



Tanseeq

Coordination

For Ending GBV in Lebanon

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Kicking Off the Gender Based Violence National Plan of Action

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) is proud to launch the first issue of the Gender Based Violence (GBV) newsletter, in partnership with national stakeholders. This newsletter is part of the *GBV National Plan of Action* and it is designed to serve as a platform for exchanging information on ongoing efforts to end, respond to, and prevent GBV in Lebanon.

Addressing GBV constitutes one of the main pillars of UNFPA's mandate. The Fund has continuously advocated that GBV is a violation of human rights and constitutes a public health priority.

In the absence of a national strategy and based on the collective observation that various efforts for ending GBV tend to be fragmented and prone to duplication, UNFPA initiated a *GBV National Plan of Action*, with the support of the Government of Italy and the Italian Cooperation in Lebanon. This plan of action was elaborated in a participative approach involving more than 46 entities and GBV actors from governmental institutions, civil society and development/donor partners.

The *GBV National Plan of Action* aims at enhancing institutional systems and standards in order to prevent, protect the survivor of, and respond to GBV. It consists of three categories of activities: capacity development; direct aid and support group; community mobilization and advocacy.

The present newsletter constitutes the first national networking tool on GBV gathering news of efforts underway since the beginning of 2010. UNFPA wishes to thank all partners for their contributions and welcomes comments and contributions to coming issues.

UNFPA; Lazariah Building, Block 03
Down Town Beirut, Lebanon
P.O. Box: 11-3216
Tel: 01964633, 70111652
Fax: 01964631
Website: www.unfpa.org.lb
Email: nahas@unfpa.org



Efforts to End GBV Jumpstarted by Council of Ministers' Decision

On April 7th, 2010, the Council of Ministers approved the *Law to Protect Women from Family Violence* and referred it to the Parliament for ratification. This key development crowns all advocacy efforts for fighting GBV and encourages their intensification.

To access the full text of the Law in Arabic:
<http://www.unfpa.org.lb/documents/ArabicUnderConstructionContent.pdf>

Initiation of a Study on School-Related Gender Based Violence in Lebanon

Within the framework of the project *Supporting Gender Equality in Education in Lebanon* funded by the Government of Italy, UNESCO Beirut is launching a study on school-related GBV which is a serious obstacle to learning causing not only physical harm but also severe psychological and educational damages. Limited research has been conducted in this field in the Arab region; however, there is indicative evidence that GBV unfortunately permeates the school environment in Lebanon, as in other parts of the world, with severe physical, psychological and learning consequences suffered by students.

UNESCO
Sports city Avenue, Bir Hassan
P.O. Box: 11-5244
Tel: 01850013
Website: www.unesco.org/beirut
Email: beirut@unesco.org



Research on Economic Abuse Among Lebanese Women

Work is considered to be an important strategy to empower women and to combat abuse. Yet, a strong correlation was found between exposure to domestic violence and the working status of abused women. Many working women reported lack of control over their own income which undermines the effect expected to be achieved by empowering women through work. Since March 2009, thanks to the funding of the Population Council and in partnership with Kafa (Enough) Violence and Exploitation, Dr. Jinan Usta from the American University of Beirut Family Medicine Department has been conducting a research entitled *Economic Abuse Among Lebanese Women*. This study explores the different types of economic abuse that paid-working-women are exposed to, the factors that predispose women to such an abuse and those involved in making her accept it. Focus group discussions with women and interviews with men and women (each separately) were conducted in addition to a desk review of the existing religious and civil laws in Lebanon. The results are expected to help in recommending changes that improve the economic situation of women.

Jinan Usta; American University of Beirut, Family Medicine Dept; Email: ju00@aub.edu.lb

Publishing a Book Entitled Women Facing Violence

With the support of Kafa (Enough) Violence and Exploitation, a study by Dr. Azza Chararah Baydoun entitled *Women Facing Violence* was published in April 2010. This study builds on existing literature about violence against women and encompasses three parts as follows:

The first part consists of a desk review of all writings in the field of violence against women. It tries to depict what already exists in the public cognitive background by identifying existing publications and ends with recommendations as to what still needs to be studied and has yet been ignored. The second part analyses the results of a field study conducted among GBV female survivors and looks at the family and relations dynamics that govern the phenomenon of violence against women from a gender perspective. The study overviews the support networks available to GBV women survivors and evaluates their perceptions of these networks' responsiveness to their needs. Part three analyses the current trends and methods adopted by the organizations working on GBV. It ends with some wishes and recommendations expressed by these organizations for improving the impact of their work. The author concludes by highlighting the added value of the study and the confusion it faced. The book ends by uniting all women researchers, reporters of cases of violence or workers in GBV organizations under one common objective: women working together, implicitly or explicitly, on facing gender based violence in Lebanon.

Assessing Media Coverage Of Gender Based Violence in Lebanon

The Lebanese Council to Resist Violence Against Woman (LECORVAW) is currently conducting a *Research for Assessing the Media Coverage of GBV in Lebanon*; the research is supported by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The completion of the study is expected around August 2010 and its objective is to assess the coverage of various media channels of GBV issues over the last five years in terms of content, messages, magnitude, frequency, type of programs/articles and timing, among others. The study will target selected reports, news anchors, talk show hosts, TV and radio program directors, script writers, actors and producers/production companies in all local TV stations, radio stations, newspapers and magazines. With the aim of generating practical recommendations, the assessment will:

- Identify types of information and approaches of the media sector in relation to GBV;
- Explore triggering factors that are used to raise the interest of the public on GBV;
- Analyze capacity gaps and strengths of the media coverage in relation to GBV;
- Enquire into the interest and willingness of the media to better understand and deal with GBV.

The Lebanese Council to Resist Violence Against Woman
Beirut, Damascus Road, Bassoul building, 2nd floor
Tel/Fax: 01612899; Email: lecorvaw@inco.com.lb
Tripoli, Amine Moukaddem Street
Abdel Wahab building, 2nd floor
Tel/Fax: 06624060; Email: l_corvaw@idm.net.lb



Pilot Intervention on Violence Against Palestinian Refugee Women in Tyre

Launching the intervention on violence against women was one of UNRWA's key achievements in 2009. The pilot intervention started in January 2010 in the southern district of Tyre namely in El-Buss camp and Kfar Badda gatherings. A core team of 20 UNRWA frontline staffs from Relief and Social Services, Women Programme Centre, UNRWA schools and health centres were identified in late 2009 for the detection of women victims of violence. They received training in March 2010 from Lebanese NGO Kafa (Enough) Violence and Exploitation that enables them to properly identify cases, respect confidentiality and refer victims/survivors to partners. In parallel, UNRWA has been developing partnerships with NGOs active in GBV and women protection for the management, follow-up and support of detected cases, namely Beit Atfal Soumoud, Association Najdeh and Terre des Hommes.

UNRWA; Lebanon Field Office, Bir Hassan, Opposite Sports City; Tel: 01840490; Fax: 01840466; PO Box: 11-0947 Beirut 1107 2060



Disseminating the First Supplementary Report On the Implementation of the Convention On the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women For Palestinian Refugee Women in Lebanon

The *Supplementary Report on the Implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) for Palestinian Refugee Women in Lebanon* was prepared and presented to the CEDAW committee in Geneva in January 2008. The report addressed the particular forms of discrimination facing Palestinian refugee women, including gender based violence, and was produced with the financial support of Kvinna till Kvinna (Swedish NGO), KARAMA network, UNICEF and the Italian Cooperation.

In 2010, Association Najdeh and the Forum of Palestinian Women in Lebanon (gathering all NGOs involved in drafting the report) will focus on disseminating the CEDAW report through various channels such as internet, printed matter and workshops.

Association Najdeh
P.O.Box: 113-6099
Afif Tibi Str. Alamin Bldg 3rd floor
Beirut, Lebanon; Tel: 01302079
Email: association@najdeh.org.lb
najdeh_dv@cyberia.net.lb
Website: www.association-najdeh.org



Situation Analysis On Gender Based Violence In Lebanon

As part of the GBV national plan of action and with the support of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the Centre of Arab Women for Training and Research (CAWTAR) is currently conducting a *GBV Situation Analysis in Lebanon*. From the perspectives of human rights of women and gender equality, the assessment exercise planned for March-August 2010 should result in an in-depth GBV situation analysis in Lebanon covering a) GBV programmes along with various interventions and services with target groups and geographical areas; b) the legal and policy mechanisms, systems, and frameworks that govern gender equality, human rights of women and GBV through life cycle; c) the key stakeholders involved in GBV at various levels and d) the coordination and sustainability mechanisms. The identification and validation of related challenges, gaps and lessons learned and priority issues will guide the implementation of various components of the GBV national plan of action as well as its strategic interventions. The situation analysis will also provide evidences for advocacy and policy dialogue.

In preparation for this situation analysis, a brainstorming meeting was organised in Beirut in April 2010 and brought together national experts, main GBV actors and other concerned stakeholders. It consisted of a strategic thinking exercise before launching the situation analysis in GBV. Consultation with and involvement of all concerned stakeholders, right holders and duty bearers in defining the appropriate framework and tools as well as assumptions to orient the research will help the CAWTAR team and UNFPA Lebanon in conducting the diagnosis on a consensus basis to ensure ownership and commitment in addressing the identified issues and priorities.

Centre of Arab Women
for Training and Research
(CAWTAR)
P.O. Box: 105
Cit  El Khadra 1002 Tunis
Tel: +21671773511
Email: cawtar@cawtar.org
Website: www.cawtar.org



Seminar On the International Situation of Prostitution And Trafficking in Human Beings: A Feminist Analysis

In April 2010, the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World (IWSAW) at the Lebanese American University (LAU) organized a two-day seminar on the subject of *International Situation of Prostitution and Trafficking in Human Beings: A Feminist Analysis* in partnership with KAFA (Enough) Violence and Exploitation. Targeting students, faculty and professionals from NGOs dealing with trafficking and prostitution, the seminar hosted expert Gunilla S. Ekberg who gave interventions on prostitution and trafficking in women considered as serious crimes and violations of women's human rights and dignity. Survivor testimonies were projected too. This activity follows earlier collaboration between IWSAW and KAFA (Enough) Violence and Exploitation, namely the display of silhouettes representing women who have been killed in acts of domestic violence, with individual stories recorded on them; a visual display of shirts with graphic messages by women survivors of domestic violence or relatives of victims; the collection of signatures in support of a draft-law that criminalizes domestic violence in Lebanon and debates involving students about the topic.

Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World
at the Lebanese American University
Address: Qoraytem, Labban Street
P.O. Box: 13-5053 Chouran
Beirut: 1102 2801, Lebanon
Tel: 01786456 / 01786464 / 03791314
Fax: 01791645; Email: iwsaw@lau.edu.lb
Website: <http://iwsaw.lau.edu.lb>



Capacity Building for Gender Based Violence Survivors

Community Maryam and Martha is a centre specialized in the lodging, rehabilitation and support of women and girls having been subject to GBV. The community believes that developing the capacity of GBV survivors eliminates the risks of ignorance, dependency on others and lack of understanding and awareness. Through capacity development, women acquire self-confidence and move more easily towards autonomy. In 2010, residents of Community Maryam and Martha centre in Ajaltoun received a number of capacity development sessions which themes revolved around the following:

- **Literacy sessions:** Funded by the Ministry of Social Affairs, illiterate women were provided with a literacy program consisting of intensive courses (3 days per week) for a period of two months.
- **Hair dressing and make-up session:** Funded by the Italian Cooperation Office and in partnership with KAFA (Enough) Violence and Exploitation, this session aimed at empowering women through a career in hairdressing and make-up, given the fact that both hairdressing and make-up professions do not require a fixed location or sophisticated equipments.
- **Language and technical sessions:** Funded by the Italian Cooperation Office and in partnership with the Don Bosco Technical Institute, the sessions provided lessons in French and English as well as basics in electricity and mechanics. They aim at enabling beneficiaries to acquire the necessary experience for solving minor home or car problems without the help of a male. In addition, the knowledge of languages is expected to increase women's opportunities in finding a job.

Community Maryam and Martha
Lebanon, Ajaltoun, Darayya road
Tel: 09236961-2, 03553121
Email: cmm@maryamandmartha.org
Website: www.maryamandmartha.org



Capacity Development For Marginalized Women

Funded by both the Ministry of Social Affairs and Drosos Foundation-Diakonia, Dar Al Amal recently expanded an awareness-raising project since 2008 through health, educational and legal sessions. The project targets families, girls and women in both regions of Nabaa and Sabra as well as women prisoners of several nationalities, areas and religions, the majority of which are illiterate and living in very difficult conditions. Regular monthly group sessions are organized with around 30 girls in each session. Topics are identified by the participants themselves.

In this context and since the beginning of 2010, awareness-raising sessions tackled issues on women rights, health and court procedures for imprisoned women. Additional awareness-raising sessions on drugs and HIV/AIDS gathered around 60 female prisoners while 6 other legal sessions reached an estimated 350 women in both centres and prisons. The sessions will go on throughout 2010 on a monthly basis.

Dar Al Amal
Sin El Fil- Horsh Tabet
Near the Public Garden
Samir Ghazal Bldg
Ground Floor
Tel/ Fax: 01483508/ 01241164
Website: www.daralamal.org



Manual for Working With Women Prisoners

The Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World (IWSAW) at the Lebanese American University has been involved with women inmates in Lebanese prisons for a decade. In the light of successful interventions in the two major women prisons in Lebanon, whereby it succeeded in improving the physical setup for the inmates and helped a lot of them develop income-generating skills and/or receive a fair trial, IWSAW plans to go one step further, with the technical and financial support of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). It is currently involved in developing a manual for working with women prisoners.

The objective of the manual is to equip personnel from governmental and non-governmental organizations with the adequate methodology and tools to rehabilitate inmates while fully respecting their human rights. In addition, the manual aims at ensuring that women prisons in Lebanon become correctional facilities that adopt a human rights approach to treating prisoners. The manual will be developed in Arabic and will be based on previous experience, literature review and consultation with key stakeholders, field visits and interviews. It is expected to be completed by September 2010.

Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World
at the Lebanese American University
Address: Qoraytem, Labban Street
P.O. Box: 13-5053 Chouran
Beirut: 1102 2801, Lebanon
Tel: 01786456 / 01786464 / 03791314
Fax: 01791645; Email: iwsaw@lau.edu.lb
Website: <http://iwsaw.lau.edu.lb>



Direct Aid to Women Victims of Violence Through the Listening And Counselling Centres

The listening and counselling centres for women victims of violence in Beirut and Tripoli are the main and regular activity in the Lebanese Council to Resist Violence Against Woman (LECORVAW) that continue to be active in 2010 with the financial support of various donors such as Kvinna Till Kvinna (Swedish NGO), Women World Day of Prayer, European Union, etc. LECORVAW's ongoing listening and counselling centres engage qualified social workers who are expert in reading violence indicators and getting into direct face to face contact with GBV survivors.

Regardless of their age, socioeconomic, educational and religious backgrounds, women who suffer all kinds of physical, psychological, economic, social, legal or sexual violence, along with their children, are received by the social workers. LECORVAW listening and counselling centres start by identifying the needs of women and providing them with the appropriate service, then move on to formulating and executing a plan of action with the involvement of the woman herself to prevent any further abuse and finally maintain a continuous follow-up through the social worker.

The Lebanese Council to Resist Violence Against Woman
Beirut, Damascus Road, Bassoul building, 2nd floor
Tel/Fax: 01612899; Email: lecorvaw@inco.com.lb
Tripoli, Amine Moukaddem Street
Abdel Wahab building, 2nd floor
Tel/Fax: 06624060; Email: l_corvaw@idm.net.lb



Review of Gender Based Violence Research in Lebanon

As part of the GBV national plan of action and with the support of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), a comprehensive analytical *Review of GBV Research in Lebanon* is being undertaken by Education for Change Ltd, since January 2010. The review includes national and international academic, NGO, UN agencies and other researches (published and unpublished) in English, Arabic or French related to GBV in Lebanon and conducted since early nineties.

The review team has designed an analytical framework for assessing the compiled research and studies and is in the process of gathering and cataloguing documentation. Stakeholder consultations and communications are ongoing. The research team is working on a comprehensive inventory of existing work including useful abstract summaries of key studies.

After collection and cataloguing is complete, the team will identify research gaps and propose a research priorities agenda, delivered in a final report, scheduled for June 2010. If any reader has any researches related to this project, please email l.wetheridge@efc.co.uk.

Education for Change Ltd
17A Christopher Street
London, EC2A 2BS, U.K
Tel: +44(0)2072473370
Email: info@efc.co.uk,
Website: www.efc.co.uk



Relief and Support Programs For Refugee Survivors Of Gender Based Violence

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) provides protection and assistance to a number of refugees and asylum seekers in Lebanon, the majority of which come from Iraq along with other nationalities (Sudanese and others). UNHCR pays special attention to the protection of refugees, especially women, from GBV. In partnership with the Middle East Council of Churches, Caritas, Restart, Association Justice et Misericorde and Amel Association, the project aims at providing the required support to Iraqi women, girls and men subject to GBV. The project also aims at strengthening and expanding UNHCR capacity and ensuring the implementation of the *Standards Operational Procedures* in terms of prevention and response to GBV, using a community-based approach. The project drives towards empowering girls and women to gain strength and knowledge in coping with the challenges they face in the new host community.

The project consists of the identification of individuals and groups at risk, individual assessment and counselling, ensuring physical safety of women at risk using community support and access to shelters as needed, provision of psycho-social counselling for necessary rehabilitation especially for the traumatized cases, engagement of women in meaningful activities to help them address their material and social needs and improvement of the economical situation of vulnerable women through promotion of self-reliance. It also aims at facilitating access to legal assistance and counselling.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
Khater building, Dr. Philippe Hitti street
Ramlet el Bayda, Beirut, Lebanon
Tel: 01849201-210
Fax: 01849211



Shelter for Women and Children

In view of its commitment towards the elimination of all forms of violence against women, the National Young Women Christian Association (YWCA) of Lebanon established a much needed shelter for victims of domestic violence with the financial support of the Ministry of Social Affairs. Through its nine outlying centres, YWCA receives women from all over Lebanon. Beneficiaries are among abused and destitute women, alone or with their children, who need temporary or semi-permanent refuge. They are assisted to break the cycle of violence prevailing in their lives and families.

Currently, the YWCA shelter offers them refuge, counselling and a lasting solution to domestic or social abuse. During their stay, some of the beneficiaries are enrolled in vocational training programs at YWCA centres to equip them with the requirements of a job that would lead them towards financial self-sufficiency while others are assisted to find suitable jobs.

The National YWCA of Lebanon; Ain Mraisseh, Rustum Pasha Street
Tel/Fax: 01369635; Email: info@lebanonywca.org; Website: www.lebanonywca.org



Introducing Interactive Theatre To GBV Projects In Palestinian Camps and Gatherings

Supported by the Italian Cooperation Office and the Italian Embassy and in partnership with the Palestinian Women's Forum in Lebanon, Association Najdeh launched a 10-month project in March 2010, the objective of which is to provide interactive theatre skills to 20 staff members and volunteers from local NGOs working on GBV among Palestinian and Lebanese communities, notably in Palestinian camps and gatherings in Lebanon. After 10 months of training and follow-up, the trainees will facilitate performances in different camps, gatherings and some Lebanese cities and towns. Educational materials and a documentary film will be produced as tools to be used by the trainees who will in turn provide training in interactive theatre to other local NGOs working on GBV with a focus on violence against women.

Association Najdeh
P.O.Box: 113-6099
Afif Tibi Str. Alamin Bldg 3rd floor
Beirut, Lebanon; Tel: 01302079
Email: association@najdeh.org.lb
najdeh_dv@cyberia.net.lb
Website: www.association-najdeh.org



Enhancing Status and Working Conditions Of Female Health Staff

Since February 2009, Amel Association has launched a two-year project for *Enhancing the Status and Working Conditions of Female Health Staff in Lebanon*, with the financial support of the European Union and in partnership with the Centro di Educazione Sanitaria e Tecnologie Appropriate Sanitarie (CESTAS- Italy).

The project aims at improving women's status in Bazourieh (South, Tyre caza), Kham (Nabatieh, Marjayoun caza), Hay Es Sellum (Mount Lebanon, Baabda caza) and will focus mainly on the types of discrimination prevailing in the health sector. The main objective will be the improvement of working conditions for health care staff. Indeed, focusing on caregivers is of high importance as they are part of the same societal pattern and suffer from similar socio-economic problems as the communities they belong to.

Several forms of violence will be addressed, from physical and verbal harassment to discriminatory treatments in general. Along with grass-roots sensitization and advocacy on policy-campaign, the bulk of the project will be to build the capacity of staff and encourage the targeted medical structures to initiate protocols to improve the situation.

Amel Association; Amel building, Abu Chakra street
Musaytbeh, Beirut, Lebanon
Tel: 01317293/4, 01304910, 01304910
Fax: 01305646; PO Box: 14/5561
Email: info@amel.org.lb
Website: <http://www.amel.org.lb/>



Exhibition Behind the Doors: Photographs by Survivors of Violence in Tyre, Tripoli and Other Locations

The exhibition *Behind the Doors: Photographs by Survivors of Violence* will tour Tyre, Tripoli, and other locations between April and December 2010. This event is organized by the Italian Cooperation Office of the Embassy of Italy in Beirut, in collaboration with KAFA (Enough) Violence and Exploitation and the photographer Dalia Khamissy and in partnership with INTERSOS, Safadi Foundation and other civil society organizations.

In August 2009, photographer Dalia Khamissy, in partnership with KAFA (Enough) Violence and Exploitation, started a 4-months long workshop of photography gathering 10 women survivors of violence from different religious, educational and social backgrounds. The aim was to teach them how to tell their stories through photographs that help them understand the violence they went through and prompt some raising-awareness in society. The activity, funded by the Italian Cooperation Office of the Embassy of Italy in Beirut, was part of the 16-Days Campaign of Activism against GBV. For additional information, please contact ghida.anani@kafa.org.lb

Italian Cooperation Office of the Embassy of Italy in Beirut; Hazmieh
Hazmieh Square, 4th floor, Beirut; Tel: 05451494; Email: utl.beirut@esteri.it; Website: www.utlbeirut.org



Protecting the Rights Of Women Migrant Domestic Workers in Lebanon

The 2010-2012 International Labour Organization Regional Office (ILO RO-Beirut) strategy is two-pronged and is designed to ensure improved regulation and monitoring of the work of Women Migrant Domestic Workers (WMDWs) and their protection from labour abuses, exploitation and other forms of GBV. A gender-specific approach is used in advocating for the legal, social and institutional integration of WMDWs into labour laws under the auspices of the Lebanese Ministry of Labour. A participatory learning approach is used to mainstream gender equality concerns into the legal, policy and programmatic frameworks of the institutions involved in labour migration regulation and monitoring.

Such strategy is intended to be actionable at all levels: *macro* (migration, labour, social and gender equality policies), *meso* (governmental and non-governmental institutions) and *micro* (targeting women migrant domestic workers themselves). The programme has two main objectives: a) enhancing the capacities of the Ministry of Labour and other key players to monitor the working terms and conditions of the WMDWs and b) increasing awareness of relevant stakeholders, especially NGOs, ministries and the Lebanese population as well as the workers themselves on the rights of WMDWs in Lebanon. The project is conducted with the financial support of the European Union Delegation in Lebanon. The project's lessons learnt and best practices will be disseminated to the wider Arab region including Syria, Jordan, Yemen and the GCC.

ILO Regional Office for Arab States (ILO RO-Beirut or ROAS)
ARESCO Centre Justinien Street, Kantari
PO Box: 11-4088 Beirut, Lebanon
Riad Solh, Beirut 11072150
Tel: 01752400; Fax: 01752405
Email: beirut@ilo.org
Website: <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/region/arpro/beirut/index.htm>



Resisting Violence Against Women

Financed by Global Fund, in partnership with KFAFA (Enough) Violence and Exploitation and in the context of its GBV project, the Lebanese Women Democratic Gathering organized several activities in 2010, among which are the following:

- **Awareness-raising meetings:** Ten awareness-raising meetings were organized. They revolved around a variety of topics, namely presenting the draft law for the criminalization of domestic violence, sexual harassment of little girls and early marriage and its effects on girls. The meetings took place in five Lebanese regions: South, Beqaa, Mount Lebanon, North and Beirut. Around 500 girls, students and women participated in the meetings.
- **Follow-up on GBV cases:** All branches of the Lebanese Women Democratic Gathering offered listening, guidance, counselling and support services to a number of GBV cases. The number of new cases reached 35 while the follow-up cases were 16.
- **Training sessions:** Two workshops targeting 20 staff working on GBV were organized in February and March 2010. These sessions addressed various GBV related concepts, such as women's rights within the human rights system, the project law for protecting women from family violence, the social fabric and the culture of violence in Lebanon, as well as opportunities for change.

The Lebanese Women Democratic Gathering
Beirut, Zokak El Blat, Batriarkiya, Nahhas Street
Rayess & Hamoud building, 1st Floor
Tel : 01370120; Fax: 01370189
Email: rdfl@inco.com.lb
Website: www.rdbl-women.org



Review of Gender Based Violence Resource and Training Materials in Lebanon

As part of the GBV national plan of action and with the support of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), a comprehensive desk *Review of GBV Resources and Training Materials in Lebanon* is being undertaken by Education for Change Ltd, since January 2010. The review considers reference and training modules, guides and tools (published and unpublished) developed in the last 10 years. It also includes an overview of current information systems related to capturing and recording data and cases on GBV in Lebanon.

To date, the review team has contacted stakeholders to collect relevant resources and compiled a list of materials. These resources are being analysed and catalogued according to a detailed classification system. The content is considered in terms of its themes, types of GBV tackled, target beneficiaries, year of production, relevance, gaps and other criteria.

In April 2010, a focus group discussion brought together selected NGOs, United Nations agencies and pertinent national stakeholders with experience in developing and/or using training materials and resources in order to learn lessons about good practice in training materials on GBV in Lebanon and assess where the gaps and challenges remain. This focus group discussion will contribute to the final report, scheduled for June 2010. If any reader has materials related to this project, please email them to l.wetheridge@efc.co.uk.

Education for Change Ltd
17A Christopher Street
London, EC2A 2BS, U.K
Tel: +44(0)2072473370
Email: info@efc.co.uk
Website: www.efc.co.uk



A Recently Established Gender Working Group For Enhancing Aid Effectiveness

Within the framework of the *European Union Code of Conduct on Division of Labour in Development Policy*, a Gender Working Group (GEWOG) was recently established in order to provide a platform for a more effective and results-based engagement between the Lebanese government and donors with regards to ongoing and planned gender equality and women's empowerment initiatives. In view of its current capacity and commitment in the field, Italy was consensually designated as the Chair of the first Secretariat.

Upon completion of a preliminary mapping of ongoing gender equality focused projects (as defined by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development *Gender Markers*) and acknowledging that most of the mapped initiatives address the eradication of GBV as a primary concern, a technical meeting was convened among concerned stakeholders on March 30th, 2010 to enhance complementarities and aid effectiveness overall.

Pending the incumbent constitution of a UN working group on gender, coordination with UN agencies active in the field is ensured through their participation in the GEWOG meetings. Participation of the National Commission for Lebanese Women, gender focal points working in the different Lebanese ministries and civil society organizations will be sought for so as to ensure ownership, sustainability, transparency and mutual accountability.

Italian Cooperation Office
Of the Embassy of Italy in Beirut
Hazmieh, Hazmieh Square
4th floor, Beirut
Tel: 05451494
Email: utl.beirut@esteri.it
Website: www.utlbeirut.org



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