



IN BRIEF



MEN AND WOMEN FOR GENDER EQUALITY

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The Issue

In 2018, Lebanon ranked 140 out of 149 countries in the world on the global gender gap index. Women's participation rate in the labour forces is 26% compared with 76% of men. Levels of violence against women are high, and an average of 90% of SGBV reported incidents since 2015 have involved women and girls. Family laws, including marriage, are governed by personal status codes, which are established in line with the various confessions and often discriminate against women.

Critical to addressing gender inequalities in Lebanon is understanding and changing social norms around gender relations, work which needs both women and men. As a first step to this, in 2018 PROMUNDO and UN Women in Lebanon conducted the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES) which found that:

- While many men in Lebanon still hold deeply entrenched inequitable views, some change is noticeable; with men beginning to embrace gender equality.
- Men are in general supportive towards women's economic empowerment. However, when work opportunities are scarce, men state that they should have access to jobs before women.
- Both men and women believe that there should be more women in positions of political authority. Yet many believe that women are too emotional to be leaders.
- Women say they do the majority of household work themselves. However, men would like to spend more time with their children. Both men and women would like men to have paternal leave, with one to six weeks of paid time

off. Family role models and early childhood matter: boys who witness and experience violence are more likely to use violence as men; men who witness their fathers engage in childcare and household tasks are more likely to engage in these tasks as husbands and fathers.

Strategy for Change

UN Women's regional programme "Men and Women for Gender Equality" (2015-2018), funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), was developed to address the root causes of gender inequality as identified by IMAGES. The programme has a bottom-up approach that addresses social norms, legislation and policies related to gender inequality. In 2019, and using the learnings from phase I, UN Women started implementing phase II of the programme targeting 6 countries across the MENA region among which Lebanon. Phase II of the programme (2019-2022) has the following focus:

1. Implement and replicate interventions for challenging social norms and promoting gender equality.

Support will be provided to community-based initiatives across the country with focus on engagement of youth and fathers/other men in violence prevention and child care. These initiatives will identify male champions and will roll out a model on engaging fathers in sharing unpaid care work. Key service providers such as health clinics as well as the private sector will spread messages about fatherhood in their advertisement campaigns. The campaign will link to the global MenCare Campaign and will engage men as spokespersons.

2. Support civil society organizations to advocate for legal and policy change based on the IMAGES research findings

Support will be provided to initiatives by national civil society organizations/coalitions aiming to reform the legislative and policy environment in line with international norms and frameworks. This will include targeting legislation to end violence against women, paternal leave policies and the inclusion of “engaging men and boys” in national strategies to promote gender equality.

3. Advocate for the government to reform and/ or develop laws, policies and strategies.

The policy and programme briefs generated from phase I will be used for national policy dialogues, seminars and roundtables in collaboration with the Ministry of State for Youth and Women’s Economic Empowerment and the National Commission for Lebanese Women (NCLW).

Phase I Achievements

- The completion and launch of the Lebanon IMAGES study, and the organization of community-based and national level consultations around its findings.

Theory of Change

If (1) Communities demonstrate more gender equitable attitudes and behaviors; if (2) Key institutions (academia, faith based institutions, media, governments) and networks integrate/ promote gender responsive practices; and if (3) Laws, policies and strategies promoting gender equality are drafted, revised and/or approved; then (4) Men and women in Lebanon can equally exercise their rights and opportunities as active citizens in their communities and countries; because (5) equality will be promoted at all levels of society through positive behavioral change and through a favorable legislative environment.

- Two advocacy campaigns on banning child marriage in the law and the right of Lebanese women to grant their nationality to their husbands and children. Both campaigns led to the submission of revised laws for endorsement by the Parliament.
- The development of four policy briefs on engaging men in achieving gender equality: i) promoting men’s caregiving to advance gender equality ii) raising children more gender equitably iii) engaging men in gender-transformative

approaches to end violence against women and iv) engaging young men in gender equality that will be used as guiding tools for Phase II.

- The implementation of nine community-based pilot projects engaging more than 12,000 men and women, boys and girls in challenging social norms through sports, arts, debates, working with religious leaders and parenting programmes.
- The finalization and piloting of the gender transformative fatherhood curriculum ‘Program P-ECD’ with PROMUNDO. The program is contextualized for Lebanon and targets fathers of children aged 0 to 5.
- The launch of a national social media campaign “Because I’m a Man” aiming to change perceptions on masculinity and the role of men and boys in gender equality. 2223 people follow the Facebook page created for this campaign.
- The development of knowledge products including a Youth Advocacy toolkit; Media Monitoring toolkit; Masculinity Toolkit; and a publication entitled “Women’s stories, Women’s Lives: Male Authority in Muslim Contexts”; and many more audiovisual materials.

Projected Impact: 2019-2022

1. Communities have more gender equitable behaviors as a result of interventions that seek to challenge social norms and promote gender equality.
2. A model for engaging fathers in gender equality exists and is embraced in programme areas.
3. Key national institutions (governments, academia, faith-based institutions, media) integrate/ promote gender-responsive practices.
4. Civil society organizations have greater capacity to advocate for legal and policy change.
5. Laws, policies and strategies to promote gender equality are drafted, revised and/or approved.

Partnerships for change

AT LOCAL, NATIONAL AND REGIONAL LEVELS:

Authorities from a range of sectors and ministries (social affairs, education, women and youth economic empowerment, the National Commission for Lebanese Women etc.); faith-based organizations; grassroots women’s, youth, and men’s groups and organizations, UN agencies and interagency coordination groups; research institutions; the media, etc.

AT THE GLOBAL LEVEL:

MUSAWAH; PROMUNDO; UNFPA; UNICEF; MenEngage Alliance.