



CSO Gender Mainstreaming Survey

Summary Findings &
Policy Recommendations
June 2019

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BALADI CAP

Building Alliances for Local
Advancement, Development and
Investment – Capacity Building



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Introduction

BALADI CAP is a USAID-funded capacity-building project that aims to build the individual and institutional capacity of 51 Lebanese CSOs, so they could provide better advocacy and service delivery to their constituents.

BALADI CAP also aims at building the capacity of 37 municipalities and their CSO partners to strengthen citizen-municipal cooperation in local policy and decision-making. In support of USAID's Gender Equality and Female Empowerment (GE/FE) Policy, BALADI CAP has endeavored to assess the level of understanding and awareness that its CSO partners have on issues of gender equity and gender mainstreaming, as well as their commitment to integrating GE/FE principles into their organizational structures, operations, governing policies, and implementation of project activities.

As part of its gender-focused programming, BALADI CAP conducted a series of Gender Mainstreaming Surveys to interested CSO partners to obtain more detailed knowledge and data that could help inform ongoing gender capacity-building interventions, as well as to identify and promote best practices for the integration of GE/FE principles into CSO and municipality operations, project design and implementation. An additional objective was to provide evidence-based recommendations that could assist in the design of future gender programming and capacity-building initiatives for CSOs by USAID in Lebanon.



Survey Methodology and Approach

BALADI CAP conducted three Gender Mainstreaming Surveys over the past four years (2014-2018), involving the participation of 54 CSOs from five different cohorts of CSO partners for a total of 184 respondents, of which 61.23% were female and 38.76% male.

The questionnaire used was based in part on InterAction's "Gender Audit Handbook 2010" and the Gender Integration Framework's theory of change.¹ The framework is founded on the premise that institutional gender transformation can only occur when four organizational dimensions are in place, namely, political will, technical capacity, accountability, and organizational culture. The survey provides descriptive statistics covering the following aspects:

Programming Level: (1) Program Design and Guidelines; (2) Program Implementation; (3) Technical Expertise; (4) Monitoring & Evaluation; and (5) Partner Organizations.

Organization Level: (1) Gender Policies; (2) Staffing; (3) Human Resources; (4) Advocacy & Communications; (5) Financial Resources; and (6) Organizational Culture.

The overall analysis of the surveys' results allowed for:

- ▶ Assessing the level of partner civil society organizations' (CSOs) understanding and compliance with GE/FE principles;
- ▶ Introducing the concept of gender mainstreaming to relevant stakeholders, in tandem with arriving at a common understanding on basic gender concepts; and
- ▶ Proposing recommendations and the way forward that could help inform future gender programming and capacity-building for CSOs and municipalities in Lebanon.

¹ The Gender Audit Handbook, a Tool for Organizational Self Assessment for Transformation https://www.fsnnetwork.org/sites/default/files/gender_audit_handbook_2010_copy.pdf

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The lack of a clear understanding of GE/FE concepts and the inability to effectively analyze, plan, monitor, or provide proper resources to address GE/FE-based concerns emerged as key weaknesses for most CSO partners.

Thus, there is a need for more structured and gender-focused capacity-building interventions at the level of governance and organizational development, including the introduction of customized by-laws, policies and regulations, followed by sustained implementation through the integration of best practices into daily operations, especially in the areas of planning, management, data collection, budgeting and professional development.

General and specific training activities for CSO management and staff is a must in order to improve their knowledge, skills and capacities, and to overcome the lack of a common understanding of GE/FE concepts and principles; this is crucial for undertaking long-term strategic actions.

However, the achievement of the increased understanding and capacities mentioned above necessitates the allocation of dedicated financial resources to gender-focused interventions in organizational operations and project budgets, which is a main obstacle within the present context. A gender-sensitive budget could help CSOs to build in resources specifically designated to increase gender awareness and capacity-building support into annual operation budgets.

There is also a clear need for developing gender analysis tools and guidelines that can help CSOs analyze the impact of their interventions, learn from field-work and integrate this knowledge into new interventions.

The building of CSOs' internal capacities is a double win: on the one hand, it will enhance their performance and operational and financial sustainability; on the other hand, it will positively impact the quality of their partnerships with stakeholders and beneficiaries.



Contextual Analysis

on Gender Mainstreaming and GE/FE within Lebanon

Gender stereotypes remain very much embedded within the Lebanese society. They affect women's access to rights and resources, as well as decision-making processes.

According to the Global Gender Gap Report (2018)², Lebanon ranked 140 out of 149 countries globally³, despite a number of legal, structural and operational steps that have been locally adopted to improve women's empowerment and gender equality.

At the level of gender related strategies and structures, the **National Commission for Lebanese Women (NCLW)**⁴ launched the National Women's Strategy (2011-2021)⁵ consisting of twelve objectives that include: the elimination of stereotyping of women in local culture; promoting education, training opportunities and participation of girls and women in the economic sector; achievement of full and unconditional equality between men and women in all fields and sectors; and, the introduction of gender mainstreaming in all fields. The strategy also focuses on strengthening the capacity of institutions

concerned with women issues at the national level and reinforcing the partnership between NCLW and public sector departments and institutions, as well as civil-society organizations. The strategy was developed in a collaborative way through engaging stakeholders and State entities, thus reinforcing the sense of ownership at a local level.

In addition, the **Ministry of State for Economic Empowerment of Women and Youth**⁶ works to "ensure the equal rights of women and men to enjoy all economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights and privileges", through empowering women and promoting their equal participation in all fields and access to all rights and services. The National Strategy, designed by the Ministry, focuses on twelve areas including power & decision-making, and the strengthening of the capacity of the organizations working in the field of

² The report is published by the World Economic Forum and serves as index to measure gender equality in major and emerging economies.
<https://www.weforum.org/reports/the-global-gender-gap-report-2018>

³ Lebanon ranked 14 out of 18 at the level of the Middle East and Northern Africa countries included in the report.

⁴ The NCLW was established in 1998 and is affiliated with the Presidency of the Council of Ministers.

⁵ <http://nclw.org.lb/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/2-National-strategy-for-women-in-Lebanon-2011-2021-in-3-languages.pdf>

⁶ It was first established in 2017, as an Office of Ministry of State for Women's Affairs.
<https://eeway.gov.lb/en>

women's rights.⁷ Although ministries of state are not sustainable (as they can be created and abolished when forming a new cabinet), their existence indicates a level of interest and commitment by the political level to the topic.

The two strategies, above mentioned, benefit from the presence of actors who can push for their implementation within state institutions. Those include gender focal points in thirteen ministries and six official bodies including the Presidency of Council of ministers;⁸ a ministerial committee⁹ entrusted with the coordination between the different government ministries and national mechanisms on women's affairs; and, the "Department of Women Affairs" within the Ministry of Social Affairs.

The monitoring of gender related actions and the promotion of GE/FE has been reinforced through the establishment of a **National Human Rights Commission** in 2016. The Commission is tasked with the revision

of laws, legislative and executive decrees, and administrative decisions; the investigation of complaints of human rights violations and the production of periodic reports on the findings; and, the dissemination of human rights culture and advocacy for the implementation of relevant education programs.

The combination of those three pillars i.e. strategies, implementation and monitoring structures institute a solid ground for promoting and achieving gender equality and women empowerment, through the enforcement of existing laws and policies and the adoption of new ones. However, this is not enough. The absence of political will, vision, technical expertise and financial resources could undermine possible advancements.

The above entry points could be made use of when designing future strategy or programming pertaining to GE/FE within Lebanese CSOs and scaling up the intervention at later stages.

⁷ <https://eeway.gov.lb/en/content/about-us-0>

⁸ As listed in the strategy: "ministry of Tourism, ministry of Defense, ministry of Finance, ministry of Energy and Water, ministry of Higher Education, ministry of Interior and Municipalities, ministry of Environment, ministry of Social Affairs, ministry of Foreign Affairs, ministry of Information, ministry of Displaced, ministry of Industry, ministry of Economy and Trade. Economic and Social council, Council for development and reconstruction, Central administration of Statistics, Center for educational research and development, Presidency of Council of ministers, Civil defense."

⁹ Formed in 2018 by the Prime Minister.

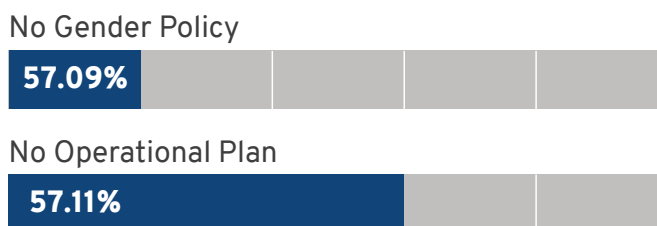
Primary Survey Findings

Status of concrete policies and procedures on GE/FE

The majority of surveyed CSOs do not have formal written GE/FE policies or related operational plans. This constitutes a challenge to the sustainability of ad hoc mainstreaming efforts within some CSOs, the latter of which relies mostly on staff's personal knowledge and initiatives. The little importance allocated to GE/FE at the level of program planning and design is reflected in the lack of gender-sensitive monitoring & evaluation or disaggregation of gender-based data and statistics, thus preventing systematic collection and analysis of relevant data or the production of best practices and lessons learned. The latter would ultimately help inform and shape the

design, efficiency, effectiveness and impact of proposed interventions. Where GE/FE policies do exist, the lack of consistent implementation and follow-up mechanisms to ensure enforcement and accountability jeopardize the full and successful institutionalization of this policy.

Figure 1: Existence of Gender Mainstreaming Policies and Procedures



Perception vs. Reality When it Comes to GE/FE within CSOs

Answers provided by respondents to the survey are opinion-based and not evidence-based. They reflect a gap between overall staff perceptions and the actual realities of their organization structures and existing

capabilities. This observation is reinforced by the lack of knowledge, inconsistency and frequently conflicting answers in various areas, especially monitoring & evaluation and budgeting.

CSO staff have the necessary knowledge, skills and attitude to carry put their work with gender awareness



CSO do not provide training of project and program staff in gender planning and analysis



Absence of a person responsible for the integration and mainstreaming of gender within organizational departments



Absence of a person/department responsible for handling gender-based issues



Absence of GE/FE policy



GE/FE policy is reflected in advocacy campaigns



Figure 2: Staff Perception of Existing Gender Mainstreaming Capacity versus Institutional Realities

Actual Presence of GE/FE in CSO Budgets and Institutional Set-Up

Most CSOs lack budgets with funding specifically dedicated for addressing gender-based development or the allocation of adequate financial resources to conduct gender analysis and gender training in a systematic manner. There is a proportional relationship between the lack of integration of gender considerations in CSOs' programs/

projects design, implementation, evaluation and human resources practices, and the allocation of relevant resources in favor of GE/FE. CSO contributions to the advancement of gender equality among their staff and within their beneficiaries appear to be an unintended consequence rather than a conscientious undertaking.

Figure 3: Staff Training and Allocation of Financial Resources to Implementation of Gender Policy

Staff training on gender equality issues and gender analysis is systematically budgeted for

45.02%

Allocation of financial resources for the implementation of the gender policy at all levels

31.26%

Integration of GE/FE in Project Design and Implementation

The integration of GE/FE in project design and implementation is done on an ad hoc basis, with few exceptions. It relies mostly on staff's personal knowledge and initiative, but does not come as the result of organized processes or tools, such as capacity-building activities, strategic planning, M&E tools and/

or related resources. The absence of these elements negatively affects the sustainability of similar actions (i.e. staff knowledge will become less relevant over time, inconsistent application of processes and tools will result in uneven or flawed outcomes) and creates challenges measuring the impact

of the implemented activities, producing lessons learned and informing future interventions.

Most survey respondents think that their CSOs have the capacity to handle the frequent resistance faced when addressing gender-related issues. Commitment to gender equality is mentioned as a criterion for collaborating with other organizations. However, the lack of gender-related training and tools needed to support gender planning, analysis and evaluation constitutes a challenge and a limitation to forming efficient partnerships. The little importance and

funds being allocated to gender analysis impacts the effectiveness of establishing partnerships based on the existence of gender criteria (within partner institutions), and undertaking common actions. Survey findings reveal that the top three impediments to effective gender integration remain: (1) lack of gender analysis tools, (2) non-supportive office culture and environment, and (3) insufficient staffing levels. The lack of gender analysis tools is indicative of the lack of efficiency in the collection, analysis and utilization of sex-disaggregated data that feeds into and supports further efforts.

Figure 4: Existence of Program Activities that Provide Equal Access to Services to both Sexes versus Staff perception of CSO Ability to Recognize and Handle Resistance to Addressing Gender Issues

CSO implements plan for programs/projects include activities that strengthen skills of men and women, providing both sexes equal access to services and training budgeted for

46.63%

CSO has the capacity to recognize and handle resistance to addressing gender issues in our programs/projects

80.37%

Codes of Conduct, Grievances and Complaint Mechanisms

Most respondents agree that their CSOs encourage gender-sensitive behavior, discourage gender stereotyping, and take measures to counter sexism at work. They also agree that the working environment has improved for women over past few years within the institution. Yet, further probing is required at the level of response

with regards to the existence of specific policies against workplace harassment, discrimination, complaint and accountability mechanisms.

As per the findings of the survey, challenges to GE/FE can be divided into two categories: external and internal. CSOs are highly influenced

CSO encourages gender sensitive behavior, for example in terms of language used, jokes and comments made

60.62%

CSO discourages gender stereotyping and takes measures to counter it in its work environment

39.79%

Figure 5: Perception of CSO Encouraging Gender Sensitive Behavior versus Weakness in Measures to Counter Gender Stereotyping at Work Place

by external challenges, as these govern their existence, priorities, operations and dynamics. Within this context, CSOs' margin of influence is almost restricted to lobbying and advocacy actions toward inducing change at the level of the **national culture and attitude with regards to gender and equality; amendment of national legislation; recognition of women's role in the public sphere; and, provision of access to resources and decision making processes.**

Contrary to external challenges, CSOs are more likely to have control over internal challenges as these require the will and action to overcome them. Yet, those two conditions (will and action) are more probable to exist whenever **staff and management are knowledgeable and aware of gender-related issues; gender policies are adopted and enforced by CSO management; financial resources are allocated to gender-related trainings and activities; and, gender specific**

tools (M&E systems, learning, analysis...) are made available.

The above challenges are interrelated. Less knowledge especially at the managerial level will reduce the likelihood of relevant internal discussions and debates, thus decreasing the chances of equal access of men and women to different levels of jobs, and most importantly the institutionalization of GE/FE through policies and plans. Furthermore, the above challenges will make any GE/FE action difficult and unsustainable within large organizations, as those actions, within the present context, lack structural foundations and linear processing. Those main challenges constitute in the same time a set of areas where interventions are recommended to maximize benefits, i.e. increased knowledge, endorsement and active involvement of senior management, equal access to staffing and sustainable actions within large organizations.

Policy Recommendations

Inconsistent levels of gender knowledge, experience and commitment were identified within the surveyed CSOs. This reality allows room for different unilateral and joint entry points aimed at achieving GE/FE gradually, and at different levels:

Micro level

- ▶ Provide professional development and training opportunities. Encourage CSOs to plan and implement regular trainings, or to enroll staff in professional development and training activities and workshops. This can be done on a first instance through the provision of direct support (technical and financial), but also through conditioning sustainable cooperation with CSOs to their allocation of financial resources (as modest as they be, but as long as meaningful) to such activities.
- ▶ Raise awareness on the importance of gender analysis and provide support to gender mainstreaming and sensitization.
- ▶ Encourage CSOs to adopt and integrate GE/FE commitments.

These could be written policies or mission statements that are made available to the public, to staff, and third parties through displayed notices within the CSOs' premises, employee handbooks, organizational websites and social media platforms, and publications, reports and related communications.

- ▶ Make efficient, effective and fair complaint mechanisms available for staff.
- ▶ Encourage CSOs to make public gender-based success stories and achievements that specifically influence women, as well as promote the contributions of women staff, partners and beneficiaries during project implementation.

Intermediate/tactical level

- ▶ Conduct gender assessments and audits for CSOs and develop customized action plans based on their identified needs/priorities/capacities.
- ▶ Adopt or update gender-sensitive internal policies & procedures, regulations and practices (human resources, operations, finance, and Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (PMEAL)...).
- ▶ Provide peer-to-peer support and mentorship for young or inexperienced female staff members.
- ▶ Develop CSOs' internal gender expertise and analysis capacities.
- ▶ Provide technical expertise to

CSOs to enable them to mainstream GE/FE into policies, budgets and strategic plans, and enhance and modify existing ones to ensure the inclusion of complaint and accountability mechanisms, protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) policies, and the consolidation of M&E systems and tools (at the level of design and data collection).

- ▶ Support the assignment of necessary resources for a gender focal point/unit to coordinate gender-related matters and establish a mechanism for building institutional memory and future reference for gender knowledge and advice within CSOs.

Macro level

- ▶ Consolidate CSOs' with specialized capacities in gender training and audit by establishing a pool of CSOs with gender expertise that can provide services to other CSOs and to public institutions.
- ▶ Support CSOs in identifying GE/FE common priorities and provide technical expertise to promote

advocacy and policy-change with influencers and decision-makers at the national level.

- ▶ Encourage the collection of disaggregated data and the application of gender analysis and mainstreaming within public institutions.
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