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**Collective for Research and Training on Development – Action**

**"Gender Profile in Municipal Election 2004"**

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2

3

**CONTENTS**

**Introduction**

**Lebanese Election Law & the Municipalities**

**Municipal Management in Lebanon**

**Local Government Reform Projects**

**An Overview of Women's Participation in Local Government**

**Female Political Participation in Lebanon**

**Projects to Increase Female Participation**

**DATA ANALYSIS OF FEMALE PARTICIPATION IN THE 2004 MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS**
*Female Candidates According to Governorate*
*Voters According to Governorate*
*Success Levels of Female Candidates*
*Female Candidates by Caza*
*Female Candidates in Rural & Urban Areas*
*Voters by Religion*
*Voters by Sect*
*Candidates by Religion*
*Female Candidates by Religion*
*Candidates by Sect*
*Female Candidates by Sect*
*Successful Female Candidates by Sect*
*Female and Male Candidates by Age*
*Successful Female Candidates by Age*
*Female Candidates by Marital Status*
*Successful Female Candidates by Marital Status*
*Female Candidates and the Female Voting Pattern*

**An Analysis of Voting Patterns in the Municipality of Beirut**
**Table**

**AN ANALYSIS OF FEMALE MAYORS IN 2004.**
*Female Mayors by Governorate*
*Female Mayors by Religion & Sect*
*Female Mayors by Age*

**Conclusion**

4

In January 2004, The Collective for Research and Training on Development – Action (CRTD.A), launched a project to look at gender divisions within Lebanese politics.

The project began during the Municipal Elections in 2004, when an external consultant Mr. Kamal Fghali was used to gather data about participation in the election, specifically by women, as both voters and candidates, and to look at how their participation compares with that of men. This data forms the basis of this report: A Gender Profile of the Lebanese Municipal Elections.

It is hoped that this research will identify gender specific obstacles to political participation, and form appropriate strategies, social, economic, political and legal, which need to be implemented to enable a positive and sustainable transformation in the area of political participation for women, allowing them the ability to influence decisions that affect their lives.

The report is divided into 2 main sections. The first section looks at the current election law within Lebanon, and at the municipal districts within the country. It then gives a review of Municipal Management in Lebanon and looks at a series of local government reform projects that have taken place or are in progress within the country. The report then concentrates specifically on female participation in the political process, and at projects aimed at increasing women's roles within the political sphere.

The second section of the report is an analysis of female participation, as voters, but especially as candidates, in the 2004 municipal elections, taken from data gathered during the election process. This analysis gives us a strong indication of where women currently stand within the political arena in Lebanon, and gives a basis for the future growth and development of female participation.

## LEBANESE ELECTION LAW & THE MUNICIPALITIES

Lebanon is divided into 8 Governorates. These are as follows:
- Mount Lebanon
- North Lebanon
- Beirut
- Nabatieh
- The South
- Bekaa Valley
- Baalbak-Hermel
- Akkar

Within each of these governorates there is a varying number of Cazas or districts, and within each Caza there are a varying number of villages or towns. Each of these villages or towns has a municipal council, and throughout Lebanon there are 9032 people who sit on these municipal councils, all of varying sizes. The size of the council depends on the population of the municipality and ranges from 9 members where the population is 2000 people or less, to 21 members where the population is over 24,000. The exceptions are Beirut and Tripoli that each has a council of 24 people. Each town or village also has a mayor.

All Lebanese people over the age of 21 (with certain exceptions such as convicted criminals) have the right to vote in both municipal and parliamentary elections. In order to claim the right to vote, people must register on the electoral roll. It is important that any campaigns to encourage greater participation in elections focus on this as many people, especially women and people in more rural and deprived areas are not aware of the need to register to vote, or do not know what this registration involves. The government, political parties, NGOs and the media should all work together to improve understanding in this area.

Lebanese law states that people must vote in their home district, rather than the district in which they currently reside. Once they are married, women must register and vote in the district in which their husband is registered.

To stand for election, people must be 25 years old and registered on the voting list.
Each municipality then produces a list of candidates who are standing for election in that area. These lists are available at the polling station on election day and voters choose the candidates they wish to vote for, and write their names on their ballot papers. Ballot papers containing offensive remarks about any candidates, or other inappropriate marks, are considered void. Each voter can vote for as many of the people on the list of candidates as they choose.

6

## MUNICIPAL MANAGEMENT IN LEBANON

In Lebanon the provision and management of municipal services has historically been controlled by the central government. The Taif Agreement, at the end of the civil war, set out specific guidelines for the central government to introduce programs and encourage reform to strengthen regional and local governments. The municipal elections in May 1998, in which over 8,000 members were elected in around 750 municipalities, led the way for this reform which focuses on citizen's participation, improvement in municipal management and increased use of communication technologies.

Municipalities are still, however, highly dependent on the central government, because they have limited human and financial resources. In order to continue the reform programs it is important to make them more independent with their own sources of revenue, to enable them to optimize their expenditure and motivate the local community to become more involved.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM PROJECTS

Since 1998, The State University of New York/ Centre for Legislative Development (SUNY/CLD) have been gradually implementing a program of municipal administrative and financial reform in Lebanon. The project, known as the Lebanon Relief and Redevelopment Project aims to strengthen relations and communication between citizens and the local government and ensure greater transparency and accountability in municipal work.[1] The SUNY/CLD project has organized a series of human resource development workshops and training sessions to facilitate the implementation of newly standardized administrative and financial procedures. 1,150 staff members from more than 500 municipalities have completed computer training and over 1,200 staff members have completed administrative and financial training. Between, 28%-34% of all staff members trained were female.

In addition over 465 municipalities throughout Lebanon now have internet access as part of the SUNY/CLD assistance program. These websites, which can be accessed through the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MOIM) www.moim.gov.lb, include information about laws and decrees governing municipal work as well as downloadable forms and information. Some of the more developed municipal websites are those of Choueifat www.choueifat.gov.lb , Jounieh www.jounieh.gov.lb and Tripoli www.tripoli.gov.lb .

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[1] For more information on the SUNY/CLD program in Lebanon see www.suny-cld.edu.lb/ui/localgovernments.aspx

In 1998, USAID also started work in Lebanon to empower local governments, the media and civil society, and have worked in collaboration with the SUNY/CLD project. The USAID mission is entitled Promoting Democracy and Good Governance and its aim is to promote democracy and humanitarian assistance. This work continues into 2005.

Another interesting analysis of the condition of municipalities in Mount Lebanon, the South, North Lebanon and Beirut is a book (in Arabic) entitled "The Reality of Municipalities in Lebanon: Obstacles to Local Participation and Balanced Government"[2] published by The Lebanese Centre for Policy Studies in 1998, which analyzes the relationship between local bodies and the central government.

## AN OVERVIEW OF WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The United Nations Development Program's Program on Governance in the Arab Region (UNDP-POGAR) has looked in detail at local governments in different regions of the world. The International Union of Local Authorities has also carried out important research, in particular a study on women in local government, which provides important statistical information about women's participation in decision making on a political level. They found that in Africa women's participation is estimated at less than 5%, and that the East Mediterranean and Middle East regions have an even lower level. For example in Turkey's municipal elections in 1994, only 0.46% of the elected mayors were women, and even these few were in the smaller scale district levels.[3]

Many governments have taken affirmative action to improve the gender balance within the decision making structures. However, despite this, the 30% threshold advocated by the UNDP Human Development Report as an initial target for women's participation (the long term aim is 50%) is still a long way off for most countries. Women's rights remain a politically sensitive issue, particularly in the Arab region, and this means that women's organisations have an uphill battle in their work towards equality. Although awareness of women's rights, their abilities, their portrayal in the media, and even many aspects of societal attitudes have changed a lot, over the last 5 years, no substantial change has been seen on a national level.

## FEMALE POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN LEBANON

In Lebanon women continue to be marginalized within the political arena because it has traditionally been a male domain. The political system is based on community and family ties, and in addition Lebanese political parties are usually based on religious loyalties rather than a political agenda. Generally women are also more likely than men to face

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[2] www.lcps-lebanon.org/resc/democ/9596/reform96.html

[3] Azza M Karam, "Women's Political Participation: Meeting on Women and Political Participation: 21st Century Challenges." *UNDP-POGAR*

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practical barriers to entering politics, including a lack of financial resources, lower levels of education, less access to information, greater family responsibilities, and a deprivation of rights that has left them with fewer opportunities to acquire political experience. With the exception of the close relatives of male politicians, women generally also lack the political networks necessary for electoral success. Most positions of leadership in political parties are passed on to the next male heir, though recently there are a few instances in Lebanon where leadership has been inherited by the wife of a deceased husband.

Traditionally women have also made up only a tiny percentage of the municipal councils. Although, as we will see when we look at the data, female representation has risen with the 2004 municipal elections, women still only account for 2.3 percent of the municipal council. In the 1998 municipal elections, 139 women were elected to office out of a total of 8,000 elected members in over 750 municipalities (around 1.7% of members).[4] In the 2004 elections, ninety-one more women won seats, but the number of municipalities rose to around 900, with almost 10,000 members being elected, meaning women's representation only increased to 2.3%.

Given the slow speed by which the number of women in politics is growing, people are calling for more efficient methods to increase their representation. The initial problem is to find a way to break the pattern of the old system so initiating a quota system is one legal solution which would allow women to penetrate the political system. Enforcing a quota system would open up the doors of the political arena to women and as their participation increased through this method their presence would eventually become an acceptable part of the social norm.

There are different quota methods to ensure that women are represented in parliament. There are statutory quotas where women must make up at least a minimum proportion of elected representatives. The electoral law can require parties to field a certain number of women candidates, or individual political parties can be required to adopt their own informal quotas of women as parliamentary candidates. Beirut MP Serge Toursarkissian submitted draft legislation in July 2002 to promote the participation of women in the municipal councils in proportional numbers according to the principle of equality between the sexes.[5] The draft said that a 12 member council should include at least two women in any municipalities where the number of residents ranged between 2,001-4,000 people. The draft urged a formula to determine the number of participating women according to the demographics of the municipalities they represent. This piece of legislation still hasn't been recognized or implemented by parliament.

It is important therefore to increase women's access to the political sphere. Although political party affiliation may represent women's most obvious entrée into

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[4] www.peacewomen.org/news/Lebanon/July04/elections.html
[5] www.amanjordan.org/english/daily_news/wmview.php?ArtID=301

9

politics, it is not the only option. One of the best ways for women to enter the political arena is through involvement in national women's movements. In post-conflict countries such as Lebanon where women have been active in mobilizing against the regime, participation in the women's movement may provide them with the credentials needed to become a party leader or a candidate. Women's movements can also influence political party platforms and help ensure that issues of special interest to women are addressed seriously by all parties. More broadly, non-governmental organizations, including women's, human rights and community groups, labour unions, and other civil society institutions, can contribute in various ways to the advancement of women's political participation. Priorities may include identifying women to stand as candidates, providing training on dealing with the media and other issues, developing networks to advance women in politics both within the party and across party lines, and assisting with gender-sensitive civic and voter education.

In addition to this need to get women into national government and municipal councils, there is also a need to get women's issues on to the political agenda. It is hoped that these two processes can work together, and that by increasing awareness of women's issues, more women are enabled to join the political process, and in turn, as more women participate in politics, their issues are increasingly brought to the forefront of the political agenda.

## PROJECTS TO INCREASE FEMALE PARTICIPATION

An important program is the Beijing Platform for Action, which aims to remove obstacles to women's active participation in all spheres of public and private life through a full and equal share in economic, social, cultural and political decision-making. This means that the principle of shared power and responsibility should be established between women and men at home, in the workplace and in the wider national and international communities. Through information gained by the Beijing Platform for Action, UNDP-POGAR is able to gauge the progress of the reforms within different regions.

Affirmative action measures have been taken by some governments. These include measures such as quotas, or systems of proportional representation, to try and improve the balance of gender within political participation. However, in many areas there is a lack of comparative information about the effects of these quotas and electoral systems, particularly at a local level. The Beijing Platform for Action provides a useful tool for those working towards women's political participation and many of its recommendations are being used. However, while data and information on women in parliament and government is improving, it is vital that this data is also available on a local government level, such as this report.

The Lebanese Women's Council, in collaboration with UNIFEM-OXFAM and the Freidrich Ebert Stiftung Foundation, produced a report, "NGO National Report on the Progress Made after the Beijing Conference." The Council prepared this report as part of

10

CEDAW convention and the Follow-up of Women's Issues (post-Beijing). Issues included women's participation in elections and at the political level in general. The U.S. Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labour promoted democratic practices that enhanced the role of women in politics which included programs to promote women's political participation in advance of municipal elections in 2004 and parliamentary elections in 2005. Lebanese women and youth participated in the Arab Businesswomen Internship Program and the Young Student Leaders Program.[6]

The National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) began working in Lebanon in May 2000 with the organization of workshops in coalition building and community problem solving for Lebanese civic activists. With the municipal elections in 2004, NDI launched a program to strengthen the ability of interested women to mount viable campaigns for local and national office and increase nation-wide support of these women from citizens, political parties and the government. In March 2004 the Institute conducted a series of three two-day training workshops for over 80 women participants. Trainings took place in Beirut, Saida and Tripoli and brought together women candidates and activists from all regions. NDI held the Beirut and Tripoli trainings in cooperation with the Lebanese Women's Council and partnered with the Development for People and Nature Association for the workshop in Saida. A fourth training for women candidates from the Bekaa was held in Beirut in April.[7]

All of these projects, both general and more gender specific have gone a long way to improving the systems of both governance and local governance in Lebanon. Municipal reforms have increased the effectiveness of local government and participation for all citizens, as candidates or voters has become more effective and worthwhile. The next step in this reform is to continue to develop the demographic of political participation in Lebanon, and the following analysis of data from the 2004 municipal elections will give us a strong basis to do this by providing a clear analysis of the current position of the gender balance within Lebanese local government.

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[6] To find out more about the U.S. Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labour's programs in the Middle East region see: U.S. Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labour, "Human Rights and Democracy: The U.S. Record 2004 - 2005 Middle East and North Africa." (29 March 2005)

[7] NDI has also worked to assist municipal offices to develop the skills necessary to respond to their constituencies through a partnership with the Development and Municipality Studies Centre, (DMSC). To see more on contributions from NDI and DMSC see:
www.ndi.org/worldwide/mena/lebanon/lebanon_pf.asp

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### DATA ANALYSIS OF FEMALE PARTICIPATION IN THE 2004 MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

From even a cursory look at the data (Table 1), the main conclusion that can be drawn about women's participation in municipal elections is that, compared to that of men, it is minute.

The total number of candidates competing over all the municipalities was 18,606 and women represented a mere 3% of them or 552 prospective candidates. These 18,606 people were fighting for 9032 municipal seats.

Women won 215 (or 2.4%) of these 9032 seats, whereas men won 8817 (or 97.6%) of the available seats. This means that 38.9% of the women who stood for election won, compared to 48.8% of the men.

These figures show us that there is not a huge discrepancy between the success levels of men and women. This suggests that the problem of the lack of women in the municipalities is a lack of candidates, rather than an unwillingness to vote for them.

**Female Candidates According to Governorate.**
When we look at the locations of the female candidates (Table 2) we see that women ran in municipalities in all 8 Governorates. The highest number of women ran in Mount Lebanon, where 170 of the 552 women were candidates, translating to 30.8% of the total. In North Lebanon 131, or 23.7% women stood as candidates. In Nabatieh 67 or 12.1% of the women stood, and in Akaar 68, or 12.3%. In the South there were 52 candidates or 9.4%, and the Bekka had 37 or 6.7%. In Baalbak/Hermal, only 18 of the 552 women stood, or 3.3%. The lowest incidence of female candidates however, was in Beirut where only 9 women ran for election, or 1.6% of the total.

However, we should also compare the female participation in each governorate with the male participation (Table 3), and the number of seats available. When we do this we see, for example that in Beirut, although only 9 women ran for election, the total number of candidates was in fact only 70, so women made up 12.9% of the candidates in this area. In comparison, in Mount Lebanon where the highest number of female candidates ran (170), there were actually 5,621 candidates in total, so women actually comprised only 3% of the total candidates.

**Voters According to Governorate.**
Overall 3,029,138 people voted in the municipal elections. Voter numbers did vary significantly around the country. 24.5% of people who voted were in the Mount Lebanon area, with 16.1% in North Lebanon. Voters in Beirut made up 14% of the total, with 11.5% coming from Nabatieh, 10.9% from the South, 8.4% from the Bekaa, and 7.9%

from the Baalbek/Hermal area. The smallest number of voters was in Akkar which had only 6.8% of the total voters.

**Success Levels of Female Candidates.**
Of the 552 women who ran for election in the municipalities, 215 were elected to office. At least one woman was elected in every Governorate and every Caza. As we would expect the highest number of women were elected in the area where the highest number of women ran, Mount Lebanon, where 75 of 170 or 44.1% of the candidates who ran won. This translates to 34.8% of the total successful female candidates. Of the 131 candidates in North Lebanon, 50, or 23.2% of the total won. 25 or 11.6% of the successful women were in Akkar, where 68 women stood. The South, the Bekka and Nabatieh had 21, 18 and 17 successful candidates respectively. 8 or 3.7% out of 18 women who stood in Baalbek/Hermal were successful. In Beirut, where only 9 women stood, only 1 was successful.

**Female Candidates by Caza (Table 15)**
The highest representation of women candidates came from Akaar the only caza in Akaar governorate with 68 from 552 or 12.3%. The caza of Metn had 51 female candidates or 9.2% of the total number of female candidates, and 25 of these won municipal seats. The township of Koura in North Lebanon had 42 female candidates or 7.6% of which 17 won. Other reasonably high representations of female candidates came from Mount Lebanon in the cazas of the Shouf and Baabda, which both had 30 female candidates of which 13 won in the Shouf and 11 in Baabda. The cazas in the Bekaa, the South and in Baalbak/ Hermal had significantly lower representations of women candidates, with no caza exceeding 20 female candidates.

**Female Candidates in Rural and Urban Areas**
No significant conclusion can be drawn in relation to differences in female participation between rural and urban areas. In the urban area of Beirut 9 female candidates stood for election, 1.6% of the total female candidates running and only one of them won. The Baalbak/ Hermal governorate which is comparatively rural had the next lowest number of women candidates at 18. However, in contrast to this the rural Akaar area had 68 female candidates.

**Voters by Religion**
Of the 3,029,138 people who voted in the election 59% (1,788,452) were Muslim and 40.8% (1,234.988) were Christian, with other religions making up the remaining 0.2%.

**Voters by Sect**
Due to the strong sectarian influence in Lebanon it is important to break down this distinction between Muslim and Christian religions even further. Of the 1,788,452 Muslim voters, 801,685 or 26.5% of the total voters were Sunni, closely followed by the Shia, who comprised 26.2% of the total voters or 793,081 people. The Druze formed 5.6% of voters with other Muslim sects making up the remaining 0.7% of Muslim voters. The Maronites were the most prominent Christian group amongst voters with 22.1% of

13

the total, and the Greek Orthodox made up a further 7.8% with Catholics the third largest Christian group with 5.2% of the voters. Other sects made up the remaining 5.7% of the Christian voters.

### Candidates by Religion
Of the 18,503 candidates who stood in the election, 57.5% (10,633) were Muslim and 42.5% (7,870) were Christian.

### Female Candidates by Religion
When we look at the breakdown of female candidates (Table 5) we find that more Christian women than Muslim women ran in the election. Of the 552 female candidates 351 or 63.6% were Christian, whereas only 201 or 36.4% were Muslim. This is reflected when we look at the overall participation of women and see that 4.5% of the Christian candidates were women, compared to just 1.9% of the Muslim candidates.

### Candidates by Sect (Table 8)
When we look at the sectarian data for candidates we see that it does not follow the same pattern as that of the voters. The highest number of candidates were Shiia, comprising 5727 people or 30.9%. They are closely followed by Maronites who made up 29.3% or 5435 candidates. Despite having the most voters, there were only 3589 Sunni candidates, or 19.4%. Greek Orthodox made up 8.0% or 1482, the Druze were 6.8% or 1267 of the candidates and Catholics comprised 866 (4.7%) candidates.

### Female Candidates by Sect (Table 7)
As we have seen above there was a much higher number of Christian than Muslim female candidates. This is also emphasised when we look at the sectarian distribution of female candidates. The highest number of female candidates was amongst the Maronites, where 230 women stood, or 4.2% of the total Maronite candidates. From the Shia 92 women stood, just 1.6% of the total Shia candidates. There were 84 female Sunni candidates, comprising 2.3%, and 82 Greek Orthodox, comprising 5.5%, a greater proportion of the total number. 2% of the total Druze candidates were female, and 4% of the total Catholic candidates. The highest percentage of female to male candidates was actually amongst the Armenian Orthodox, who had 2 female candidates from just 23, comprising 8.7% of the total.

### Successful Female Candidates by Sect (Table 10)
As you would expect the highest number of female candidates won the elections from the most represented religious sect. Of the 230 Maronite women running, 93 successfully won seats, meaning that Maronites represent 43.2% of all women in municipal positions. Interestingly however, beyond this the figures for the successful women do not follow the same pattern as the number of candidates. The second highest success rate amongst women was the Greek Orthodox, where 33 of the 82 women were successful, or 15.3% of the total successful women. Of the 84 Sunni women, 31 were successful, and of the 92 Shia, 28 women won, meaning that the Sunni and Shia comprise 14.4% and 13% respectively of the women in municipal positions. Of the 25 Druze female candidates, 15

14

won, so the Druze women make up 7% of women in the municipalities. Overall, the women in municipal positions comprise 141 Christians or 65.6% and 74 Muslims or 34.4%. These figures reflect the higher number of Christian than Muslim female candidates.

**Female and Male Candidates by Age**
It is interesting to look at the age of both male and female candidates (Table 13) as this indicates to us at what age men and women are becoming interested and involved in politics at a leadership level. As 25 is the minimum age to stand for election all the candidates in the 2004 elections must have been born before 1979. The youngest candidates will fall into the 1970 – 1979 bracket. When we look we see that 165 of the 552 female candidates, or 29.9% were born in these years. In contrast to this only 14.9% of the male candidates were born in this period. The highest number of female candidates, (196 or 35.5%), were born a decade earlier, between 1960 – 1969. This corresponds with the male figures, with the greatest number of male candidates (34.2%) also being born in the 1960s. If we look at the years 1950 – 1959, we see that 25.2% (or 139) of all female candidates, and 30.3% of all male candidates were born in the years. Prior to 1949, only 9.4% of female candidates were born, in contrast to 20.6% of the male candidates.

From these figures we can see that women involved in politics are generally much younger than men involved in politics. Although the majority of candidates from both genders are aged between 35 – 45, we can see that whereas 65.4% of women are aged below 45, 50.9% of men are aged over 45.

**Successful Female Candidates by Age (Table 12)**
This age distribution is reflected when we look at the age of successful female candidates. 70 of the successful women, or 32.6%, were born between 1960 – 1969, with 28.8% born between 1970 – 1979, and 27.4% between 1950 – 1959. As we would expect the most candidates won from the most represented age group, and we find that 60.4% of the women holding municipal positions were born in the 1960 – 1969 bracket.

**Female Candidates by Marital Status**
        Of the 552 female candidates 178 or 32.2% are married and 356 or 64.5% are single. Of the remaining 18, 9 are widowed and 9 are divorced. Of the 201 Muslim candidates 65 (32.3%) are married, 128 (63.7%) are single and 8 (4.0%) are divorced. Of the 351 Christian candidates 113 (32.2%) are married, 228 (65%) are single, 9 (2.6%) are widowed and just 1 (0.3%) is divorced. We can see from this that political participation is higher amongst single women than married women, and also that the comparative percentages of single and married women are very similar regardless of their religious background.

**Successful Female Candidates by Marital Status**
        As you would expect more single women were successful in the elections than married women because more single women took part. In total 70 married women were

successful (25 Muslim and 45 Christian) and 138 single women (46 Muslim and 92 Christian). In addition 3 divorced women and 4 widows were successful. This means that 38.5% of the married Muslim women who participated were successful, compared to 39.8% of the married Christian women. Also 35.9% of the single Muslim women, compared to 40.4% of the single Christian women. These figures demonstrate that marital status does not appear to effect the success or otherwise of women in the municipal elections.

**Female Candidates by their Religion and that of their Husband (Table 17)**
Only 2 (or 0.36%) of the 552 female candidates are married to husbands of a different religion to them. This is one Maronite and one Greek Orthodox candidate who are both married to Sunnis. All married women out of the 550 female candidates have married within their own religion, and the majority of them (91.8%) have also married in their own sects within that religion.

**Female Candidates and the Female Voting Pattern (Table 16)**
There seems to be no clear pattern when looking at women's voting record for female candidates as the numbers are quite evenly spread. 41 female candidates each received less than 50 votes from women, and none of these 41 candidates were successful. At the other end of the scale 36 candidates each received more than 2000 votes from women and of these 21 or 58.3% won. The highest number of candidates (85) received between 101 – 200 votes from women, and of these 26 candidates won and 59 lost. The highest number of winning candidates fell into the group of women who received between 201 – 300 votes from women, as 32 of the women who fell into this group were successful. As we do not have figures to show the incidence of women's votes for men we cannot see from this whether women are more or less likely to vote for a female candidate.

## AN ANALYSIS OF VOTING PATTERNS IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF BEIRUT

In total, 390,004 people were registered to vote in the Beirut municipality. Of these 184,667 or 47.4% were men and 205,337 or 52.6% were women. From the people entitled to vote only 92,906 actually exercised the right, or 23.8%. In spite of there being more women registered to vote, in the end more men actually did vote with 49,409 men voting, and only 43,497 women. This translates to 26.8% of eligible men and 21.2% of eligible women. In total, after spoiled ballots were discarded 89,666 people voted in the Beirut municipality.

Of the 390,004 registered voters, 57.1% or 222,862 are from the main Muslim sects, and 36.0% or 140,413 are from the main Christian sects, with other religions and sects comprising the remaining 6.9%.

This divide between Muslim and Christian is emphasised further when we look at the number of people who actually voted in Beirut. We see that 67,497 Muslims (72.7% of the total) and only 22,712 (or 24.4%) of the eligible Christians.

When we look at the difference between the male and the female vote we see that within both religious groups more men voted than women. 31,519 Muslim women voted, or 33.9% of the total voters, whereas only 10,681 Christian women voted or 11.5% of the total.

Of the 9 female candidates in Beirut, 5 were Muslim and 4 were Christian. The one successful candidate was a Sunni Muslim.

**An Analysis of the top 6 candidates in Beirut**.
When we look at the table (following) we can see that the difference between male and female voting patterns is not huge. The big discrepancy comes when we look at the difference between the Muslim and Christian vote. This emphasises the fact that in Lebanon votes are often cast along sectarian lines rather than based on the political agenda of a candidate.

We can also see that people are not greatly influenced by the gender of the candidate. Although the only female candidate is $6^{th}$ here, there were many men below her. We also see that more men than women voted for the female candidate, showing that men are no less likely to vote for a female, and equally that women are no more likely to choose a female over a male candidate.

**Table showing the top 6 candidates in the Beirut Municipality**.

| TOP 6 CANDIDATES GENDER | TOTAL VOTES | TOTAL MUSLIM VOTES | | TOTAL CHRISTIAN VOTES | | TOTAL MALE VOTES | | TOTAL FEMALE VOTES | | % GAP Male & Female | % GAP Muslim & Christian |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | | |
| Male | 53,523 | 43,715 | 81.7 | 8,820 | 16.5 | 28,294 | 52.8 | 25,229 | 47.1 | 5.7 | 65.2 |
| Male | 51,969 | 40,334 | 77.6 | 10,500 | 20.2 | 27,725 | 53.3 | 24,244 | 46.7 | 6.6 | 57.4 |
| Male | 50,300 | 39,260 | 78.0 | 10,008 | 19.9 | 26,232 | 52.2 | 24,068 | 47.8 | 4.4 | 58.1 |
| Male | 50,237 | 39,970 | 79.6 | 9,187 | 18.3 | 25,609 | 51.0 | 24,628 | 49.0 | 2.0 | 61.3 |
| Male | 48,736 | 37,987 | 78.0 | 9,662 | 19.8 | 25,368 | 52.1 | 23,368 | 47.9 | 4.2 | 58.2 |
| Female | 48,657 | 37,978 | 78.1 | 9,577 | 19.7 | 25,866 | 53.2 | 22,791 | 46.8 | 6.4 | 58.4 |

## AN ANALYSIS OF FEMALE MAYORS IN 2004

There are 2362 mayors in Lebanon and out of that number only 21 (or 0.9%) are women. There are 1302 Muslim mayors of which 5 are women and 1060 Christian mayors of which 16 are women(Tables 19 – 20). Due to the very low level of female participation as mayors in Lebanon it is even more difficult than with the municipal participation to

make any effective analysis of the women who are participating, therefore the following data should be viewed purely as an assessment of the current status of female mayors.

**Female Mayors by Governorate**
There are female mayors in 7 of the 8 governorates of Lebanon. The highest level of female representation is in North Lebanon where there are 383 mayors of which 7 are women. These seven women make up 33.3% of all female mayors. In Mount Lebanon there are 697 mayors and of them there are four women. In Akkar there are 3 female mayors out of a total of 211. The South, Baalbak-Hermal and Beirut each have 2 female mayors from a total of 292, 243 and 107 respectively. In the Bekaa governorate there are no female mayors.

**Female Mayors by Religion and Sect (Tables 21 & 23)**
Although there are more Muslim mayors (55.1%) than Christian (44.9%), we find that, as with municipal candidates, when we look at female participation this is reversed and there are 16 Christian female mayors and only 5 Muslim female mayors. This means that 76.2% of the female mayors are Christian, and only 23.8% are Muslim.

The highest number of mayors comes from the Maronite sect which is repeated in the female mayors, with 6 of the women being Maronite. However, whereas in the overall figures Shiite and then Sunni have the next most representatives, within the female figures the Greek Orthodox have a higher representation also having 6 mayors. They are followed by the Shiites with 3, the Catholics with 2 and then the Sunni, Alawite, Syrian Orthodox and Syrian Catholics all with one female mayor each.

**Female Mayors by Age (Table 25)**
   Seven out of the 21 female mayors or 33.3% were born between the years 1960-69. Women that were born between the years 1950-1959 represent five or 23.8% of all female mayors. There are 4 women or 19% born between the years 1970-79. Women born between the years 1930-1949 make up 23.8%. The majority of women are between 36-45 years old and over 50% of the female mayors are under the age of 45.

The main conclusion we can draw from the analysis of the data is that female political participation in Lebanon is currently very low. It is interesting to note, however, that the discrepancy between the percentage of male candidates who stood for election and were successful, and that of the female candidates is not huge. 48.8% of the men who stood were successful, as opposed to 38.9% of the women. Although there is still some difference this shows us that there is not a significantly greater level of support for men rather than women, and suggests that if more women stood for election then they would be successful.

This report is the basis for further research and development of women and their political position in Lebanon. The next stage of this research is to carry out more qualitative research about women as both candidates and voters. Researchers will talk to women directly about their experiences of political participation, what encouragement they have to participate and where it comes from. Also we will look at what hinders them, and what obstacles they face.

In addition to this the research will look closely at the women's vote within Lebanon. The data shows us that there does not seem to be a huge discrepancy between the male and female vote at present – both men and women vote for both men and women, but we will look at this further to establish if there is any prejudice against women candidates within the political arena. We will also look at the women's vote in more detail, looking at what motivates women to vote, and at their level of awareness of the agenda of candidates. The research will also look at the level of political awareness of women voters, and whether they are motivated by a candidate's agenda, their own personal needs, or by the influence of people around them.

By increasing all participation, particularly that of women, more of the issues that people face on a day to day basis can be brought into the political arena. It is hoped that this further research, coupled with the local government reform projects discussed in section one of this report, can serve to make local governance in Lebanon more effective and efficient for all citizens.