

# Annual Report 2019

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# Message from the President

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Each year, CRTD.A grows, improving our capacity to empower women all over Lebanon. Since our incorporation in 2002, we have developed our activities, extended our focus areas, and increased our reach. This year has been no exception, as we have made huge strides across all areas of action.

CRTD.A was founded with a vision to create a society where gender equality has become the lived experience of everybody, in both the private and public spheres. We have since then worked on building this society from the ground up, conducting field research to understand the mechanisms of gender inequality, and using this research to build capacity at the grassroots level and advocate for social and policy reform.

On top of our usual growth and development, however, this year has been particularly exciting for CRTD.A and Lebanon as a whole, as we have witnessed groundbreaking changes in our country. The popular uprisings that have characterized the last few months in Lebanon have meant both a delay in many of our regular activities, but also an opportunity and, for us, a result of years of hard work by CRTD.A and other organizations. Our research, capacity-building, and advocacy have consistently drawn attention to the poor governance and inequality – in gender, class, and nationality – espoused by the ruling elite over the last few decades.

As we have participated in and engaged with the mass movement, it is increasingly evident that women are at the forefront of this movement, and gender dynamics within this movement represent a huge step forward for women in Lebanon. However, these protests are just the beginning, and it is now up to us and feminist activists across Lebanon to take the next steps to crystallize this phenomenon into lasting change in our country. Engaging with decision-makers, and ensuring that women's rights are at the forefront of the new political agenda is now key to progress. It is our duty to make clear to decision-makers, both present and future, that we will no longer stand for sectarian manipulation of the fundamental rights of women in our country, and CRTD.A is currently planning strategically how to take up this mantle in the coming year.

Finally, we want to extend our sincere gratitude to the funders, partners, collaborators, and participants who have made the last year so successful and meaningful for CRTD.A. None of this would be possible without you.

**Lina Abou Habib**

PRESIDENT



# ABOUT CRTD.A

The Collective for Research and Training on Development – Action (CRTD.A) is a Beirut-based, non-governmental organization that works across the Middle East and North Africa to promote gender and citizenship equality and social justice. 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 social societal spheres.

## Our Vision

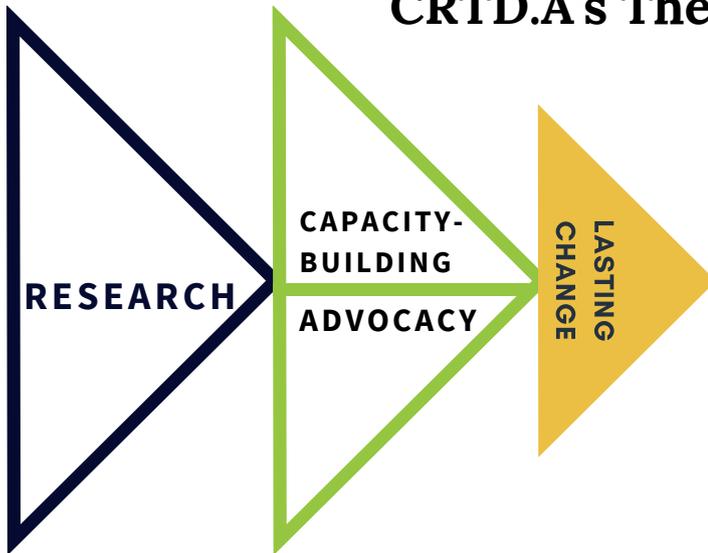


A gender inclusive society where social justice and gender equality are practiced in the public as well as the private spheres.

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.



## CRTD.A's Theory of Change



CRTD.A has adopted a theory of change that consists of three parts: knowledge generation, capacity building, and mobilization through advocacy. These three channels interact with each other, and knowledge generation, or research, leads to a more nuanced approach to capacity building and simultaneously informs best methods for mobilization. This theory was conceptualized as a means of enabling women to be agents of change.

## Focus Areas

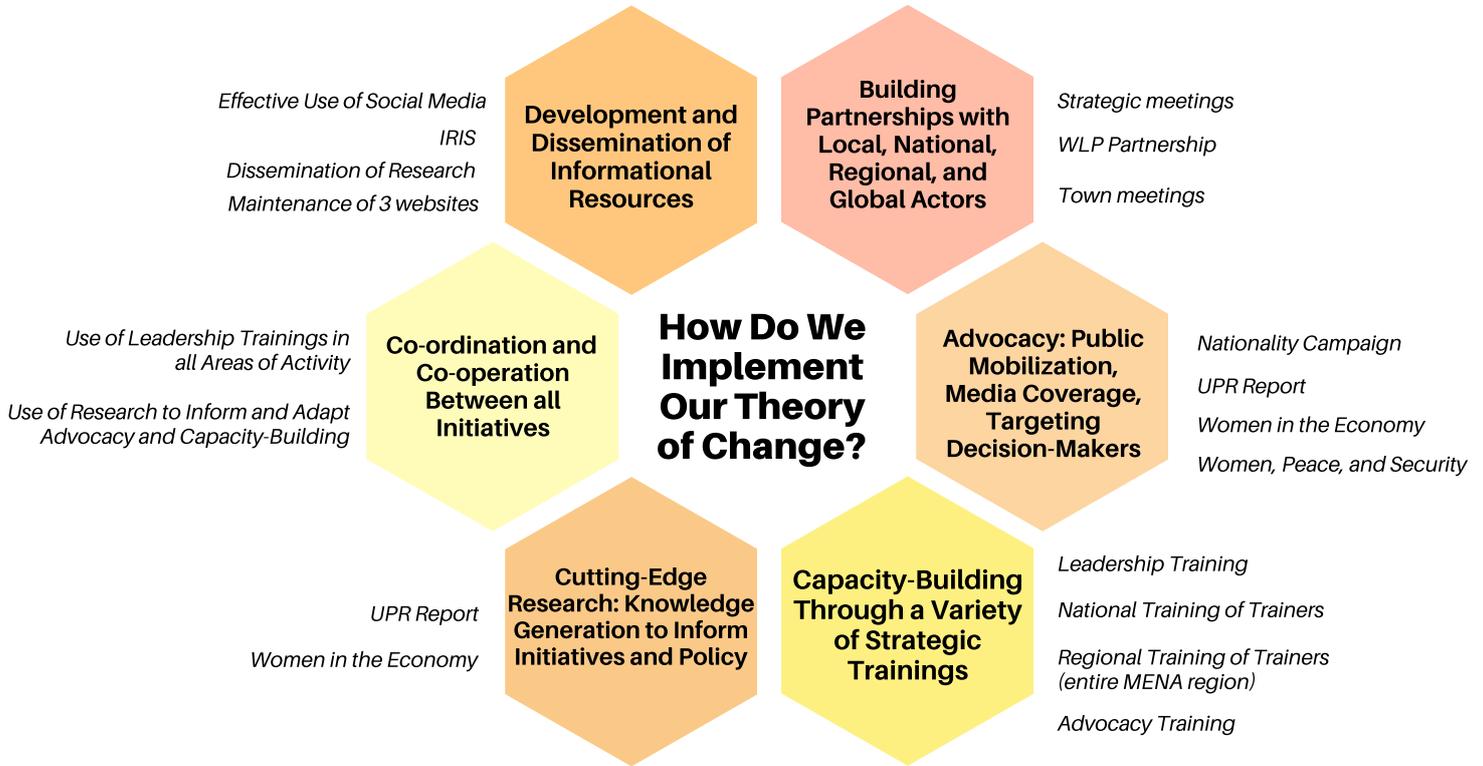
Based on this vision, the CRTD.A has identified five main focus points, which shape our areas of activity. These areas of focus overlap and interconnect, as well as support and inform the other areas.



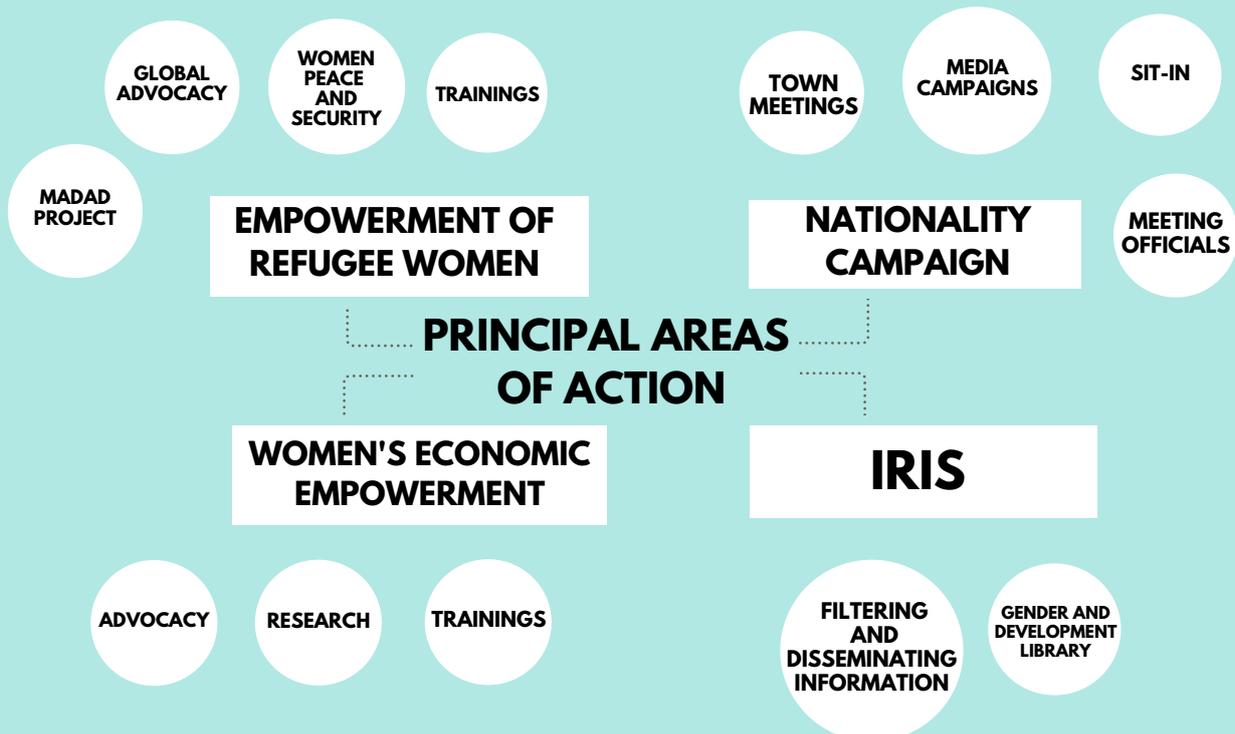
# STRATEGIES AND AREAS OF ACTION

## Strategies

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



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



The activities and initiatives mentioned here are the principal initiatives of each area of action, but are non-exhaustive. Each of these programs invoke one or more of CRTDA's focus areas in specific program activities undertaken. The trainings mentioned are all variations of Leadership Trainings, but the curriculum is adapted to the specific context. The content is based on Women's Learning Partnership resources.

# SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES JAN-DEC 2019



# NATIONALITY CAMPAIGN

## Activities and Initiatives

TOWN MEETINGS

MEDIA CAMPAIGNS

ENGAGEMENT WITH MEDIA

MEETING OFFICIALS

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 children, is mainly an awareness-raising, advocacy, and lobbying campaign. The strategies used for this area of action are therefore different to CRTD.A-wide strategies.

### 1. Engagement with the Public

Engagement with the public is achieved through social media, and through public actions, such as sit-ins, and town meetings.

- Town meetings have been revived in the last year in an effort to mobilize and create public awareness of the campaign on a national level, as well as to build relationships with co-campaigners across Lebanon. 5 town meetings were held in the last 6 months: in Baakleen (May 9), Mahraya (May 25) and Qabrshmoun (13 June), Makseh (June 29). and Baabdat (19 August).
- A sit-in was organized on the 10 March 2019, which attracted significant media and public attention, and was the focus of a social media campaign, as well as a media engagement campaign.
- Several social media campaigns were launched, including:
  - a video campaign involving children and women affected by the discriminatory law, who were encouraging mobilization and participation in the sit-in on 10 March.
  - a documentary creating publicity for the sit-in.
- A new campaign is underway where testimonies of public figures affected by the discriminatory nationality laws are filmed. In 2019, the following testimonies were filmed: Patricia Nammour (actress and co-founder of L'atelier du JE); Tina Jarrouss (actress and TV host); Rania Barghout (television presenter and Owner of R\*stars and The Palace Theatre); Rindala Kodeih (Lebanese Actress and film Director); Souha Bechara (national political activist and freed detainee); Khitam Laaham (actress), all of whom are married to non-Lebanese men, or related to someone who is.

### 2. Meeting Officials, Engaging with Decision-makers

- A strategic meeting was held with Violette Safadi, Minister of State for the Economic Empowerment of Women and Youth. This meeting resulted in the Minister speaking out in favor of changing the nationality laws.
- There has also been more informal networking with individual members of Parliament and with UNDP which is active in the various arms of government in Lebanon. Meetings were also held with Hadi Abul Hassan, a lawmaker who supports the cause, and an agreement was reached to reject partial solutions.
- CRTD.A is also involved in a consultation process with the National Council for Lebanese Women - NCLW in the area of Lebanese nationality law reform. Although we maintain this relationship, CRTD.A has differed with the NCLW based on their draft bill, which CRTD.A does not think goes far enough and violates the principle of inclusiveness aimed at by the campaign.

### 3. Engagement with the Media

- The campaign generated enormous media attention from all over the region in the last year. Media coverage of the sit-in was extensive. Media attention was also generated by the decision of Minister Safadi, and the meeting with Abul Hassan.
- CRTD.A has publicly rejected any partial measures that give some rights to children of Lebanese women, without granting full citizenship, and also that exclude some partner nationalities.
- A press conference was held in the Beirut-Lebanese Press Syndicate.

### 4. Engagement with Global and Regional Partners

- 2-day strategic meeting with MENA partners (33 participants) on achieving gender equality in nationality laws.
- Participation in conference in Istanbul hosted by Global Campaign for Equal Nationality Rights.
- Collaboration with regional partners for town meetings, sit-ins, and social media campaigns.



# NATIONALITY CAMPAIGN (CONTD)

## Outcomes

- Significant social media reach, with almost 20,000 followers on the campaign Facebook page.
- Significant media coverage, with almost 50 articles in online and print journals in March alone, including: An-Nahr, El Nashra, Al Hayat, Al Akhbar, and Al Modon. Features also on Al Jadeed TV, MTV, and Future TV.
- Relationships built with key lawmakers
- Public support from the then Minister of the Interior and Municipalities and Minister for the Economic Empowerment of Women and Youth
- Increasing traction and attention, contributing indirectly to the proposal of draft laws granting a variety of rights to the spouses and children of Lebanese women who are married to non-Lebanese men. Two of the draft laws in parliament adopted the nationality campaign legal proposal. A third draft law issued by NCLW was presented but it does not adopt the inclusive approach of the campaign. All three are outputs of the efforts of the nationality campaign activism.
- Increased knowledge on a local level as a result of town meetings and discussions
- Increased unity across actors in the MENA region as a result of strategic meetings



## Monitoring and Evaluation

- Evaluation of public awareness-raising is done via social media statistics, which inform us of the reach of our social media. Our 20,000 followers are a testament to the traction being gained by the campaign.
- Evaluation is also conducted by tracking press coverage by month, and examining the activities that increase press coverage. This process showed a significant increase in press coverage due to the sit-in.
- The proposal of bills, creation of draft laws, and the public participation of lawmakers all testify to the efficacy of the campaign.



# EMPOWERMENT OF REFUGEE WOMEN

## Activities and Initiatives

GLOBAL  
ADVOCACY

WOMEN,  
PEACE,  
AND  
SECURITY

TRAININGS

### 1. Capacity Building

- Empowerment of refugee women during the reporting period was achieved primarily through the Women, Peace, and Security project, which focuses on capacity-building for Syrian refugees to advocate for themselves, as well as capacity-building for advocates from across the MENA region and Nigeria. Capacity-building under this project focuses on training trainers, in order to maximize its scope and reach. Two regional trainings of trainers were conducted (February and July), and one national training of trainers in March, with a total reach of 61 participants. The training of trainers focuses on participatory leadership, women's political participation, gender-based violence, human security, and conflict analysis.
- The regional training of trainers was attended by participants from Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Turkey, Nigeria, Egypt, Libya, and Iraq, and lasted 4 days. Participants were selected based on their ability to transfer knowledge to the WLP partner organization's staff/trainers upon their return, and commitment to engaging in follow-up advocacy and training efforts.
- All training of trainers were preceded by pre-training of trainer meetings between facilitators which ensured that the best possible training was provided.
- One evaluation workshop, with participants from the women, peace, and security trainings was conducted, with 12 participants.
- As a result of these, trainers held trainings in Iraq and Libya during this period. 2 workshops were held in Libya, including one which trained 20 trainers from Libyan NGOs in Leadership and the Role of Women in Peace and Security, resulting in 4 projects. The second was a leadership and grassroots activism training. 31 trainers were trained in Iraq.
- Another national training of trainers, conducted in collaboration with UN Democracy Fund was held with 15 participants.
- A workshop focusing on empowerment Syrian refugee women was held in December, with 16 participants.
- The Irsal Project, also known as the Women as Agents of Social Cohesion (WASC) project is a new project funded by the European Union, which commenced its inception activities in September. This project aims at improving social cohesion between refugee and host communities in the Beqaa valley by conducting capacity-building and awareness-raising with both host and refugee women to improve knowledge of women in the area's role as agents of social cohesion. The inception phase, which involved recruitment, a field visit, and a meeting with community members has now been completed.

### 2. Research

- A research paper on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of Lebanon was funded, examining both how the UPR has looked at refugee women in the past, how the focus of the UPR can be drawn to refugee women, and CRTDA's possible contribution.
- The IDRC has approved a concept note for a nationwide qualitative research project on Gender-Based Violence in refugee communities, which focuses on sexual and reproductive health among Syrian refugees. The research will explore the link between a lack of reproductive health rights and gender-based violence in refugee communities, and will be used for policy advocacy and reform.

### 3. Advocacy

- This year was marked by the emergence of an advocacy component of the refugee initiative, with the UPR research. It was presented to stakeholders and partners in March, and will continue to be used for advocacy in the run-up to the UPR process.
- This area of action mainly aims to conduct advocacy through its capacity building exercises, aiming to empower women in Lebanon and the MENA region to become advocates or to focus and improve their advocacy activities.
- CRTDA as WLP-Lebanon hosted a side event at CSW63 in March entitled 'Redefining Human Security in the Public and Private Spheres', as part of this project.



# EMPOWERMENT OF REFUGEE WOMEN (CONTD)

## Outcomes

- 61 people empowered to conduct their own trainings.
- Trainings held in Iraq and Libya by the trainers trained in Lebanon. 20 trainers trained and 13 people trained in grassroots leadership in Libya. 4 projects in Libya resulted from the training of trainers. 31 trainers trained in Iraq.
- Relationships built between regional activists, allowing for integrated advocacy messages and knowledge-sharing
- Constructive, in-depth feedback received in order to improve the trainings.
- Research and advocacy conducted which will pave the way for inclusion of refugee women in international human rights monitoring processes.
- Process begun to conduct qualitative research, which will also act as an empowerment and partnership-building project.
- Groundwork laid for project to improve social cohesion between refugee and host communities in vulnerable areas in the Beqaa valley.



## Monitoring and Evaluation

- Individual and group evaluations were conducted throughout the workshops in order to measure the usefulness of the trainings and to get feedback from the participants.
- 2 day evaluation workshop conducted which produced concrete, in-depth suggestions for improvements to the women, peace, and security trainings. These suggestions have informed changes to curricula.
- Impact-mapping survey produced for WLP, our strategic partner in March, which evaluated in detail the impact and its scope of the Women, Peace, and Security trainings. This showed an increase in the level of influence on decisions of peace and security, particularly on a family and community level. 76 meetings or policy dialogues were conducted with institutional bodies on women, peace, and security by participants. 100% of train the trainer participants reported increased knowledge. A huge leap was registered on the level of engagement in dialogue processes at CSW and the UPR, indicating increased knowledge on the subject.



# WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

## Activities and Initiatives

ADVOCACY

RESEARCH

TRAININGS

The WEEP area of action, which has developed out of the refugee program since the inception of CRTD.A, has developed swiftly since its inception. The economic empowerment project, which has the goal of strengthening the engagement of women in economy can be broken down into two phases: capacity building and research, and advocacy. The Income Generating Projects (IGPs) were established prior to the project and are not part of the project, however coaching the IGPs is part of the project. The project is currently funded by the African Women's Development Fund. The project consists of:

1. Capacity-building and coaching of IGPS, research

Including: training in grassroots activism and advocacy skills, research on the engagement of women in the economy.

2. Advocacy

Including: engagement with media, social media campaigns, dissemination and publicity around research project, grassroots activism conducted by the women trained in phase 1.

While the research has been delayed by the protests, and is due to be completed next year, the first phase is now nearing completion, and we are now starting to focus on the second phase, which will empower the women involved in the first phase to advocate for support for similar projects, a change in the perception of women in the economy and in economic policy, and to support similar projects.

### 1. Capacity-Building

- The capacity-building phase of WEEP works through empowering the women involved in the IGPs and others in leadership, grassroots activism, and advocacy skills.
- 8 trainings in grassroots activism and leadership were conducted, with a total reach of 188 women. Several scheduled trainings had to be delayed due to the protests, but are scheduled to be conducted next year.

### 2. Research

- A research project, which focuses on women's involvement in the economy is now underway. The research focuses on women's economic rights in Lebanon and how these are affected by economic and social policies as well as by political and cultural policies. This research has a desk research element, and a field research element. The desk research is now complete, but the field research, which was due to start in October has been delayed by the popular protests, and will now be conducted in 2020. This research will be used to inform our capacity building, as well as our advocacy efforts.

### 3. Advocacy

- WEEP has now entered its advocacy stage. Advocacy is conducted in WEEP in two main ways: through empowering women to become advocates, and through our own advocacy efforts. The capacity-building in grassroots activism is preparing women for advocacy, and the IGPs will be used as case studies for how women can be empowered to participate in economic activities. This advocacy is therefore the culmination of WEEP's work to date.
- The research project will also be used for advocacy purposes, achieved through dissemination and engagement with media.
- We have also maintained our advocacy efforts through the WEEP website ([www.weepportal-lb.org](http://www.weepportal-lb.org)), in conjunction with IRIS, which aims to engage and inform the public on issues that affect the economic rights of women.

## Outcomes

- 188 women trained in leadership, advocacy, and grassroots activism. These trainings created an environment where women could meet other women which fostered collaboration on projects, and relationships were built between women that will encourage and improve advocacy capacity and future partnerships.
- Research conducted into women's participation in the economy, the field research phase of which was delayed by the popular uprisings, but which is due to be completed next year.
- A large amount of relevant information disseminated through the WEEP platform. (see IRIS section for user statistics)

## Monitoring and Evaluation

- Post-training evaluations are conducted based on the WLP evaluation tool to assess level of knowledge gained.
- Report produced with feedback from leadership training. The overall evaluation of the workshops indicated that the workshops achieved their goals. The feedback was generally very positive.

# IRIS, OTHER ACTIVITIES, ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

## 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:

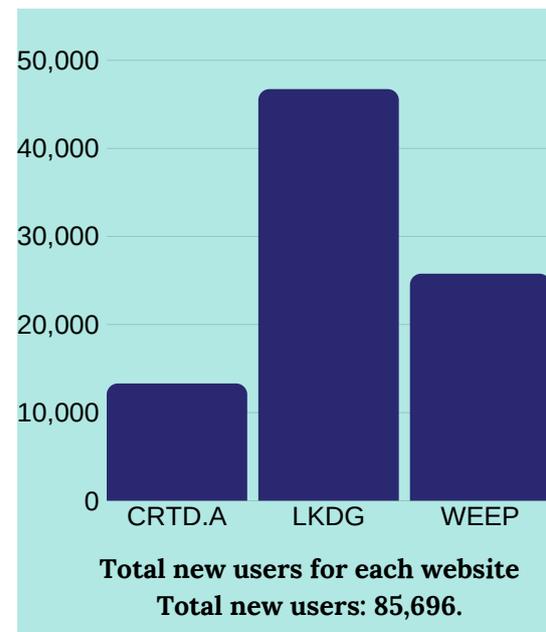
1. The CRTD.A website provides information on CRTD.A activities;
2. The Lebanon Knowledge Development Gateway (LKDG) website focuses on citizenship, rights, refugees, economy, NGO news and gender issues;
3. The Women's Economic Empowerment Portal (WEEP) focuses on women economic rights in the context 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.

FILTERING AND DISSEMINATING INFORMATION

GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT LIBRARY



## 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.
- CRTD.A is also involved in the drafting of the report to the CEDAW committee.
- Young Feminist meeting with Lopa Banerjee from UN Women in Amman, Jordan.
- Hosted CSO consultation meeting for Beijing+25 with 52 participants.

## Organizational Development

- Strategic 5-year plan adopted in December 2018 which has been guiding our focus and areas of action, and helped us to plan better for long-term initiatives.
- Core funding received during the reporting period from Kvinna Til Kvinna, as well as MATCH, and WLP, which enables flexibility in our initiatives and areas of action, capacity-building within the organization, more efficient responses to identified needs, and innovation within our initiatives.
- Registration of staff in a training on donor identification in the Center for Global Health in AUB.

# PARTNERSHIPS AND LOOKING FORWARD

