



FINAL REPORT – PART 1 | 14.07.2017

PATRIARCHY AND SECTARIANISM: A GENDERED TRAP BASELINE OF WOMEN IN POLITICS: THE CASE OF LEBANON

Commissioned for the Hivos Women Empowered of Leadership (WE4L) Programme, which is funded through the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs Funding Leadership and Opportunities for Women (FLOW) Programme. Research conducted by Beyond Reform and Development..

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>.

FINAL REPORT | 14.07.2017

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</u>	4
<u>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT</u>	5
<u>PARTNERS</u>	6
<u>RATIONALE</u>	7
<u>METHODOLOGY</u>	9
OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY	9
DATA COLLECTION TOOLS	9
ASSUMPTIONS, LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS	11
<u>CHAPTER 1: WOMEN AND THE POLITICAL SYSTEM IN LEBANON</u>	12
GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT WOMEN IN LEBANON	12
THE LEBANESE POLITICAL SYSTEM	13
THE PRE-CIVIL WAR PERIOD, WOMEN AND POLITICS: TWO OPPOSITE POLES (1943 – 1975)	14
THE CIVIL-WAR PERIOD, WHERE ARE THE WOMEN? (1975 – 1990)	19
WOMEN AND POLITICS IN LEBANON	22
WOMEN IN LEBANESE CABINETS	22
WOMEN IN LEBANESE PARLIAMENTS	24
BREAKDOWN OF WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES	26
CHALLENGES TO WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN GENERAL	29
ECONOMIC CHALLENGES	30
SOCIAL CHALLENGES	32
STRUCTURAL CHALLENGES	34
<u>CHAPTER 2 - WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN LEBANESE POLITICAL PARTIES</u>	36
WOMEN AND POLITICAL PARTIES	37
EXCLUSION OF WOMEN IN AND FROM POLITICAL PARTIES	38
<u>CHAPTER 3 - WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN UNIONS AND SYNDICATES</u>	45
<u>CHAPTER 4 – WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM</u>	51
<u>CHAPTER 5 – WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS</u>	55
<u>CHAPTER 6 – REVIEW OF DONOR PROGRAMS</u>	58
THE “DAWRIC” PROJECT	59

THE ‘PROMOTING WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT’ PROGRAM	61
THE ‘PROMOTION OF THE ROLE OF POLITICAL PARTIES AND TRADE UNIONS IN ENHANCING WOMEN’S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION’ STUDY.....	63
THE ‘PROMOTING WOMEN’S ROLE IN POLITICAL PARTICIPATION’ PROGRAM	65
THE LANA PROGRAM.....	67
THE “LEADERSHIP INSIDE-OUT MATTERS” PROGRAM	68
<u>ANNEX I – RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE PROGRAMS</u>	<u>69</u>
<u>ANNEX – A: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS – WOMEN IN POLITICAL PARTIES.....</u>	<u>70</u>
FREE PATRIOTIC MOVEMENT (FPM)	70
FUTURE MOVEMENT	73
LEBANESE FORCES (LF)	76
THE PROGRESSIVE SOCIALIST PARTY (PSP).....	78
THE PHALANGES PARTY.....	80
THE SYRIAN SOCIAL NATIONALIST PARTY (SSNP).....	82
HEZBOLLAH.....	84
AMAL MOVEMENT	86
<u>ANNEX – B: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS – WOMEN IN UNIONS AND SYNDICATES</u>	<u>88</u>
THE BAR ASSOCIATION	88
ORDER OF PHYSICIANS.....	91
ORDER OF ENGINEERS AND ARCHITECTS	94
TEACHERS UNION.....	96
<u>ANNEX – C: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS – WOMEN IN THE LEBANESE JUDICIAL SYSTEM.....</u>	<u>98</u>
<u>ANNEX – D: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS - WOMEN IN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS.....</u>	<u>105</u>
BEIRUT MADINATI	105
YOU STINK.....	106
MOUNT LEBANON MOVEMENT	107

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report looks at how the influence of national measures and lack of consideration of women's issues have directly impacted women's involvement in politics. Lebanon has failed to ratify the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (est. 1982; UN) (CEDAW) articles that ensure proper distribution of tasks in families, as well as granting both women and men equal rights in terms of marriage, custody rights, guardianship and other measures that recognize women as first class citizens and as individuals who receive full and equal access to and benefit from all laws. This failure to do so, serves as a reminder of the Lebanese patriarchal political structure, a structure that claims to offer women access to the political space and points to a lack of legal barriers (for example, women have the right to vote and run) without actually supporting women in their attempt to gain access, this is best illustrated by the way in which the system reminds the Lebanese people that a woman's role is to be a mother and caregiver and are unable to make a decision about passing their nationalities to their children. By doing so, the Lebanese government, represented by the political parties, unions, and other political structures, has directly set limitations and obstacles to limit the personal status of women, and instead, has adapted it to fit religious and cultural expectations. Today, women in Lebanon are fighting for equal access to opportunities and rights and to enjoy being full citizens, without prejudice toward their gender, their expectations and their professional careers. The fight is still nascent and requires attention and analysis of the deep-rooted man-made structures that are by their very nature exclusive of women. When women do decide to become politically active, they are faced with many challenges pertaining to society's expectations of them, to the gender stereotyping of each and every woman, and the challenges related to resources and access to them. Women cannot stand alone in promoting political activism amongst women; everyone has a role to play, including the government that has a responsibility to design and implement measures to guarantee quicker and easier access to politics for all groups, with women being the top priority.

Finally, by its nature, politics in Lebanon is exclusive and is dominated by the political elite who have extensive financial resources, social networks and social power to exercise power and repeatedly attain it. It is even more exclusive of women, who, if they decide to become active in politics in a patriarchal society, would need to compete with men, with the media's image of how politicians appear, with a general discourse of clientelism and many other aspects of Lebanon's unique political system. This report acknowledges that access to formal politics in Lebanon is challenging for both genders, and all economic classes, and minorities, however it serves to highlight the different ways women are abruptly excluded from entering politics by being drawn into a vicious circle of constant challenges with little hope for progress and career advancement.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to thank all those who contributed to this study, including the team at HIVOS, *People Unlimited* and the Country Coordinator, Ms.Doreen Khoury, who provided the research team with excellent support. Additionally, we acknowledge the time and advice provided to our team by key experts representing political groups, unions, and government institutions. We would also like to thank all research participants who took the time to assist us in exploring this topic, their contributions were essential to the work covered in the report.

This study would not have been possible without the contribution of the team members at Beyond Reform and Development.

We hope that it will achieve its purpose of guiding future programs seeking to promote women's political participation.

CONTRIBUTORS - THE TEAM AT BEYOND REFORM AND DEVELOPMENT

Krystal Tabet

Marwa Abou Dayya

Yusra Bitar

Gilbert Doumit

Natalia Menhall

Nour Hneineh

Thibault Rabussier

Lubna Halabi

Catherine Moughalian

PARTNERS

HIVOS INTERNATIONAL

Hivos is an international organization that seeks new solutions to persistent global issues. With smart projects in the right places, HIVOS opposes discrimination, inequality, abuse of power and the unsustainable use of our planet's resources. The organization's primary focus is achieving structural change leading to its cooperation with innovative businesses, citizens and their organizations. HIVOS believes that every human being has the right to live in freedom and dignity. The organization has recently launched a programme 'Women empowered for leadership' that works in 6 countries to promote women's leadership at the political level, in public administration and within civic organizations. The programme focuses on the sub-national since that's where the decisions are made and policies are implemented. This programme seeks to form an enabling environment to promote women's participation in public life.

BEYOND REFORM AND DEVELOPMENT

Beyond Reform & Development (BRD) is a mission-driven consulting firm and a social enterprise working in the MENA region on policy research, public management reform and capacity development. We have been particularly focused on women and gender related issues leading large scale research projects for public institutions, international organizations and local NGOs. For instance, BRD has recently developed and conducted a regional mapping and assessment of women's needs in Lebanon, Jordan and Egypt for the creation of a regional multimedia platform. We have worked with on women leadership within political parties with the Ministry of Social Affairs, the National Commission for Lebanese Women (NCLW), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). We are renowned for our participatory, inclusive and comprehensive qualitative and quantitative assessments methodologies and tools applied for development research projects. We have been working with more than 200 civil society organizations and building the capacities of more than 6000 participants, including women, for the past 10 years in the MENA region.

RATIONALE

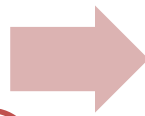
On a global level, women's participation in politics has made great strides around the world, with an increasing number of women joining ministries, parliaments, municipalities and other political bodies. However, events in Lebanon still fall short of the goals set out in international agreements such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1979¹, that aimed at ending discrimination against women in all forms including in political and public life by ensuring that women:

- Vote in all elections, and public referenda, and are eligible for all publicly elected bodies;
- Participate in the formulation of government policy and implementation thereof, and to hold public office and perform all public functions at all levels of government;
- Participate in non-governmental organizations and associations concerned with the public and political life of the country.

The CEDAW convention asks signatories to take all appropriate measures to ensure to women, without discrimination, the opportunity to represent their governments at the international level and to participate in the work of international organizations. Lebanon ratified the agreement on April 16, 1997 with specific reservations.²

Article 9, Paragraph 2

- State Parties must grant ensure women's equal rights with men with respect to the nationality of their children



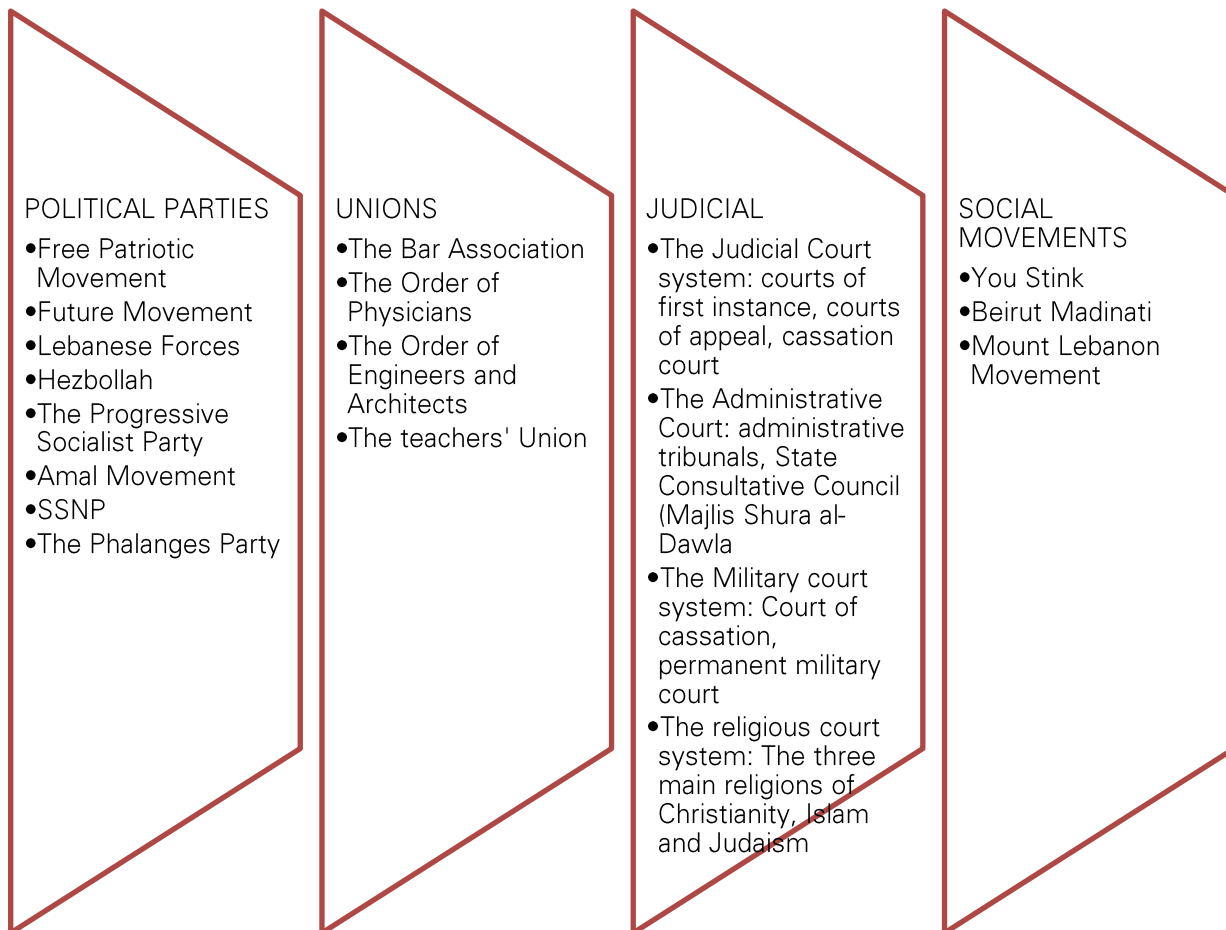
Article 16, paragraph 1

- Point c: ensuring the same rights and responsibilities during marriage and at its dissolution
- Point d: ensuring the same rights and responsibilities as parents, irrespective of their marital status, in matters relating to their children and in all cases the interests of the children shall be paramount
- Point f: ensuring the same rights and responsibilities with regard to guardianship, wardship, trusteeship and adoption of children
- Point g: Ensuring the same personal rights as husband and wife, including the right to choose a family name, a profession and an occupation

¹ Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women , Overview of the Convention

² Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, OHCHR

Today, Lebanon ranks 135th on the World Economic Forum for Political Empowerment annual report where: 9 % of legislators and senior officials are women³; 3.2% of parliamentary seats and 4.5 % of ministerial positions are occupied by women. Women in Lebanon face great challenges that limit both their capacity and chance of practicing or being engaged in politics: the lack of an enabling environment is a serious hindrance, as is the social and political patriarchal structure⁴ that is exclusive of women. This report seeks to understand and identify the key challenges facing women in the political and public sphere, more specifically in:



³The Global Gender Report, 2016.

⁴Patriarchy as defined by Merriam Webster: social organization marked by the supremacy of the father in the clan or family, the legal dependence of wives and children, and the reckoning of descent and inheritance in the male line; broadly: control by men of a disproportionately large share of power

METHODOLOGY

This research study seeks to look at women's political participation from a holistic perspective by examining the cultural, economic, social, religious, legal and institutional barriers that hinder women's participation in the political and public scene. As such, the methodology was designed so that the information retrieved would consider all the aforementioned barriers. Initially, the methodology included two data collection tools that would seek to validate each other as well as complement one another: Qualitative tools and quantitative data collection tools, as detailed in the following section.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this research are to:

- Develop a **baseline** for women's participation in: political parties, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), the judicial system and unions and syndicates;
- Identify **challenges and obstacles** to women's participation: Socio-cultural barriers and structural and legal barriers;
- Document and analyze **previous efforts and programs** in the past five years, targeted at promoting women's leadership and political participation
- Arrive at a set of **recommendations** to promote women's political participation

DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

This research study includes a baseline, as well as an analysis of the barriers to women's political participation, thus requiring a combination of qualitative and quantitative data collection tools.

- Qualitative Data Tools: These tools assisted in understanding the formal and informal challenges that women face when engaging in politics. These include structural, legal, social, economic and cultural challenges. The conversations triggered by these tools helped form a holistic understanding of women's access to the political space, and their ability to advance, engage and develop in political arenas.
- Quantitative Data Tools: These tools helped draw a visual description of the status quo, including but not limited to: Which positions women have access to, the level of participation of women in different layers of management within political groups, a review of previous data on women's participation in different sectors, focusing on the political scene, and data on the level of participation in the public and private sphere.

Below is a breakdown of all data collection tools used throughout the study,

IN LEBANON	QUALITATIVE DATA	DATA
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Desk review of studies, reports and articles, etc. — <u>60 interviews</u> with relevant stakeholders from each of the aforementioned groups — <u>5 focus groups</u> with female candidates, civil society activists, political activists and women active in political groups — Review of <u>secondary data and reports</u> on the status of women in politics in Lebanon — Review of <u>government laws and policies</u> related to civil society groups and political parties — Review of the <u>bylaws of unions, political parties and courts</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing literature on patterns and trends of socio-cultural, economic, political and structural challenges hindering women’s political participation in politics • The level of participation of female members in political groups: unions, political parties, social movements and the judicial system, • Studying of formal and informal challenges facing women who are active in politics, • Review of five development projects seeking to promote women’s participation in politics, and an analysis of lessons learned and recommendations for future projects.

ASSUMPTIONS, LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS

ASSUMPTIONS

- Outdated reports and national statistics: The Central Administration for Statistics in Lebanon has not published any new or significant information since 2009.
- Interviewees representing their respective groups tended to be positive when describing the situation of women's involvement in their groups,
- The lack of proper documentation regarding gender in government institutions,
- The political context in Lebanon hindering the political parties' willingness and ability to share information about their constituencies,
- The competitive nature of political groups in general, which might influence answers and the information shared,
- 2017 was an especially eventful year in terms of women's rights, with the establishment of the new Ministry of State for Women's Affairs and the recent documented speeches of key political figures opposing some of the key rights of women, (such as Sayyed Hasan Nasrallah's speech calling for child marriages)
- Judges were the most reluctant to share information and data due to the nature of the judicial system's internal bureaucracy and the sensitivity of their positions.

DELIMITATIONS

- The lack of quantitative data from the perceptions survey resulted in an inability to conduct a thorough analysis of cultural barriers,
- Almost all groups studied in this research are based, and are most active in, Beirut and its suburbs, as such, the data collected does not represent the views of women and men in rural areas, an issue that could be solved with a regional survey at a later stage.

CHAPTER 1: WOMEN AND THE POLITICAL SYSTEM IN LEBANON

Since the CEDAW (UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women) Convention (1996), academics, public institutions, foreign governments and other institutions have become increasingly interested in gender mainstreaming and equality in general, and specifically in the political scene. The discourse around women's political participation has developed over the years and includes groups that work on changing the culture or changing perceptions around women in politics, to concluding and designing policy reforms and initiatives to be more inclusive of women in all public and political positions.

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT WOMEN IN LEBANON

The following table includes a summary of all numbers and statistics related to women's involvement in specific sectors or groups at the time of writing. It seeks to serve as a set of indicators for future development projects.

INDICATOR	
RIGHT TO VOTE AND RUN IN PARLIAMENT	1953
PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN IN PARLIAMENT	3%
NUMBER OF WOMEN MINISTERS IN THE HISTORY OF LEBANON	1
	Only 8 women have been appointed to ministerial positions
	Only 10 female parliamentarians have been elected
RANK IN TERMS OF WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION IN PARLIAMENT	139 th (in the world)
NUMBER OF ACTIVE POLITICAL PARTIES	96
% OF WOMEN IN CATEGORY ONE EMPLOYMENT IN PUBLIC OFFICE	10.1% (2011) – 6.5% (2004)
% OF WOMEN IN CATEGORY TWO EMPLOYMENT IN PUBLIC OFFICE	24.1% (2011) - 18.75% (2004)
% OF WOMEN IN CATEGORY THREE EMPLOYMENT IN PUBLIC OFFICE	36.3% (2011) - 28.1% (2004)
% OF WOMEN IN CATEGORY FOUR EMPLOYMENT IN PUBLIC OFFICE	38.3% (2011) - 31.8% (2004)
% OF WOMEN IN THE INTERNAL	3.6% of total ISF personnel (2013)

BASELINE OF WOMEN IN POLITICS: THE CASE OF LEBANON

SECURITY FORCES	
INTERNAL SECURITY FORCES STATISTICS IN DETAIL	362 sergeants and 61 gendarmes out of a total of 1,805 sergeants and gendarmes (2013)
WOMEN IN GENERAL SECURITY	217 - 4.7% of total general security personnel.
WOMEN IN SPORTS FEDERATIONS	Women sit on the administrative bodies of 16 out of a total of 37 (2014) -8.5% of the total membership of the administrative bodies of the 37 federations.
SPORTING COMMITTEES	15.6% (women represented in six out of 9 committees)
WOMEN ON THE LEBANESE OLYMPIC COMMITTEE	6.6% (2014)
WORKING WOMEN BY SECTOR	60.2% in services, 21.5% in commerce, 7.5% in industry and 5.7% in agriculture (2014)
FEMALE POPULATION IN LEBANON'S PRISONS	7.91% (2014)
PERCENTAGE OF FEMALE AMBASSADORS	6.7% (2013)
FEMALE CANDIDATES IN MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS	6.9% (2016) 1,508 out of 21,932 candidates
FEMALE CANDIDATES FOR 'MUKHTAR' POSITIONS	381 candidates out of 8,135 candidates (4.7%) (2016) – 57 won (1.9%)

THE LEBANESE POLITICAL SYSTEM

Lebanon is a parliamentary democratic republic within an overall framework of confessionalism. It is a power-sharing system with a sectarian quota in all political positions. Article 7 of Lebanon's Constitution states, "All Lebanese shall be equal before the law" and thus guarantees inclusion and representation of all social groups in its societies.⁵ Yet, the deeply rooted patriarchal and discriminatory attitudes in Lebanon make it difficult for women to engage, participate and advance their status in the different spheres in Lebanon. This system presents additional challenges to women looking to attain high level management and leadership positions in political parties and government institutions.⁶ Article 8 of the Lebanese Constitution asserts the equality of rights and duties of all citizens, regardless of their gender,⁷ yet, there are 15 separate PERSONAL STATUS LAWS for the different recognized religious communities represent individuals in the community.⁸ This means that Lebanese

⁵Tanya H., Camille N., Zeina C., Increasing Women's political participation in Lebanon, *Journal of Politics and Law*, Vol. 8, No. 4; 2015

⁶Abdel Samad, O. (n.a). Women Political Participation. Beyond Reform Development

⁷ChemalKhalaf, Mona (2010) 'Lebanon', in Sanja Kelly and Julia Breslin, eds., (2010) *Women's Rights in the Middle East and North Africa*, New York, NY: Freedom House; Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield

⁸Human Rights Watch, *'Unequal and Unprotected: Women's rights under Lebanese Personal Status Law'*, 2015.

BASELINE OF WOMEN IN POLITICS: THE CASE OF LEBANON

individuals are treated differently under different laws when it comes to specific private issues in their lives: their personal status. In short, the Lebanese political system is established on the principle of separation of powers⁹ between two communities (Christian and Muslim) who have, since the creation of Lebanon, struggled for power and leadership. Within each of these communities, men dominate women, not only in practice but also through the legal framework, though the means differ between the two communities; this goes to show that women are not only second-class citizens in Lebanon, but that they are also used as bargaining chips or tools in legal conflict. For example, the right of a woman to pass on her nationality to her children is denied in Lebanon because one of the communities claims that women will then be able to marry men from different communities and risk changing the demographics of the Lebanese state, thus undermining the confessional system. Another example is the issue of civil marriage, where there is a fear that Christian men will marry Muslim women, thus again threatening the entire sectarian balance.¹⁰ Lebanon witnessed 15 years of civil war between different sectarian groups from 1975 to 1990 that ended with the 1989 Taif Agreement. The agreement reaffirmed the 1943 National Pact, which was designed to guarantee equal representation between all confessional groups, while at the same time preventing any from gaining a dominant position. As a result, the government recognizes 18 religious sects through representation according to the size of their respective populations.¹¹ As part of this system, the three major positions of government were divided among the three biggest sects in Lebanon as follows:

- The President of the Republic is a Maronite Christian
- The Speaker of the House is a Shiite Muslim
- The Prime Minister is a Sunni Muslim

Looking at three different eras of Lebanese history will result in a better understanding of the context and trends when considering women's participation in the political sphere:

1. The Pre-Civil war period,
2. The Civil war period,
3. The Post-Civil war period.

THE PRE-CIVIL WAR PERIOD, WOMEN AND POLITICS: TWO OPPOSITE POLES (1943 – 1975)

Before the eruption of the civil war in 1975, Lebanon was experiencing development and progress with regard to social values and norms; the country was famed as the Switzerland of the East and was known for being modern and extolling western habits and customs.¹² Yet, politics remained close for women as it was an 'outside'

⁹The Lebanese Constitution, 1995.

¹⁰YollaSharara: 'Women and politics in Lebanon', Jan 2013.

¹¹Henderson, T., Nelson, C., Chemali, Z., 'Increasing women's Political participation in Lebanon: Reflections on Hurdles, Opportunities and Hope', Journal of Politics and Law, Vol.8, No. 4, 2015.

¹²YollaSharara: 'Women and politics in Lebanon', Jan 2013.

BASELINE OF WOMEN IN POLITICS: THE CASE OF LEBANON

activity, a field that would require women to leave the house and stop caring for the family. At that time motherhood and homemaking were the two main functions or roles attributed to women, and women were even valued according to their motherhood and homemaking skills. Politics was predominantly a masculine activity, and a field where anger and aggressiveness were the norm. The conversation about women's political participation started in May 1934 when Deputy Sheikh Yusef Al Khazin asked for women to be allowed the right to vote, however, the bill did not pass.¹³ Between 1929 and 1953, women fought to gain the right to vote and run for elections.¹⁴

The Lebanese Arab Women's Union

1929

Established in 1929¹⁵, in order to bring together Arab nationalists and leftists¹⁶

Conversation About women's Right to VoteMay 29,
1934

Deputy Seikh Yusef Al Khazin asked for women's right to vote, only 3 voted in favor.¹⁷

Women Demand their Right to Vote and Run

1936

Women used the text of the Lebanese – French Agreement, which specified equal civil and political rights to all citizens to demand the right to run and vote.

Women in Demonstrations

1943

Women joined men in their demands for the release of Sheikh Bshara El Khoury, Riad el Solh and other members of the cabinet from prison, and then the declaration of independence. Eveline Boutros, (then president of the Lebanese Women's Union) led a number of demonstrations in 1943.¹⁸ Ibtihaj Qadoura, a union leader proclaimed in 1945: *'Woman is no longer solely for the home, because the whole world can no longer do without her services'*¹⁹

The Lebanese Women Solidarity Association

1947

Founded in 1947 and composed of elites and haute bourgeoisie female representatives from twenty Christian organizations throughout Lebanon²⁰

¹³Shehadeh, L.R., *'Women and War in Lebanon'*, p.31-32, University Press of Florida

¹⁴Shehadeh, L.R., *'Women and War in Lebanon'*, p.31-32, University Press of Florida

¹⁵Thompson, E., 'Colonial Citizens: Republican Rights, Paternal Privilege, and Gender in French Syria and Lebanon'.

¹⁶Stephan, R., *'Four Waves of Lebanese Feminism', E-International Relations'*, November, 2014.

¹⁷Shehadeh, L.R., *'Women and War in Lebanon'*, p.31-32, University Press of Florida

¹⁸Dombrowski, A, N. *"Women and War in the Twentieth Century: Enlisted with Or Without Consent"*

¹⁹Dombrowski, A, N. *"Women and War in the Twentieth Century: Enlisted with Or Without Consent"*

²⁰Stephan, R., *'Four Waves of Lebanese Feminism', E-International Relations'*, November, 2014.

First Arab Women's Conference December 1944	The First conference was held under Huda Sha'rawi's ²¹ leadership in Cairo. ²² The conference highlighted women's claims to political participation above and beyond their reiterated calls for social reforms. ²³
Lebanese Women's Council 1952	Formally established in 1952 under the notice 3752/AD, as the result of the merger between the Association of Lebanese Women (1947) and the Coalition of Women's Committees (1920)
The Formation of the Executive Committee of Women Groups April, 1950	First general assembly on June 10, 1950 to ask for the amendment of article 21 ²⁴ of the electoral law to include the word 'females'
First Petition Submitted February 5 th , 1951	The Executive Committee of the WG submitted a petition to the cabinet asking for the amendment of article 21 to include the word 'females'
Mobile Demonstrations February, 1951	The Executive Committee of the WG organized a mobile demonstration formed of convoys of cars that headed to the presidential palace
Second Petition Submitted March 2 nd , 1951	The Executive Committee of the WG submitted a second petition to the prime minister
Right to Participate in Municipalities March 14 th , 1951	The cabinet granted women the right to participate in municipal elections
Massive Demonstrations March 20, 1951	A massive demonstration of women from all parts of Lebanon gathered in front of the parliament during the parliament's weekly sessions. Other demonstrations took place in all parts of Lebanon asking for full political rights.
The Roxy Movie Theater January 11 th , 1952	All women's groups met at the Roxy Movie theater under the sponsorship of the First Lady, and asked for full suffrage. ²⁵

²¹Huda Sha'raw was a women's rights activist in Egypt, and the founder of the Egyptian Feminist Union. She cast aside her veil in a public place in 1923 after attending an international feminist meeting in Rome.

²²Keddie, R.N., *Women in the Middle East: Past and Present*, p.98.

²³Dombrowski, A. N. *Women and War in the Twentieth Century: Enlisted with Or Without Consent*

²⁴Article 21 then: 'Every Lebanese man who has completed his twenty-first year is an elector provided he fulfills the conditions stated by the electoral law'.CEDAW – Lebanese NGO Forum, Women's Rights Monitor Project, March 2000

²⁵Shehadeh, L.R., *Women and War in Lebanon*, p.31-32, University Press of Florida

Not the Perfect LawNov 24th, 1952

The government granted the right to vote only to educated women. This was rejected.

Unconditional Political Rights

February, 1953

Women were granted unconditional political rights.

Women gained the right to run for and vote in elections in 1953, but the literature suggests that women would largely go with their fathers or husbands to vote and that they were often told who to vote for; thereby denying women's right to vote and participate in politics.. Society had told women what was and was not suitable for them, and running for elections was not seen as suitable for women. Lebanon had six parliamentary elections between 1953 and 1975 (before the civil war),²⁶ during which only one woman reached parliament (because her father died while in office). Over this period, seven women in total ran for elections, with three of them running several times (Mounira Solh ran three times, Nuhad Sayyed ran three times and Emilie Ibrahim ran twice) increasing the total of female candidacies to 12 over the period..

First Parliamentary Election in Lebanon

1953

Emilie Fares Ibrahim (Baabda) ran for parliament. She was not elected^{27, 28} (She ran in seven elections in total but was never elected).

Second Parliamentary Election in Lebanon

1957

One woman ran: Laura Tabet. She ran for the Maronite seat in Beirut. She received 652 votes, compared to Pierre Edde who received 17,560 votes.²⁹

Third Parliamentary Election in Lebanon

1960

Two women ran for elections: Mounira El Soleh who ran for the Sunni seat in Beirut against Saeb Salam, and lost with 2,165 votes, while Salam received 17,357 votes.³⁰

²⁶Shehadeh, L.R., *'Women and War in Lebanon'*, p.31-32, University Press of Florida

²⁷ Joseph, Suad, ed. *Gender and citizenship in the Middle East*. Syracuse University Press, p.127-128, 2000.

²⁸ El Khazen, F., *'Lebanon's First postwar Parliamentary Election, 1992: An Imposed Choice' – Part Two*, American University of Beirut

²⁹ El Khazen, F., *'Lebanon's First postwar Parliamentary Election, 1992: An Imposed Choice' – Part Two*, American University of Beirut

³⁰ El Khazen, F., *'Lebanon's First postwar Parliamentary Election, 1992: An Imposed Choice' – Part Two*, American University of Beirut

BASELINE OF WOMEN IN POLITICS: THE CASE OF LEBANON

Renee Hajj ran for the Maronite Seat in Jezzine and lost with 601 votes against Bassel Abboud who received 6,400 votes.³¹

First Female Parliamentarian

1963

Myrna Boustany was elected into office to finish her deceased father's term. She served for one year.

Fourth Parliamentary Election in Lebanon

1964

Two women ran: Ibriza al Meoushi, who ran for a seat in the Shouf area and withdrew her candidacy before the elections. Munira Solh ran for the Sunni seat in Beirut and lost with 999 votes.

Nuhad Sayyed Runs for Parliament

1965

Nuhad Sayyed ran for the Maronite seat in Jbeil after her husband (Parliamentarian Dr. Antoine Sayyed passed away) and lost with 9,544 votes.

Fifth Parliamentary Election in Lebanon

1968

Two women ran: Munira Solh ran again for the same seat in Beirut, but withdrew her candidacy before the elections. Nuhad Sayyed ran again for the Maronite seat in Byblos and lost again with 10,917 votes (while her opponent Raymond Edde received 11,173 votes).³²

Sixth Parliamentary Election in Lebanon

1972

Nuhad Sayyed ran again for the same seat in Byblos, and lost with 9,863 votes (while Raymond Edde received 13,484 votes). Three other women ran, Zakiya Salman, Emilie Ibrahim and Nazira Trabay, all of whom withdrew.³³

The Lebanese Women Democratic Gathering³⁴

1976

The Lebanese Women Democratic Gathering was founded in 1976 as per notice 25/A.D. It works with democratic forces to achieve full gender equality in all fields and combat violence. It takes international bills and treaties as its reference.

³¹ El Khazen, F., 'Lebanon's First postwar Parliamentary Election, 1992: An Imposed Choice' – Part Two, American University of Beirut

³² El Khazen, F., 'Lebanon's First postwar Parliamentary Election, 1992: An Imposed Choice' – Part Two, American University of Beirut

³³ El Khazen, F., 'Lebanon's First postwar Parliamentary Election, 1992: An Imposed Choice' – Part Two, American University of Beirut

³⁴9th session the Universal Periodic Review 2010, Report prepared by the Lebanese Women Democratic Gathering

THE CIVIL-WAR PERIOD, WHERE ARE THE WOMEN? (1975 – 1990)

'They were proud of their sons who died fighting, they were defending their land and their families',³⁵ documentary filmmaker Zeina Aboul-Hosn suggests, explaining and re-emphasizing that women within Lebanese culture (especially in times of war) are there to guard and care for the men as themselves cannot have a political opinion over which to fight. Another article³⁶ asked 'Why were women fighting?', explaining that during the civil war women took part in the fighting and men were proud to have women fighting alongside with them as it confirmed that the civil war was a people's war. However, these articles do not tell the complete story: women faced sexual and verbal aggression; they had to prove that they were courageous, they had to prove their competency and at the same time they had to fight.³⁷ In addition, women served as first aid teams, cared for the injured and served at hospitals. In short, women recreated an facsimile of family life: The women take care of the family, the men go out and fight for a decent life – and if any individual switches roles, they would be ridiculed.

POST-CIVIL WAR PERIOD, WOMEN REPRESENTING POLITICAL FAMILISM (1990 – PRESENT)

After the civil war, politics became a dangerous game in Lebanon due to the 29-year long Syrian Occupation (1976 – 2005)³⁸, Israel threatening Lebanon's borders, and leaders of the political parties who fought during the war, now dominating Lebanese politics. The first elections after the war were in 1992, during which five women ran for seats and three won, however these women were either the widows of deceased politicians or had some form of relationship to one of the (then) powerful male politicians: Bahiya El Hariri was the sister of then prime minister Rafik Hariri, Nayla Moawad was the widow of assassinated president Renee Moawad, and Maha Khoury Asaad was able to win by a mere 41 votes in Byblos only because Christians boycotted the elections³⁹. Given these results, the state of women's political participation in Lebanon became worse after 1992. Women who won seats in Lebanon were all affiliated with elite families, powerful politicians, or related by blood or marriage to a deceased, martyred or politically powerful man, they all entered politics with the help of their fathers, brothers, or husbands. Most of the women who ran for parliament in Lebanon had no prior political career, but their affiliations helped them win; a privilege that not many Lebanese women enjoy.⁴⁰

³⁵Zeina Aboul-Hosn, 'Where were the women', Al Araby Al Jadid, April 2015.

³⁶Yolla Sharara: 'Women and politics in Lebanon', Jan 2013.

³⁷Yolla Sharara: 'Women and politics in Lebanon', Jan 2013

³⁸The New York Times, 'Syrian Troops leave Lebanon after 29-year occupation', April, 2005

³⁹El Khazen, F., 'Lebanon's First postwar Parliamentary Election, 1992: An Imposed Choice', American University of Beirut.

⁴⁰NadyaKhalife, 'A Woman's Place in Lebanon', Human Rights Watch, July 2009

1991

Nayla Moawad elected to parliament (after her husband's assassination shortly after becoming president) ⁴¹

First Election After the Civil War

1992

Six women ran for parliament, three won, constituting 3.2% of the total number of Members of Parliament. However, at the time, voters were boycotting the elections, which could explain why candidates won with a very small number of votes (Especially in Byblos and Mount Lebanon): **Nayla Moawad** ran for the seat in Zgharta and won with 90,599 votes – some claim that she received so many votes because people empathized with her over her husband's assassination a few days after being elected president. **Bahiyya Al Hariri** ran for the seat in Sidon, and received the highest number of votes (117,761). She is the sister of (then) ex-prime minister Rafik Hariri, who had a great number of organizations and charitable institutes operating all over Lebanon and was therefore able to support her candidacy while he also ran for a seat in Beirut. **Maha Khoury Asaad** ran for a seat in Byblos and won with 41 votes only. Bushra Al Khalil ran for a seat in the South and lost with 14,677 votes, and Mona Hobeish ran for a seat in Keserwan and lost with 156 votes ^{42, 43}

Second Election After the Civil War

1996⁴⁴

Eleven women ran for election and only three won: Bahiyya Hariri with 141,338 votes, Nayla Moawad with 108,631 votes, and Nuhad Sayyed in Byblos with 7,195 votes. (Voter turnout in 1996 was 44%, higher than the low participation of 1992)⁴⁵

CEDAW

1997

Lebanon signs and ratifies CEDAW⁴⁶

Third Election After the Civil War

2000

The electoral campaign was characterized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union as the most corrupt since the termination of the civil war.⁴⁷ Sixteen women ran for election that year, and only three won: Bahiya Hariri (who kept her seat in Sidon), Nayla Mouawad in Zghorta, and Ghenwa Jalloul who ran for a seat in Beirut (with three other women on her list (?)) and won with 24,845 votes. Jalloul was an ally of Rafik Hariri.

⁴¹El Khazen, F., 'Lebanon's First postwar Parliamentary Election, 1992: An Imposed Choice' – Part Two, American University of Beirut

⁴²Shehadeh, L.R., 'Women and War in Lebanon', p.31-32, University Press of Florida

⁴³El Khazen, F., 'Lebanon's First postwar Parliamentary Election, 1992: An Imposed Choice' – Part Two, American University of Beirut.

⁴⁴Inter-Parliamentary Union, Lebanon

⁴⁵Shehadeh, L.R., 'Women and War in Lebanon', p.31-32, University Press of Florida

⁴⁶UNDP, 'Women's participation in elections', UNDP Lebanese Elections assistance programme

⁴⁷ Inter-Parliamentary Union, "Parliamentary Chamber: Majlis Al-Nuwwab, Elections Held in 2000". (2000). http://www.ipu.org/parline-e/reports/arc/2179_00.htm

First Ministers 2004 ⁴⁸	Female Leila Al Solh (daughter of former Prime Minister Riad Solh) was appointed Minister of Industry, and Wafaa Hamza was appointed Minister of Health (Hamza is politically close to the Speaker of Parliament Nabih Berri) ⁴⁹ . But this cabinet did not last, and another was formed where only one woman participated: Nayla Moawad as Minister of Social Affairs.
Fourth Election after the Civil War 2005	Voter turnout stood at only 28% after the assassination of former prime minister Rafik Hariri. ⁵⁰ Ten women ran (14 initially ran, but 4 withdrew) ⁵¹ for election that year and six won. This was the highest number of female Members of Parliament since the creation of Lebanon: Bahiya Hariri (sister of the former prime minister Rafik Hariri), Nayla Moawad (widow of former president Renee Moawad), Sethrida Geagea (wife of the leader of the Lebanese Forces Party), Solange Al-Gemayel (wife of Bashir Gemayel, former leader of the Lebanese Forces and Phalanges party who was assassinated), Ghenwa Jalloul (ally of Rafik Hariri) and Gilebrt Zwein (ally of Michel Aoun, leader of the Free Patriotic Movement). Nayla Moawad was appointed Minister of Social Affairs.
Fifth Election After the Civil War 2009	12 female candidates from a total of 528, from whom only 4 were elected: Nayla Tueni (daughter of Gebran Tueni), Sethrida Geagea, Bahia Hariri and Gilberte Zouein. Solange Al Gemayel relinquished her seat in the interest of her son and Nayla Moawad stepped down to allow her son to run, he lost later on in the election. Bahia Al Hariri was appointed Minister of Education, Rayya Hassan was appointed Minister of Finance, Mona Ofeish was appointed State Minister for Women and Children.
Female Minister 2014	Alice Chabtini was appointed Minister for Displaced Persons

In 2006, a bill was drafted by the National Commission on Electoral Law combining the majoritarian and proportional systems, this bill recommended a quota whereby at least 30% of parliamentarians should be women. Again, in 2011, the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities prepared a parliamentary election bill proposing the adoption of a quota for women of 30% at the candidacy level: this meant that a 30% quota for women should be enacted on each list of candidates –the lists must contain at least 30% of each sex among the candidates – numbers which were consistent

⁴⁸Alami, M., 'Parliamentary presence sticking point for Lebanon's women', Al Monitor, March 2015.

⁴⁹Worldwide Guide to women in Leadership, 'The Republic of Lebanon',

⁵⁰Inter-Parliamentary Union, Lebanon

⁵¹UNDP, 'Women's participation in elections', UNDP Lebanese Elections assistance programme

with the CEDAW⁵² international convention to which Lebanon had joined. The bill was passed to the Chamber of Deputies pursuant to Decree no. 8913. The new electoral law was passed in 2017 but did not recognize any quota for women despite wide ranging efforts by civil society groups and promises made by political leaders during the various discussions of the law prior to its passing. Since 2009, Lebanon has been politically stagnant as the parliament extended its mandate for another term, a president was elected after almost three years of failed attempts, and a new cabinet was formed.

WOMEN AND POLITICS IN LEBANON

Today, three patriarchal⁵³ structures stand at the core of all discriminatory practices against women in Lebanon: The family (and community), the sect, and the state.⁵⁴ While Lebanon is one of the few countries in the Middle East that is relatively politically open and claims to enjoy 'religious freedom' as well as a culture that supports and promotes women's academic and professional advancement, it has one of the lowest rates of female political participation.⁵⁵ Lebanon is one of the bottom three countries on the Political Empowerment Sub index, having closed less than 3% of its political gender gap,⁵⁶ the current (and historical) political structures and culture in Lebanon impact women's political participation both as voters and candidates.⁵⁷ This has put women in a position where they are vulnerable to abuse and dismissal from the system as they are not encouraged to formulate an independent political opinion, an independent choice as to whether or not to enter politics, or to embark upon an independent political career.⁵⁸ Reports suggest that in 2013, 44 women (out of 705 candidates) ran for parliament and this represents the highest number of women to have ever run (6.2% of the total number of candidates), however, the government unconstitutionally extended its mandate and postponed the elections three times, in May 2013, November 2014 and June 2017⁵⁹. To the date of this report, the next general elections are supposed to take place on May 6, 2018.⁶⁰

WOMEN IN LEBANESE CABINETS

The first Lebanese Cabinet was formed in September 1943 under President Bchara el Khoury, and included 13 ministries, 61 years later women were first selected to join a

⁵²Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women, fourth and fifth periodic reports of States parties in May 2014.

⁵³ Patriarchy, as defined by Merriam Webster is a social system in which males hold primary power and predominate in role of political leadership and social privilege: in short, it is a system that values masculinity over femininity

⁵⁴Heinrich Boll Stiftung, "Women's political participation in Lebanon", September, 2013.

⁵⁵ Henderson, T., Nelson, C., Chemali, Z., 'Increasing women's Political participation in Lebanon: Reflections on Hurdles, Opportunities and Hope', Journal of Politics and Law, Vol.8, No. 4, 2015.

⁵⁶World Economic Forum, 'Results and analysis, Country Coverage, 2016'.

⁵⁷ Henderson, T., Nelson, C., Chemali, Z., 'Increasing women's Political participation in Lebanon: Reflections on Hurdles, Opportunities and Hope', Journal of Politics and Law, Vol.8, No. 4, 2015.

⁵⁸World Economic Forum, 'Results and analysis, Country Coverage, 2016'.

⁵⁹NadyaKhalife, 'A Woman's Place in Lebanon', Human Rights Watch, July 2009

⁵⁹UNDP, 'Women's participation in elections', UNDP Lebanese Elections assistance programme

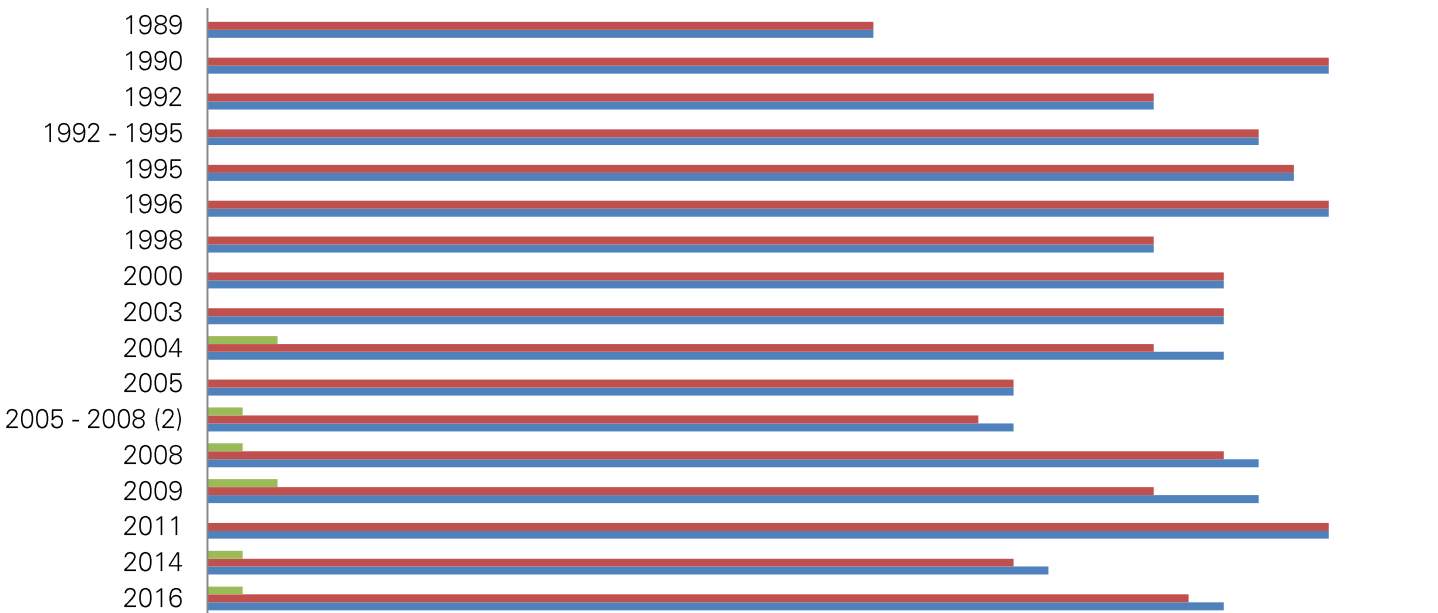
⁶⁰ Joseph A. Kechichian (2017, June 14), "Lebanon to hold parliamentary elections in May 2018", *Gulf News*.

BASELINE OF WOMEN IN POLITICS: THE CASE OF LEBANON

cabinet. For 61 years, only men were able to influence governance and executive matters in Lebanon. The below list shows a breakdown of the years of absence of women from the first Cabinet to the 67th in 2004 and Cabinet positions held since:

In 2005, women constituted less than 3% of all parliamentary candidates, compared to 1.7% in 2009 while women make up 51.2% of registered

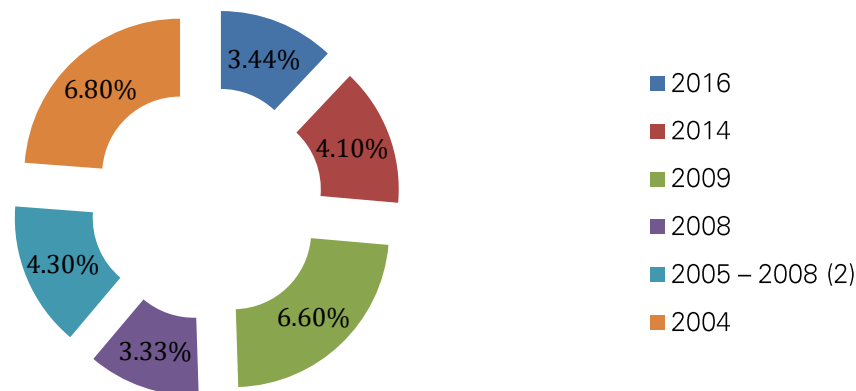
- 2004: Ms. Layla Solh Hamade, Minister of Industry
- 2004: Ms. Wafaa Dika Hamze, Ministry of State for Parliamentary Affairs
- 2005: Ms. Nayla Moawad, Minister of Social affairs
- 2008: Ms. Bahia Hariri, Minister of Education
- 2009: Ms. Raya Hassan, Minister of Finance
- 2009: Ms. Mona Ofeich, Minister of State
- 2014: Ms. Alice Chabtini, Minister of the Displaced
- 2016: Ms. Enaya Ezzedine, Minister of State for Administrative Development (74th Lebanese Cabinet)



	2016	2014	2011	2009	2008	2005 - 2008 (2)	2005	2004	2003	2000	1998	1996	1995	1992 - 1995	1992	1990	1989
Female Ministers	1	1	0	2	1	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Male Ministers	28	23	32	27	29	22	23	27	29	29	27	32	31	30	27	32	19
Total Number of Ministers	29	24	32	30	30	23	23	29	29	29	27	32	31	30	27	32	19

Since 2004, the Cabinet with the highest percentage of female participation was that of 2004, when two women were appointed to ministerial positions.

% OF WOMEN IN THE 6 LEBANESE CABINETS



WOMEN IN LEBANESE PARLIAMENTS

Lebanon ranks 139th in the world in terms of female representation in parliament: Only four women (3.1%) of the 128 MPs are female at the time of writing this report.⁶¹ The following charts and graphs highlight the discrepancy between men and women in attaining public office. Although women were granted full political rights in 1953, no woman was elected to parliament until 1992, and the three women who were elected were directly connected to a strong political figure. In Lebanon, the Parliament has the power to:⁶²

The first cabinet to include a woman was in 2004, when two women were appointed ministers in a 29-ministry cabinet. Since then, 8 ministerial positions have been led by female

- Confirm or disapprove the formation of the Cabinet
- Oversee the performance of the Cabinet and its ministers, and vote them out of office when necessary
- Elect the president of the Republic
- Ratify certain categories of international treaties and agreements
- Approve the annual budget of the state

⁶¹Naharnet, 'Lebanon at Bottom of Rankings of Women in Parliament', March 2014

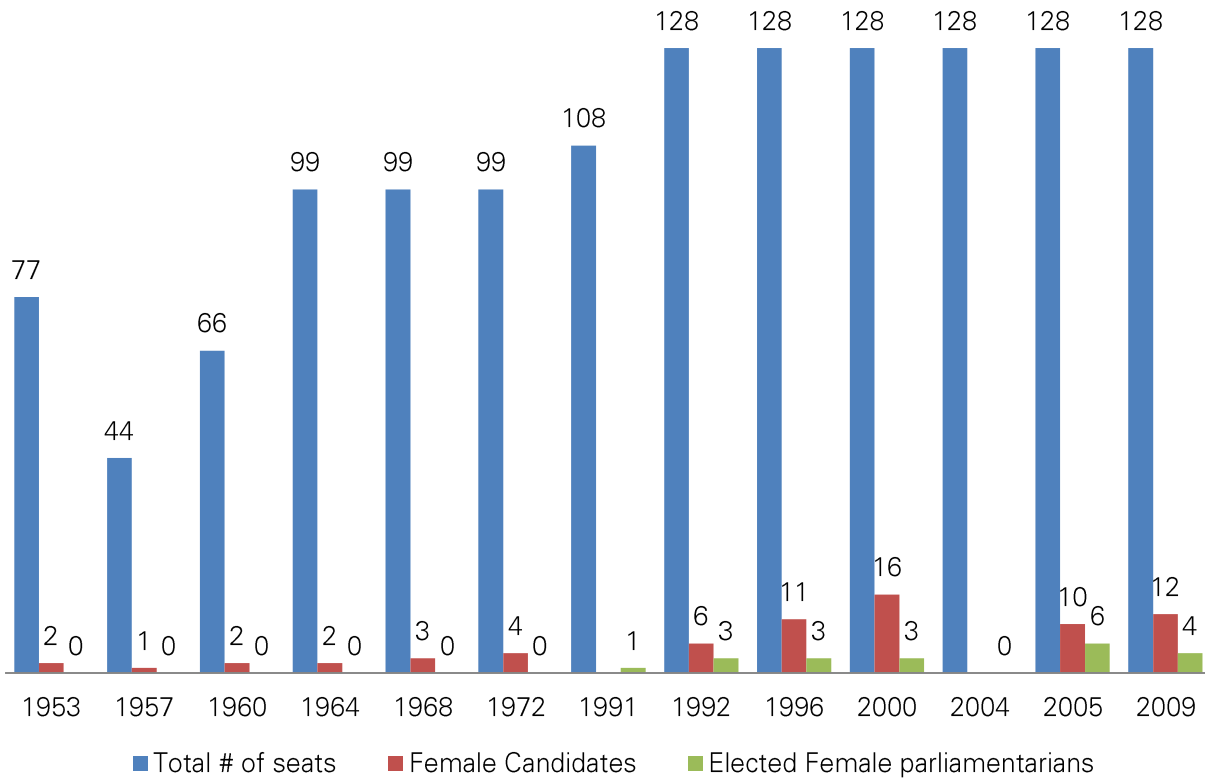
⁶²Lebanon Constitutional Law and the Political Rights of Religious Communities, The Law Library of congress

BASELINE OF WOMEN IN POLITICS: THE CASE OF LEBANON

- Be the “single body” exerting the legislative power⁶³ and adopting the laws⁶⁴, as well as one of the two bodies having the right of legislative initiative, along with the Cabinet.⁶⁵

Women are largely unable, in terms of both voice and opinion, to exercise these powers, thus indicating that elected presidents are voted for by a group of men, who constitute only half of the population, without proper representation of women’s voices in those elections. Additionally, the legislative power: the power to make, design, and amend laws that affect the everyday life of Lebanese citizens, is in those same hands, hands that represent the needs and interests of only half the population.

The below graph shows women’s level of participation in Lebanese parliaments since 1953, when women received the right to vote and run for parliament. The highest participation occurred in 2005, when six female MPs were elected into office out of 128 parliamentarians.

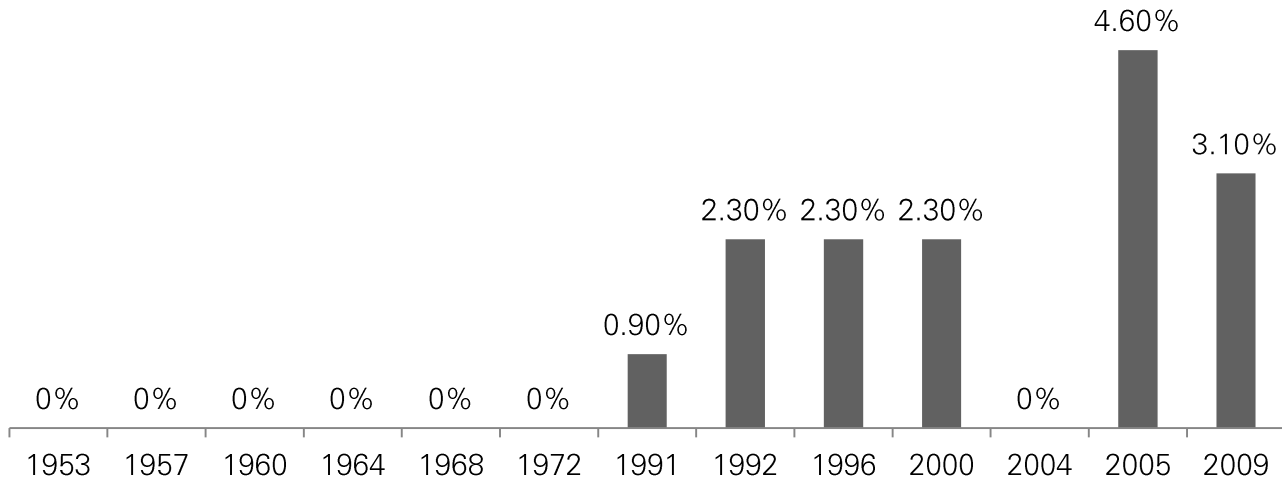


⁶³ Article 16 of the Lebanese Constitution.

⁶⁴ Article 18 of the Lebanese Constitution.

⁶⁵ Article 17 of the Lebanese Constitution.

% OF FEMALE PARTICIPATION IN LEBANESE PARLIAMENTS



BREAKDOWN OF WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES

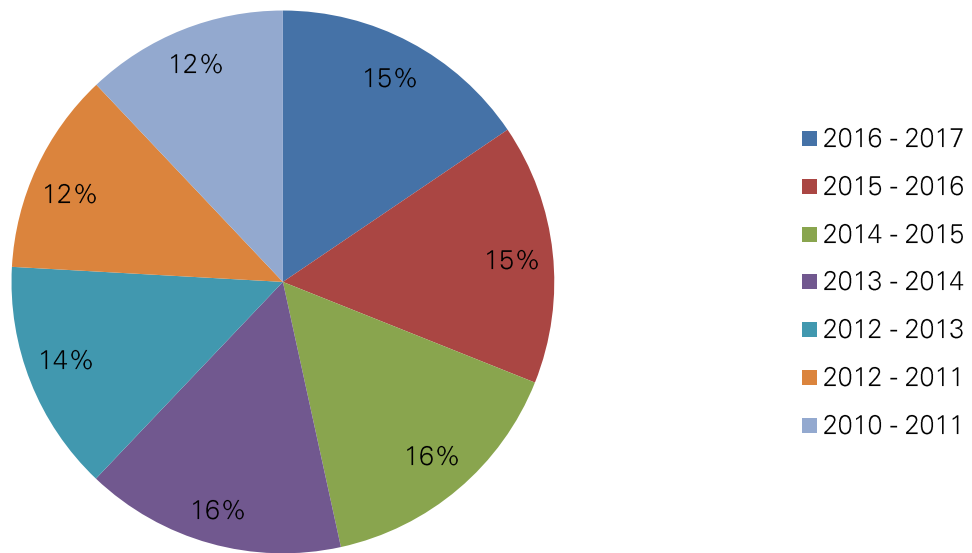
Unfortunately, low rates of female involvement in national governance is not limited to the number of seats in parliament, but also in terms of the number of women assigned to parliamentary committees and appointed to conduct work and design policies on specific issues. The Lebanese Parliament has had 16 parliamentary committees in the past 6 years (2010 – 2016), a breakdown of women's involvement in the conversations related to a specific agenda or topic shows how even on the national level, women are constrained to working on issues related to tourism, women's rights, children's rights, youth and sports, education and the environment. It could be argued that these numbers are to be expected, given that there are only four female representatives in parliament. Below is a table that describes where women have mostly been active in parliamentary committees, (committees that have the responsibility of suggesting legal reforms and drafting new laws):

COMMITTEES WOMEN HAVE PARTICIPATED IN	COMMITTEES WOMEN HAVE NEVER PARTICIPATED IN
Education, Higher education and culture committee (headed by Bahia Hariri)	National defense and internal affairs,
Agriculture and tourism committee	Health, Labor and social issues,
Environmental committee	Energy and Water,
Media and communications committee	Finance and Budgets committee,

BASELINE OF WOMEN IN POLITICS: THE CASE OF LEBANON

Youth and sports committee	Foreign Affairs committee,
Human Rights committee	Economy, industry and trade committee,
Women and children's committee	And information technology committee.

% OF WOMEN FROM ALL PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE POSITIONS



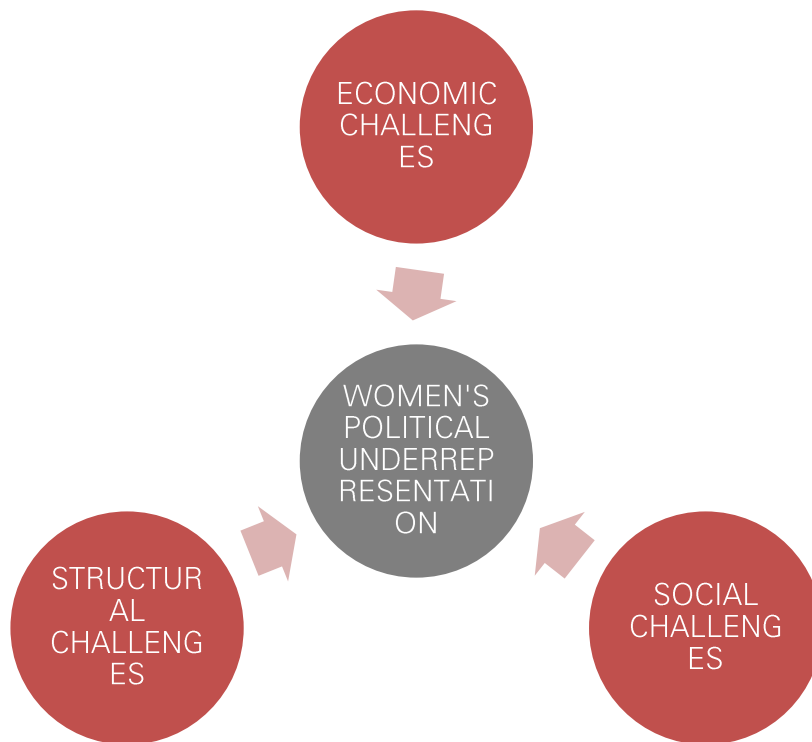
BASELINE OF WOMEN IN POLITICS: THE CASE OF LEBANON

A breakdown of the committees in which women have been participating in since 2010:

		2016 – 2017		2015 – 2016		2014 - 2015		2013 – 2014		2012-2013		2011-2012		2010-2011	
		W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M
Finances and Budget Committee	17	0	17	0	17	0	17	0	17	0	17	0	17	0	17
Governance and Justice Committee	17	0	17	0	17	0	17	0	17	0	17	0	17	0	17
Foreign affairs and migration committee	17	0	17	0	17	0	17	0	17	0	17	0	17	0	17
General works, transportation, energy and water committee	17	0	17	0	17	0	17	0	17	0	17	0	17	0	17
Education and Higher education and culture committee	12	1	11	1	11	1	11	1	11	1	11	1	11	1	11
Health, labor and social issues committee	12	0	12	0	12	0	12	0	12	0	12	0	12	0	12
National defense, internal affairs and municipalities committee	17	0	17	0	17	0	17	0	17	0	17	0	17	0	17
Immigration committee	12	0	12	0	12	0	12	0	12	0	12	0	12	0	12
Agriculture and tourism committee	12	1	11	1	11	1	11	1	11	1	11	1	11	1	11
Environmental committee	12	2	10	2	10	2	10	2	10	1	11	1	11	1	11
National economy, industry, planning and trade committee	12	0	12	0	12	0	12	0	12	0	12	0	12	0	12
Media and communications committee	12	1	11	1	11	1	11	1	11	1	11	1	11	1	11
Youth and sports committee	12	1	11	1	11	1	11	1	11	1	11	1	11	1	11
Human Rights committee	12	1	11	1	11	1	11	1	11	1	11	0	12	0	12
Women and children's committee	12	2	10	2	10	2	10	2	10	2	10	2	10	2	10
Information technology committee	9	0	9	0	9	0	9	0	9	0	9	0	9	0	9

CHALLENGES TO WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN GENERAL

There is a general agreement that the technically the doors are open for women wishing to run and engage in politics, however in practice adequate female representation in the political sphere is yet to be seen, and this is due to a variety of reasons that put women at a disadvantage. Throughout the implementation of this study, the research team interviewed and met with representatives from eight political parties, four labor unions, three civil society campaigns, judges, as well as government officials and representatives of donor agencies. This section highlights the key findings related to challenges hindering women's proper representation in politics, as expressed by the interviewees and participants in this study. The challenges were divided into the following three categories;



ECONOMIC CHALLENGES

In a study conducted in 2015 on the economic empowerment of women in Lebanon, it was found that around 50% of the workforces in Lebanon are women, however only 31% of managers and senior executives are female⁶⁶ proving that women are rarely appointed to leadership positions and are often seen as excelling at administrative and secretarial work. Economic issues were commonly mentioned as challenges that limit women's ability to advance in politics.

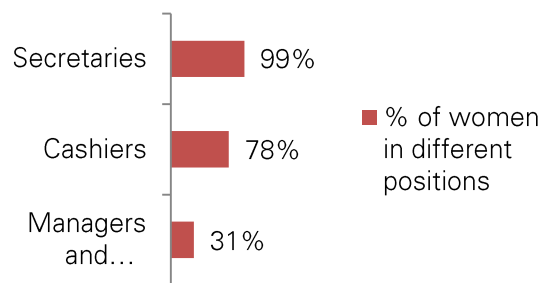
“One way of motivating women to run for national elections is to work on removing the fees for candidacy for women that would allow women to feel less burdened by money and more focused on their political career”, a senior female politician

— THE COST OF ENGAGING IN POLITICS

In Lebanon, pursuing a political career is very expensive, especially due to its clientelistic nature that requires politicians to pay for and otherwise cover the expenses of services in order to nurture popular support. Women are less financially capable than men, and this is mostly due to social notions that did not allow women to work (and still do not in some areas) until recently in history. Assuming a woman is financially capable of covering the candidacy fee to stand for parliament (almost 7,000 USD) and campaign fees (not less than 20,000 USD), she would still face great challenges when campaigning as women enjoy less access to social and political networks that are commonly male-dominated, to promote her campaign and achieve popular support. Due to the gender gap, women are paid less than men for the same work. The same applies to unions, as research respondents confirmed that the cost of registering and becoming a member of a union is high (see Annex C for more details).

— GENDERED EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Additionally, married women face a specific challenge when gaining employment opportunities as employers expect them to get pregnant and take maternity leave, as explained by some of the female interviewees, which is not convenient for the employer. Along the same lines, it would be harder for a woman to travel and attend weekend trainings or workshops due to familial commitments placed upon her by societal norms; this is a challenge that was voiced by almost all female



⁶⁶Hamdar, B., Hejase, H., Hakim, F., Le Port, J., Baydoun, R., 'Economic Empowerment of Women in Lebanon'. World Journal of Social Science Research, vol. 2, No. 2, 2015.

participants in this study when discussing the influence of their social roles on their everyday lives and future careers.

— ECONOMIC FACTS CONCERNING WOMEN IN LEBANON

- 71.4% of all female-headed households in Lebanon are at risk of extreme poverty⁶⁷
- Women in Lebanon are economically active mostly between the ages of 20 and 29⁶⁸
- 29% of employed women are married, compared to 51% of employed men,⁶⁹ while 68% of female employees are single, compared to 47% of employed men
- According to a study conducted by UNDP on Household Living Conditions in 2007 (the last study of its kind), women are mostly active in the service sector, and least in construction, business and telecommunications in comparison with their male counterparts,⁷⁰
- All five categories⁷¹ of permanent employment in the private sector include women, however the percentages are striking: 10% of category one employees are female, 24.1% of category two, 36.3% of category three, 38.3% of category four and 19.8% of category 5.⁷² These percentages translate to eight female staff compared to 71 male staff in category one, 57 female staff and 179 male staff, 778 female staff and 1,361 male staff, and 2042 female staff and 3280 male staff, and finally 161 female staff and 652 male staff in category five, respectively.)
- In rural areas, only 1.3% of healthcare providers are female, compared to 30.7% of employees in the agriculture sector, and 7.3% in education.⁷³

⁶⁷ Delphine Tailer, 'The Legal Framework and challenges to women's economic empowerment', CRTD-A, Oxfam Quebec, October 2010

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

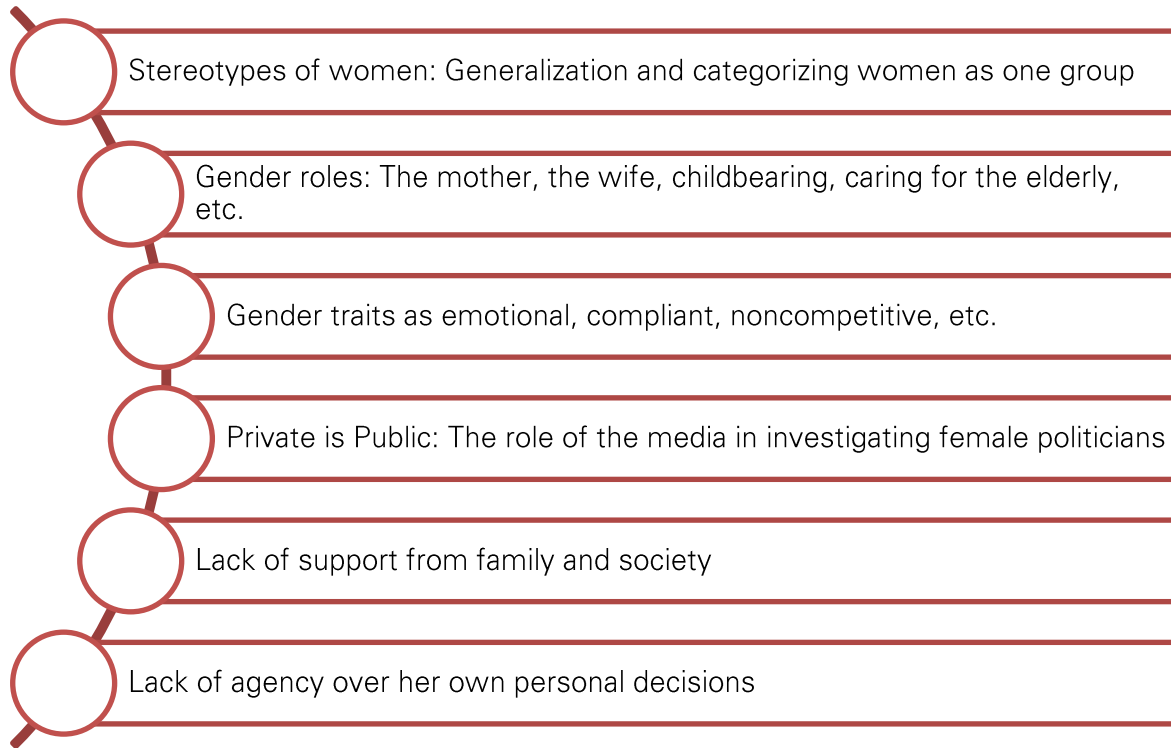
⁷⁰ UNDP Lebanon, 'Living Conditions of Households 2007', October 2008. <http://www.lb.undp.org>

⁷¹ Five categories of employment

⁷² National Commission for Lebanese Women, National Yearly Report, CEDAW, 2014

⁷³ National Commission for Lebanese Women, National Yearly Report, CEDAW, 2014

SOCIAL CHALLENGES



In Lebanese culture – but also generally speaking – women are expected to fulfill the roles of mother, wife, child bearer, primary carer for children, caring for the elderly, maintaining social relationships, building homes and supporter of the breadwinners, who are in this context male. This teaches women from a very young age that education is not instrumental to their future, neither is their professional career, as at some point in their lives – usually in their 20s – they will be required to marry, form a family, and support their husbands in furthering their own careers. This also teaches men what is expected of women.

“Women who do courageously decide to enter politics, have to continuously fight for their choices, and manage their homes while also engaging in politics and most likely working a formal full-time job and an informal housebound full-time job”, *research participant*

“But why would any smart, successful woman want to subject herself to a barrage of criticism, aggressive questions, and the possible embarrassment of making a public mistake that could end her career”, *Research respondent*

— SHE HAS TO PROVE SHE CAN

Women, from a very young age, are brought up to support the partner, father and family, as the famous saying goes, ‘Behind every great man, there is a great woman’, however, the Lebanese culture doesn’t have a similar saying for women, suggesting and reaffirming the culture’s gender roles are in favor of women taking care of the

BASELINE OF WOMEN IN POLITICS: THE CASE OF LEBANON

household and the family to allow the man to build a career and achieve great things. When women do gather enough resources and courage to enter a patriarchal political system, they are held to higher standards than men, as a great number of respondents claimed, 'Yes we support women engaging in politics, but we don't want just *any* woman to run or make it to public office', this is a common statement expressed by both men and women who are engaged in politics, explaining that 'we need the *right* women to run, not daughters or wives of politicians.'

— WOMEN ARE GENERALLY NOT INTERESTED IN ENGAGING IN POLITICS

Women are judged differently than men when children are involved. A woman is viewed as being a terrible mother for leaving her children at home for days at a time (with their father) so that she can go into politics. One rarely hears that being said of a man doing the same thing.⁷⁴ In September 2016, a number of senior female politicians in the EU and UK were reported on as being 'childless politicians', but the *Sunday Times*, the reporting newspaper, failed to add pictures and names of men in the same situation.⁷⁵ Interview respondents in this study stated that 'women who have children are less likely to run or get involved in politics', this is true to some extent, but it is a fallacy to assume that all women with children won't run for office without looking at the responsibilities that are generally associated with being a mother, such as household tasks, childbearing tasks, childcare, etc.

'We don't want just any woman to run. She has to have the right qualifications',
*female political activist with the Free
 Patriotic Movement*

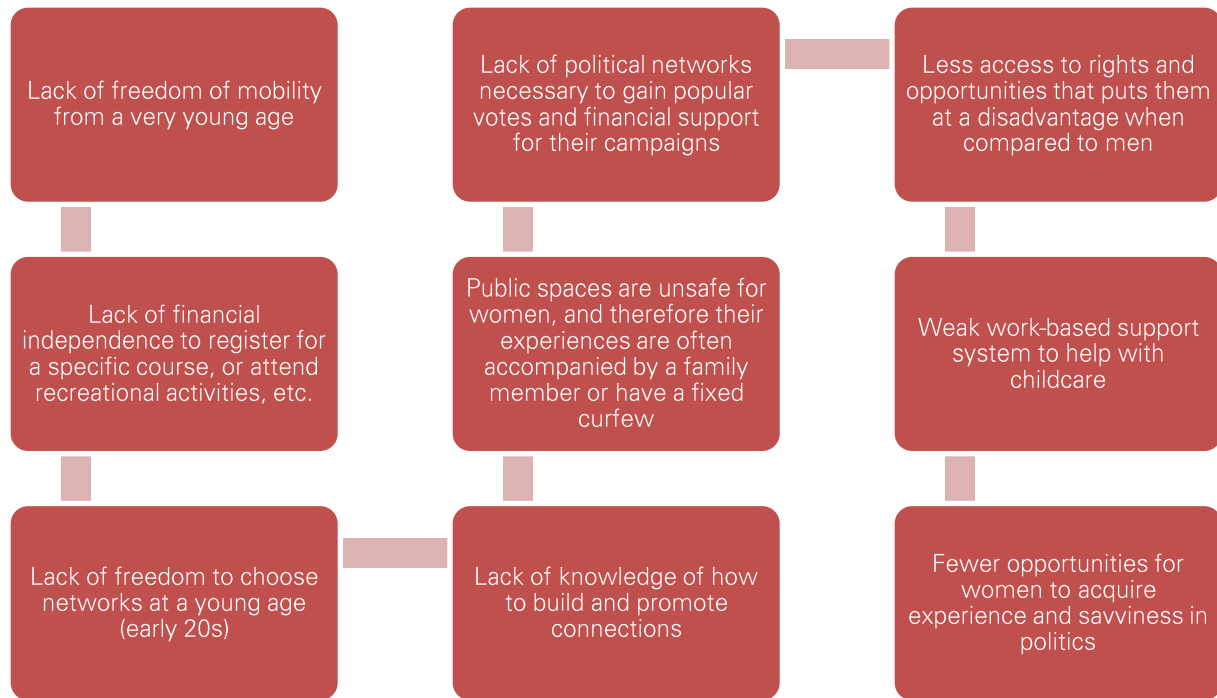
⁷⁴Driedger, M., 'Challenges for women in politics', *Canadian Parliamentary Review*, Autumn 2013

⁷⁵The Guardian, 'Sunday Times criticized for portrayal of female politicians without children', September, 2016

STRUCTURAL CHALLENGES

During the interviews, it was commonly claimed that men hold on to their positions because of their strong networks of support, (which are financial, political, social and cultural), men dominate decision making and tend to bypass female candidates in order to preserve their seats as well as the political structure they helped build or are familiar with. In Lebanon, both the political and financial networks are largely controlled by men, and informal acts of consolidating relationships within said networks play to male modes of interaction, such as smoking, playing sports, meeting at inconvenient night hours, drinking, etc.

Factors Limiting Female Political Engagement



— WOMEN CAN'T HEAD POLITICAL PARTIES

'Men draft and make laws; they won't make laws that don't put them in favor' *Female Senior member of the Amal Movement*

In Lebanon, not a single political party that has seats in parliament is headed by a woman, nor has there ever been a female political party leader in the history of the current eight political parties. The issue of underrepresentation of women as party leaders is crucial when

considering the election of more women to office, especially because women have limited access to networks, financial resources, and social support when compared to men. This underrepresentation is a result of the belief that women have less chance of getting elected and that their personal interests are influenced by the men in their

BASELINE OF WOMEN IN POLITICS: THE CASE OF LEBANON

lives. Women are portrayed as weak and incapable of making intelligent decisions. They have been depicted for generations as only capable of dealing with trivial matters, constantly engaged in gossip and hearsay, utterly incompetent and less intelligent.⁷⁶ At the same time, almost all political parties in Lebanon have highly centralized decision-making processes that are usually controlled by a number of well-known leaders (men), leading to the environment being less receptive to any relative outsider climbing the hierarchal ladder and even less receptive to women who attempt to do so.

— WOMEN CAN ONLY WORK ON ISSUES RELATED TO CHILDREN AND WOMEN

There is an assumption that women are by default only interested or informed about causes related to women and children, however this is clearly not the case. The same applies to men; the fact that they are men does not mean that they cannot work on issues related to women and children. At the same time, within political parties only women are found on the Women's Committee, yet on the national level political parties do not shy away from encouraging their male ministers and MPs to talk about women's issues; these same politicians also almost always see women's issues as less important on the national scale. At the same time, in a study conducted by UNICEF in 2006, it was concluded that a third of all ministerial positions held by women fall under the areas of family, children, women, social affairs and youth, while women accounted for only 13 Ministries of Defense (1.5 per cent) and nine Ministries of Economy (or 1 per cent) worldwide.⁷⁷

⁷⁶Komath, A., 'The patriarchal barrier to women in politics', IknowPolitics, August 2014.

⁷⁷ UNICEF, 'Women and politics: realities and myths'