



Gender Equality, Sexual and Reproductive Health/ Rights: Needs Assessment: Lebanon

Prepared by

Zeina Abdel Khalik

Oday Naji

Mothers and daughters: narratives on sexuality and relationships

Needs Assessment Report: Lebanon

Introduction

This desk review aims to assess the progress achieved by Lebanon towards gender equality with a particular emphasis on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), in terms of current legislations, education and prevalent norms and behaviors. It provides insights on the unmet needs and the gaps hindering the fulfillment of sexual and reproductive health and rights. It concludes with a set of priority areas to be targeted, and topics to be discussed during the meetings between mothers and daughters foreseen by the project.

Gender Equality in Lebanon

Standing at 145 out of a total of 153 countries according to the Global Gender Gap Report 2020, Lebanese women experience high levels of health and education, but are lacking a commensurate participation in the economic activity, political representation and decision making¹. 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 spaces². Only 8.4% of legislators, senior officials and managers are women, compared to 91.6% of men. 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%)³, and most ministries and public agencies continue to overlook the gender dimensions in their work⁴. Cultural norms and beliefs are enriched in biases and assumptions for males and females⁵.

In 1997, the Lebanese State ratified the Convention on Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) with reservations on Nationality equal rights as per its 1925 unjust law that gives a Lebanese man the right to pass nationality but not a woman, equality in marriage and family relations, and arbitration in the event of a dispute. The Lebanese Constitution states that all Lebanese are equal before the law and equally enjoy civil and political rights, however, and as per article 9, it authorized the religious sects and courts to govern personal status laws and family affairs,

¹ World Economic Forum. (2020). Global Gender Gap Report. P.219, 220

² 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>

³ World Economic Forum. Global Gender Gap Report. 2020. P.219,220

⁴ The Arab Institute for Women (AIW). (2016) Available at <http://iwsawassets.lau.edu.lb/cgp/lebanon.pdf>

⁵ 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>

all of which discriminate against women⁶. Moreover, the right to health, which is of extreme relevance to reproductive health, is not mentioned in the Lebanese constitution.⁷

Gender Based Violence (GBV)

IMAGES survey data⁸ show that 31 percent of women in Lebanon report ever experiencing one or more forms of intimate partner violence, and 24 percent of men report ever perpetrating one or more forms of intimate partner violence. Also, nearly 60 percent of women reported having ever experienced some form of sexual harassment in the street; one-third of men reported having ever carried out this harassment.⁹

Lebanese women are protected from violence by law N.293 of 2014 which lacks a comprehensive definition on Gender based violence (GBV) and fails to criminalize marital rape¹⁰. Several judgments from courts have supported a broad interpretation to include verbal, emotional violence, sexual and economic violence. However, this expansion in reading the text is related to the individual initiative of a judge and not to the legal text itself¹¹. In 2020, Lebanon's Parliament has endorsed a landmark law criminalizing sexual harassment¹², in all places and conditions including workplace, public areas and via online, however, the law focuses on sexual harassment and discards emotional and psychological harassment; allows everyone, and everyone alike, to file a complaint of harassment in and outside the workplace overlooking the unequal labor relations and the prevailing hierarchical relationships, specifically in the workplace; maintains the burden of proof of the act and its effect on the victim of the offence rather than on the perpetrator; and gives more weight to the criminal and penal logic without paying attention to the victim's desire for privacy and their right to choose different remedial paths.¹³

Furthermore, and even with the recent modifications on Law 293, it fails to respond for the feminist agenda as it still holds many discriminatory articles since it maintains a narrow definition of the

⁶ Human Rights Watch. (January 2015). Unequal and Unprotected Women's Rights under Lebanese Personal Status Laws. Retrieved from https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/lebanon0115_ForUpload.pdf

⁷ Dejong, J., Bashour, H. (2016). Regional Report - Sexual and Reproductive Health Laws and Policies in Selected Arab Countries. UNFPA. July 2016. Retrieved from <https://arabstates.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/Sexual.pdf>

⁸ The International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES-MENA), the largest multi-country study, conducted surveys with 1,050 men and 1,136 women between the ages of 18 and 59, representing both the Lebanese and Syrian populations living in Lebanon.

⁹ International Men and Gender Equality Survey IMAGES. Lebanon Summary. P.7

¹⁰ Human Rights Watch. (2014). "Lebanon: Domestic Violence Law Good, but Incomplete". Retrieved from <https://www.hrw.org/news/2014/04/03/lebanon-domestic-violence-law-good-incomplete>

¹¹ Yassin, N., Moussawi, F. (August 2017). Dissecting Lebanese Law 293 on Domestic Violence: Are Women Protected? AUB POLICY INSTITUTE. POLICY BRIEF #5/2017

¹² Azhari, T. (2020). Lebanon Passes Landmark Sexual Harassment Law. AL Jazeera. Retrieved from <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/12/21/lebanons-parliament-approves-landmark-sexual-harassment-law>

¹³ Karim Nammour, Maya Dolly Ammar. (2020). How To Protect Harassment Survivors in Lebanon? The Legal Agenda. Qanuni Podcast. Retrieved from <https://soundcloud.com/qanuni-podcast/s02-e35?ref=clipboard&p=i&c=0>

“family” ignoring other bonds formed outside marriage, still lacks a comprehensive definition on Gender based violence (GBV), and claims a martial right to intercourse among others.¹⁴

Also, the Lebanese Penal Code lacks adequate sanctions that may contribute to changing the stereotyped behavior of discrimination against women¹⁵. Article 534 criminalizes sexual acts that are “against nature”; and is commonly used against the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) community.¹⁶ Although in recent years Lebanon’s courts have issued several judgments that rule that homosexuality is not a crime¹⁷, the law does not specify what might constitute “contrary to the order of nature” leaving a large margin of interpretation to individual judges. (Human rights Watch, 2013). Discriminatory attitudes against LGBTI remain widespread, and many may not openly express their sexual orientation or gender identity. Accurate data on LGBTQ community are not available, and the barriers they encounter are not fully understood.¹⁸

Rape

On 16 August 2017, Lebanese parliament abolished article 522 and article 516, which allowed rapists to avoid punishment if they are married to their victims. However, a perpetrator of a sexual offence against a girl who marries his victim is exonerated if the circumstances fall under Articles 505 or 518 of the Penal Code. Articles 505 and 518 of the Criminal Code are still used to exempt rapists of minors between 15 and 18 years of age from prosecution or punishment when the survivors have been promised for marriage to the rapists by their parents.¹⁹

Early marriage

There is a dearth of official information on the scale of child marriage in Lebanon. Figures reveal that around 6% of Lebanese girls and women are married before age 18 and 1% before age 15²⁰. Lebanon

¹⁴ The Legal Agenda. (2020). Retrieved from <https://legal-agenda.com/%d8%aa%d8%b9%d8%af%d9%8a%d9%84-%d9%82%d8%a7%d9%86%d9%88%d9%86-%d8%ad%d9%85%d8%a7%d9%8a%d8%a9-%d8%a7%d9%84%d9%86%d8%b3%d8%a7%d8%a1-%d9%88%d8%a3%d9%81%d8%b1%d8%a7%d8%af-%d8%a7%d9%84%d8%a3%d8%b3%d8%b1/?fbclid=IwAROG67avyCAaT5Q4o57c9A2U47zi7X47tDWQbw4no-TC1X4nha4b8ssR3vQ>

¹⁵ UN Women, UNFPA, UNDP. (2018). Gender-Related Laws, Policies and Practices in Lebanon.

¹⁶ Human Rights Watch. (2013). “It’s Part of the Job”. Ill-treatment and Torture of Vulnerable Groups in Lebanese Police Stations. Human Rights Watch.

¹⁷ Human Rights Watch. (2020). Lebanon: UPR Submission 2020. Retrieved from <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/08/03/lebanon-upr-submission-2020>

¹⁸ 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>

¹⁹ Najjar, F. (2017). “Scrapping of Lebanon rape law ‘is one small step’”. Al Jazeera. (August 18, 2017). Available at <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2017/08/scrapping-lebanon-rape-law-small-step-170818142722481.html>

²⁰ UNICEF & International Center for Research on Women. (Nov. 2017). Lebanon Country Brief. Child Marriage in the Middle East and North Africa.

have not established a national minimum age for marriage and completely delegate this responsibility to religious authorities, in which all allow marriage for girls under the age of 18 if the girl's guardian gives consent and, in some cases, these laws permit girls as young as nine to marry²¹. Also, evidence suggests that the Syrian refugee crisis has contributed to an increase in child marriage and was adopted as a negative coping strategy among displaced Syrian families residing in Lebanon²².

In February 2020, COVID-19 pandemic hit Lebanon, at a time of an ever-lasting political instability and instated a “health emergency” on March 15, which contributed to an increase in different forms of GBV and exacerbated structural gender inequalities.²³

Currently, Lebanon is in the midst of the worst economic crisis in its recent history, compounded by the August 4 explosion and the COVID-19 pandemic, which all may significantly push back what gains have been made on gender equality in the country. This underpins the crucial role that the civil society and feminist organizations must play in increasing the level of awareness and responsiveness of the measures that have to be taken to prioritize women and young girls needs and empowerment.

Background on Sexuality Education and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in Lebanon -Status of Comprehensive Sexuality Education

The 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo has presented a new paradigm that shifted emphasis from macro-level focus to a micro-level concern, with individuals' rights in relation to sexuality and reproduction.²⁴

Sexual and reproductive health and rights achieved greater prominence in the health (Goal 3) and gender equality (Goal 5) goals of the SDGs than they had in the MDGs.²⁵

According to World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Index 2017-2018, data shows good performance of the health system in Lebanon, ranking 34th out of 137 countries with a score of 6.8

²¹ See more at https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/node/15672/pdf/child_marriage_policy_brief_final.pdf

²² Bartels SA, Michael S, Roupetz S, *et al.* (2016). Making sense of child, early and forced marriage among Syrian refugee girls: a mixed methods study in Lebanon. *BMJ Global Health* 2018;**3**:e000509.

²³ Lebanon Inter Security Forces, May 2020. Available at <https://twitter.com/LebISF/status/1257215652995182592>

²⁴ DeJong, J. (2000). The role and limitations of the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development. *Social Science & Medicine*. doi:10.1016/s0277-9536(00)00073-3

²⁵ Shirin Heidari (2015) Sexual rights and bodily integrity as human rights, *Reproductive Health Matters*, 23:46, 16. Retrieved from DOI: [10.1016/j.rhm.2015.12.001](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rhm.2015.12.001)

out of a maximum of 7²⁶. With a total fertility rate at 2.1 births per women²⁷, Lebanon have integrated family planning services beyond the maternal health ones²⁸, and was able to achieve Maternal Mortality Rates below those called for by SDGs 2030 at 5 per 100000 live births.²⁹

The United Nations (UN) Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women praised Lebanon for the delivery of a comprehensive package of primary health-care services and reducing maternal mortality, however, concerns were raised about the limited access of rural women and adolescent girls to sexual and reproductive health services, the high number of unsafe abortions, and the delay in introducing comprehensive sexuality education³⁰. National laws lack a clear definition of the sexual and reproductive rights that is aligned with the International Framework of Human Rights and most of the ministries consider that sexual and reproductive rights are the ones related to the services of reproductive health.³¹

A number of the barriers to the achievement of SRHR mentioned by national reports relate to the overall functioning of the health system such as issues relating to supplies, public-private divisions, the verticalization of health programs and lack of universal health coverage (UHC). National and regional studies emphasize the need for better integration of SRHR services within existing services particularly by linking women's SRHR services with services in mental health and noncommunicable diseases, taking advantage of women's contacts with the health system to maximize prevention and treatment opportunities. The low coverage of the HPV vaccine in the region is a case in point, where better linkage between SRHR and non-communicable diseases is needed³². Young people, particularly unmarried young people, remain highly neglected populations in terms of access to sexual and reproductive (SRH) services and public education. Moreover, the lack of a life-cycle approach, which follows individuals from a young age to a post-reproductive stage of life, was noted in Lebanon.³³

²⁶ World Economic Forum. Global Competitiveness Index 2017-2018. <http://reports.weforum.org/global-competitiveness-index-2017-2018/countryeconomy-profiles/#economy=LBN>

²⁷ World Bank Data. (2018). See more at <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.DYN.TFRT.IN?locations=ZQ>

²⁸ T. Kabakian-Khasholian et al. (2020). Sexual and Reproductive Health Matters, 28:2. Integration of sexual and reproductive health services in the provision of primary health care in the Arab States: status and a way forward. Available at <https://doi.org/10.1080/26410397.2020.1773693>

²⁹ WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, World Bank Group and the United Nations Population Division. (2019). Trends in Maternal Mortality. 2000-2017.

³⁰ Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. (2015). Concluding Observations: Lebanon. United Nations.

³¹ UNFPA, Arab institute for Human Rights. (2019). Country Assessment on Sexual and Reproductive Rights in Lebanon

³² Dejong, J., Bashour, H. (2016). Regional Report - Sexual and Reproductive Health Laws and Policies in Selected Arab Countries. UNFPA. July 2016. Retrieved from <https://arabstates.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/Sexual.pdf>

³³ Dejong, J., Bashour, H. (2016). Regional Report - Sexual and Reproductive Health Laws and Policies in Selected Arab Countries. UNFPA. July 2016. Retrieved from <https://arabstates.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/Sexual.pdf>

Abortion:

The Statistical Bulletin of the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) shows that the total number of legal abortions, including spontaneous abortions, reported by hospitals to the Vital Data Observatory at the Ministry of Public Health was 11318 in 2016.³⁴ However, there is still no accurate information on the number of legal and illegal abortions in Lebanon. Lebanon's Penal Code (articles 539 to 546), which dates back to 1943, bans abortion except to save the pregnant woman's life. The penalty for anyone who aborts, facilitates, promotes, sells, buys, or acquires its means is imprisonment and a fine.

However, criminalization does not appear to be an undefeatable obstacle for women, at least for those women who can afford to pay, it seems relatively easy to access abortion in medical facilities with qualified clinicians.³⁵ Marital status and socioeconomic background are important factors in determining women's access to safe abortion with single women from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds standing out as the most marginalized³⁶. The process of negotiating access to safe abortion reinforces socioeconomic inequalities and patriarchal structures that constrain women's choices.³⁷

Contraception:

Information from the scientific literature on the national prevalence of contraceptive use appears scarce.³⁸ Most forms of contraceptives are available in pharmacies and are not funded by any of the state health programs. The most commonly used contraceptives are (male) condoms, contraceptive pills and IUDs.

A survey targeting 825 married women and men sample found that the current prevalence of contraceptive use is 55.6%, and the unmet need is 11.4%³⁹. Also, 96% of sex workers in Lebanon report using condoms⁴⁰.

Pervasive social norms and stereotypes around sexuality, especially around the sexuality of adolescents and/ or sex outside of marriage, often prevents women, especially unmarried women, from seeking contraceptive information, products and services, putting them at a greater risk of

³⁴ See more at <https://www.moph.gov.lb/en/Pages/8/327/statistical-bulletins>

³⁵ Maffi, I., & Tønnessen, L. (2019). EDITORIAL The Limits of the Law: Abortion in the Middle East and North Africa. *Health and Human Rights Journal*. Retrieved from https://www.hhrjournal.org/2019/12/editorial-the-limits-of-the-law-abortion-in-the-middle-east-and-north-africa/#_ednref4

³⁶ Fathallah, Z. (2019). Moral Work and the Construction of Abortion Networks: Women's Access to Safe Abortion in Lebanon. *Health and Human Rights Journal*. Retrieved from <https://www.hhrjournal.org/2019/12/moral-work-and-the-construction-of-abortion-networks-womens-access-to-safe-abortion-in-lebanon/>

³⁷ *ibid*

³⁸ El Khoury, G., & Salameh, P. (2019, Aug). Assessment of the awareness and usages of family planning methods in the Lebanese community. *BMJ Sex Reprod Health*. doi:10.1136/bmjsex-2018-200067

³⁹ El Khoury, G., & Salameh, P. (2019, Aug). Assessment of the awareness and usages of family planning methods in the Lebanese community. *BMJ Sex Reprod Health*. doi:10.1136/bmjsex-2018-200067

⁴⁰ See more at <http://aidsinfo.unaids.org/>

unwanted pregnancies and contracting Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)⁴¹. Major factors hindering the use of family planning methods in Lebanon appear to be religion, age and lower educational levels.⁴²

HIV

According to the National AIDS Control Program (NAP) at the ministry of Public Health, the cumulative total of HIV/AIDS cases reached 2366 By the end of November 2018.⁴³ Women tests are much less than that of men due to social challenges, stigma and discrimination, where HIV is an indicator for sexual activity within a society that condemns premarital sex.⁴⁴

Women living with HIV/AIDS in Lebanon face stigma at different levels threatening their ability to live a "normal" life, and attending regular activities⁴⁵.

Human rights violations and maltreatment occur within the community, at the workplace, health care and governmental settings, and even by family and friends ranging from neglect, stigmatization, blaming, and denial of access to services⁴⁶. Among the 160 new reported cases of HIV/AIDS in 2018, 94.4 percent were men where the most common form of transmission is due to Men who have Sex with Men (MSM)⁴⁷, resulting from the inconsistent condom-use and the lack of sexual health education from reliable sources as school, university, or healthcare workers⁴⁸.

Status of Comprehensive Sexuality Education

In 1995, sex education within the curricula was officially introduced for eighth grade students (ages between 12 and 14), but it was deleted a few years later after facing severe criticism from various religious authorities in the country⁴⁹. The following attempts and efforts to reintroduce it into public

⁴¹ CRTD.A. (2020). Lebanese Women Fighting Inequalities. Lebanon Parallel Report for Beijing +25.

⁴² El Khoury, G., & Salameh, P. (2019, Aug). Assessment of the awareness and usages of family planning methods in the Lebanese community. *BMJ Sex Reprod Health*. doi:10.1136/bmj.srh-2018-200067

⁴³ Ministry of Public Health. National AIDS Control Program in Lebanon. Retrieved from <https://www.moph.gov.lb/en/Pages/2/4000/aids>

⁴⁴ Maysaa Ajjan HIV in Lebanon: What you need to know. *Annahar*. Retrieved from <https://www.annahar.com/english/article/951581-hiv-in-lebanon-what-you-need-to-know>

⁴⁵ Kaplan, R. L., El Khoury, C., Field, E. R., & Mokhbat, j. (2016). LIVING DAY BY DAY: THE MEANING OF LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS AMONG WOMEN IN LEBANON. *Global Qualitative Nursing Research*, 3. doi:10.1177/2333393616650082

⁴⁶ Hammad, L., Doumit, C., & Khalaf, R. (2017). Speak Up: For the Rights of People Living with HIV - Human Rights & HIV Monitoring System for Law Reform in Lebanon. Available at <http://sidc-lebanon.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Final-ENG-Speak-UP-Final-report-EN.pdf>

⁴⁷ Ministry of Public Health. National AIDS Control Program in Lebanon. Retrieved from <https://www.moph.gov.lb/en/Pages/2/4000/aids>

⁴⁸ Assi, A., Abu Zaki, S., Ghosn, J. *et al.* (2019). Prevalence of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections and their association with sexual practices and substance use among 2238 MSM in Lebanon. *Sci Rep* 9, 15142 <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-019-51688-7>

⁴⁹ Alabaster, O. (2011, September 19). Lack of sex education in Lebanese schools poses risks. Retrieved from *The Daily Star*: <https://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Local-News/2011/Sep-19/149097-absence-of-sex-education-in-lebanese-schools-poses-risks-experts.ashx>

schools have had little effect, with teachers complaining of a lack of training and the need for administrative support in case parents complained⁵⁰. Most parents believe that the exclusion of explicit classroom discussion of the topic of sex itself and the cultural meanings attached to it, illustrates the lack of attention given to young people's real concerns about sexuality.⁵¹

Lebanon's Ministry of Education and Higher Education and Ministry of Public Health approved Decree 6610/11 (June 4, 2010) to introduce a school-based reproductive health education and gender curriculum. It has yet to be widely implemented in the country's schools.⁵² Although the curriculum falls short of discussing sexuality outside of the scope of reproduction, it could improve the knowledge and attitude of students towards their reproductive health and understanding of gender.⁵³

What Young People Know about Relationships

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 Lebanon⁵⁴. 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. Among 2700 university students surveyed in 2015, 85.1% of female participants had never had sexual activity, and 9.6% were regularly sexually active.⁵⁵ Unsurprisingly, university students report little open communication about sexuality at home or at school, but demonstrate a more-free expression within one's social circle made of friends of same age⁵⁶. Also, students reported reluctance in engaging in sexual activity and fear to social sanctions toward premarital sex and agreeing on abstinence before marriage. Young Lebanese are in need for information and guidance regarding sexual education.⁵⁷ And in this context it is important to note

⁵⁰ Porter, L. (2017, Apr 24). Tackling Lebanon's blushes about sex. Retrieved from ALJAZEERA:

<https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2017/4/24/tackling-lebanons-blushes-about-sex#:~:text=Sex%20education%20was%20introduced%20for,religious%20groups%20in%20the%20country>

⁵¹ Bteich, G., Hajj, M., Accaoui, E., & El Abed, A. (2017). Sexual Perception of Young Lebanese Students. *Health*, 9, 299-316.

⁵² The A Project. United Nations Universal Periodic Review. Lebanon. (November 2015). 23rd Session of the UPR Working Group of the Human Rights Council.

⁵³ *ibid*

⁵⁴ 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

⁵⁵ *ibid*

⁵⁶ Bteich, G., Hajj, M., Accaoui, E., & El Abed, A. (2017). Sexual Perception of Young Lebanese Students. *Health*, 9, 299-316.

⁵⁷ *ibid*

that recent research conducted by UNFPA have shown that some CSOs working on this issue lack the understanding of the sexual and reproductive rights, particularly in terms of their link to the human rights values and principles.⁵⁸

The need for this project - description of our approach: Sex positive approach – sexual agency, intersectionality in our approach – why it is important.

The relationships between Mothers and daughters are complex and diverse. Lack of communication, particularly on sexuality issues is a common challenge with mothers and daughters.

Discussions on sensitive topics may reveal the transmission of values, ideas and behavior between mother and daughter and explore how their accounts converge and diverge. Such discussions shall exemplify the differences between mothers' and daughters' views highlighting the generational transformations and cultural shifts that has occurred, and how gender inequalities are rooted, shaped or transformed between generations.

Comprehensive Sexuality Education is associated with promoting positive ideas and approaches towards sexuality, accompanied by gender sensitive approaches with an attention to the diverse needs. The project shall adopt sex positive approaches to acknowledge and tackle the various concerns and risks associated with sexual and reproductive health and rights, gender expression, sexual orientation, and gender identity, thus providing comfort instead of reinforcing fear, and expressing encouragement instead of shame or taboo in an environment which respects diverse sexual values, experiences, concerns and desires.

Topics to be discussed with the pairs of mothers and daughters.

- Social norms and expectations
- Familial and personal expectations
- Gender based violence and intimate partner violence
- Premarital sex and sexualities
- Unequal power relations between men and women which profoundly influence sexual behavior and reproductive choices.
- Sexual orientation or gender identity

⁵⁸ UNFPA, Arab institute for Human Rights. (2019). Country Assessment on Sexual and Reproductive Rights in Lebanon