

UPR 2020 Lebanon: Women's Rights

Coordinated by Lebanese Women Democratic Gathering (RDFL)

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Introduction

Women were an integral part of the popular uprising in Lebanon since its beginning on October 17 2019, where "Revolution is Female" was one of the main slogans. Women practically led actions and chants and often stood as the primary defense line between protesters and security forces. The strong presence of women shattered sexist stereotypes, barriers, and inherited social traditions in society. It placed their main demands against discrimination and sexism at the forefront of the struggle. Although women play a vital role in economic, social, and political life, they still suffer from discrimination and marginalization in the various spheres of life, especially following the economic downturn and reduced job opportunities. Sexist laws abound, primarily related to personal status. Lebanese women are also forbidden from giving their nationality to their children and face discrimination in the labor and social security codes. Their participation in decision making in Parliament and the Council of Ministers is still minimal, due to the prevailing male culture.

Up until the writing of this report, the situation of women did not witness any changes since the last UPR, which included 78 recommendations related to women's rights (out of 404). Although Lebanon agreed on 18 of those recommendations, none were implemented to date.

1. The International Context of Women's Human Rights

Although Lebanon acceded to several international conventions on human rights in general and women's rights, in particular, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), it has kept its reservations on Article 9 Paragraph 2, related to nationality, and items (c), (f), (d), and (g) of Article 16, in addition to Article 29.

Lebanon should:

- Lift reservations on CEDAW
- Join the CEDAW Optional Protocol

2. Personal Status Laws

The Lebanese state has never approved a civil personal status law, leaving the task of managing personal affairs, including marriage, divorce, alimony, custody, and inheritance to the religious courts of officially recognized sects. Lebanese citizens are thus subject to the laws of 15

religious courts. Under this system, women do not enjoy the same rights as men of the same sect, and there are discrepancies in women's rights between the sects. The distinction between sects is enshrined in Article 9 of the Lebanese constitution, which "guarantees that the personal status and religious interests of the population, to whatever religious sect they belong, shall be respected." Its legal systems and decisions discriminate against women of all sects in access to divorce and custody of their children.

In addition to legal obstacles, women also face challenges related to judicial procedures, their financial costs, and the absence of proper support.ⁱ This discriminatory reality underscored Lebanon's reservations on CEDAW Article 16, which recommends equal rights for women and men in all family matters. Despite repeated recommendations by rights activists, groups, and international organizations in the past decades, Lebanese authorities have failed to act seriously to adopt a civil, unified personal status law. Furthermore, there is no Lebanese law that regulates the affairs of citizens who do not belong to one of the 18 recognized sects.

The age of marriage remains one of the most prominent problems in this context, due to the legalization of child marriage. Marriage ages vary according to the varying laws of different religious communities, in violation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which sets the age of majority at 18, and its Protocols that require states to protect children from sexual violence. Likewise, the CEDAWⁱⁱ does not recognize the betrothal of children, as early marriage carries severe consequences for the minor, the family, and social stability and provides easy access to human trafficking and sexual exploitation.

Civil society organizations provided Parliament with several proposals related to the protection of children from early marriage. However, they have not been presented before the General Committee as of yet.

Recommendations:

- Adopt a unified civil personal status law that applies to all Lebanese citizens, based on equality between men and women in the affairs of marriage, divorce, and custody.
- Adopt a civil law that sets a minimum age for marriage and forbids child marriage, applicable to Lebanese and all residents on Lebanese territories without exception.

3. Lebanese Penal Code

In its core, the Lebanese Penal Code is a reflection of a sexist, patriarchal culture in addressing gender and gender-based violence. It continues to criminalize adultery and abortion, only allowing the latter under exceptional circumstances. It penalizes women for providing sexual services as perpetrators of the crime of prostitution while ignoring the client.

Although Article 536 of the Penal Code, which used to provide a mitigating excuse for perpetrators of so-called "honor crimes," was removed, Lebanese courts continue to base their

decisions on Article 252 of the same law to provide a mitigating excuse based on the "state of anger" of the perpetrator when committing the crime.

The Penal Code remains weak in handling sexual violence and unable to protect women. First of all, the Code lacks a clear definition of sexual violence and does not explicitly criminalize sexual harassment. It allows men to rape their wives through article 503 and 504, which criminalize rape but exclude cases of marital rape.

Although Article 522, providing amnesty for rapists who marry their victims, was removed, its provisions remain in the content of Articles 505 and 518. Its abolition coincided with the amendment of the two articles to exempt perpetrators who later marry their victims. Article 505, criminalizing intercourse with minors, was amended to exempt perpetrators of the crime of intercourse with a person between 15 and 18 if a valid marriage contract is concluded with the victim. The same amendment was also applied to Article 518, which criminalizes sexual intercourse with a virgin through promises of marriage. In both articles, the stipulated exemption included stopping the prosecution or the execution of the judgment.

Recommendations:

- Criminalize marital rape and abolish the exemption of spouses from rape crimes by amending articles 503 and 504 of the Lebanese Penal Code.
- Amend articles 505 and 518 of the Lebanese Penal Code to repeal the text exempting the perpetrator from punishment if he marries his victim.
- Pass a law to criminalize sexual harassment.
- Repeal all articles criminalizing women's right to abortion, particularly Article 541 of the Lebanese Penal Code.
- Approve the proposal to amend articles 252 to 548 of the Lebanese Penal Code.
- Decriminalize adultery by removing Articles 487, 488, and 489 of the Lebanese Penal Code.

4. Trafficking in Women

The Human Trafficking Law 164 was issued on 24/8/2011 and considered an achievement despite some flaws, as it constituted a clear legal framework for the crime of trafficking. Although security services have been able to uncover several human trafficking networks operating in Lebanon, the lack of a legal text and transparent mechanisms to protect victims remain the main obstacles to justice and the criminalization of perpetrators, as well as reducing the crime in general. The law also suffers from several loopholes, summarized as follows:

- Absence of a monitoring system for migration patterns in and out of Lebanon and the lack of a system to monitor whether foreign migrants are heavily involved in sex work.
- Law 164 does not explicitly mention geographical authority to enforce it outside the country, to enable the fight against human trafficking to be applied to all victims,

including the Lebanese outside the country.

- Lack of laws and policies to protect women and girls from employment agencies involved mainly in trafficking - procedures are limited to administrative measures by the General Directorate of General Security (GDGS) against these agencies. However, judicial measures must be taken to prosecute those involved in the crime of trafficking in the courts.
- Lack of applicable laws and policies related to marriage agencies, in particular those involved in arranging marriages to foreigners.
- The Human Trafficking Law is inconsistent with the Prostitution Law to Protect Public Health issued on 6/12/1931 - currently under review by Parliament - that stipulates that sex workers must be isolated in a specific location. Although the civil war took with it all legal prostitution establishments and while the state stopped giving new permits after 1977, the Prostitution Law is still in effect in Lebanon.
- The Human Trafficking Law also contradicts Article 523 of the Penal Code, applied to all cases of prostitution, which equates between the exploiter and the exploited.
- It also contradicts the measures applied to female artists (GDGS) and waitresses (Internal Security Forces - ISF), whereby owners of drinking establishments recruit artists and waitresses from Arab and other countries. After arriving in Lebanon, the young women are forced to sign contracts under debt and remain in Lebanon to pay it off by accepting sexual exploitation. The duration of such contracts is no longer than 6 months at most. The women are unable to file complaints against their exploiters due to Article 523, which criminalizes sex prostitution.

Recommendations:

- Intensify efforts and programs to help eliminate the exploitation of women in sex work and trafficking.
- Design and implement programs and public policies aimed at reducing the demand for services that can be used for trafficking and prosecuting those involved in the exploitation of sex work and trafficking in women.
- Establish a national protection system for victims of this crime to ensure that the principle of exemption for victims from punishment and the victim's access to integrated assistance is applied.
- Amend the Trafficking in Persons Law and Article 524 of the Penal Code based on "the accused is a victim until proven guilty" and not the other way around, as well as punishing the perpetrator.
- Abolish of the Law on the Protection of Public Morals from Prostitution of 1931.

5. Domestic Workers

Article 7 of the Labor Law excluded "servants in individual households," including women domestic workers, from its provisions. They are subject to a particular employment contract within the *kafala* (sponsorship) system that links their residence and work in Lebanon to the sponsor and allows the latter to engage in violence, suppression of freedom, and other violations of rights. No evident official efforts were undertaken to protect this category of workers, despite the extensive documentation of violations by local and international organizations and the long struggle of workers against the *kafala* system and for better work conditions through several movements and campaigns in the past years.

The only legal framework regarding the status of women domestic workers is the tripartite labor contract (the worker, recruitment office, and the homemaker), knowing that its clauses do not stop any of the parties from its violation. The Ministry of Labor and GDGS developed the contract to include details on working hours, leave, sleeping and living arrangements, and similar matters. The absence of a regulating law and monitoring mechanisms, thus accountability for violators, the tripartite relationship remains subject to the whims of its parties. The relationship with the Ministry of Labor does not go further than organizing the logistics of recruiting the workers and their residency. Home country embassies and consulates are sometimes involved in solving disputes.

Recommendations:

- Abolish the *kafala* system and include domestic workers, women, and men, to the Labor Code by amending or removing Article 7 thereof.
- Ratify ILO Convention 189 on decent work for domestic workers
- Establish a domestic worker recruitment mechanism in line with international standards.
- Stop the administrative detention of women domestic workers victim of violence and exploitation and put an end to the detention and deportation of those who are establishing families and have children in Lebanon
- Monitor, hold accountable and punish abusive employment agencies and all who violate the rights of domestic workers.
- Conduct serious investigations in cases involving the death of domestic workers and prosecute all violators.

6. Protecting Women from Domestic Violence

The Law to Protect Women and Other Family Members from Domestic Violence, issued by the Lebanese Parliament in 2014, was incomplete. The approved text ignored fundamental demands included in the draft law before its amendment by MPs. Consequently, a bill to amend the law above was approved by the Council of Ministers on 3/8/2017. However, it remains in Parliament. It includes:

- Establish the Victims Assistance Fund provided for in the law.
- Establish a specialized unit on domestic violence within the Internal Security Forces.
- Establish a family court specializing in family issues and violence against women.
- Criminalize marital rape.

Recommendation:

- The Parliament should pass the above bill amending the Law to Protect Women and Other Family Members from Domestic Violence.
- Activate Article 5 of Law 293 and establish the Domestic Violence Unit in the Internal Security Forces.

7. Nationality Law

The Lebanese Nationality Law, issued in 1925 and amended in 1960, continues to discriminate against Lebanese women. It prevents them from transferring their citizenship to their children, clearly stating that Lebanese citizenship is granted to those "born of a Lebanese father." Lebanon continues to refuse to withdraw its reservations on CEDAW Article 9. Although the government took some measures to facilitate the residency of children of Lebanese mothers, through exemptions from work permits and free courtesy residency permits renewable every three years, the demand for granting women the right to give citizenship continues to be ignored.

The nationality law also discriminates against women by distinguishing between mothers of Lebanese origin and women of other origins who acquired nationality through their husbands. In the case of divorce or death of the husband, the latter can grant nationality to children from another marriage. Lebanese mothers are not allowed to do so.

In May 2017, the latest of a series of draft amendments to the nationality law was presented by the President of the National Commission for Lebanese Women's Affairs to the Council of Ministers. However, the presented draft failed to reflect a commitment to equality, denying the children of Lebanese mothers from nationality, political rights, and some labor and property rights if they had reached the age of legal majority.

Recommendation:

- Lift reservations on CEDAW Article 9.
- Amend Article 1 of the Nationality Law to start with: "A Lebanese is (1) Every person born of a Lebanese father or a Lebanese mother..."
- Amend Article 5 of the Nationality Law to give foreign men married to Lebanese women the right to obtain citizenship, and to comply with the recommendations of the 2015 CEDAW Committee.ⁱⁱⁱ

8. Women's Representation in Political Institutions

Lebanon suffers from the absence of public policies to strengthen the position of women in public life and their representation in political institutions. It is considered one of the worst countries in the world in terms of gender equality indicators. Lebanon was ranked in the 9th worst position (145 out of 153 countries) in the World Economic Forum's Gender Gap Index 2020, consisting of several indicators related to economic and political participation, in addition to health and education. While Lebanon failed to rank above 111 in any of these indicators, it ranked the fifth worst in terms of women's participation in political institutions.^{iv} For example, women were historically absent from ministerial councils up until 2004, holding 2 or fewer seats until the popular uprising of 17/10/2019, where women showed their real leadership and revolutionary potential, which led political sides in the current government to give 7 ministries to women.

In this context, human rights organizations and groups in Lebanon have always called for the facilitation and encouragement of women's participation in politics. One such demand is including a quota for women in Parliament through the electoral law. Unfortunately, the government that took office between December 2016 and May 2018 failed to fulfill its pledge in the ministerial statement^v to apply the quota system in the new electoral law for the 2018 elections. However, only 6 women reached Parliament, compared to 122 men, and two of the largest 4 parliamentary blocs lacked any women's representation.

Recommendations:

- Adopt an electoral law setting a quota for women of no less than 30% of the seats.
- Adopt public policies and programs to ensure the participation of women by no less than 30% of municipal or local council seats.

9. Rights of Women Prisoners

The situation of prisons and laws confirms that women prisoners are denied the most basic humanitarian rights and international human rights standards. There are 4 women's jails in Lebanon, one each in Zahle, Beirut, Baabda, and Tripoli. They are mostly located in ancient buildings that used to be designated as barracks for the army or security forces. Minors are received in Dahr el-Basheq in Metn, in addition to the women's cells under the Adlieh Bridge in Beirut.

Most of these prisons lack the most basic human needs and witness many violations to several human rights, such as the lack of gynecological services and chronic medications. Drinking water is also scarce, and the food provided does not conform with special health needs. Eating spaces are in the vicinity of toilets. Violations also include the failure to take into account the needs related to pregnancy and nutrition for mothers and breast-feeders. The policies also

neglect the situation of children born in prison and the lack of attention to their needs. Other violations impact foreign prisoners who are in a fragile situation. Furthermore, the situation of women prisoners intersects with the whole process involving litigation, courts, and time limits.

Recommendations:

- Apply Decree 17315/64, transferring prison administration to the Ministry of Justice as soon as possible; implement all international human rights instruments ratified by Lebanon; and apply the minimum standards and regulations related to the treatment of prisoners.
- Set clear and relevant legislative, judicial, administrative, and financial plans and policies to guarantee the minimum rights of women prisoners.
- Construct new prisons for women or rehabilitate existing ones to observe international standards.
- Develop and implement a reform plan that includes health, social, and psychological care and provides and maintains suitable places for women with disabilities and special needs.
- Develop and equip temporary detention centers to isolate prisoners from those who are temporarily detained.
- Train all those concerned on international human rights conventions and the minimum standards for the treatment of prisoners, particularly the UN Bangkok Rules.
- Expedite investigations and trials and develop a legal aid system, providing it to women detainees and prisoners when needed.
- Develop and promote alternatives to prisons and encourage judges to apply them.
- Work to deport foreign women prisoners immediately upon completion of their prison terms, return them to freedom without delay, and extradite foreign women prisoners to their respective countries.

10. Financial and Tax System

Discrimination against women also appears in the country's financial and tax system. The Lebanese government does not consider care work, including domestic work, to have any economic value. Article 31 of the Tax Code explicitly discriminates against women in allocating deductions and exemptions. According to the article, married men are entitled to tax deductions on dependent wives and up to five children. However, these benefits only apply to married women who can prove they are the head of the household due to the husband's death or inability to work. Articles 625 to 629 of the Commerce Law of 1942, also discriminates against women by imposing restrictions on the wife's property when the husband goes bankrupt. She is considered her husband's dependent, and all her property acquired during the marriage is considered part of her husband's unless she can prove otherwise. Finally, officially married women carry a higher tax burden than their male counterparts, for they are treated as single women for tax purposes and do not receive the tax exemptions granted to married men

with children.

Recommendation:

- Amend or remove the articles mentioned above to eliminate discrimination against women in the tax system.

11. Labor Laws and Social Security

A. Social Security Law

Social security is the backbone of the entire social system, as it is the mechanism allowing citizens, especially the poor and the middle class, to face personal crises and health problems. However, some aspects of the Lebanese Social Security Law still discriminate against women:

- Discrimination between men and women in the **time of benefit from maternity leave**: Wives of beneficiaries enjoy maternity benefits three months after their husband's registration in the National Social Security Fund (NSSF). However, women workers can only benefit from such benefits 10 months after their registration. This period must be unified to allow equal access to maternity benefits.
- **Family allowance**: Article 3 of Legislative Decree 3950 of the Law of Employees and Article 46 of the Social Security Law, which gave male employees and workers the right to benefit from family allowances, does not allow the same rights to women workers, denying them family compensation, despite their equal contribution to the NSSF. For example, male employees may receive compensation for non-working wives, while female employees can only do this if their husbands are dead or have a debilitating illness.
- **Health and Hospitalization**: Article 10 of the Benefits and Services Regulations of the State Employees Cooperative and Article 14 of the Social Security Law discriminate against women, regarding their husband's ability to receive healthcare, hospitalization, and other forms of social benefits, despite their equal contribution to the funds.

B. Discrimination against Women in the Lebanese Labor Law

- **Exceptions**: The Labor Law excludes some groups from its provisions (Article 7), such as domestic and agricultural workers. The majority of those are women who do not, therefore, receive from social security benefits. The Labor Law's provisions regarding women are combined with juveniles and minors, according to Articles 21 and 30 of Chapter 2.

- **Harassment and Discrimination in the Workplace:** The Labor Law does not address sexual harassment and lacks precise mechanisms to deter and punish gender-based discrimination against working women, including a precise mechanism to monitor the situation in the private sector and apply deterrent penalties for violations, especially those based on gender.
- **Equality in Job Opportunities:** The Labor Law does not discriminate against women in the right to work and work opportunities. However, there is a lack of legislative measures to enhance equal opportunity in employment between women and men. Furthermore, while Articles 26 to 30 of the Labor Law specifically address the employment of women, Article 27 thereof prohibits employing children, teenagers, and women in a range of jobs. Thus, women and children are addressed in the same chapter of the Labor Law.
- **Working Conditions and Equal Wages:** The Labor Law established equal pay for equal work between workers of both genders. However, it sometimes differs from legal texts. Women workers are sometimes forced due to an urgent material need to sign employment contracts that are not compatible with current wages.
Article 34 stipulates a one-hour rest time after five hours of non-stop work for women and after six hours for men.
Discrimination is also apparent in the right to leave work due to marriage, provided by Article 59 to women one year after they start working in the establishment. However, men are not allowed this right, which reproduces the logic that believes women should give priority to domestic and family responsibilities.
- **Job Security:** Every worker in the public or private sector has the right to job security. In practice, however, there are discrepancies of various magnitudes in applying regulations in some areas.
- **Maternity Leave:** Article 28 of the Labor Law set maternity leave at 7 weeks in the private sector. Article 38 of the Legislative Decree No.112 Amended by Law No.48 set maternity leave at 60 days for public sector employees. It shows an apparent discrepancy between the two segments, noting that Lebanon has not yet ratified ILO Convention 103 on Maternity Protection.
- **Dismissal and Retirement:** Article 26 of Decree No.47 of the Retirement and Dismissal Code of 19/6/1983 denied family members of deceased women employees from benefiting from her pension, except under specific conditions.

Recommendations:

Although it had ratified CEDAW in July 1996, Lebanon has yet to reform the Labor Code, Social Security Laws and regulations, and laws concerning employees. Thus, it must:

- Amend Article 26 of Legislative Decree No.47 on 19/6/1996 (Retirement and Dismissal Regulations).
- Amend Article 3 of Decree No.3950 on 27/4/1960 (Family Allowances).
- Amend Article 15 of Decree No.5883 (Maternity Leave).
- Clear all discrimination against women in the Labor Law to ensure complete equality between the sexes.
- Separate the provisions of the Labor Law concerning women from those related to juveniles and children.
- Establish a system to protect men and women farmers of all nationalities.
- Establish a law to govern the recruitment of domestic workers and organize their work.
- Establish a clear mechanism to achieve equal pay for equal work between the sexes and tighten deterrent penalties.

12. Rights Women Refugees

A. Syrian Women Refugees

More than one million Syrian refugees are registered at the UNHCR in Lebanon. However, the government estimates the number at around 1.5 million actual refugees. Female refugees constitute around 51.8% of the Syrian refugee population in Lebanon. Some simply do not know the whereabouts of their husbands, following the disappearance of 58,148 persons in Syria at the hands of regime forces between March 2011 and August 2015, around 90% of whom are men. Many Syrian refugee women are breadwinners and, according to the International Rescue Committee (IRC), face significant challenges related to sexual exploitation, daily harassment, and the high frequency of domestic violence, leaving women insecure in their homes, in addition to child and forced marriage and dwindling resources.^{vi}

Syrian refugee women are affected by lack of access to Lebanese laws due to the question of identification documents, Lebanese policies and restrictions on Syrians, and the need to carry a regular residence permit or refugee card. Women without identification papers cannot seek the authorities, knowing that 74% of Syrians in Lebanon lack legal residency and are exposed to an increased risk of exploitation and abuse, reducing the ability of refugees to access services.^{vii}

Recommendations:

- Provide legal protection for refugee women and prohibit all forms of sexual violence, such as rape, sexual slavery, and prostitution.
- Secure legal procedures for pregnant women in terms of ensuring reproductive health and naming and registering newborns.

- Provide legal protection for women subjected to violence and facilitate their access to the courts, even if they cannot obtain the necessary identity documents.

B. Palestinian Refugee Women in Lebanon and from Syria

Palestinian refugee women in Lebanon and Palestinian refugee women from Syria to Lebanon suffer from double discrimination in the country and are denied access to their fundamental human rights. Furthermore, the failure of the legislature to define Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and the non-ratification of the 1951 Refugee convention exposes them to several violations such as the absence of protection; the lack of a legal identity, which hinders their access to justice; and denying them their most basic human rights, such as the right to freedom of movement, residence, and travel, the right to work and join liberal professions, the right to own property, the right to adequate housing, health, education, and the right to free opinion and freedom of expression.

Women refugees continued to be denied access to public services, including those related to Covid-19 and the general mobilization measures taken by the Lebanese government. The Lebanese government's prevention and treatment plans excluded Palestinian women. They were also denied re-entry into Lebanon during the evacuation of Lebanese citizens abroad.

The social and economic situation in Lebanon has worsened. As poverty and unemployment rates have increased, domestic violence rates followed suit. Girls, in particular, are being subjected to abuse and exploitation. Women also carry the additional burden of dealing with psychological pressures felt by the whole family, their children's distant learning, among other responsibilities.

Recommendations:

General Recommendations:

- Issue a Law to legally and unequivocally define the status of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon to ensure their economic and social rights and dignified living.
- Acknowledge the legal identity of Palestinian refugees from Syria to Lebanon.
- Grant Palestinian refugee women the right to transfer their legal status to their children and allow them the same courtesy residency for their children on equal footing with Palestinian refugee husbands registered at the official Lebanese departments.
- Facilitate the registration and extraction of documents for newborn children of Palestinian refugees from Syria. Instead of facilitating routine procedures, taking

into account their status as refugees from a war-torn country, they are further complicated under the pretext of expiry of residency for one or both parents.

- Abolish discriminatory measures that hinder Palestinian refugee women married to Lebanese men from obtaining the Lebanese nationality and linking it to having children, which constitutes double discrimination.
- Commit to implementing Recommendation 80.24 of the 9th session of the Human Rights Council in 2010, as the Lebanese state has failed to develop suitable measures to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women, with the view to achieve gender equality and to combat gender violence, despite its commitments and its acceptance of the recommendation.
- Register and complete the extraction of identification documents for newborn children of Palestinian refugees from Syria, in line with ratified international conventions, particularly women with expired residency permits who are at risk of several violations, including abuse and discrimination at work, violence, and sexual assault, without recourse to justice.
- Amend Law 129/2010, exclude Palestinians from the Plan to Eradicate Illegal Foreign Labor issued by the Ministry of Labor in June 2019, and grant Palestinians the right to practice all professions without exception, issuing the necessary implementing decrees.
- Promote the participation of refugee women in economic life and consider the specificity of their situation, ensuring women's empowerment and equality between men and women at work by bridging gender or nationality gaps. Unemployment rates among Palestinians reached 53%, 21% of whom were male and 32% female. According to a study by URWA and AUB in 2015 (before October 17, the Ministry of Labor's plan, and the Covid-19 pandemic, as unemployment rates are expected to have increased), 86.5% of the employed refugees were not protected by employment contracts.
- Enhance the protection of refugee women from the risk of early marriage, through Lebanon's commitment to international agreements relating to the rights of the child, raising the age of marriage to eighteen, and the guardianship of girls by the Union to Protect Juveniles.
- Remedy and develop UNRWA's budgets and services in the areas of health, education, and social welfare in all agency services and integrate women with disabilities. Recent measures have posed a significant threat to the educational, health, and social departments. Schools were crowded with students, and health services, including reproductive health services for women, were curtailed.
- Include Palestinian refugee women in campaigns carried out by the Ministry of Health, especially on the early detection of breast cancer.
- Promote the participation of Palestinian refugee women in local Palestinian decision-making bodies that work with refugees/women and introduce a gender

dimension in the health, education, and employment sectors.

ⁱ <https://www.hrw.org/ar/report/2015/01/19/267959>.

ⁱⁱ CEDAW Article 16, Paragraph 2.

ⁱⁱⁱ CEDAW recommended that the Lebanese state take measures related to the refugee situation in line with its general recommendations No. 32 (2014) and No. 33 (2015) on the issue of women's access to justice.

^{iv} The Global Gender Gap Report http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2020.pdf.

^v Available in Arabic on the Lebanese Parliament Website at <https://bit.ly/38RVPh1>.

^{vi} International Rescue Committee, "Are we listening? Acting on our commitments to women and girls affected by the Syrian conflict," September 1, 2014, <https://www.rescue.org/report/are-we-listening-acting-our-commitments-women-and-girls-affected-syrian-conflict-0>.

^{vii} <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2019>.