

# ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Towards Social Justice & Gender Equality

جنسيتي



حق لي ولأسرتي



## Twentieth Anniversary

### *In 2020, we celebrate the twentieth anniversary of CRTD.A*

We also celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Beijing conference of 1995, a conference that has shaped, influenced and informed the genesis of CRTD.A as well as its vision, mission and the work that it has done so far.

2020 was also a year of great challenges and difficulties. It has forced CRTD.A to change its ways of working almost overnight. Our team has borne an enormous burden both professionally and personally and have bravely sustained these trying circumstances with courage and humor. As we finalise this report, our thoughts are with our longest standing colleague, Moustapha al Chabb, who has been confronted with the cerebrovascular accident from which he is now recovering with the love and care of his family and the support of his colleagues.

We will mark this 20th celebration with knowledge production. As of mid-December, we will be releasing a series of publications and films which include new production as well as updated ones. These pertain to various aspects of our work.

We will be re-publishing our signature gender training manual, releasing new nationality documentaries, a new newsletter as well as many other products which we hope will provide tools, ideas and food for thought for gender practitioners. We will also be revamping our website as well as our social media platforms.

**Lina Abou Habib**

Co-Founder and Chair of Board

## ABOUT CRTD.A

The Collective for Research and Training on Development – Action (CRTD.A) is a Lebanon-based, non-governmental organization that works across the Middle East and North Africa to promote gender and citizenship equality and social justice. Instituted in 2000 and registered in 2003, CRTD.A's programs and initiatives have helped many women in the region become politically, socially and economically autonomous and given them the voice and agency needed to participate in political and societal spheres.

### OUR VISION

A gender inclusive society where social justice and gender equality are practiced in the public as well as the private spheres.

Witnessing a generation of women and girls who are empowered and equally participating in decision-making in the public and private spheres in Lebanon, the MENA region, and globally.

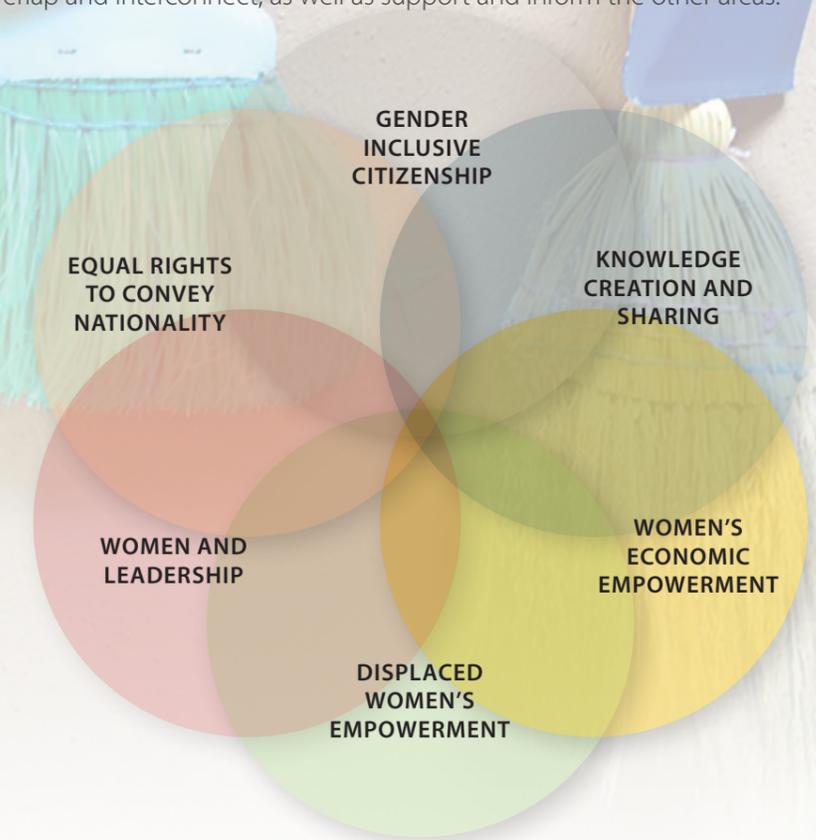
## THEORY OF CHANGE



**CRTD.A** has adopted a theory of change that consists of three main work streams: knowledge generation, capacity building, movement building/advocacy. These three work streams interact with each other. Knowledge generation leads to a more nuanced approach to capacity building and simultaneously informs best methods for movement building and advocacy. This theory was conceptualized as a means of enabling women to be their own agents, to bear the responsibility of leading to claim their rights and to act effectively as agents of social change.

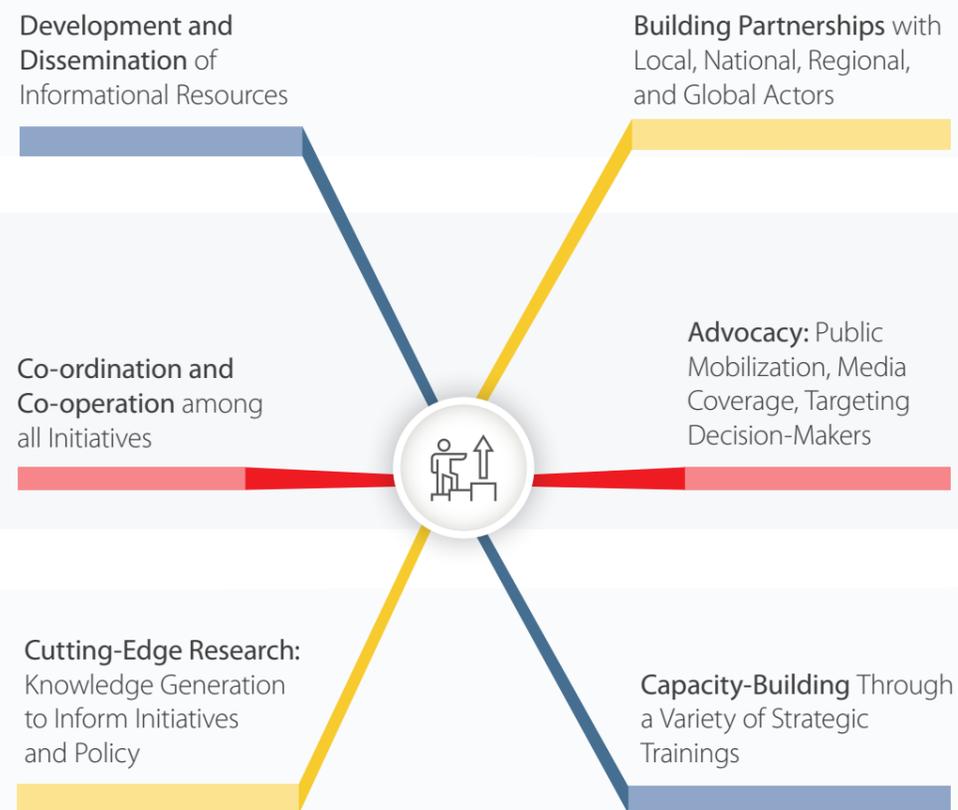
## FOCUS AREAS

Based on this vision, CRTD.A has identified five main focus points, which shape our areas of activity. These focus areas overlap and interconnect, as well as support and inform the other areas.



# STRATEGIES

## HOW DO WE IMPLEMENT OUR THEORY OF CHANGE?



We have used our theory of change and our five focus areas to develop the strategies that we employ to achieve our vision.

# CRTDA - Two Decades of Activism at a glance

## SUPPORTING WOMEN TO CLAIM THEIR RIGHTS

Work streams along the two decades

- Claiming Nationality Rights**

  - Building capacities of concerned women
  - Providing legal aid
  - Putting pressure towards claiming rights through change in regulations
  - National advocacy
  - Regional and Global movement building and advocacy in Gender inclusive right to convey nationality
- Claiming Economic Rights**

  - Building women's leadership capacities with a focus on the marginalized – rural and refugee women.
  - Building technical and leadership capacities towards gender equitable engagement in the economy among rural women, refugee women and other marginalized women.
  - Movement building and advocacy.
- Knowledge Generation**

  - Creation and dissemination of knowledge
  - *Providing evidence for action*
- Building Synergies**

  - Nationally
  - Regionally
  - Globally

## AREAS OF ACTIONS

Our focus areas have evolved to become five principal areas of action, informed by our theory of change and our strategies. Although each area operates independently, there is a high level of alignment among the different areas.

### CURRENT AREAS OF ACTION



# COVID 19 RESPONSE

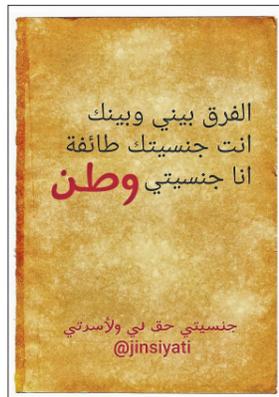
## Online Advocacy and Engagement

The covid-19 crisis has transformed the way we work nationally, regionally and globally as activists with the inception of the year 2020. It both limited traditional forms of activism and opened up new forms of activism with increasing engagement across digital platforms. CRTDA used this opportunity to amplify the voices of women across many of our areas of action.

- **Engagement with the Arab States Civil Society Organizations and Feminist Network** – CRTDA is a co-convenor of the network since April 2020. The Arab States CSOs and Feminist Network was established in 2019 in the context of consultative meetings relating to Beijing +25. Following the COVID19 pandemic, the network expanded to include about forty women/feminist CSOs from majority of Arab countries who meet bi-weekly to exchange information, experience and data on the gendered impact of COVID-19.

### The network member organizations aim at achieving the following goals:

- “To coordinate and strengthen their voice in order to advocate and call for governments to put women and girls at the centre of their efforts to recover from COVID-19 and to make sure that there is no reversal of the progress that has been made on gender equality and women’s rights.
- To support the build- up of a regional feminist movement that has leadership and can participate in all decision- making processes in addressing the COVID-19 and to work together to curb the gender injustice that can exist post COVID-19. The
- To share data, information, experiences and effective practices undertaken by CSOs in the Arab countries in order to effectively use in influencing government policies to ensure that women’s rights are central to the response to COVID-19 and beyond.
- To ensure that the needs and voice of the women marginalized groups in the region (refugees, migrants, LGBTI, female heads of households, domestic workers and women with disability) during and post COVID-19 are heard and addressed.
- To mobilize and support feminist CSOs to build greater solidarity for transformative sustainable gender justice interventions
- To facilitate the participation of women in the region in the global feminist movement, the Generation Equality Forums and the Action Coalitions.”
- Launch of the Parallel Report: 25 years after Beijing, Women Fighting Inequality in Lebanon – November 25th 2020.
- Participation in Feminists Leading Revolutions Webinar April 27th 2020: This webinar mixed global advocacy with building synergies. Lina Abou Habib, CRTDA’s co-founder and President of the Board joined as a feminist and activist. This webinar was hosted by the Global Fund for Women along with sister feminist activists - Maria Al Abdeh Women Now Syria, Yanar Mohammad -Organization of Women’s Freedom -Iraq and Fahima Hashim - Salmah Women’s Resource Center in Sudan.
- CRTDA, in the person of the President of the Board, co-moderated a discussion session entitled ‘Paid Care Work and the Pandemic’ organised by Friedrich Ebert Stiftung that explored the current situation that faces (under-)paid care workers across the MENA region. From dangerous working conditions that are faced by



Wednesday, November 25th, 2020  
4:00 - 5:30 pm Beirut Time



## Lebanon's Parallel Report 25 Years after Beijing: Women Fighting Inequality in Lebanon

**Moderator**

**Rachel Dore-Weeks**  
Head, UN Women Lebanon

**Presentation  
of Findings**

**Lina Abou Habib**  
Asfari Institute at the American University of Beirut

### Panelist

<p><b>Myriam Sfeir</b> Director, LAU's Arab Institute for Women</p>	<p><b>Fatima Moussawi</b> Researcher, Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy &amp; International Affairs at AUB</p>	<p><b>Zeina Abdel Khalik</b> Gender Expert, CRTDAr</p>
<p><b>Houry Guedelekian</b> Chair, NCO Committee on the Status of Women</p>	<p><b>Soon-Young Yoon</b> UN Representative of the International Alliance of Women and Chair of the Board of Women's Environment and Development Organization</p>	<p><b>Diana Abo Abbas</b> Executive Director, Marsa Sexual Health Center</p>

health-care workers to the dire circumstances that migrant domestic workers. The session looked at the measures that have been deployed to address the needs of women in (under-)paid care jobs and the coping mechanisms that have evolved to improve their realities. The insights gathered from the session will inform policy and issue briefs that are being developed on the topic.

- **Gender Dynamics in the Age of COVID19:** This regional webinar was held on May 6th 2020 and Ms. Lina Abou Habib spoke in addition to Dr. Sahar Qawasmeh Director General of 'Atwar' Palestine and Dr. Abla Ammaoui – Secretary General of the High Council for Population - Jordan.
- **COVID 19 and National Policy from a Feminist Perspective:** In a webinar conducted by Intersectional Feminist Foreign Policy IFFP on Ms. Lina Abou Habib speaking about the COVID19 crisis focusing on Lebanon, underscored that COVID19 is not 'the great equalizer', questions to ask are about who is affected most by COVID19, and who can 'resist the shock'.
- **The Gendered Impact of COVID 19 Webinar:** Lina Abou Habib spoke at this webinar hosted by The New Arab which looked at the gendered impact of COVID 19 in Lebanon, Syria, and Palestine on May 11th 2020.

# Nationality Campaign



The nationality campaign, publicly known as 'My Nationality: A Right for Me and My Family', which focuses on advocating for the right of women across the region to pass their citizenship on to their families, is mainly an awareness-raising, advocacy, and lobbying campaign.

The planned activities for the nationality campaign continued as always despite political instability and the covid-19 crisis. Intensity of the work varied in response to varying intensities of challenges.

However, the nationality campaign continued maintaining direct contact with the concerned (individuals, schools, institutions); interfacing with mainstream media such as television interviews and news features. In addition, the campaign communicated with relevant embassies and international mission abroad as well as individuals from the concerned who are abroad; the campaign maintained contact with government agencies. The online component of the campaign's work included dissemination of campaign's public statement and events as usual, and conducting advocacy through social media and CRTD.A's online platforms.

The covid-19 crisis represented an exciting time for the nationality campaign as, with the families of Lebanese women severely adversely affected, they often turned to CRTD.A and the nationality campaign to share their stories and their experiences.

Due to Lebanon's discriminatory nationality laws, many of Lebanese women's families were discriminated against and barred from returning home to Lebanon under the pretext that they were not Lebanese nationals. The families of Lebanese women inside Lebanon were often deprived of what healthcare and support was afforded to citizens, exacerbating both their situation and the pandemic in Lebanon.

The nationality campaign focused on amplifying and sharing the voices of these women, documenting their experiences, and raising awareness of what was happening as a result of the discriminatory citizenship laws. Multiple articles were published and disseminated across CRTD.A's online platforms. We encouraged women to film their testimonies and to share them, and these were also widely disseminated, drawing attention to the adverse effects of discriminatory citizenship laws for both the women and their families, but also for Lebanese society as a whole. Furthermore, the campaign was part of the preparatory team of the report of the Global Campaign for Equal Nationality Rights entitled "In Solidarity with the Stateless" which was published on May 26, 2020, in English and Arabic with 82 international organizations as signatories.

We continued to engage with the mainstream media, with Karima Chebbo, the Manager of CRTD.A's Nationality Campaign engaged with media such as the MTV interview on Mother's Day in March 2020, and an interview with 'Alliwa' newspaper where there was for a full page spread on 25 April 2020. Also there was a televised interview with Maharat News to voice the campaign



perspective against allegations of the NCLW. In addition there was a feature with Legal agenda periodical in confrontation with an official from the government's National Relief Committee regarding COVID19 measures, in addition to several features and disseminated a plethora of information.

Pressuring, sustained work, and follow up conducted by campaign was instrumental in inducing change. The campaign adopted the strategy of identifying issues, monitoring, and confrontation. The campaign made sure to follow up the implementation of promises made by the officials. As a result, policies related to the COVID-19 response were changed, and the families of Lebanese women were included for repatriation to Lebanon during the crisis, as well as with access to subsidies.

The campaign was involved in facilitating access to public schools for daughters and sons of concerned women and issued a complaint to the Ministry of Education followed by a statement to that effect. As a result, the Minister published a decree formally that facilitates registration of sons and daughters of concerned Lebanese women in public schools. That effort was conducted in close networking with Human Rights Watch.

Also, the campaign published a documentary and an animation film soon to be screened. The documentary is on the impact of COVID19 on concerned women during the pandemic. The animation film is a comparison among legislative proposals pertaining to nationality law reform that have been recently submitted to parliament. The animation also contains an overview of 20 years of the campaign 'Nationality is a Right for Me and My Family'.

# Empowerment of Refugee Women

## Activities and Initiatives

### Women as Agents of Social Cohesion - Arsal

Much of the refugee women empowerment area of action was focused on the Women as Agents of Social Cohesion project in Arsal supported by *EU Madad for Women Fund and EFI-IFE*.

This project aims to build social cohesion in a fragile refugee-hosting region which has suffered from jihadi insurgence, civil war, and poverty in recent years. This project brought together women from both Syrian refugee and Lebanese host communities to advocate for common causes, working to both empower women from this fragile community and to build social cohesion and common understanding.



- A three day leadership advocacy training was held on January 10, 11, and 12, 2019, in which the participants identified two priority advocacy issues: early marriage and labour market access and opportunities. The participants split into two working groups to work on these projects.
- These groups were then coached through the advocacy process with regular follow-up meetings. Four face to face Coaching sessions conducted on February 20th, 22nd, 29th and March 7th involved presentations on details in implementing the advocacy process including setting objectives and stakeholder analysis.
- The community field coordinator attended a Madad workshop on advocacy in Beirut January 28,29 and shared information with her colleagues. The project was therefore on track when the first covid-19 cases were discovered in Lebanon. The project was re-oriented in light of the covid-19 crisis, and became more focused on disseminating information on covid-19 and health services in Arsal and the surrounding refugee camps.
- The last face-to-face meeting was conducted on March 7 which included a presentation on COVID19 based on resources from the Lebanese Ministry of Public Health, and issues surrounding health education were discussed.
- At the same time the community activists met with the municipality emergency cluster and there was an initiative of mapping health services facilities in the town as well as the mapping of the refugee camps surrounding Arsal which amounted to 150 camps.
- In addition, the two initial themes – early marriage and work opportunities were pursued by the community activists who divided into six teams each engaged with groups of women and men. Meetings were held utilizing WhatsApp. An average of 15 participants were present at the time of each meeting and the facilitator asked a set of questions, in total eighteen meetings were conducted three meetings for each of the six WhatsApp groups.
- Following the meetings an evaluation survey was distributed to assess the impact of the intervention to beneficiaries as well as to capture the perspective of the community activists. Finally, a stakeholder meeting using Zoom was conducted on May 5, 2020 and it was attended by IFE EFI representatives as well as by the head of municipality as well as some NGOs operating in Arsal.



### Women, oceans and conservation

The world's oceans are in crisis. Climate change has thrown marine ecosystems out of balance, as have pollution and ocean acidification. UN Women works to address women's and girl's vulnerabilities to climate change and empowers them to lead sustainable development efforts.

<https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/empowering-women-to-serve-our-oceans>



# Women's Economic Empowerment

## Activities and Initiatives



As with the other projects, the extraordinary circumstances since January 2020 meant that the women's economic empowerment project changed from what was previously planned. For this area of action, we are currently focusing on empowering women to advocate for economic rights, access to labour markets, and fairness in the labour market.

- A national training of trainers (NToT) – 16 participants - on January 17,18,19, and 20th where we provided accommodations for participants from remote areas to facilitate access given the situation of interrupted mobility prevalent during that period due to the continued uprising in Lebanon.
- A grassroots workshop in digital advocacy in February 7th to cover the South region of Lebanon in collaboration with Imam Sadr Foundation which was well attended (22 participants).
- A further NToT for media advocacy on March 14,15,16, and 17th was scheduled, however the COVID19 emergency measures /lockdown was implemented by government and we had to cancel that workshop.

Following the covid-19 crisis that started in Lebanon February 21st, we reconfigured our work to an online format and achieved the following:

- Started the policy dialogues reconfigured into online discussions for mobilization
- Finished a first set of four online discussions with a cohort consisting of four grassroots organizations working in various areas in Lebanon (North, Beqaa, Mount Lebanon and South), and targeting marginalized women – urban, rural and refugee women.
- Started the first online discussion of the second cohort consisting of three grassroots organization.

In light of the current state of the labour market and economic situation, we continued coaching of the three income-generating projects that we had previously coached. The projects had become self-sufficient, but we did not think that they would be able to withstand the current economic situation without further support. This was a deviation from the planned project, but we are also hoping to use these initiatives as prospective case studies to help similar initiatives to survive in the current climate in Lebanon, as the economic situation develops. All of these initiatives are led by Syrian and Palestinian refugee women.

The last stretch of the project involved a national consultative meeting convened on November 26th and a set of activities including narratives of women who dared challenge traditions and institute small economic ventures in Beqaa, Mount Lebanon and South Lebanon. Also the project included perspectives of men in the form of two focus groups.

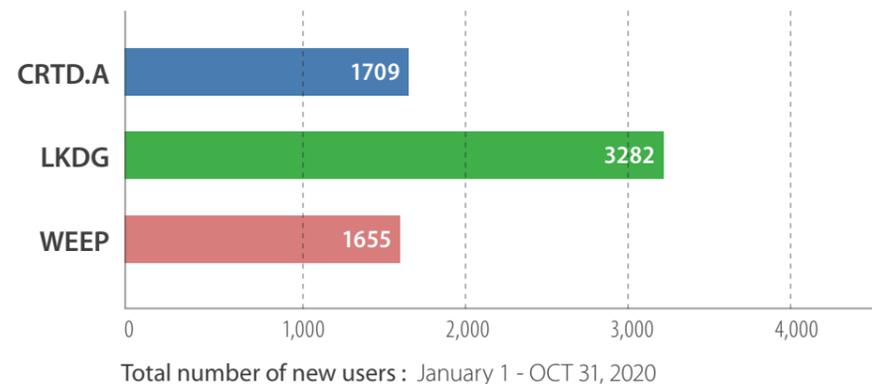
*External evaluation of the project is underway.*



## IRIS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

### Independent Resource and Information Service (IRIS)

The Independent Resource and Information Services (IRIS) is an information repository and dissemination unit at CRTD.A. Its activities are cross-cutting to CRTD.A programs and projects.



- IRIS manages three internet knowledge platforms, for which it filters media sources in order to ensure that only relevant information is disseminated a total of 6646 new users interfaced with the three platforms as shown in figure above.
- [www.crt-da.org.lb](http://www.crt-da.org.lb) website provides information on CRTD.A activities;
- The Lebanon Knowledge Development Gateway (<https://lkdg.org/>) website focuses on citizenship, rights, refugees, economy, NGO news and gender issues. A recent addition is: <https://www.facebook.com/CRTDA> ;
- The Women's Economic Empowerment Portal ( <https://www.weepportal-lb.org/>) focuses on women economic rights in the context of gender equality, and other relevant contextual information.
- IRIS manages CRTD.A's public library which consists of two sections: resources in the fields of community development and civil society (IRIS-Lib); and specialized resources in gender and development, women's rights and equality, including research and training resources (GLIP-Lib). The library contains around 7000 references ranging from books, reports, studies, and research publications in Arabic, English and French. The number of resources in the Library is increasing continuously as new additions are made on a monthly basis. The library serves the interest of students, researchers, media figures and individuals involving gender issues and civil society. All areas of activity benefit from the upkeep and expansion of IRIS.
- Mailing list service for NGOs which includes more than 7000 email addresses covering NGOs, researchers and activists involved in social and economic development



### Social Media Campaigns and Synergies

- **Amplifying Voices of Migrant Women Workers in Lebanon** and raising discrimination and racism issues. The following statement was posted along with an analysis of the discrimination against Migrant women workers by excluding them from legal reform and restricting that only to Lebanese women. "You cannot when giving a right to a human being, deprive that right from another human being, you can never do that."
- **Amplifying voices of rural women in Senegal** who are continuing their efforts in reclaiming agricultural land despite the COVID19 crisis. Our sister organization the Groupe d'Initiatives pour le Progrès Social/West Africa Region (GIPS/WAR) has a land reclamation project in the area of Ndiéfourne that is still sustained despite the COVID19 crisis. Julie Cissé – director of GIPS/WAR points out - in a video interview conducted on June 5th on the event of the day of environment and published in Youtube - that this is a fundamental aspect of this Bay Doundé project. "With the Covid19 context, we preferred to celebrate Environment Day here at Ndiéfourne Farba while respecting the barrier measures. Today Bay doundé is an alternative especially in this period of confinement.
- **Feminist bailout campaign** June 1- 5 2020 We participated in the Association for Women's Rights in Development - AWID feminist bailout campaign. The goal of that social media campaign is to amplify voices of feminist activists regarding several themes on matters affecting their lives during the COVID19 pandemic which has resulted in increasing social inequalities. The themes were June 1: Resources & Economic Justice, June 2: Bodies, Pleasure & Wellbeing, June 3: Governance, Accountability & Justice, June 4: Digital Realities, and June 5: Planet & Living Beings. CRTDA focused on the theme on resources and economic justice which is relevant to our work in economic empowerment of women.



### Other Activities

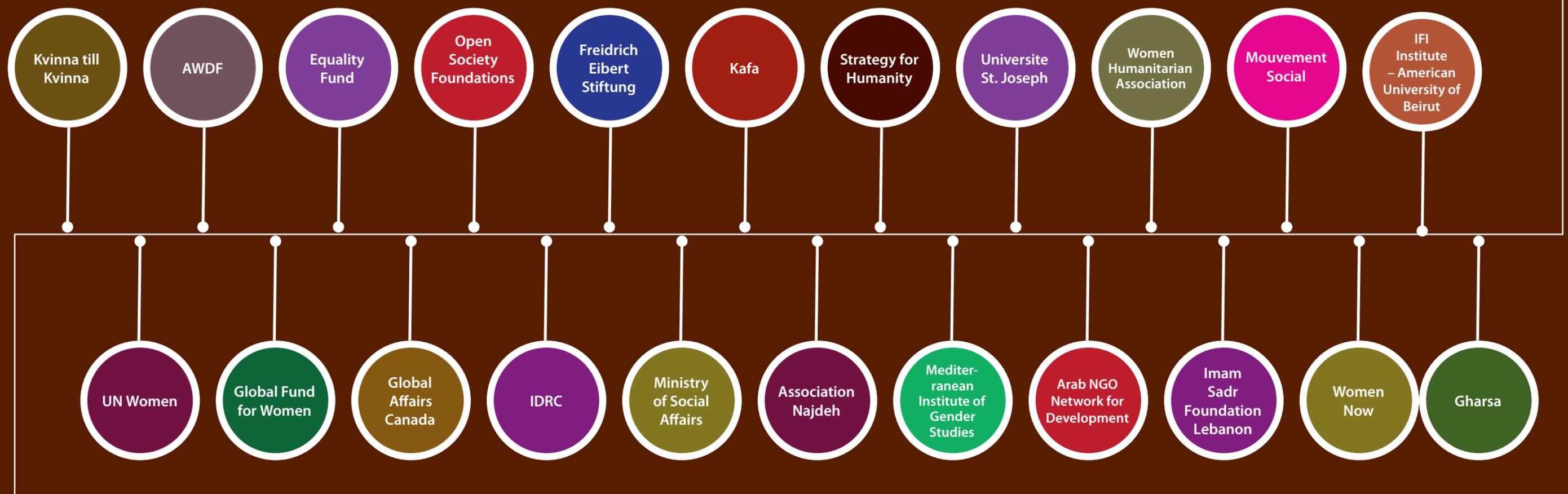
- CRTD.A is involved with the Ministry of Social Affairs in the design of the monitoring and evaluation tool for implementing gender mainstreaming strategy in the Ministry.
- CRTD.A participates in the advisory committee pertaining to the project 'Civil Society Actors and Policymaking in the Arab World' which entails planning and monitoring a hundred case studies on activism in several Arab countries, including the Gulf.
- CRTD.A is also part of the national consultation for the design of the strategy to implement resolution 1325 on women peace and security.



“ Scenes from training workshops on processing and weaving banana fibers Sour September 2020. An eco friendly and women led initiative in Sour - South Lebanon. The activity is part of a project supported by the African Women Development Fund.” This initiative provides job opportunities for rural women in the area of banana cultivation.”



# PARTNERSHIPS





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