



Tanseeq

COORDINATION

For Ending Gender Based Violence In Lebanon

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EDITORIAL

The Ministry of Social Affairs is pleased to introduce the third issue of the newsletter *TANSEEQ for Ending Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in Lebanon*. The problem of violence has grown into a main social concern for the Ministry, which decided to list it among its top priorities. In fact, the social acceptance of GBV and the resilience shown towards the perpetrator further violates the dignity of women in an environment already lacking the necessary legislation to protect women and end discrimination and violence against them.

It is worth noting that the Ministry of Social Affairs emphasized the fight against GBV by addressing it in its social development strategy and incorporating it in a myriad of training, media-sensitizing and awareness-raising programs and activities targeting local communities and relevant sectors. Furthermore, the Ministry adopted a policy consisting of providing medical services and empowerment trainings to women survivors of violence at a very minimal cost; it also offered its full support to civil society organizations working in this field, mainly to those providing shelter for GBV survivors, and pulled intensive efforts to ensure the adoption of the law protecting women from family violence and to uphold all initiatives seeking to reduce and eventually end GBV.

In this context, we would like to commend the *TANSEEQ for Ending GBV in Lebanon* newsletter that scans the main activities and programs undertaken by both the public and civil sectors to fight GBV particularly that this newsletter constitutes an efficient tool for sharing experiences and lessons learned among concerned actors. More so, this tool provides a fundamental means of coordination and cooperation between all relevant entities, and paves the way for a multidisciplinary implementation of joint programmes and activities.

At the end, I would like to thank UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, for this valuable initiative, and hope we all contribute effectively to ending all sorts of discrimination against women in Lebanon.

Minister of Social Affairs
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UNFPA MOVES FORWARD WITH SUPPORTING NATIONAL GBV EFFORTS

During the first half of 2011, UNFPA carried out a series of consultation with its partners for strategizing and identifying priorities towards preventing and responding to GBV in terms of strengthening institutions, enhancing services, setting an adequate monitoring system, to name just a few. As such, and while building on achievements and evidence generated in 2010, the following key initiatives were launched:

- Reviewing methodologies of GBV national surveys conducted in neighboring countries (i.e. Syria, Palestine, Egypt) and initiating a technical consultative process in preparation for the undertaking of the national prevalence survey in Lebanon;
- Assessment of several media entities with regards to their pertinence and expertise on GBV and identification of a potential media center that would be entrusted with sensitizing media personnel on ways, approaches, and tools to address GBV;
- Defining elements for a GBV monitoring system and agreeing on the way forward for the development of the monitoring system including key indicators;
- Development of policy briefs on key GBV issues.

In addition to the above and for marking the *International Women's Day*, UNFPA office organized on March 10 a meeting among stakeholders to disseminate the executive summary of 4 GBV studies supported by UNFPA and to agree on short and medium term priority areas for enhancing GBV prevention and response.

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NEW RELEASES: ENGLISH PUBLICATION OF CASES OF FEMICIDE BEFORE LEBANESE COURTS AND PAPER ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

The English version of the book *Cases of Femicide before the Lebanese Courts* was published in June 2011. The book is authored by Dr. Azza Chararah Baydoun and published by KAFA (Enough) Violence and Exploitation. It analyzes written documents of 66 trial proceedings of femicide cases committed between 1978 and 2004 in all Lebanese districts, from a gender perspective. The book aims at showing that the murders committed represent the tip of the iceberg of pervasive violence against women and calls upon the State, its legal and security institutions, to safeguard half of the citizens' rights. (Arabic and English versions of the book are available on <http://kafa.org.lb/StudiesAndPublications.aspx?Category=2>)

In addition, Dr Baydoun presented a paper on *Sexual Violence against Women: An Expression of Sexual Ideology* in June 2011, in the context of a seminar organized by Amnesty International. The paper addressed the practices prevalent in Arab societies that are situated at the intersection of sexuality and GBV. It questions the beliefs, attitudes and laws that confer legitimacy on these practices and bestows upon men the final authority on the sexualities of women in their "guardianship". These practices are classified in three categories according to the psycho-social bases upholding sexual violence:

- "Objectification" of women (as reflected in rape, for example);
- "Ownership" of women (manifested, for instance, in coercive virginity and hymenoplasty);
- Practices that fall under the title of "justification" of sexual violence (mitigation of the death penalty for women murderers under the so called 'honor cleansing' excuse, for example).

COMBATING GBV IN SOUTHERN MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRIES

In April 2011, the *EuroMed Gender Equality Programme (EGEP)* completed its study on GBV. Results provide insights on GBV situation in 9 Southern Mediterranean countries including Lebanon, whereby the study shows that it has been civil society organizations who have been at the forefront of raising the issue of GBV. As is the case of a number of Southern Mediterranean countries, domestic violence is particularly wide-spread, though under-reported. Similarly, sexual violence, from sexual harassment to rape is rarely reported, a fact that led to the general public perception that sexual assaults on women are few. Study results further revealed that trafficking in women occurs and is often hidden behind legal activities. According to the study, combating GBV in Lebanon requires increased efforts. Prerequisites for successfully combating GBV are a national strategy based on a broad societal and political consensus and institutions dedicated to this issue. Any effective policy to combat GBV also requires comprehensive data. To this end, the EGEP has completed a *Methodological Protocol* to conduct GBV surveys.

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INTERACTIVE THEATRE: A POWERFUL COMMUNITY BASED GBV AWARENESS-RAISING APPROACH

Association Najdeh's *Violence against Women (VAW)* Program adopted interactive theatre as a strategic tool in community awareness-raising, in addition to its regular activities including discussion groups and film screenings. As such, four of Najdeh's staff members participated in an intensive training on basic theatre skills followed by another one on interactive theatre skills in cooperation with the Palestinian Women's Forum in Lebanon. Three of them completed successfully a training of trainers' workshop on interactive theatre. Trainees also participated in several performances, notably at UNESCO Palace and in Baddawi Camp in April and May 2011. Feedback from the audience indicated that interactive theatre significantly increases community members' attendance and successfully transmits GBV awareness messages.

Further steps will consist of an in-house training workshop on interactive theatre, scheduled for the second half of 2011. This workshop is expected to increase capacity of 10 staff members of various programs, in accordance with Association Najdeh's strategy for mainstreaming interactive theatre in GBV awareness-raising activities.

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PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS OF MIGRANT DOMESTIC WORKERS AND DISSEMINATION OF AWARENESS GUIDE

In January 2011, the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World (IWSAW) at the Lebanese American University initiated a dissemination plan of the *Awareness Guide for Female Domestic Workers in Lebanon*, which includes information about rights and duties of migrant domestic workers, access to legal, medical, and other types of support. The guide is available in English, Amharic (Ethiopia), Nepali (Nepal), and Sinhala (Sri Lanka) languages. Some 24,000 copies of this guide were distributed to embassies of Sri Lanka, Ethiopia, Nepal, and Philippines in Lebanon; churches that migrant workers attend; stores that sell products from their respective countries; clubs where they gather; Western Union and Money Gram branches; shops that provide communication services (international calls); and women prisons.

Copies were also given out following an ecumenical worship service titled *Women Praying Together for the Well-being of their Families on the Occasion of the International Women's Day*; and following the launching of two studies titled *Trafficking of Migrant Domestic Workers in Lebanon: A Legal Analysis* (authored by lawyer and activist Ms. Kathleen Hamill) and *An Exploratory Study of Psychoanalytic and Social Factors in the Abuse of Migrant Domestic Workers by Female Employers in Lebanon* (Dr. Ray Jureidini). The process of dissemination is expected to continue throughout the current year.

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ONGOING PROJECT FOR PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT OF MARGINALIZED WOMEN

Within its day centers, the multidisciplinary team of Dar Al Amal attends to the needs of vulnerable children, as well as young girls and women who are victims of violence, exploitation, abuse and marginalization. These centers are community based and located in the very poor areas of Nabaa, Sin El Fil, and Sabra. During January-June 2011, Dar el Amal implemented 38 educational, social, health, legal, and recreational activities. It also addressed the needs of women in conflict with law and supported them in reinforcing their identity, improving their skills, reintegrating society, and starting to make a change in their community.

Dar Al Amal has long been facing the problem of inadequate premises to accommodate the beneficiaries of its day centers, who are in need for a temporary shelter. As such, Dar Al Amal bought a building in Choueifat and started its rehabilitation, which should be completed by the end of 2011. This shelter is expected to provide a safe place for young girls and women from all Lebanese areas and without any discrimination.

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INTERACTIVE THEATRE: SUCCESS STORIES MANUAL AND GRADUATION CEREMONY

Since July 2010, the Palestinian Women's Forum in Lebanon, with the support of the Italian Cooperation office of the Embassy of Italy in Beirut has been implementing an interactive theater project which aims at raising awareness among children and women on GBV. The project consists of trainings on interactive theatre techniques as well as a number of theatre performances throughout Lebanese regions including Palestinian camps.

In April 2011, and with the support of the Italian Cooperation office, the Forum published a manual documenting the project's success stories, which was distributed during a graduation ceremony held on April 5. On that date, nine female trainers in interactive theatre graduated at UNESCO Palace, in the presence of 350 representatives of local communities of Palestinian, Lebanese and international NGOs, as well as local media. A show on sexual harassment was also performed during the event, and stirred extraordinary interaction from the audience.

The Palestinian Women's Forum will pursue this project with the support of the European Union and the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD). As such, six additional plays addressing women rights, the *Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)* and the *Istanbul Plan of Action (2006)* will be performed in North and South Lebanon. A first show on sexual harassment was presented on May 5 in Baddawi Palestinian camp and made an impressive impact on the 150 participants. Five more shows will be conducted during the second half of 2011.

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TWO ROUNDTABLES ON THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN PRISONERS AND RIGHTS OF FEMALE MIGRANT WORKERS IN LEBANON

The Lebanese Women Democratic Gathering held two roundtables on combating violence and discrimination against women in March and May, respectively. The first roundtable, organized on the occasion of *International Women's Day*, debated the *Enhancement of Female Inmates' Health in Lebanon*, under the auspices of the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities, in coordination with Amel Association and Mouvement Social, in partnership with Diaconia, and with the participation of representatives from the health sector; officials from women prisons at the General Directorate of the Internal Security Forces, and civil society and human rights activists working in Lebanese prisons. The discussions examined the promotion of female inmates' right to health in compliance with the international minimum standards for the treatment of prisoners and in agreement with human rights principles.

On the agenda of the second roundtable was *the Rights of Female Workers in Lebanon* in light of international conventions protecting women from discrimination and violence in the workplace. The event coincided with the *Labor Day* and held under the auspices of the Minister of Labor, in cooperation and consultation with the International Labour Organization. A review of the status of female workers in Lebanon and the means for protecting them from discrimination, violence, mistreatment, abuse, and exploitation in the workplace was carried out. Challenges and hindrances facing the advocacy work of women, labor, and human rights organizations were also discussed. Participants came up with specific recommendations such as incorporating clauses that guarantee the rights of Palestinian female refugees and migrant domestic workers in Lebanese labor and social security laws, in adequacy with international conventions.

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MARKING INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY WITH STAFF AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Once again UNIFIL confirmed its commitments to gender and women issues by standing side by side with Lebanese women and for the first time, since its establishment, joined the UN community in observing *International Women's Day* (IWD) on March 8 and 15 respectively.

On March 8, in observance of IWD and in order to raise awareness on GBV and Security Council Resolution 1325 on *Women, Peace and Security*, the Gender Unit (GU) prepared a special bulletin on IWD which was broadcasted to all mission staff. On March 15 the GU joined efforts with the National Staff Union (NSU) of UNIFIL, the Director of Mission Support Office and the Focal Points for Women, and organized an event highlighting women concerns in local context within the 2011 IWD theme *Equal access to Education, Training and Science and Technology*. The event addressed the challenges of women's work in a changing environment. Guest speakers from the Lebanese League for Women in Business, a national women NGO, shared their experience in the Lebanese private sector and shed light on the challenges that face them as senior managers, community leaders, and mothers. The event also featured interventions by the mission Force Commander, the Director of Mission Support, Focal Point for Women, the Chairperson of the NSU and the Gender Adviser.

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DISSEMINATION OF DOMESTIC WORKERS' INFORMATION GUIDES TO COMMENCE

The International Labour Organization (ILO) launched in May 2011 the project *Towards Counting As Workers* in Lebanon, with funding from the European Commission and Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. This project addresses several aspects of women migrant domestic workers protection, including from violence, in the world of work. The printing and dissemination of the workers' information guide for migrant domestic workers is in the first order of priority. The ILO will be partnering with civil society organizations and the Lebanese Government to disseminate the information guide in 12 languages in Lebanon as well as in countries of origin.

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THE CAMPAIGN FOR LIFTING RESERVATIONS ON ARTICLE 16 OF CEDAW

As part of a larger regional project entitled *CEDAW from Theory to Practice* funded by the European Union and implemented in Lebanon, Syria and Jordan, KAFA (Enough) Violence & Exploitation launched a regional lobbying and media campaign for lifting the reservations on Article 16 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which pertains to equality between men and women in marriage and family life. The campaign comprised activities targeting decision makers to gain their support for lifting reservations on the said article. This plea complements the *Draft Law for Protecting Women from Domestic Violence*, especially that the prejudice against women in the *Personal Status Code* creates and anchors various types of violence they are subjected to.

In general terms, the project *CEDAW from Theory to Practice* aims mainly at fostering the implementation of and recourse to the CEDAW by judges, lawyers and civil society organizations on the one hand, as well as raising social awareness to the importance of the CEDAW on the other as a tool that promotes women's human rights. It is in this context that KAFA (Enough) Violence & Exploitation carried out studies on the actual use of CEDAW in courts, and developed a page on its website (cedaw.kafa.org.lb) to document and monitor the use of the convention.

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OPENING OF A NEW RESOURCE CENTER FOR GENDER EQUALITY: "ABAAD"

In May 2011, the civil society in Lebanon witnessed the birth of a new gender-focused association. ABAAD a non-profit, non-political, non-religious association aims at achieving gender equality as an essential condition to sustainable social and economic development in the Middle East and North Africa region. ABAAD seeks to promote women's equality and participation through policy development, gender mainstreaming, engaging men, eliminating discrimination, and advancing and empowering women to participate effectively and fully within their communities. ABAAD will also support civil society organizations that are involved in gender related interventions and campaigns. ABAAD comprises a dynamic pool of resources, human rights activists, lawyers, consultants, social workers and researchers who are all dedicated towards achieving ABAAD's mission. To achieve its goals, ABAAD plans to design, implement and support programs that are focused on developing and mainstreaming a gender perspective and fostering just policies that protect women's rights. ABAAD also plans to develop the skills and capacities of professionals on all issues and processes related to gender.

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GBV AWARENESS EVENTS AND OPEN DOORS

On May 6, Community of Maryam and Martha (CMM) organized an event at Notre Dame University campus in the presence of delegates from reverential religious, political and social groups in Lebanon. Placed under the slogan *We Have Something to Say: Listen to Us*, the event featured the launching of two songs compiling life testimonies of GBV survivors sheltered at CMM: *Fi Hima Maryam wa Martha* and *Sarkhet Wajaa*. A video clip for the second song was also featured. In addition, a round table discussion between GBV specialists and the public was conducted and addressed the issue of GBV from its legal, social, religious and service provision aspects.

On May 7, CMM organized an *Open Doors Day* at its shelter, for the public to visit, to get introduced to the rehabilitation program and team, and to encourage women's production of trinkets, food products, etc.

CMM also participated in a technical seminar organized by Kvinfor in Jordan and aiming at strengthening the network of GBV shelters in the Middle East and Europe. CMM participants benefited from the exchange of experiences and developed their technical expertise through such exposure.

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PROMOTION OF NON-VIOLENT COMMUNICATION WITHIN IRAQI FAMILIES AND ADVOCACY FOR PREVENTING TRAFFICKING IN WOMEN

As part of its support for Iraqi refugees present in Lebanon, Caritas Lebanon Migrant Center (CLMC) delivered 70 awareness-raising sessions on *Non-Violent Communication* to the Iraqi community during the first half of 2011, with the support of the US Department of State/ Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration as well as UNHCR. Indeed, after noticing a trend of domestic violence resulting from complex factors including stress, poverty and changing gender roles, CLMC designed the sessions with the support of accredited psychotherapists. As such, 68 awareness-raising sessions targeted Iraqi women, as well as women married to Iraqis. These sessions developed the skills of participants on how to deal with conflicts and positively discipline children. Additionally, two sessions focused specifically on men, who acquired skills in positive communication (role of gesture, body language, voice tone and self control) and its impact on the family circle.

In addition, on April 29, and with the support of the Canadian Regional Human Rights and Peacebuilding Fund, and the Finnish Local Cooperation Fund, CLMC organized a workshop in Beirut on *The Crime of Trafficking In Persons (whose main victims are women and girls): Between International Law and the Lebanese Reality*. This workshop, led by Professor Speedy Rice from the School of Law in Washington and Lee University, and Judge Sami Mansour, President of the Judicial Studies Institute, gathered 50 high-level Lebanese stakeholders. While speakers explored the definition of trafficking and assessed existing judicial control mechanisms in Lebanon, participants stressed the need to integrate trafficking to the law curricula and to improve Lebanese legislation in order to comply with the *UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children* (Palermo, 2000). All agreed that legal enhancement is essential, in particular regarding protection of the victim's rights.

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AWARENESS ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT AGAINST ADOLESCENT GIRLS AND CHILDREN'S AND WOMEN'S ISSUES

Between February 28 and March 11, 2011, the Lebanese Council to Resist Violence Against Woman (LECORVAW) organized a series of 17 awareness sessions on *Sexual Harassment against Adolescent Girls* in 8 public and private schools in Beirut suburbs (Ein el- Remeneh, Chyah and Furn Chebak) and in partnership with the Ministry of Social Affairs (through its Social Development Centre in Ein el-Remeneh). Within these sessions, LECORVAW reached more than 450 adolescent girls and boys, with the aim of reducing the risk of harassment among young women and girls.

These participatory sessions aimed at empowering and enabling girls in private and public schools to counter sexual harassment when possible and seek help when necessary. They also aimed at sensitizing adolescent boys on how violence and harassment affect girls and at encouraging them to adopt a responsible behaviour regarding this issue. Breaking the taboos enables a more open communication on the issue of violence between adolescent girls and boys on the one hand as well as between adolescents and community service providers and educators on the other.

On April 7, an open discussion session was held in the Australian Embassy in Beirut, with the participation of staff members from the British, Canadian, Australian and Danish Embassies. LECORVAW presented the situation of domestic violence in Lebanon from the legal and social perspectives, along with suggested solutions and existing challenges. The issue of violence against children was also briefly mentioned. As a result, it was recommended that training workshops be organized in order to provide embassies' staff members with sufficient information enabling them to act in case any woman or child asks for assistance.

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SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN UNIVERSITIES THROUGH THE ADVENTURES OF SALWA

Nasawiya collective launched the *Adventures of Salwa* campaign and held a series of workshops in May at the American University of Beirut and Saint Joseph University (USJ). The workshops introduced students to sexual harassment, in terms of causes and means for facing it. Short video clips about the *Adventures of Salwa*, also aired on local TV channels, were displayed during the workshops. In addition, the campaign held a number of awareness-raising debates about the same subject at the Arab University and USJ. Moreover, the campaign organized discussion groups with women about sexual harassment, ways for combating it, effect on the lives of female victims and means to counter the damages caused by emotional, verbal, physical and sexual violence.

On another note, the *Adventures of Salwa* campaign was present in a conference held by the Lebanese Women Democratic Gathering and the International Labour Organization and addressing labour and social security laws. The importance of including a legal article criminalizing sexual harassment was discussed. Also, on the occasion of *International Women's Day* on March 8, the campaign staged a march entitled *Take Back the Night* to call for safer streets, free from all sorts of violence against women. The campaign was successful in voicing its demands through a number of radio and TV appearances. (For more information, visit: www.adventuresofsalwa.com and www.qawemeharassment.wordpress.com)

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