

# ANNUAL REPORT 2021



Collective for Research and Training on Development – Action CRTD-A





**Covid-1925**  
stop Discrimination



## About CRTD.A

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The Collective for Research and Training on Development – Action (CRTD.A) is a Beirut based, feminist 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 have provided them the voice and agency needed to participate in political and social spheres.

### Our vision

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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

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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.

## **CRTD.A** at a glimpse

CRTDA's work revolves around processes of strengthening human capacities with a focus of providing women and girls in particular with the necessary knowledge and tools to exercise their agency at the private as well as at the public sphere.

Given our organization's commitment to women's rights and social justice, our initiatives aim to address the multi-dimensions of oppression and discrimination against women and support transformative feminist leadership and women led initiatives as means of enabling women to voice out their needs and preferences, to narrate their own stories, and to act effectively as agents of social change to achieve gender equality. We are focusing on adopting a holistic approach to women's empowerment in terms of economic empowerment, capacity building, knowledge generation and advocacy on intersectional forms of discrimination faced by women and non-binary people and supporting the feminist and women groups, rural and refugee women through building capacities, skills, and agency and enabling the emergence of new women and youth leaders.

CRTD.A adopts a holistic, transformative understanding of empowerment, as transforming power relations to bring about equality and empowering women to challenge gender hierarchies.

Also, CRTD.A is in a continuous engagement with women representatives and leaders of national and regional feminist CSOs, women active in political spheres, feminist advocates and human right defenders, donors and global actors, to amplify the voice of women, civil society and feminist organizations and to push forward the gender equality agenda at the national level and across the MENA region.

## FOCUS AREAS

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# STRATEGIC PILLARS

CRTD.A works on these pillars as means of strengthening women to voice out their needs and preferences, to narrate their own stories, and to act effectively as agents of social change to achieve gender equality.



# Introduction – Country Background

Lebanon has been facing a deep economic and financial crisis since late 2019, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and the explosion of Beirut port on 4 August 2020. Furthermore, Lebanon remains the country hosting the largest number of refugees per capita, with some 865,500 registered Syrian refugees and over 200,000 Palestinian refugees as of the end of December 2020<sup>1</sup>. Access to humanitarian services in Lebanon remains constrained, there is lack of income and jobs, and refugees are still restricted in accessing aid because of a lack of documentation.<sup>2 3</sup>

Humanitarian organizations working in Lebanon are facing operational impediments related to the economic crisis, such as a shortage of US dollars which has affected operations and cash distribution, as well as COVID-19 lockdown measures.<sup>4</sup> Also, foreign husbands and children of Lebanese women face obstacles in accessing basic rights such as education and health care<sup>5</sup>. COVID-19 pandemic has had a compounded impact on Lebanese women married to non-Lebanese men and their families. Students whose mothers are Lebanese and whose fathers are foreigners were excluded from registration in government schools. These problems are consequences of inequities and gender inequality prevailing in the current discriminatory Nationality Law, which reflects adversely on women and their families and denies them access to economic, social, civil and health rights, etc. It is also the consequence of the government not considering the protection of concerned Lebanese women and their families in any of its decisions.

Standing at 145 out of a total of 153 countries according to the Global Gender Gap Report 2021, Lebanese women lack commensurate participation

in economic activity, political representation and decision making<sup>6</sup>. The parliament is dominated by an overwhelming majority of men (95.7%) holding 122 seats out of 128, and only 6 seats for women (4.7%)<sup>7</sup>. Although females are becoming the markers of success in education, gender parity at all levels and taking leadership roles through university-level education, however, this is not translating into norms and opportunities in the workforce and other public spaces<sup>8</sup>.

Alongside the disproportionate increases in violence against women that were documented including new forms of cyber-bullying and online harassment, economic violence, and violence against non-binary people, disabled women, single female headed households, and women refugees, the pandemic-related restrictions have accelerated initial job losses among host community individuals and refugees. The UN ESCWA estimated that, in 2021, 82 per cent of the total population in Lebanon lived in multidimensional poverty, and 34 percent in extreme multidimensional poverty<sup>9</sup> and 88% of the Syrian refugee<sup>10</sup> families are living below the extreme poverty line. 86% of all Lebanese households have reported consuming cheaper and less preferred food<sup>11</sup> and preliminary findings from December 2020 data collection show that women adopted the coping mechanism of putting children to sleep early in order to skip meals<sup>12</sup>.

The existing tensions exacerbated an already complex landscape of sectarian and political differences within Lebanese communities in addition to an overarching economic anxiety and uncertainty about the future that affects all groups. The growing frustrations within the host communities are translated in more hostile living environments, especially for the refugees.

1 UNHCR. Fact Sheet. Lebanon, January 2021.

2 Norwegian Refugee Council. Documentation and access to healthcare for refugees in Lebanon. Briefing note. May 2020.

3 Reliefweb. Syrian refugees in Lebanon trapped in unsafety. Published 4 Feb 2021. Retrieved from <https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/syrian-refugees-libanon-trapped-unsafety>

4 Lebanon Crisis 2017–2021 (2021 Update). Retrieved from [https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/LCRP\\_2021FINAL\\_v1.pdf](https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/LCRP_2021FINAL_v1.pdf)

5 Chamoun, C. (2017). The Lebanese Nationality Law That Leaves Children Stateless. Open Society Foundation. <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/voices/lebanese-nationality-law-leaves-children-stateless>

6 World Economic Forum. (2020). Global Gender Gap Report. P.219, 220

7 World Economic Forum. Global Gender Gap Report. 2020. P.219,220

8 USAID. (2019). Lebanon Gender Assessment. Performance Management and Support Program for Lebanon (PMSPL II). Retrieved from <https://encompassworld.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/USAID-LEBANON-GENDER-ASSESSMENT-Final-assessment.pdf>

9 UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UNESCWA), Multidimensional poverty in Lebanon (2019-2021): Painful reality and uncertain prospects, E/ESCWA/CL3.SEP/2021/POLICY BRIEF.2, September 2021.

10 UNHCR Global Focus. (2021). Lebanon

11 WFP. Lebanon m-VAM, Vulnerability and Food Security Assessment. March - April 2021. Retrieved from <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/WFP-0000129566.pdf>

12 UN Women. GENDER ALERT ON COVID-19 LEBANON. February 10, 2021. Issue No. 5



# GENDER INCLUSIVE CITIZENSHIP

Since its formation, and to end gender discrimination in the outdated 1925 Lebanese nationality law, CRTD.A have been mobilizing all available resources and advocating for Equal Nationality Rights which is rooted in its core objectives, however, and unfortunately, Lebanese women basic rights' such as granting nationality to their children, among other rights are influenced by regional conflicts and geopolitical tensions. Recently, the children whose mothers are Lebanese but whose fathers are not, were also excluded from a decree approved by the Lebanese Parliament which allocated 500 billion Lebanese Lira to support families in paying the fees of students in primary and secondary level private schools.

CRTD.A is still struggling in the frontlines to enhance the well-being of Lebanese women and their children which

was lately manifested by the successful modification of the Minister's of Education and Higher Education decree allowing the inclusion of children of Lebanese mother married to non-Lebanese and prioritize the registration and securing seats for them in formal education programs, just as students born to a Lebanese father.

CRTD.A continue to strengthen advocacy capacities for equal nationality rights in Lebanon, by producing evidence based knowledge and documenting the violations of social and economic rights of Lebanese women married to non-Lebanese nationals as a result of the gender discriminatory nationality law. CRTD.A's Nationality campaign is a part of The National Human Security Forum (NHSF) and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation.

## Key Highlights



- In parallel to the various efforts and support provided during 2021, and within the "Feminist Response to COVID-19 - Enhancing Resilience and Synergies in the MENA Region and Lebanon" project funded by the Open Society Foundation, the nationality campaign has developed a qualitative research that includes a legal review of the relevant decrees pertaining to social and economic and legal entitlements of Lebanese women during the COVID-19 and their impact of Lebanese women married to non-Lebanese nationals.



- The campaign was able to annul the decision of the President of the Lebanese University to oblige students of a Lebanese mother to pay university fees in foreign currency. The decision was amended by the President of the University and the Minister of Education and was issued in the Official Journal. For more info check here

<https://jinhaagency.com/all-news/content/view/20893?fbclid=IwAR3QWFp3Ij3bfknKBYN7n44i0ARsAw6ZjsJA-zls6OCm189H3ZxSiUoWO9s>



- Document and publish testimonies of Lebanese mothers married to non-Lebanese ([https://www.facebook.com/jinsiyati/posts/10157938866232143?\\_\\_cft\\_\\_\[0\]=AZWXo-7zFRVvZ7JzwLf-HSwRC9aM-Cv5QU-jjdIMFdBCLtJ\\_2W7uGhu-NOVZrgCYqjEWJAgSrVV3JWN1brpGnsfgymUrKR6rWjrj5\\_CSsH-U06CMI8n-Me-sEAHqphC8xreHiX8TTEh7Xigam2PZoejrc&\\_\\_tn\\_\\_=%2CO%2CP-R](https://www.facebook.com/jinsiyati/posts/10157938866232143?__cft__[0]=AZWXo-7zFRVvZ7JzwLf-HSwRC9aM-Cv5QU-jjdIMFdBCLtJ_2W7uGhu-NOVZrgCYqjEWJAgSrVV3JWN1brpGnsfgymUrKR6rWjrj5_CSsH-U06CMI8n-Me-sEAHqphC8xreHiX8TTEh7Xigam2PZoejrc&__tn__=%2CO%2CP-R))

[https://www.facebook.com/jinsiyati/posts/10157939530922143?\\_\\_cft\\_\\_\[0\]=AZV6EqD8SFroJ6j8PHlztBv1FqkGyP-KPZCELZvxnc-KmqKMjgQCxxFEeBRasFIGxZZdeqCl3hdx4IAR0o2rCfWfwCJkwnCU3TEQlxtM7zeF7HHKJqDbE-FLTCYn5eiwH\\_-cPN\\_dhz91cpss\\_nN5AxEA&\\_\\_tn\\_\\_=%2CO%2CP-R](https://www.facebook.com/jinsiyati/posts/10157939530922143?__cft__[0]=AZV6EqD8SFroJ6j8PHlztBv1FqkGyP-KPZCELZvxnc-KmqKMjgQCxxFEeBRasFIGxZZdeqCl3hdx4IAR0o2rCfWfwCJkwnCU3TEQlxtM7zeF7HHKJqDbE-FLTCYn5eiwH_-cPN_dhz91cpss_nN5AxEA&__tn__=%2CO%2CP-R)

[https://www.facebook.com/jinsiyati/posts/10157939530922143?\\_\\_cft\\_\\_\[0\]=AZV6EqD8SFroJ6j8PHlztBv1FqkGyP-KPZCELZvxnc-KmqKMjgQCxxFEeBRasFIGxZZdeqCl3hdx4IAR0o2rCfWfwCJkwnCU3TEQlxtM7zeF7HHKJqDbE-FLTCYn5eiwH\\_-cPN\\_dhz91cpss\\_nN5AxEA&\\_\\_tn\\_\\_=%2CO%2CP-R](https://www.facebook.com/jinsiyati/posts/10157939530922143?__cft__[0]=AZV6EqD8SFroJ6j8PHlztBv1FqkGyP-KPZCELZvxnc-KmqKMjgQCxxFEeBRasFIGxZZdeqCl3hdx4IAR0o2rCfWfwCJkwnCU3TEQlxtM7zeF7HHKJqDbE-FLTCYn5eiwH_-cPN_dhz91cpss_nN5AxEA&__tn__=%2CO%2CP-R)



- In partnership with "Salam Organization for Democracy and Human Rights", an advocacy campaign entitled "Our right is not Patronage" was developed to demand immediate action from the Lebanese state in terms of amending the Nationality Law to achieve full equality between women and men. Also, the Nationality campaign held a workshop for 40 students from NDU



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الناجيات من العنف الاقتصادي  
القائم على النوع الاجتماعي - عرسال



ملتقى التعاون الإنمائي - عرسال  
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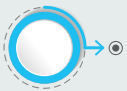
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University, in coordination with Dr. Maria Njeim, on Thursday, July 15, 2021. The workshop was launched from the vision of "active citizenship", which aimed through opening a dialogue between the organizers and the students to identify the dimensions of issues directly related to citizenship, such as identity, rights, human rights, gender roles, and discriminatory laws, and their repercussions on citizens.

[https://www.facebook.com/jinsiyati/posts/10157811779087143?\\_\\_cft\\_\\_\[0\]=AZWXn6RAI4Joh5Ua1itNsXDvNvuedn\\_G-Fp-DRoaqKavoTx6hURQaCsIraS0Gvz2EzQGvHBCIRKY6hyGDM-t1U8vRDDVswvleGeKVoid405tT08wLfx1aqRn5xf2A0Xn03db8M-fqKX55jwlFv79wQctZH&\\_\\_tn\\_\\_=%2CO\\*F](https://www.facebook.com/jinsiyati/posts/10157811779087143?__cft__[0]=AZWXn6RAI4Joh5Ua1itNsXDvNvuedn_G-Fp-DRoaqKavoTx6hURQaCsIraS0Gvz2EzQGvHBCIRKY6hyGDM-t1U8vRDDVswvleGeKVoid405tT08wLfx1aqRn5xf2A0Xn03db8M-fqKX55jwlFv79wQctZH&__tn__=%2CO*F)

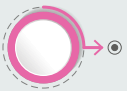
<https://nabadalshamal.com/?p=114127&fbclid=IwAR32JtTG056YQuh1T5afRbt6lo5QZXcm8p-RbV4QRkwZg2cwbxc-K8av4Yc>



Organized by Salam DHR in cooperation with the Global Campaign for Equal Nationality Rights, My Nationality is a Right for me and my Family campaign, implemented a workshop aimed to enhance the capacity of youth activists from Kuwait and Lebanon to advocate for reforms to end gender discrimination in their countries' nationality laws and mobilize other youth to join national campaigns for gender-equal nationality rights. Participants received substantive training on gender discrimination in nationality laws and developed advocacy plans, to be implemented at the local level.



Continuing cooperation and coordination with the global campaign within intensive activities of workshops, international meetings, planning and strategizing



Continuous engagement and ongoing partnership with Friedrich Ebert to produce a series of interviews with a number of politicians / parliamentary blocs in the Council, and with influential figures from civil society, which will be launched soon through 12 episodes or videos after the completion of the technical work. A series of posters were also produced expressing the campaign's position and its legal and human rights demands, as well as constitutional and international criticism in an approach with the Nationality Law.

[https://www.facebook.com/jinsiyati/posts/10158008378667143?\\_\\_cft\\_\\_\[0\]=AZUgQ5H-6cXbi7dAZGESuTRd\\_ZcsIdSB-NOzUIMZ6vBujgEcrlxjAUilGvi7jpKJlzoLp97zH\\_G9ovH7vx1WYEmzkE-5hWYdC4FAVaxbSczn0MSiliWuBoBFjXW-W5HMmluz7iyfvRtdife9Dss6SjgmHs0N1RXxBSW8l711aXmQ&\\_\\_tn\\_\\_=%2CO%2CP-R](https://www.facebook.com/jinsiyati/posts/10158008378667143?__cft__[0]=AZUgQ5H-6cXbi7dAZGESuTRd_ZcsIdSB-NOzUIMZ6vBujgEcrlxjAUilGvi7jpKJlzoLp97zH_G9ovH7vx1WYEmzkE-5hWYdC4FAVaxbSczn0MSiliWuBoBFjXW-W5HMmluz7iyfvRtdife9Dss6SjgmHs0N1RXxBSW8l711aXmQ&__tn__=%2CO%2CP-R)

Also, a documentary was developed entitled “The Citizenship Law of 1925 is more deadly than the COVID-19 pandemic. Stop the Discrimination” that monitors and categorizes in video the facts and testimonies, and the challenges faced by Lebanese women and their families in light of the decisions and measures adopted by the Lebanese state during the closure and quarantine procedures.

The documentary is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PuKTGyplNrw>



*As such CRTD.A urges all national, regional, and international partners, actors and authorities to pressurize the Lebanese state and policy makers to:*

- Enact a civil personal status law that guarantees equal rights for women and men
- Amend the unjust nationality law to ensure that children and spouses of Lebanese women have the same right to citizenship as those of Lebanese men.
- Implement necessary measures to ensure equal treatment between children of a Lebanese woman from a foreign father and Lebanese children (from a Lebanese father)
- Guarantee the right to education for all in public schools and national universities
- Implement necessary measures to ensure that the family of a Lebanese woman married to a foreigner benefits from the same services provided by the Ministry of Public Health and other insurance funds.

## WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

The already high unemployment rate for women in Lebanon was augmented by the economic crisis and pandemic-related restrictions which have accelerated initial job losses among host community individuals and refugees. These drastic conditions are affecting both Lebanese women and refugee women (Syrians, Palestinians) and is reflected by the increase in physical, psychological and economic GBV where economic resources and/or income are withheld from vulnerable women with the deepening of the financial crisis in addition to the increase in the load of care work. This situation also exposes vulnerable women to being exploited (lower wages, increase in working hours, delays in payments, etc.).

Care is considered as the main responsibility of women and highly prioritized over their participation in the productive labor market; thus, affecting women's decision to choose a given job and making work-life balance a huge hurdle on women. Women in Lebanon spend an average of 60 hours per week on unpaid household-related activities such as child care, cooking and cleaning<sup>13</sup>. Care work is perceived as the responsibility of women and girls, and is enshrined in the prevalent gender norms which frame women and girls as “natural carers” who have “inherent skills” that allow them to master these tasks<sup>14</sup>. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic has underlined the inherent structural insecurity of the roles of women in the labor market. This crisis has shown that the fragmented social protection systems of the MENA region are incapable of protecting the more vulnerable, including women, from the pandemic and its aftermath in terms of temporary and mostly permanent losses of livelihoods and lives<sup>15</sup>. Rural women are among the most vulnerable groups of the population marked by an increased incidence of poverty. Rural women still face a number of constraints (legal, cultural, socio-economic) and challenges to benefit from rural development, emphasized by persisting gender bias in the delivery of rural services. Women and men participate at different levels of the value chain, performing activities largely

13 UN Women. (2016). Supporting Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality in Fragile States: Lebanon. Research Brief. Available at [https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2016/fge\\_fragile\\_states\\_research\\_brief\\_lebanon.pdf?la=en&vs=2824](https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2016/fge_fragile_states_research_brief_lebanon.pdf?la=en&vs=2824).

14 Abou Habib, L. “Feminist Perspectives on Care Work in The MENA Region”. Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung.

15 Abou Habib, L. “Feminist Perspectives on Care Work in The MENA Region”. Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung.

dependent on gendered roles and social expectations. From input supply to retailing, gender roles and power balances determine labor division, decision-making, and access to productive resources and income.

CRTD.A aims to contribute to empowering the Lebanese and Arab, displaced and refugee women, girls and young people to fully realize their rights and increase their participation in political, economic and social spheres.

Within the context of the “Power Up! Women Advocate for Bodies, Voices and Resources”, a five-year project implemented in partnership with Gender at Work (G@W) in Tunisia, Lebanon, and Palestine, and funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, CRTD.A seeks to establish and catalyze effective partnerships among and with various CSOs and institutions towards promoting and advancing women participation in politics and decision-making spheres and advancing economic justice for women, particularly those in rural areas. Power Up! is a consortium of four women’s rights organizations: Just Associates (JASS, lead organization), a feminist movement support organization rooted in the Global South; Coalition of African Lesbians (CAL), a queer Pan-African feminist organization; Yayasan Pemberdayaan Perempuan Kepala Keluarga (PEKKA), a national women-headed family empowerment network in Indonesia; and Gender at Work (G@W), an international feminist knowledge network.

*The project Activities aim to:*

- Support women cooperatives in terms of equipment and technical skills needed to increase production quality and capacity
- Advocate and lobby on the underrepresentation of women in politics
- Launch and implement capacity building programs targeting women active at the local levels and grassroots civil society organizations
- Develop and disseminate concrete messages on discrimination against women via face-to-face discussions, social media, and other online outlets
- Disseminate and generate knowledge on marginalized women facing intersectional forms of discrimination

The Power Up project has launched and provided support packages aiming at equipping women cooperatives with relevant equipment to advance, ease, and enhance their engagement within the value chain thus enhancing food security and livelihoods.

*Also, CRTD.A is implementing periodic capacity building programs targeting women active at the local and community levels, feminist activists and representatives of local and grassroots organizations who are willing to induce change in their community, that focus on:*

- Raising awareness on the concepts of gender, leadership and women’s rights
- Enhancing knowledge on lobbying and advocacy strategies
- Networking and intergenerational dialogue





# COMBATTING EGBV

*Economic gender-based violence stems from norms and traditions and their misapplication in society; the girl can't bear the house expenses, the girl does not learn, women are forbidden to inherit, forbidden to work and forbidden to know or learn about specific topics. The girl is raised as a child to take care of her brothers and sisters at the expense of her needs.*

A pilot initiative that addresses the need to compile knowledge and analysis on economic gender-

based violence using constructs articulated by women living in challenging situations themselves was implemented by CRTDA during the past year. The project provided community activists with relevant knowledge on economic gender based violence and knowledge and skills on community mobilization in partnership with community and grassroots actors to identify and support survivors of economic gender based violence and to raise awareness in local communities.

## Story 1

*A Syrian woman who was financially dependent on her husband and brothers. "Suddenly my husband fell ill and I lost most of my brothers in war, I lived in a state of collapse, I lived in the worst chaos. What do you have to do I asked myself? I used to pray and ask God to guide me.*



*My neighbors used to support me psychologically with simple things and recommendations, and one day I was invited by one of the project focal point to participate in an online WhatsApp group, I liked the idea and I started participating in discussions related to economic participation of women and about work opportunities. I found myself wondering how to start making money and not be dependent on others and I started to bake bread from my own tent and sell in small quantities and upon orders. This small income made me feel that I am free for some moments to do what I want.*

### I have a message:

*For every mother, teach your daughter everything you can. Don't leave it for destiny and time. Building independence for men and women is equally important."*





## Story 2



*My husband's illness prevented him from working and spending on house expenses. I didn't think before that I might need to work. Suddenly I felt myself as a problem and a burden on others. I lived a period of fear, fatigue and collapse. My sisters and mother supported me. You have to think of a solution and be dependent on yourself. My engagement within the project taught me how to set a goal and work on it.*

*I started making sweets and fulfilling occasional requests with the help of my family and a team that I trained with, and now I have a very small corner-shop, making sweets and pastries upon orders.*

This pilot project initiated a dialogue between various women from different age groups towards an interactive dialogue and a participatory learning approach with groups and strived to explore the challenge of economic GBV and the survival strategies adopted by women in the targeted community – the host community and the refugee/displacement community.

EGBV was manifested by depriving women from access to knowledge, depriving her from inheritance, depriving her from her right to work, lack of learning programs, opportunities, and travel. The women had no clue about how controlling resources leads to the imbalanced power dynamics between men and women.

Women survivors who combated EGBV are those who had the ability and the will to defend themselves, by participating in learning initiatives and active engagement in associations, or through the provided support from civil society organizations. The change starts when women begin to engage in learning and education programs, and when women are supported through non-discriminative and gender responsive initiatives that reflected on their needs and priorities and encouraged them to claim their rights. The love for change and knowledge in women can be ignited by enhancing self-confidence and esteem, promoting feminist solidarity, and encouraging micro initiatives.





## FEM PAWER

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Building on the success stories and lessons learnt from the above mentioned initiative, CRTD.A, and through the MENA Program “Feminist Power in Action for Women’s Economic Rights” (Fem PAWER) program aims to strengthen young women who face multiple discrimination of economic gender-based violence (E/GBV) in the MENA specific countries (Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine and Tunisia). The Consortium guiding the Program includes three national non-governmental organizations and one international one; AWO (Jordan), CRTD.A (Lebanon), PWWSD (Palestine), and Kvinna till Kvinna.

The program aims to strengthen women through promoting women led initiatives and feminist leadership, challenge prevailing social norms and hence gender equality, and promoting women’s economic rights (WER). The Program recognizes that economic discrimination towards women is a form of gender-based violence, and is interlinked with sexual, psychological, and physical gender based-violence.

Young women as targeted by the Program reflect the gender intersection with age, social status, race, legal status and disability among others. and disability.

*The expected changes are:*

- Enhanced safe on/offline spaces for the young women and Women rights organizations (WROs) supports them to mobilize and set target led agenda for WEE advocacy missions
- Strengthened innovative and inclusive leadership in a mutual learning space that reflects the young women’s and WRO’s experiences and knowledge
- Strengthened inclusive leadership and capacity in advocacy for the young women and WROs
- Increased gender responsive attitudes and behaviors among duty bearers and private sector on promoting WER and eliminating of E/GBV

CRTD.A, and through its various initiatives and via solid community based experiential evidence, continues to compile knowledge on facets of economic violence in local marginalized communities thus contributing to the strengthening of the feminist movement highlighting and combating economic gender based violence in private and in public discourses. CRTD.A is striving to support, provide and equip women with necessary skills and capacities to overcome challenges by acknowledging their potential, building agency and challenging the dominant patriarchal structures.



## INTERGENERATIONAL DIALOGUES on Sexual Health and Rights

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Young people's experiences of sexual pleasure are very important since these early experiences can shape the way they experience and express their sexuality in the future. Ensuring that all young people understand that they are entitled to sexual pleasure and understand how to experience different forms of sexual pleasure is important for their health and well-being.

Sexuality is still a taboo in Lebanon<sup>16</sup>. Justified by traditional, religious or moral values, abstinence only sexuality education is one of the most conservative sexuality education, promoting fear-instilled abstinence of sexual intercourse until marriage. Most of the children refer to their mothers as a primary source of information or help, followed by the father and gynecologist or doctor<sup>17</sup>. The relationships between Mothers and daughters are complex and diverse and discussions on sensitive topics reveal the transmission of values, ideas and behavior between mother and daughter and explore how their accounts converge and diverge.

The "Mothers and daughters: narratives on sexuality and relationships" project, implemented in partnership with the Mediterranean Institute for Gender Studies Lebanon and Cyprus, has engaged with young women and their mothers in conversations on gender, sexuality, and relationships in a process of intergenerational exchange and alliance. Discussions were guided based on review of available needs assessment on gender, sexuality and the mother-daughter partnership in Lebanon. Conversations and quotations were captured in video and written form (storybook, including expert commentaries), and synthesized as tools and resources that will present the plurality of experiences of roles as girls, women, daughters, mothers and as sexual agents in the region, and generate further discourse.

This initiative aimed to create safe spaces for young women and mothers to communicate regarding sexualities and strengthen intergenerational alliances among young women and their mothers in raising their voices and establishing personal agency in sexuality and relationships to inform public discourse, on the way gender identities and sexual agency is negotiated against sociocultural norms and through the mother-daughter relationship.

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16 Saleme, P., Zeenny, R., Salame, J., Waked, M., Barbour B, Zeidan, N., & Baldi, I. (2015). ATTITUDES TOWARDS AND PRACTICE OF SEXUALITY AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN LEBANON. *Journal of Biosocial Science*, 233-248. doi:10.1017/S0021932015000139

17 KAFA, Save the Children. Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights of Children and Adolescents in Lebanon. Retrieved from <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/node/5924/pdf/5924.pdf>





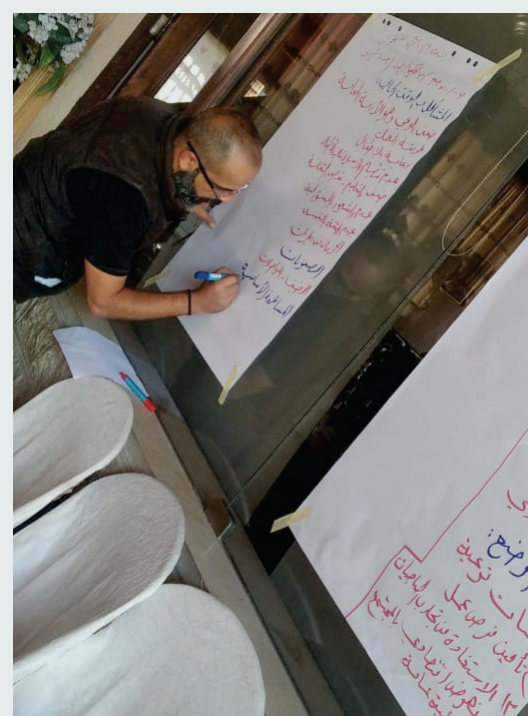
## KNOWLEDGE GENERATION AND DISSEMINATION

Within the “Feminist Response to COVID-19 - Enhancing Resilience and Synergies in the MENA Region and Lebanon” project funded by the Open Society Foundation, CRTD.A assisted in the development of a series of regional policy papers on four gender thematic areas that were prepared by the Arab States CSOs and Feminist Network. The policy papers aimed to amplify the voice of civil society and feminist organizations and push forward the gender equality agenda.

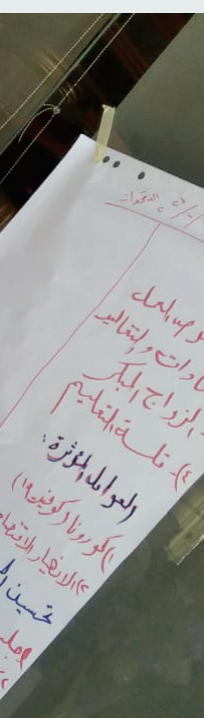
*The policy papers have covered the following areas:*

- Gender-Based Violence
- Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
- Economic Justice for Women
- Women, Peace and Security

Furthermore, a desk reviews to map available information and assess the situation of gender equality, sexual and reproductive health/rights (SRHR) in Cyprus and Lebanon was developed. The needs assessment presents current national data, legislation and policies, and prevalent norms, and provide insights on the current obstacles, gaps, and areas of intervention for the fulfilment of sexual and reproductive health and rights.







#### Lebanon desk review available at:

<https://crtda.org.lb/sites/default/files/D2.1%20M&D%20SRHR%20Needs%20Assessment%20-%20Lebanon%20FINAL.pdf>

Watch the recording of the Live event on Facebook: <https://fb.watch/93iUhk48Kp/> (Part A)  
<https://fb.watch/93iXEK7w8R/>

The official video "Let's talk: Mothers and Daughters - Narratives on Sexuality and Relationships" is available on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FQzj8R-ntA&t=473s>

Moreover, CRTD.A is embarking on a research assignment, in partnership with OXFAM Novib, that is a multi-country study - desk review and field work – aiming at providing information on the current situation of SRHR with a focus on the perspective of the target population namely the young population. CRTD.A shall assist in designing interventions to mobilize young people as agents of change to move the process of claiming SRH and Rights through strengthening local CSOs to advocate for SRH and rights in the MENA region within the Massarouna project, a regional project five-year project operating in the MENA region.

The data collection methodologies will adopt feminist and inclusive approaches to address and highlight the power dynamics and differences impeding/favoring the full realization of SRHR; highlight and increase the understanding on the needs of young unmarried women 18-35 years and young people through narratives reflecting their lived realities.



## CRTD.A Media Channels



Independent Resource and Information Service (IRIS) is an information repository and dissemination unit at CRTD.A. IRIS manages three internet knowledge platforms, for which it filters media sources in order to ensure that relevant information is disseminated to the public audience:

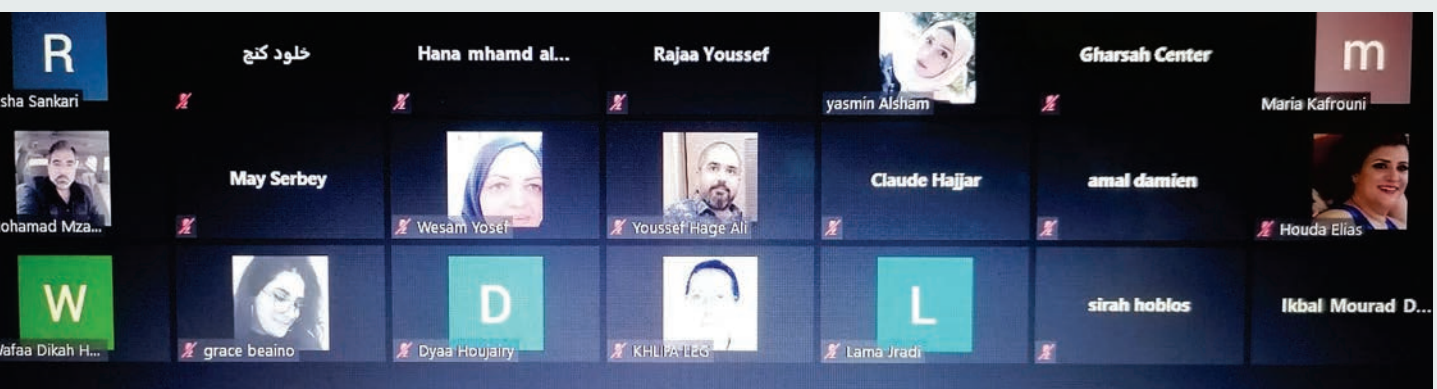
- The CRTD.A website provides information on CRTD.A activities
- The Lebanon Knowledge Development Gateway (LKDG) website focuses on citizenship, rights, refugees, economy, NGO news and gender issues
- The Women's Economic Empowerment Portal (WEEP) focuses on women economic rights in the context of gender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

Another important platform is CSW NGO Arab states platform (<https://www.ngocswarabstates.org/>), an innovative initiative supported by CRTD.A to provide a virtual space for knowledge sharing, translation and dissemination of Arabic version of policy papers, issue briefs, and reports related to women rights within the Arab region.



## ADVOCACY, Building Partnerships



Within the “Feminist Response to COVID-19 - Enhancing Resilience and Synergies in the MENA Region and Lebanon” project, and in partnership with the Arab States CSOs and Feminists Network, CRTD.A has convened online meetings aiming towards increasing the awareness and

engagement of Arab women CSOs and Arab feminist advocates within the ongoing preparations, processes and the planned events of the UN Commission on the Status on Women 65th assembly and the Generation Equality Forum (GEF) 2021. These initiatives have increased coordination and enhanced synergies among/between participants including women representatives and leaders of national and regional feminist CSOs, feminist advocates and human right defenders.

Also, during the 16 days of activism, CRTDA launched a social media campaign that was designed to raise awareness of the general audience on Economic Gender Based Violence with direct messages aiming towards combating and ending EGBV against women and girls and increasing the outreach of CRTD.A Facebook page.

*Watch the campaign videos on Facebook*

<https://fb.watch/9U2MpnfPoJ/> , <https://fb.watch/9U2Oju-khP/>



## And Strengthening Women's Right Organizations

Besides, CRTDA continues to be an active and effective member of Lebanon's Feminist Civil Society Platform which is comprised of feminists and women's rights organizations that came together following the Beirut blast to voice their concerns and demands for an immediate humanitarian assistance process that recognizes and addresses existing gender inequalities and seeks to ensure that all women and girls' needs and priorities are met and that the process is transparent and subject to due diligence as well as clear accountability mechanisms.

Finally, CRTDA continues to capitalize on available resources to strengthen the capacities of national and regional partner WROs and to engage in collective processes that aim to amplify partnerships among Arab women CSOs across the region and activate regional solidarity and advocacy on shared agendas in critical moments, and to strengthen the feminist movement and push forward the equality agenda by dismantling the patriarchal social systems and defying the prevailing discriminatory laws and social norms.



## Partners, Donors and Affiliates

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Open Society Foundation

American University of Beirut

Asfari Institute for Civil Society and Citizenship

MARSA Sexual Health Center

KAFA

Kvinna till Kvinna

Equality Fund

Gender at Work

Mediterranean Institute for Gender Studies

The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Global Fund for Women

Global Affairs Canada

IDRC

Friedrich Ebert

European Bank for Development and Reconstruction

Oxfam

Global Campaign for Equal Nationality Rights

National Endowment for Democracy NED

North South Centre - Council of Europe



Universite de Montreal - Canada  
Lebanese Women's Council  
The Arab Institute for Women (LAU)  
LECORVAW  
Arab NGO Network for Development  
Association Najdeh  
Imam Sadr Foundation Lebanon  
Women Now  
Gharsa  
Strategy for Humanity  
Université St. Joseph  
Issam Fares Institute AUB  
Faculty of Health Sciences AUB  
Women Humanitarian Association  
Atwar Association (Libya)  
Solidarity Association for Social and Cultural  
Development - SASCD - Tadamun  
Arab Institute for Human Rights - Lebanon Branch  
Arab Women Organization AWO  
FEM PAWER Consortium Partner  
Palestinian Working Women Society for  
Development PWWSD



