The Issue

Women’s engagement in peace and security is essential to building sustainable peace. On 31 October 2000, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1325 on WPS, recognizing this. This resolution, with its four pillars of prevention, participation, protection and peacebuilding and recovery, has galvanized worldwide efforts as the key instrument to engage women in peace and security deliberations.

Yet the contribution of women and girls to peacebuilding continues to go undervalued and under-resourced, leaving untapped a tool for transformative change and sustainable peace.

Since the outbreak of the civil war in 1975, Lebanon has experienced armed conflicts, invasions and occupation, and continues to face external and internal insecurities, economic hardships, and political turmoil contributing to increasing volatility and instability. To date, women have largely been excluded from the country’s peace and security deliberations. For example, women were not engaged in the Ta’if Accords that brought the civil war to an end in 1991 or in subsequent national dialogues. Women’s participation in the security and defense sectors does not exceed two and four percent, respectively.

In addition, Lebanon has the highest number of refugees per capita in the world - hosting more than 450,000 Palestinian refugees per UNRWA estimates and around one million Syrians. UN Women’s study on the status of female refugees in Lebanon highlights that gender inequalities and discrimination leave women and girls at heightened risk to physical and sexual violence, and to exploitation in both the public and private sphere. Changes to traditional gender roles provide both transformative opportunities, while also contributing to amplifying these risks.

The women, peace and security agenda, now more than ever, is a critical tool for building sustainable peace.

Our Strategy for Change

Lebanon’s programme “Implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1325: Participation, Prevention, Protection and Relief and Recovery” (2019-2021) builds on UN Women’s global expertise and leadership on issues of women, peace and security. In Lebanon, the programme works to:

1. Support the Government of Lebanon with National Action Plan (NAP) 1325 passage. UN Women will continue to support the Government of Lebanon with NAP endorsement, implementation, reporting, and monitoring and evaluation of progress and results. UN Women will
also continue its coordination role in the UN Country Team on women, peace and security to ensure a coordinated response to the implementation of UNSCR 1325.

2. Increase women’s participation in the security and defence sectors and ensure security institutions have increased gender sensitivity. UN Women will work with security sector institutions to assess the rate of women’s participation in the security and defence sectors, while identifying opportunities and challenges related to fostering an enabling environment for women’s participation. UN Women will support the security and defence sectors with developing and implementing gender affirmative policies, and to measure annual progress.

3. Increase women’s participation in local mediation efforts to decrease tensions in addition to participation in the design and implementation of community early warning and conflict prevention mechanisms. In collaboration with the United Nations Interim Forces Mission in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and other partners, UN Women will establish a national network of female mediators to support peace-making efforts at the grassroots levels through skills-training and creating channels for women’s engagement in conflict prevention. In addition, women’s networks will develop early warning systems that take into consideration the security needs of women in the community and develop indicators to detect security issues including for instance, sexual and gender-based violence and violent extremism.

4. Increase protection of women and girls through the provision of quality multi-sectoral services and awareness raising. Enhance the protection of women and girls against all forms of violence and exploitation, including forced and early marriage by enhancing access to multi-sectoral services for GBV survivors/ victims/ those at risk and through the provision of psycho-social support within referral units and centres, and lastly through raising awareness of women and girls on their human rights.

Theory of Change

If an enabling environment for implementation of WPS commitments is created; if women participate in decision-making processes related to the prevention, management and resolution of conflict; and if the safety, physical manner and mental health and economic security of women and girls are assured, their human rights respected, and their specific needs met in the peacebuilding and recovery process; then societies will be more peaceful and gender equal; because evidence shows that women are drivers of peace and security, inclusive societies are more likely to be stable and post-conflict settings are opportunities to address underlying gender inequality barriers.

Achievements to date

- UN Women serves as General Secretariat for a joint initiative with five UN agencies (OHCHR, UNDP, UN ESCWA, UNFPA and UNIFIL) that supports the National Commission for Lebanese Women (NCLW) with the development of the country’s first National Action Plan on UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. From 2017-2018, UN Women Lebanon provided technical support for an inclusive, participatory process that resulted in the Lebanon National Action Plan for the implementation of UNSCR 1325.

- In 2018, UN Women and UNIFIL embarked on a pilot project to train women in South Lebanon in acquiring mediation and negotiation skills.

Partnerships for Change

UN: UNDP, UNFPA, ESCWA, UNIFIL, OHCHR, and others.


Civil society organizations: academia, media, regional and international mediation networks, religious and traditional leaders, youth and university-based groups, women’s groups, women’s cooperatives.