborates with the various portfolios to assist them with their work on gender through regular monitoring and evaluation. Altogether and to date, it has been challenging to elaborate on the GFPs mode of operation. To fully mainstream gender efficiently, a GFP should have both the time and resources to integrate gender-mainstreaming while working pragmatically on various alliances and strategies. This cannot be accomplished alongside other commitments.

However, with the development of a gender strategy and the articulation of the CO’s plan of action, a Gender Team will take on the responsibility. The team will comprise of the Gender Focal Point, the Assistant Resident Representative (Senior Manager), the Head of Human Resources, and the Head of the Staff Association. Therefore, the dedicated time for gender activities at the CO will substantially increase to more than 20-25%. The Gender Team will make sure to involve management, operations, and programmes in the process. So far, a clear action-plan for gender-mainstreaming via the team has been set for 2016-2017 (Annex III), resulting from the strategy, in cooperation with all units, and taking into consideration national priorities.

## B. Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment Programming

To what extent does UNDP CO in Lebanon include gender in the design and implementation of its activities? What needs to be improved? In order to answer these questions, UNDP Lebanon staff from various units were interviewed to share their consideration of gender in their work and in the different activities pertaining to gender led by UNDP. In order to better understand the analysis of the information, it is important to keep in mind the previous presentation of women’s situation in Lebanon, and the areas of intervention that require further consideration.

The sample of programmes and respective projects<sup>15</sup> that were examined are the following:

Programmes	Projects
Democratic Governance (GOV)	Technical Support to the Lebanese Parliament
	Lebanese Electoral Assistance Project (LEAP)
Energy & Environment (E&E)	CEDRO

<sup>15</sup> For the purpose of sampling each portfolio recommended only a limited number of representative projects to be considered. More details on UNDP Lebanon programmes and projects can be found at [www.lb.undp.org](http://www.lb.undp.org)

	Climate Change
Crisis Prevention & Recovery (CPR)	Peace-building
	Disaster Risk Management (DRM)
Social & Local Development (SLD)	LHSP

*1. General aspects of gender-mainstreaming in a programme*

To start with, it should be mentioned that gender is not dealt with as a distinct Programmatic Area or a specific program in Lebanon’s CO. It is, however, visible in different sectors as a cross-sector practice.

The portfolios of the CO and the areas of intervention are in keeping with the UNDP strategic plan for 2014-2017 and are aligned with the main areas of work:

- 1) Sustainable development pathways
- 2) Inclusive and effective democratic governance
- 3) Resilience-building

Accordingly, the present gender strategy should align its objectives to the portfolio objectives to ensure a consolidated and holistic approach to gender-mainstreaming.

To date, the Democratic Governance, Conflict Prevention and Recovery, and Social and Local Development portfolios do in fact target and include women’s empowerment, yet in a very scattered and none institutional way. This is less visible within the Energy and Environment portfolio, given its nature and scope. However, all projects under all portfolios are currently designed in a way to address the livelihood of all people in need, regardless of gender.

The review of the current structure and perceptions of the portfolios is essential in order to develop more concrete recommendations for future action, to keep up with the strategic global gender plan.

*2. Programmes and projects*

**Democratic Governance**

The participation of women in public life and decision-making processes is an essential building block of solid democracies and plays a crucial role in achieving inclusive and effective democratic governance.

Democratic governance is structured in a way to advance legal rights and empowerment of women, providing them with access to services and safeguarding their right for participation in public spheres through inclusive decision making.

There are crucial points pertaining to women under the governance portfolio that need to be investigated to evaluate the validity of the CO in this regard. It is effective to refer back to the national context and compare it to what is being achieved. The key points will be addressed one by one:

1. Is any project in place to address women's political participation?

Having the lowest percentage of political representation in the parliament, the issue of female involvement in Lebanese politics has been addressed. The "Technical Support to the Lebanese Parliament" project has undertaken different activities in this area, namely through the lobbying for the incorporation of a quota within the electoral procedure. Their efforts were manifested in the form of bringing to the dialogue table the concept of the women quota as well as lobbying for incorporation of this quota into electoral law. In addition, they have partnered up with civil society organizations to put in place an action plan for the adoption of a female quota and drafted a constitutional law to incorporate it into the Lebanese Constitution.

Similarly, the Lebanese Electoral Assistance Project has, as one of its main objectives, the promotion of women's participation in elections. It has conducted various activities to advance this goal, which also includes efforts to implement a quota aimed at increasing direct political participation of women. Another noteworthy initiative was the formation of a Q&A platform regarding quotas to discuss the argument and counter arguments in collaboration with the women's organizations who have adopted LEAP's recommendations.

LEAP, however, acknowledges the complexities and delays that result from quota integration and amendment of the electoral law. In the meantime, it is important to integrate women within other phases of the electoral process, such as assigning female polling officials to increase the trust in women's political abilities<sup>16</sup>. Aiming towards this goal, LEAP has previously hosted a workshop to empower women in elections in 2013 and to highlight the various ways in which the political participation of women within different electoral systems can be improved. With this, UNDP's efforts to address the topic cannot be omitted but need to be improved and dealt with innovatively since the political situation remains precarious and stereotypes based on local customs and heritage remain intact and play a role.

2. Are there projects/activities to promote laws and electoral or judicial reforms for the protection of women's human rights?

UNDP, in collaboration with civil society organizations, developed the Nationality Law Project in 2008, aimed at achieving equality in the Nationality Law, which, as previously presented, gives more rights to men than to women.

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<sup>16</sup> Alex Whiting, *More Than Quotas Are Needed for Women in Politics*, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/03/05/us-global-women-parliament-idUSKBN0M121X20150305>

In addition, a section on Women's rights is included in the 2012 National Human Rights Action Plan.

With respect to the Personal Status Law, UNDP has participated in a study that led to the amendment of the PSL within specific confessional groups to tackle the problematic of child custody.

3. Are there project/activities to strengthen gender institutions?

In the labor market, women hit a glass-ceiling in their ascendance towards higher professional aspirations. This may be due, admittedly, to the evolution into motherhood and its requirements, but it also results from a hostile environment and unjust institutions that promote the patriarchal culture<sup>17</sup>. In December 2014, the Ministry of Economy and Trade initiated the project "Lebanon SME Strategy: A roadmap to 2020," supervised by UNDP. The strategy offers recommendations to foster an environment more propitious to women's leadership and to establish a more female-friendly business environment.

4. Are there projects/activities that address the issue of violence against women?

Since 2014, the Governance Programme has been working on identifying the clauses in the penal code that perpetuate gender-based violence (namely articles 503, 504, and 522 of the Penal Code identified earlier, and article 252 related to alleviating the sentence of the perpetrator of an honor crime). In 2015, it drafted a double urgency law, that articulates its work around technical support to the Woman and Child Parliamentary Committee, to delete the aforementioned article 522 (which has, in fact, been deleted from the Penal Code), which was then submitted to the Committee. It. However, the weaknesses previously mentioned regarding the law (its failure to account for marital rape, the priority put forth within the Personal Status Laws) have not yet been concretely taken into account by UNDP on their work with gender.

5. Is gender included, from the beginning, in the process of developing the National Human Development Report? That is, is there a methodology, specialized personnel, specific chapters or sections, and a budget to address gender analysis?

The latest National Human Development Report published for Lebanon, "Towards a Citizen's State," dates back to 2009. The report addresses gender issues through the breakdown of the Gender-Related Development Index<sup>18</sup> (GDI), the Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM),

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<sup>17</sup> *Lebanon SME Strategy: a Roadmap to 2020*

<sup>18</sup> *Toward a citizen's state*, 54

mapping of gender equity<sup>19</sup>, and an analysis of the aforementioned obstacles such as limitations of women in the labor force<sup>20</sup>, the Personal Status Laws<sup>21</sup>, violence against women<sup>22</sup>, etc...

Overall, the Governance programme does in fact address gender within the projects pertaining to parliament and LEAP, and both include the participation and inclusiveness of women in their goals.

This, however, is not enough to contribute to the development of gender equality. Gender mainstreaming should be more systematic, reflected in all projects, and implemented under the thematic area. Targets and indicators should be gender segregated, and projects should be regularly reviewed to fulfill the objectives of the strategy.

### **Energy & Environment**

UNDP has a responsibility to advance the agenda energy and gender. The effects of environment degradation on women and girls cannot be omitted. Lebanon's CO, however, does not yet make the direct link between gender and environment. This can be explained by the fact that projects are designed to target all Lebanese citizens without distinction. The efforts for gender-mainstreaming at this level do not go further than maintaining a balance between male and female staff, ensuring a lack of discrimination against women, and, in some cases, including a theoretical section on gender. A key question to be asked when looking at the inclusion of the gender factor in energy and environment programming is whether the CO favors the creation and/or strengthening of inter-institutional gender teams on gender and the environment within environmental policy-making bodies/ The two projects considered highlighted the need for support from the CO to create linkages and promote gender-mainstreaming as a distinct function of the project.

1. Is there any initiative/project to help produce gender-related environment statistics?

The analysis of E&E projects and interviews with the project managers did not reveal any specific initiative to directly target women.

2. What criteria are used to select beneficiaries?

Interviews with E&E staff revealed that the selection of the beneficiaries from the environmental projects is not based on gender considerations, but a general social and environmental framework is in place.

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<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*, 57

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*, 59

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid*, 75

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid*, 165

Yet, there is an understanding that including gender in environmental issues is of crucial importance.

Climate change, for example, magnifies existing inequalities in gender and its counterparts. . Instead of accounting for this, climate change policy-makers undertake gender-blind decision-making that leads to resource allocations disadvantaging women. The impact comes in the form of *“missed opportunities for capacity building and economic empowerment [that] will serve to perpetuate inequalities between men and women and entrench and deepen the structures and barriers to women’s economic empowerment”*<sup>23</sup>.

Not only, therefore, must women be included in the design of environmental policies, they must also be considered as a direct target. In the developing world, women are the primary fuel and water providers, and are the first to be impacted by climate change. Lebanon must not bypass its commitment to the Beijing Platform of Action, which clearly refers to the obligation to include women in environmental policies, with strategic objective K.3:

“Strengthen or establish **mechanisms** at the national, regional and international levels to assess the impact of development and **environmental** policies on **women**.”

UNDP must promote and implement the points presented in international treaties, and cannot afford to ignore gender issues in its environmental agenda.

### **Crisis Prevention and Recovery (CPR)**

Gender responsive policies under CPR are derived from the fact that men and women are affected differently by crises, disasters, and conflicts, since vulnerability varies. When conflict escalates and crises arise, women are more prone to gender-based violence and are treated as secondary beneficiaries. As such, gender equality and women empowerment are pillars for resilience building. Women are to be engaged in all stages of peace processes and promoted as priorities for conflict prevention, early recovery, durable peace, and sustainable resilience. It must, therefore, be asked to what extent the CPR portfolio of Lebanon’s CO includes women, and if it is sufficient

1. Do initiatives for the prevention and resolution of conflicts consider gender differences?

The Crisis Prevention and Recovery portfolio has a Peace Building project that is geared to “address the underlying causes of conflict in Lebanon”<sup>24</sup>. The incorporation of gender in such project is necessary and while it emphasized the need for targeting female teachers and journalists, gender equality or women’s empowerment is still not as a primary objective. The problem as it appears seems to be a lack of training on how, and why, it is important to include gender issues in peace building processes in countries as unstable as Lebanon.

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<sup>23</sup> UNDP, *A catalyst for success: addressing the gender dimensions of climate change*

<sup>24</sup>

[http://www.lb.undp.org/content/lebanon/en/home/operations/projects/crisis\\_prevention\\_and\\_recovery/strengthening-civil-peace-in-lebanon.html](http://www.lb.undp.org/content/lebanon/en/home/operations/projects/crisis_prevention_and_recovery/strengthening-civil-peace-in-lebanon.html)



2. Does the office program for early disaster warning include women in its formulation and implementation processes?

The Disaster Risk Management project directly targets women beneficiaries. For example, it gives grants to NGOs dealing with women's issues to help them with their work on the country's borders by, for example, distributing disaster management. This is mainly because in Lebanon, women have the crucial role in maintaining the household, which is why they are targeted for training on how to deal with disasters.

The Palestinian Gatherings (officially "Improving Living Conditions in Palestinian Gatherings Host Communities") project has undertaken an initiative entitled the "Hygiene Awareness Raising Campaign". This included erecting "home stations" about sexual and reproductive health for women and adolescent girls, as well as organizing hair-dressing trainings for women in Beirut, Saida, and Tyr, to help them feel more empowered and fulfilled.

With this, additional measures need to be taken to mainstream gender and empower women in disaster risk and peace building policies and plans, via gender disaggregated data, involvement in decision making, awareness raising, and capacity building.

### **Social and Local Development**

It has been countlessly reiterated that development cannot be effective if women are excluded from the equation. The SLD portfolio's scope of action is twofold: upstream - focusing respectively on policy advice and reporting- and downstream -; implementing local initiatives in the most remote areas. Including gender in the work is an opportunity to address inequalities, reshape policies, and promote sustainable growth.

1. Was the gender approach integrated into the actions towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals undertaken by the country office? That is, does gender appear in research, negotiations with the government, indicators, training, promotional material, and more related to the MDGs? Will this be translated in action towards the SDGs?

The UNDP Lebanon CO commits itself to the promotion of the Millennium Development Goals, including Goal number 3: "Promote gender equality and empower women." There is also a specific commitment to eliminate gender disparity within all levels of education by 2015.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> <http://www.lb.undp.org/content/lebanon/en/home/mdgoverview/overview/mdg3/>

2. Are there specific projects and/or technical assistance to generate microenterprise and cooperatives managed by women?

SLD's downstream level of action is quite active, as it has undertaken numerous initiatives towards women's empowerment under the Lebanese Host Communities Support Project (LHSP).

In 2006, it supported the establishment of women's cooperatives as a response to the post-war economic crisis to ensure an impact on rural communities and gender roles<sup>26</sup> via income-generating projects supporting local production. It has also partnered up with women from the South and North to organize cooking workshops to assist them in developing new skills<sup>27</sup>. It has also improved economic opportunities for women in host communities in Khiam with the establishment of a sewing workshop.

In addition, the project has developed "community kitchens" in Majdel Anjar, Bissariyeh and Chebaa by providing basic kitchen equipment and supervising the application process, in collaboration with local NGOs and cooperatives. It has provided support to female agro-food cooperatives in the Bekaa and the South, strengthening their marketing and production capacities to enhance their ability to develop sustainable economic opportunities. The project includes training and marketing activities as well as technical assistance and/or provision of the necessary equipment. Finally, it has developed vocational training programs within the Social Development Centre of the Ministry of Social Affairs which targets vulnerable youth and women in Baalbek, Burj Hammud, Minneh, and Saida.

SLD, therefore, directly includes women within the Lebanese Host Communities Support Project, working to empower them in terms of skills and economic independence at the micro level.

### *3. Breakdown analysis: gender approach in the design of projects*

The limited projects pertaining to gender under the different portfolios have been presented. At this point, it is useful to draw a broader picture of how gender is taken into consideration within the project design in Lebanon's CO. The information is a sample representing the work under the four various portfolios. For the sake of clarity, each project has been analyzed independently and the results have been aggregated into one quantitative result or the "average."

The figures reflect the understanding and assessment of the information provided by project managers. The table displays the projects referred to in Table II.1.

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<sup>26</sup> <http://www.lb.undp.org/content/lebanon/en/home/ourwork/SocialAndLocalDevelopment/successstories/women-s-cooperatives-in-lebanon-empowered-by-the-sweet-taste-of-/>

<sup>27</sup> <http://www.lb.undp.org/content/lebanon/en/home/ourwork/SocialAndLocalDevelopment/successstories/undp-mobilized-womens-efforts-to-fight-for-their-survival-and-so.html>

**Table II.2: breakdown analysis**

Description of the task	Stage of project	Level of incorporation (1=low, 5=high)	Additional remarks
Disaggregated data and gender assessment	Project identification	1	
Analysis of gender participation	Project identification	4	All have expressed the importance of balanced participation between men and women
Consideration of different effects on men and women that the project might have.	Project identification	2 to 3	Average. Some projects reached as high as 4, others 0.
Gender-related problem analysis conducted	Project identification	1	Low consideration of the gender relations and potential skills of men and women separately.
Goal analysis was gender-oriented	Project identification	1	Only one project considered affirmative action in favor of gender equity
Reduction of existing gender gaps was a selection criterion applied in the process	Project identification	1 to 2	It was considered only in projects that had women as primary objectives, completely bypassed by others
Decision made to mainstream gender in the project	Formulation/design Phase	1 to 2	Same as above.
A gender approach was incorporated in the implementation, planning, and follow-up	Implementation and follow-up phase	X	Unknown
The project team is gender-sensitive	Evaluation phase	3 to 4	Self-perceptions related to gender were relatively high
A gender specialist participated in the evaluation	Evaluation phase	0	Gender Focal Point aside, there is no gender expert in the office.
Gender criteria used to assess feasibility, effectiveness, relevance, Sustainability	Evaluation phase	0	Gender criteria have not been put in place in the office.

## **Conclusions**

The presentation of the selected samples of the seven projects undertaken by UNDP reveals a total of 34 gender specific initiatives (details presented above). Breaking down this number reveals an interesting pattern: more than 75% of the work on gender was under the Governance portfolio's framework, although the inclusion of gender specific activities is not systematic and is mainly related to the nature and scope of the portfolio itself. This high number is due to the active work on women's political participation and gender-based violence, yet the presentation of the national context hints that more work needs to be done to address gender issues in Lebanon. For the development goals to be optimized, gender must be integrated fully into all portfolios, not only by setting primary objectives but also by considering a gender perspective from the identification of the project to its final evaluation.

From the previous analysis, it is arguable that the CO lies between two different categories. On one hand, gender discrimination is absent within the different levels of the organization, and some projects on gender are in fact implemented. On the other hand, the substantial work on gender is implemented in a scattered method, given the lack of resources, awareness, and commitment.

Taking into consideration the previous work as well as the different guides and resources available, recommendations on how to foster a more gender-sensitive environment, both internally and externally, for Lebanon's CO can be suggested.

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## **III. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The previous sections point out the main problems that the team faces in terms of mainstreaming gender and addressing gender initiatives in both institutional operations and programming. Based on the highlighted issues and opportunities the Country Office (CO) presents, as well as a review of the Gender Equality Strategy (2014-2017), a set of concrete recommendations have been developed.

### **A. Recommendations for the internal institutional structure**

#### *1. What can be done to sensitize the personnel regarding gender equity?*

- Ensure that all staff take the mandatory courses on sexual harassment and gender journey.
- Put in place well-rounded training programs and workshops to improve the organizational culture with regards to gender.<sup>28</sup>
- Increase and distribute the availability of documents/resources on gender

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<sup>28</sup> Clear details on how to design of the training programs and workshops may be found in the tools 24 and 26 of the guide "How to prepare a Gender Strategy for a Country Office"

- Encourage women to apply for different positions, including senior management roles<sup>29</sup>:
  - ❖ Review the requirements and the method of publicizing a vacant position to make them equally attainable for men and women
  - ❖ Put in place conditions to ensure equal access to positions (including high ranked positions) for men and women.
  - ❖ Encourage women to apply for the position directly in the vacancy announcements.
  - ❖ Make sure that the job application form does not include questions about marital status and/or number of children.
- Ensure that at least 50% of key committees and decision-making units, notably Senior Management, are women so as to respect the Gender Seal and other corporate benchmarks.

## 2. *What kind of organizational reforms can be undertaken?*

- The most important recommendation is to establish a Gender Team with a specific focus on prioritizing gender issues and collaborating with programmes and projects on specific initiatives. From the planning phase, the Gender Focal Point should guide the planning of different projects to make sure that gender is included in all programmatic areas.
- Reinforce the implementation of a Gender Marker that would track gender investment on a scale from 0 to 3, with the following criteria:
  - ❖ 0: there is no inclusion of gender whatsoever
  - ❖ 1: gender equality is integrated in some way
  - ❖ 2: gender equality is a significant objective
  - ❖ 3: gender equality is a principal objective

The rating should be completed on Atlas, at the planning stage, to code every output for development and operational projects. The role of a gender specialist in this process is crucial.

- Secure funding in order to mainstream gender:

The funding should be used to develop trainings and workshops. At the project level, a part of the budget needs to be allocated for the mainstreaming of gender. To satisfy the minimum criterion of the Gender Seal, each programme should have at least 30% of its budget allocated to fund projects with gender as the main or most significant objective. Similarly, the HR department should use 10% of the budget for gender-related learning activities.

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<sup>29</sup> How to prepare a Gender Strategy for a Country Office, 173

## **B. Recommendations for Programming**

At the programming level the gender factor should be considered at all levels of a project cycle. The UNDP Standard Social and Environmental Screening should serve as a basis for project development. At the creation stage, gender equality and empowerment should be discussed with counterparts and stakeholders to assess the baseline status. During implementation, regular monitoring based on the set gender specific indicators, should take place. At the monitoring and evaluation phase, it is key to highlight progress in terms of gender, but also extract lessons learned for better future planning and more anchored results. Finally, having included and monitored the impact of gender will lead to project sustainability.

### *1. Economics and eradication of poverty*

- Include within projects incentives for the economic empowerment of women: UNDP's programmes and projects, particularly the SLD programme that has done this in the past, should help enhance the various skills of women and provide the appropriate support mechanisms to stimulate their involvement in the labor market.
- Develop relations with UN agencies, and women organization and Civil Society Organizations for coordination and alignment of work.
- Work in collaboration with the various Lebanese business women associations to promote female entrepreneurship and train women in leadership and entrepreneurship.
- Work in collaboration with the gender focal point in Ministries and public institutions, to ensure enhanced planning and targeting.

### *2. Culture and stereotypes*

- Work with national counterparts and partners to alter traditional gender norms and discuss measures for social protection.
- Conduct trainings, specifically trainings on training on how to implement and incorporate gender equality strategies for national counterparts, especially for the Parliament.
- Support initiatives providing equal opportunities for women (including young girls) in terms of access to services and within the decision making process.
- Establish gender-based violence projects, specifically focusing on:
  - Understanding the concept of violence in Lebanese society in order to effectively tackle its roots and implement an action plan from the very early stages of education;
  - Promoting a cultural context that rejects violence against women and girls. It would be relevant, in this case, to collaborate with the Ministry of Education and other relevant institutions; and
  - Developing the capacities of the security and judiciary apparatus to properly handle cases of GBV and protect the rights of victims.

3. *Legal aspects*

- Address amendments of discriminatory clauses within the Constitution and laws pertaining to Personal Status, and enforce application of amended laws (in several sectors).<sup>30</sup>
- Work in collaboration with civil society organizations, line ministries, and the parliament, and provide them with the support to amend the aforementioned discriminatory clauses.
- Work with the Lebanese state on accountability regarding the treaties that it is bound to. UNDP may need to work in collaboration with other UN agencies to achieve this goal. The national implementation of the CEDAW is a vital step.
- Work towards the implementation of a unified Personal Status Law.

4. *Access to services*

- Support national strategies to ensure gender responsive governance and management of services, including access to affordable and clean energy (and climate finance).
- Support gender-mainstreaming to protect livelihoods of women through disaster and climate risk management
- Promote women's rights to tenure and access to land, water, forests, housing and other assets.

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<sup>30</sup> *Mapping of gender and development initiatives in Lebanon*

## Annex I: UNDP Lebanon Gender Questionnaire 2015

**Target:** UNDP's staff and projects: Parliament, Lebanese Elections Assistance Program (LEAP), Peacebuilding, Disaster Risk Management (DRM), Lebanese Host Communities Support (LHSP), Country Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy Demonstration (CEDRO), Climate Change.

Portfolios concerned: Governance, Crisis Prevention and Recovery (CPR), Social and Local Development (SLD), Energy & Environment.

**Objective:** Identify interests and positions, prioritize and filter strategic points of entry, build a Participatory Institutional Gender Assessment (PIGA), steer planning and actions towards a future gender-mainstreaming guiding principle, overview and suggestions for the future.

The answers below reveal the trends noticed in the answers provided. In total, twenty-two staff members were interviewed, including three from the senior management and eight project managers.

### Questionnaire

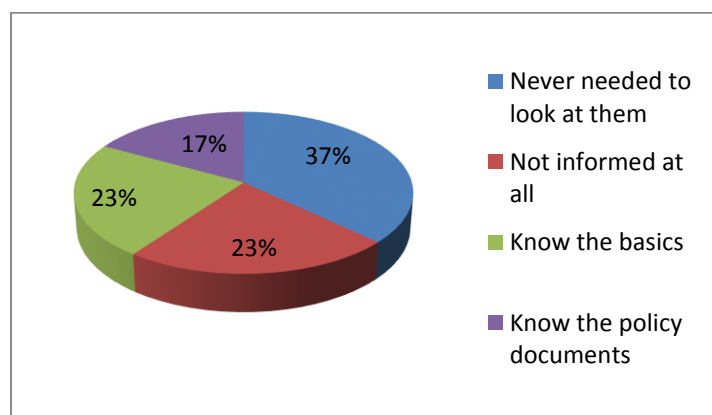
For all UNDP staff:

Man       Woman

#### 1. What does gender-mainstreaming mean to you in your daily work at the office?

- Balance between males and females.
- Equal incorporation and participation of females in the work.
- No opinion at all.

#### 2. Are you aware of the existence of policy documents and/or corporate tools on gender? If not, why is that the case?





**3. Are you familiar with sexual harassment policy? Have you completed any online course on sexual harassment?**

- Most know vaguely about the policies.
- 37% have not completed the online course on sexual harassment.

**4. Do you benefit from job flexibility policies (schedule, Work and Life, training/study plans...)? If so, for what purpose?**

- UNDP environment is flexible for both genders, provided the 7.5 working hours are respected.
- Four women benefited from maternity leave and three men from paternity leave.

**5. Have you ever completed the UNDP online course regarding gender equality (Gender Journey)?**

- 52% completed it.
- 48% did not complete it, 89% of which are project staff.

**6. Have you ever received training on gender balance activities?**

- Only one out of 22 staff (i.e. 5%) did, in keeping with the specific project.

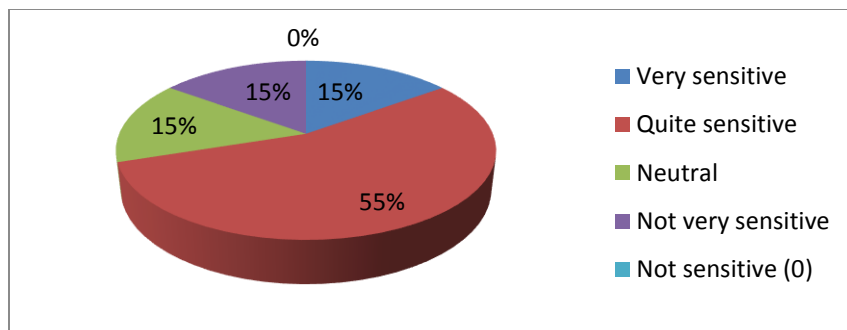
**7. Do you think your work incorporates gender issues sufficiently? How could this incorporation be improved?**

- No, we do not think that.
- Yes, we do think that we incorporate gender issues sufficiently.
- Gender is irrelevant to the work that we do.

Could be improved by:

- Spreading more awareness within the office
- Highlight more gender issues
- Reach out to specialized agencies
- Focus on specific activities

**8. Do you feel that UNDP staff is gender-sensitive?**



**9. On a scale from 1 to 10, how interested are you in gender issues?**

Median number: 8

Average number: 7.63

**10. On a scale from 1 to 10, how interested in gender issues do you think other staff members are?**

Medium number: 8

Average: 7.61

There is no significant difference between men and women's answering patterns.

**11. a) Are you aware of the Gender Seal?**

86% do not know about the Gender Seal.

**b) On a scale from 1 to 10, how important is it, in your opinion, to bring the gender seal to the country office?**

Median number: 8

Average: 8.26

**12. Do you know what activities involving gender UNDP has carried out in the last three years?**

- 43% do not know.
- Those who do know, with a few exceptions, either discuss their own projects, or present basic knowledge such as LEAP or the nationality law.

**13. Do women have the same opportunities as men to move up and be promoted within UNDP?**

- Yes: 76.2% of opinions
- No: 14.3% of opinions
- No opinion: 9.5%

**14. Would you say that the organization has a gender sensitive behavior?**

- Positively accounts for gender
- No accident has ever occurred
- Difficult to dissociate from outside culture at times

**15. Do you feel encouraged to have an open discussion with the management?**

- 86% feel encouraged, men and women.
- 9.5% are ambiguous, divided equally between men and women.
- 4.5% do not.

**16. Do you feel empowered to express your views in the office?**

- 90% feel empowered, men and women.
- 5% do not feel empowered.
- 5% say that it depends.

**17. When you design projects, do you consider the gender factor?**

- 50% consider the gender factor.
- Remaining 50% claim gender is irrelevant within their projects

**18. Is it easy to include the gender factor in your project?**

- For projects targeting women, yes.
- Members of other projects refer to the difficulty of this task and how disconnected it is from the project.

**19. What can change/improve in order to effectively address gender and to have a more gender-sensitive environment at the Country Office?**

- Keep the status quo as is.
- Raise more awareness and spread information.
- Undertake trainings and workshops.
- Put in place specialized units.
- Separate the CO culture from the external Lebanese culture.
- Put in place an effective Gender Strategy.

For the Human Resources Department

**1. Is the office considering a gender briefing kit as an introductory orientation for people joining UNDP on policies regarding the gender-mainstreaming strategy?**

It is not considered at the moment but it could be considered.

**2. Are new appointees introduced to UNDP's commitment to gender equality?**

The CO staff is but the ones working on projects are not.

**3. Do you impose a mandatory online course regarding gender equality?**

Yes.

**4. What is the size of the Country Office and the ratio of men to women? What is the gender composition of the leadership, technical unit, and operational unit structures?**

**5. What is the position that women have in the office? And what is the representation of women in key committee and decision-making bodies?**

In committees and panels, the HR department makes sure that it is gender-balanced, as per instructions from the headquarters in New York.

**6. Is there a learning budget earmarked for gender-related learning activities in the Country Office?**

There is not, but the department is considering it.

**7. Is the Human Resource unit committed to promoting women's representation at all levels of the organization? What concrete manifestations of this commitment can you name?**

It is, and the department indirectly contributes to women's representation by balancing out the number of male and female candidates.

**8. In your opinion and experience, do women have the same opportunities to advance and be promoted in UNDP as men do?**

(Within the department, the answers were divided between affirmation and mitigation, with the claim being that women be promoted as much as men only up to a certain level).

**9. Is gender equity practiced in policies and criteria for contracts, incentives, promotions and staff development?**

Yes.

**10. Do announcements of job vacancies indicate that UNDP is an employer committed to equal opportunities?**

Yes, it is written on the website (as seen in section II.A.1).

**11. Are the interviewing guidelines and techniques gender-aware?**

There are no differentiation pertaining to gender during interviews..

**12. How do you treat cases of sexual harassment?**

## Gender Strategy

There has never been a case of sexual harassment in the CO, but if there is, it can be reported locally to the head of HR or the project, or anonymously online. If it is reported locally, it goes through to the Ethic Committee and the Human Resources department follows the guidelines for the CO.

### **13. What can change/improve to address gender and maintain a more gender sensitive environment at the country office?**

The HR department is already very cautious when it comes to gender, but a way to improve the environment would be to host workshops and learning plans about gender.

## **Annex II: Country Office's courses relevant to Gender Equality**

### Gender Journey (Thinking Outside the Box):

This course is an exploration of the meaning of gender equality to help us understand why gender equality is important to the success of UNDP and what we can do to play an active role. It is part of an organization-wide initiative by UNDP to translate our commitment to gender equality into real change on ground.

#### **At the end of the course you will:**

- **Understand the concepts of gender, gender equality, and gender socialization.**
- **Understand the connections between gender equality and UNDP's goals.**
- **Understand what we can do to help achieve gender equality in the workplace and in the world.**

This course consist of a total of six lessons: Introduction, Understanding Gender, Gender Equality and Development, Gender Equality Inside UNDP, What You Can Do to Help Us Move Towards Equality, and Gender Mainstreaming: Incorporating Gender into Everyday Tasks.

NOTE: This course is for all staff. You are required to take the first five lessons and pass the assessment to complete this course. All Programme Staff should register for the course: The Gender Journey: Thinking Outside the Box (Programme Staff).

### United Nations Course on Prevention of Harassment, Sexual Harassment, and Abuse of Authority:

This eLearning course aims to ensure that staff and managers fully understand the new policy on harassment, sexual harassment, and abuse of authority in order to create a harmonious working environment free from intimidation, hostility, offence and any form of harassment and retaliation. This course will help you understand the issues of harassment and abuse of authority and their consequences in the workplace. It will also present Standards of Conduct and the procedures for responding to workplace harassment and abuse of authority in order to maintain a healthy work environment.

### **Annex III:**



*Empowered lives.  
Resilient nations.*

## **Gender Team**

### **Terms of Reference/Action Plan 2016-2017**

#### **I- General Terms**

Under the guidance and leadership of the UNDP Assistant Resident Representative, and with the facilitation of the Gender Focal Point, the Gender Team acts as a cross cutting group consisting of representatives from different units in the CO. The team's role will be to catalyze and support the process of gender-mainstreaming throughout Programme and Operations and within the UN joint programming process in Lebanon. The Gender Team is mandated with the mainstreaming of gender into all policies, programmes, and operational functions of the CO.

#### **II. Plan of Action (2016-2017)**

The Country Office Gender Team will, among other things, work towards the following objectives, as further developed in the Gender Strategy:

- Advocate for the inclusion of gender issues in programme/project formulation by researching gender issues relevant to programme/project and ensure gender is part of project identification, formulation, and appraisal, based on the UNDP Gender Equality Strategy 2014-2017.
- Gather data, monitor, and report on gender mainstreaming activities within programme/project implementation.
- Facilitate the process of assessing the capacity building needs for gender analysis of UNDP staff and project staff within all units and sections.
- Support the organization of capacity building/training activities for the Country Office on gender concepts, gender analysis, and planning.
- Keep up-to-date with gender issues and developments in Lebanon and worldwide.
- Share gender related knowledge and latest news and trends with relevant Country Office and project colleagues.
- Create and nurture internal dialogue and reflection on gender issues and mainstreaming within UNDP Lebanon, as well as within the UN system, and encourage staff to raise and discuss gender equality issues.

## Gender Strategy

- Introduce relevant gender dimensions at Country Office meetings within the niche areas, with the partners and inter-agencies, and at NGO meetings.
- When requested, participate in and contribute to the work of UN inter-agency, donor, NGO, and academic networks on gender equality.
- Lead on addressing gender issues within the working environment and support gender sensitive human resources policies.
- Communicate to staff on the progress of gender-mainstreaming within UNDP.
- Ensure that the Gender Strategy is implemented, regularly monitored, and updated in conformity with the UNDP global corporate strategy and Lebanon's context and realities.

### **III- Operational Framework**

- Regular chaired meetings with a pre-circulated agenda and post meeting minutes (suggested time frame: six meetings yearly).
- Strategy, action plans, activities designed in consultation and in discussion with CO staff.
- Regular update from the Gender Team to the CO on activities and progress including online communication when appropriate.
- Reporting on any updates and progress to Senior Management and using the Senior Management weekly meeting as a platform.

### **IV- Membership**

- Chairperson: Assistant Resident Representative
- Gender Focal Point
- Head of Human Resources
- Head of the Staff Association

The Gender Team can call for additional support from colleagues from the Country Office and projects, based on specific needs.



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