



IN BRIEF



HUMANITARIAN IMPACT IN LEBANON

Photo: UN Women/ Dar Al Mussawir

Background

Lebanon is grappling with an economic and financial meltdown as it continues to deal with the disastrous impact of the Beirut Port explosions and the spillover Syria refugee crisis. The country remains embroiled in the global COVID-19 pandemic and a devastating shadow pandemic, where sexual and gender-based violence has continued to harm women, girls and marginalized groups in high numbers. The situation has quickly worsened throughout 2021 in light of the national fuel and electricity crises, affecting women, girls and people of all genders living across the country.

The most marginalized households living in Lebanon - Lebanese, refugee and migrant communities - have crossed emergency thresholds and require emergency assistance. Women face structural gender discrimination in the economy, society, and law which puts them at greater risk at moments of crisis, as they often have less resources and are forced to utilize coping mechanisms. In March 2021, at least 78 per cent of the Lebanese population (3 million people) were estimated to live below the poverty line, while 'extreme' poverty reached as high as [36 per cent](#). According to UNESCWA, the multidimensional poverty rate, which takes into account factors other than income, such as access to health, education and public utilities in Lebanon has nearly doubled from 42 percent in 2019 to

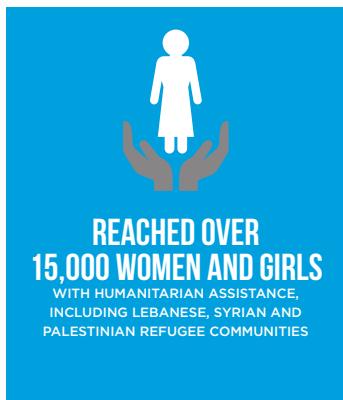
82 percent in 2021. While extreme poverty hovers around 90 per cent, Syrian refugees and half of Syrian families are food insecure, and female-headed households rates are even higher.¹ The humanitarian needs [for migrant women](#) and other marginalized groups, such as [women and girls with disabilities, elderly women and LGBTIQ+ communities](#) are increasing. Gender equality and issues concerning women and girls' specific needs remain central to Lebanon's escalating humanitarian crisis.

Since 2016, UN Women has worked with national and international stakeholders to address gender inequalities and strengthen women's empowerment in Lebanon's humanitarian response. UN Women Lebanon's humanitarian response efforts have three key objectives that work to both deliver services on the ground while positively impacting the broader scope of humanitarian assistance delivered in Lebanon:

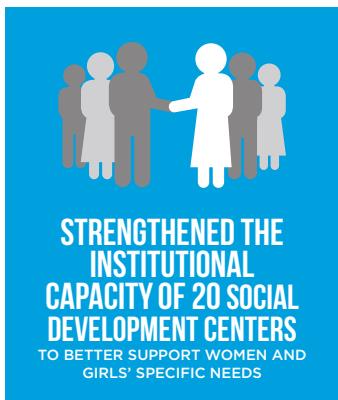
- 1. Increase gender accountability in the coordination and the implementation of the humanitarian response;**
- 2. Strengthen comprehensive protection and livelihood support to crisis affected women and girls and;**
- 3. Advance women's voices and leadership in humanitarian and crisis response and recovery.**

1. Gender Chapter 2021, forthcoming

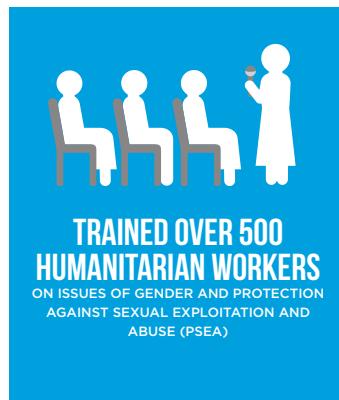
OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS, UN WOMEN HAS:



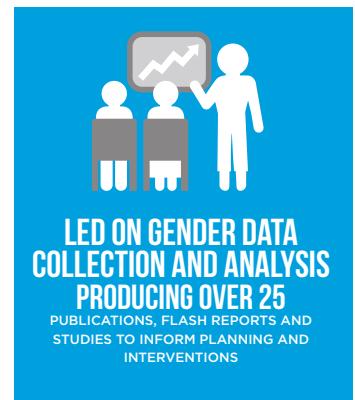
**REACHED OVER
15,000 WOMEN AND GIRLS**
WITH HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE,
INCLUDING LEBANESE, SYRIAN AND
PALESTINIAN REFUGEE COMMUNITIES



**STRENGTHENED THE
INSTITUTIONAL
CAPACITY OF 20 SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT CENTERS**
TO BETTER SUPPORT WOMEN AND
GIRLS' SPECIFIC NEEDS



**TRAINED OVER 500
HUMANITARIAN WORKERS**
ON ISSUES OF GENDER AND PROTECTION
AGAINST SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND
ABUSE (PSEA)



**LED ON GENDER DATA
COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS
PRODUCING OVER 25**
PUBLICATIONS, FLASH REPORTS AND
STUDIES TO INFORM PLANNING AND
INTERVENTIONS

Gender Accountability and Coordination

UN Women is mandated to ensure that humanitarian response efforts adequately address the needs and rights of crisis affected women and girls in all contexts. UN Women in Lebanon applies the following humanitarian response efforts in Lebanon:

1. Gender Data, Analysis, and Research

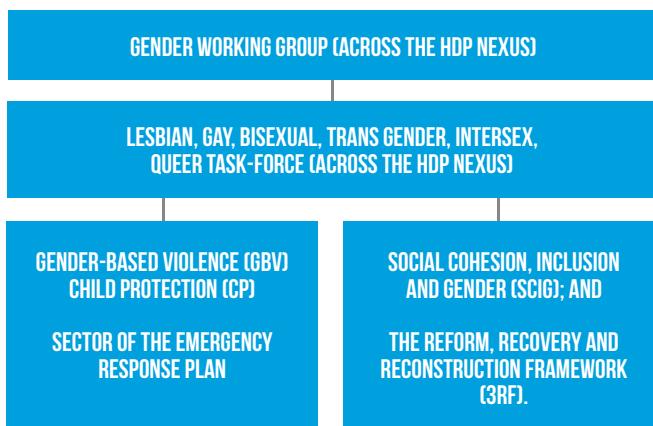
UN Women has strengthened the country's evidence base on the gender-specific impacts of crises with an intersectional lens, backed by data and analysis and informed by participatory and feminist methods. This analytical work extends across the Syrian refugee response '[Gender Chapter on the Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees](#)', COVID-19 pandemic '[Gender Alerts](#)', and the Beirut Port Explosion '[real-time gender analysis](#)'. Such analyses support UN Women's advocacy and gender technical assistance to the coordination of UN-led mechanisms such as the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), sector systems, and agencies.

2. Technical Assistance to the Humanitarian Country Team and Coordination

UN Women Lebanon is an active member of twelve humanitarian coordination bodies, including the HCT, and is an elected member of several cluster core groups (protection, PSEA and livelihoods) that shape local humanitarian policy and decision making. Through these forums, UN Women provides dedicated gender expertise to the Lebanon country team and clusters. To date, UN Women has supported the integration of gender equality into all humanitarian response plans in Lebanon: leading the gender review of the [Reform, Recovery, and Reconstruction \(3RF\)](#), Flash Appeal, the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) and the Emergency Response Plan (ERP). Throughout the implementation, UN Women provides practical and accessible guidance to humanitarian responders. UN Women also provides targeted advisors to support sister UN agencies - seconding a Gender Advisor to WHO during the COVID-19 pandemic and a Gender Expert to OCHA in response to the Beirut Port Explosion.

3. Sector Leadership

In Lebanon, UN Women co-chairs the following coordination forums related to humanitarian action:



Livelihoods and Protection to Crisis Affected Women and Girls

UN Women implements its global Flagship 'Leadership, Empowerment, Access, and Protection' (LEAP) programme to support protection, livelihood and economic opportunities for marginalized women in Lebanese and refugee communities, reaching over 15,000 women and girls to date. Accumulative monitoring and evaluation data from the past five years shows:

- **95 per cent of women have greater access to public life; and**
- **75 per cent of women report that they feel safer in their communities and the workplace.**

Livelihoods interventions increase women's economic opportunities and pathways to decent employment, but also enable them to meet their immediate needs related to nutrition, shelter, health, education and asset replenishment.



Photo: UN Women/ Dar Al Mussawir

Through cash-for-work or job placement modalities, women gain experience working in areas such as childcare and elderly care, agro-food production, business and marketing, information technology, and gender responsive industries, such as producing menstrual hygiene supplies. In parallel, UN Women provides a comprehensive range of protection services: psycho-social support, psychological first aid, legal services, emergency safe shelters, case management, and services to prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).

During the economic crisis, the following was reported under UN Women's LEAP programme:

- One in ten programme participants obtained part-time or full-time jobs within three months after the project; and
- Women significantly reduced the negative coping mechanisms that they used, by 56% on average.

Women's Voices and Leadership

UN Women leads on a series of interventions to advance women's leadership work in alignment with localization principles in Lebanon. As such, UN Women provides direct funding to projects from small women-led and women's rights organizations, and proposals that target women and girls who face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, such as those marginalized and excluded due to poverty, ethnicity, disability, age, geography, sexual orientation, lack of citizenship or because of their migratory status.

In June 2021, the United Nations in Lebanon [launched the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund \(WPHF\)](#) to finance and support six women's rights and women-led civil-society organizations that are supporting women's participation in peacebuilding and recovery processes – ensuring women's knowledge, expertise, skills, perspectives and needs are acknowledged and integrated into the Beirut port explosion response. UN Women provides secretariat support to WPHF and ensures coordination to implement the decisions of the WPHF national steering committee.

During 2020, partners have worked to increase women's participation and leadership in the Beirut Port Explosion's response and recovery process by creating women's committees, establishing women's safe spaces, including for LBQTI women, enhancing the capacity of women frontline workers, and elevating advocacy for gender equality issues through social media, art, and knowledge production.