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**THIS ACTION IS FUNDED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**ANNEX III**

of the Commission Implementing Decision on the Annual action plan in favour of Lebanon for 2022

**Action Document for “Women Empowerment Hub in Lebanon (WE-Hub)”**

**ANNUAL ACTION PLAN 2022**

This document constitutes the annual work programme in the sense of Article 110(2) of the Financial Regulation, and action plan/measure in the sense of Article 23(2) of NDICI-Global Europe Regulation of NDICI-Global Europe Regulation.

**1. SYNOPSIS**

**1.1. Action Summary Table**

<b>1. Title OPSYS Basic Act</b>	Women Empowerment Hub in Lebanon (WE-Hub) Annual action plan in favour of Lebanon for 2022 OSPYS business reference NDICI-GEO-NEAR/2022/ACT 61204 ABAC Commitment level 1 number: JAD.1007569  Financed under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI-Global Europe).
<b>2. Team Europe Initiative</b>	No
<b>3. Zone benefiting from the action</b>	The action shall be carried out in Lebanon.
<b>4. Programming document</b>	Lebanon Multi-annual Indicative Programming 2021-2027 <sup>1</sup>
<b>5. Link with relevant MIP(s) objectives/expected results</b>	To promote advancement of women’s rights and empowerment of women
<b>PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION</b>	
<b>6. Priority Area(s), sectors</b>	Priority Area 1: Enhancing good governance and supporting reforms DAC Code: 151: Government & Civil Society - General

<sup>1</sup> C(2022)8363 final of 24/11/2022

<b>7. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)</b>	Main SDG: SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls  Other significant SDGs (up to 9) and where appropriate, targets: SDG 8: Decent work and economic growth SDG 10: Reduced inequalities SDG 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions			
<b>8 a) DAC code(s)</b>	15170: Women's rights organisations and movements, and government institutions (80%) 15180: Ending violence against women and girls (20%)			
<b>8 b) Main Delivery Channel</b>	47000 – Multi-lateral organisations			
<b>9. Targets</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Migration <input type="checkbox"/> Climate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social inclusion and Human Development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender <input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Human Rights, Democracy and Governance			
<b>10. Markers (from DAC form)</b>	<b>General policy objective</b>	<b>Not targeted</b>	<b>Significant objective</b>	<b>Principal objective</b>
	Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Aid to environment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Gender equality and women's and girl's empowerment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Reproductive, maternal, new-born and child health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Disaster Risk Reduction	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Inclusion of persons with Disabilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Nutrition	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>RIO Convention markers</b>	<b>Not targeted</b>	<b>Significant objective</b>	<b>Principal objective</b>
	Biological diversity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Combat desertification	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change mitigation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change adaptation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

11. Internal markers and Tags	Policy objectives	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Digitalisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Tags digital connectivity digital governance digital entrepreneurship digital skills/literacy digital services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	/
	Connectivity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Tags digital connectivity energy transport health education and research	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	/
	Migration	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reduction of Inequalities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	COVID-19	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**BUDGET INFORMATION**

12. Amounts concerned	Budget line(s) (article, item): 14.020110 Southern neighbourhood Total estimated cost: EUR 6 000 000.00 Total amount of EU budget contribution EUR 6 000 000.00
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**MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION**

13. Implementation modalities (type of financing and management mode)	Project Modality <b>Indirect management</b> with the entity(ies) to be selected in accordance with the criteria set out in section 4.3.1
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**1.2. Summary of the Action**

Lebanon has been facing compounded challenges with its largest peace-time socio-economic and financial crisis, aggravated over time and intensified by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on key sectors of the economy, the consequences of the explosion of the Port of Beirut in 2020 and Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine in 2022. Owing to the lack of political consensus for pursuing and implementing effective reforms to enhance governance and accountability of public services and to generate State revenues and reduce expenditures, the multi-dimensional crisis continues to persist, although the 2022 parliamentary elections showed growing support for candidates representing civil society and demanding reform.

While Lebanon was the first country in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region to give women the right to vote in 1952 and acceded to the “Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women – CEDAW” in 1997, it ranked 132<sup>nd</sup> out of 156 countries in the Global Gender Gap Report 2021. Despite the fact that Lebanese women enjoy equal political and civil rights before the law with men,

they face discrimination and inequality preventing them from engaging across the political, public and economic spheres and being protected from violence. These inequalities are further exacerbated by the confessional personal status laws, which are a significant contributor to the legal foundations of gender inequality in Lebanon.

Following the Beirut Port explosion in 2020, the European Union launched jointly with the United Nations and the World Bank, the “Reform, Recovery and Reconstruction Framework (3RF)”. The 3RF focuses on alleviating the impact of the explosion by supporting the most vulnerable individuals, communities and businesses affected by it. The identified reform priorities recognises that a people centred, inclusive recovery will only be feasible and sustainable by providing women a meaningful and active participation in planning and decision making. The EU is co-leading the *Inclusion and Gender Working Group* to promote the role of women in ensuring a gender-responsive reform process.

Accordingly, this action aims to promote the advancement and empowerment of women for effective realisation of gender equality. More specifically, it seeks to:

1. Increase women’s leadership and participation in political and public sphere;
2. Foster an enabling environment for better engagement of women in the workforce;
3. Enhance key legislative reform and measures that protect women from all forms of violence.

The action is in line with the European Commission’s Priority “Promoting our European Way of Life”, in particular the policy area “Fundamental rights” and with the Joint Communication “Renewed Partnership with the southern Neighbourhood – A new Agenda for the Mediterranean”<sup>2</sup>, in particular the policy area “Human development, good governance and rule of law”. It is also aligned with the “EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025”<sup>3</sup> and the “EU’s Global Gender Action Plan III - GAP III”<sup>4</sup>, including “Lebanon Country-Level Implementation Plan 2021-2025”<sup>5</sup>. The action will contribute to the SDG 5 “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”.

## 2. RATIONALE

### 2.1. Context

Lebanon has been facing compounded challenges with its largest peace-time socio-economic and financial crisis, aggravated over time and intensified by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on key sectors of the economy and the consequences of the explosion of the Port of Beirut in 2020. According to the World Bank, the financial crisis that Lebanon is going through is “one of the top ten, possibly top three most severe economic collapses worldwide since the 1850s”<sup>6</sup>. In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic took its toll on the economic activity, especially on small businesses and the informal sector. Lebanon defaulted on its public debt, cutting its access to financial markets. In 2021, the devaluation of the national currency against the US dollars accelerated, affecting dramatically an economy highly dependent on imports. The Central Bank and the banking sector severely restricted access to people’s savings and limited cash withdrawals. Subsidies (food, gasoline, medications) were lifted abruptly. In 2022, the country might be facing a “bread crisis” as 80% of its wheat imports originate from Ukraine. A triple digit annual inflation rate was reported for the 18th consecutive month in December 2021, with annual inflation reaching a record 224%, compared to December 2020. Food and non-alcoholic beverages witnessed a staggering annual increase of 438%, compared to

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/joint\\_communication\\_renewed\\_partnership\\_southern\\_neighbourhood.pdf](https://www.eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/joint_communication_renewed_partnership_southern_neighbourhood.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0152&from=EN>

<sup>4</sup> [https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2021-01/join-2020-17-final\\_en.pdf](https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2021-01/join-2020-17-final_en.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> [https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/lebanon/107317/eu-gender-action-plan-iii\\_en](https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/lebanon/107317/eu-gender-action-plan-iii_en)

<sup>6</sup> “World Bank. 2022. Lebanon Economic Monitor, Fall 2021 : The Great Denial. World Bank, Washington, DC. © World Bank. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/35626>

December 2020. Lebanon's economy contracted by 10.5% in 2021, the highest contraction amongst 193 countries globally. This devastating contraction follows from a 21.4% contraction in 2020, reflecting the near complete destruction of an economy and a shrinking GDP to USD 21.8 billion. Lebanon's inflation rate for 2021 is the third highest globally after Venezuela and Sudan.

The poverty rate amongst Lebanese would have reached 81% in 2021 and the extreme poverty rate 34%. More alarming is that food insecurity is today a reality in Lebanon. In October 2021, 53% of families reported skipping a meal compared with 37% only six months beforehand. Seven in ten families had to buy food on credit or borrow money to afford food; the situation is even more alarming for Syrian refugees with nine out of ten families having recourse to this coping mechanism. The crisis has resulted as well in a massive impoverishment of the middle classes, with the bulk of the labour force - paid in Lebanese lira- including civil servants - suffering from plummeting purchasing power. Thousands of highly qualified Lebanese (especially medical practitioners, university professors and scientists), entrepreneurs and young graduates, are migrating in search of better opportunities. The living conditions of the population have deteriorated dramatically, in part due to lack of resources and a robust social protection systems. Importantly, the impact of the lockdowns in response to COVID-19 pandemic as well as the existing socio-economic crises affected disproportionately women.

Lebanon's leadership policy responses to these challenges have been highly inadequate, which is not so much related to knowledge gaps and quality advice, but rather the result of a dysfunctional governance system based on vested interests hampering the achievement of political consensus over effective policy initiatives. Prior to the Parliamentary elections in May 2022, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) reached Staff-Level Agreement on economic policies with the Lebanese authorities that aims to "bring back confidence and put the economy back on a sustainable growth path, with stronger private sector activity and job creation". The 2022 parliamentary elections showed growing support for candidates representing civil society and demanding reforms, which increases the potential to implement the five key pillars of reform outlined in the IMF Staff-Level Agreement, namely 1) restructuring the financial sector, 2) implementing fiscal reforms, 3) reforming state-owned enterprises, 3) strengthening governance, anti-corruption and anti-money laundering / combating the financing of terrorism and 5) establishing a credible and transparent monetary and exchange rate system. Under the Governance pillar, the agreement foresees reform of the civil service, the modernisation of public financial management, the implementation of the Public Procurement Law and the reinforcement of oversight bodies, in particular the Anti-Corruption Commission. This action will contribute paving the way for an IMF programme for which inclusive policies are expected through addressing gender inequalities in the legal framework and spurring gender-based budgeting.

In response to the Beirut Port explosion in 2020 and the multidimensional crises, the European Union (EU), jointly with the United Nations (UN) and the World Bank (WB) developed, in close cooperation with the government, civil society and the international community, the "*Reform, Recovery and Reconstruction Framework (3RF)*"<sup>7</sup>. Launched in December 2020, the 3RF focuses on the impact of the explosion on affected communities and businesses in the Beirut area by distinguishing two priorities, i.e. track 1- supporting the most vulnerable individuals, communities and businesses affected by the explosion; and track 2 - reconstructing critical assets and services. The identified reform priorities recognises that a people centred, inclusive recovery will only be feasible and sustainable by providing women a meaningful and active participation in planning and decision making. The EU is co-leading the *Inclusion and Gender Working Group* to promote the role of women in ensuring a gender-responsive reform process.

Equality of civil and political rights for citizens are constitutionally recognized in Lebanon. In order to promote equal treatment, the Lebanese state signed and ratified the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)* in 1997, which lays out women's political, social, economic and civil rights, and stipulates non-discrimination and equality. On some of the CEDAW articles

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/lebanon/publication/lebanon-reform-recovery-reconstruction-framework-3rf>

Lebanon has maintained a reservation, particularly on those regarding nationality and marriage and family relations, including inheritance. In Lebanon, these aspects are governed through personal status laws<sup>8</sup> that emanate from a confessional and patriarchal system, thus rendering it challenging to harmonize laws and practices pertaining to issues related to gender equality. Lebanon witnessed a number of legal achievements in the past decade, including the passing of a law criminalising sexual harassment in the workplace; amending the 2014 domestic violence law, and approving the 2021 resolution of the Supreme Islamic Sharia Council raising the minimum age for marriage to 18 for Sunni girls. However, Lebanese women are still far from enjoying rights and freedoms on a basis of equal treatment with men. In the last periodic meeting of the UN Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) committee<sup>9</sup>, appeals were made to the government of Lebanon for implementing the legal obligations under CEDAW and to continue harmonising laws and practices pertaining to issues related to gender equality.

Gender equality is a core EU value and universally recognised human right, as well as an imperative to well-being, economic growth, prosperity, good governance, peace and security. The action is in line with the European Commission's Priority "Promoting our European Way of Life", in particular the policy area *Fundamental rights* that aims at fighting discrimination and promoting gender equality. It is also aligned with the Joint Communication "Renewed Partnership with the southern Neighbourhood – A new Agenda for the Mediterranean"<sup>10</sup>, in particular the policy area "Human development, good governance and rule of law". It is also aligned with the "EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025"<sup>11</sup> and the "EU's Global Gender Action Plan III - GAP III", including the "Lebanon Country-Level Implementation Plan 2021-2025 – CLIP"<sup>12</sup>. Through the CLIP, the EU and its Member States have agreed to support cooperation and advocacy in three main thematic areas: 1) enhancing women's participation and leadership in politics and public life in Lebanon, 2) promoting economic and social rights and the empowerment of women, and 3) freedom from all forms of gender-based violence. The EU recognises that every human being has the right to live a life free from all forms of violence. However, this is not yet a reality in many countries including Lebanon, where social norms, power structures and discriminatory practices continue to hinder the full enjoyment of rights for women. In this light, the action will contribute to the SDG 5 "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls".

## 2.2. Problem Analysis

### *Short problem analysis*

Lebanon is a parliamentary democracy with principles based "on the respect for public liberties, especially freedom of opinion and belief, equality of rights and duties among all citizens without distinction or preference". Despite the fact that Lebanese women enjoy equal political and civil rights before the law with men, they face discrimination and inequality preventing them from engaging across the political, public and economic sphere and being protected from violence.

Lebanon is among the countries with the lowest rates of women's political participation:

- Parliamentary elections in 2022 registered only 157 women candidates (albeit a slight increase compared to the 113 registered in 2018); while only eight women were elected to parliamentary seats (compared to only 6 seats for women in 2018 parliamentary elections).

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<sup>8</sup> Personal status laws are religious laws that govern women's basic human rights in terms of custody, marriage, divorce and inheritance

<sup>9</sup> Entrusted to monitor the progress in the implementation of national measures for women's rights made in countries that are signatory of the Convention (February 2021)

<sup>10</sup>[https://www.eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/joint\\_communication\\_renewed\\_partnership\\_southern\\_neighbourhood.pdf](https://www.eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/joint_communication_renewed_partnership_southern_neighbourhood.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/gender-equality-strategy\\_en#gender-equality-strategy-2020-2025](https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/gender-equality-strategy_en#gender-equality-strategy-2020-2025)

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.euneighbours.eu/en/south/stay-informed/publications/eu-gender-action-plan-iii-country-level-implementation-plan>

- Key obstacles to increase women’s participation in political life remain, such as the absence of a gender quota in the existing law as advocated for by civil society actors to ensure a minimum level of representation of women in the parliament in order to promote gender equality and women’s rights and to ensure an inclusive democracy.
- As for their representation in ministers’ cabinets, the number of women ministers decreased from 6 in the previous cabinet headed by Prime Minister Diab to 1 woman minister among the current 24-person cabinet. Moreover, women have limited representation in syndicates/union bodies<sup>13</sup>.
- The low rates of women’s political participation are attributable not only to women underrepresentation in political positions, but are equally a consequence of legal and structural barriers such as social perceptions of women that tie them to a limited number of professions; limited legal protections to which women have access to, such as the right to confer her nationality to their children and spouses on an equal basis with men when married to a non-Lebanese - this results in considering their children, boys and girls, as non-citizens, who will face the obstacles linked to the lack of Lebanese citizenship, including disenfranchisement.
- Several studies/reports<sup>14</sup> reveal that the existing inequalities are further exacerbated by the stereotypes embedded in 15 religion-based personal status laws that govern women’s basic human rights in terms of custody, marriage, divorce and inheritance.

#### Economic and labour participation

- Lebanese women form a majority of 53% of the population, yet Lebanon is amongst the countries with the lowest global rates of women participation in the labour market with 24.5% (compared to 76% for men). Lebanese women also suffer from unequal pay.
- Lebanese women actively participate in all aspects of society but mainly working in the services sector, which is considered being an extension of their traditional role. This is consistent with a broader gender segregation in the labour market, whereby women are disproportionately active in specific sectors, such as banking, health, education, and less in the industrial and public sector.
- The lack of or little data and statistics on labour market participation for different vulnerable categories is an additional constraint to reduce barriers and access to work. Such is the case for LGBTIQ+ individuals’, for which there are no statistics on their participation in the workforce. While in the case of women with disabilities, the data shows that they represent only 5.5% of the workforce, despite legislation advancing their access to employment.
- The long lasting economic crisis leading to reducing actual jobs, combined with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Beirut Port explosion contributed to a broader context of the pre-existing gender inequality in the workforce and at workplace.
- The legal framework in the economic sector is not gender responsive: labour law discriminates against female workers' in terms of welfare benefits and lacks clear mechanisms to enforce any provisions in favour of women’s needs, such as a maternity leave, care economy, access to credit facilities.

#### Protection and social rights

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<sup>13</sup> “Specific Sector Gender Analysis”, UN Women, 2021. Funded by the EU.

<sup>14</sup> “SHS Papers in Women’s Studies/ Gender Research”, UNESCO, 2021. “Submission to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on Lebanon”, Human Rights Watch, 2021.

- The continued deterioration of Lebanon’s economy and the financial crisis have resulted in growing family tensions and has acute impact on the most vulnerable groups at risk, including women. Lebanon still lacks nationally representative prevalence data, but some estimates suggest an important increase in domestic violence, now affecting as many as one in three married women<sup>15</sup>. Although domestic violence was criminalised in 2014<sup>16</sup>, gaps remain in laws protecting women and girls from gender-based violence (GBV). The existing law is characterised by a weak implementation mechanism for survivors of GBV (e.g. referral system, support systems...). The law against sexual harassment (Law 205)<sup>17</sup> approved in 2020 was an encouraging first step to protect women and specifically employees from being subject to sexual harassment and GBV. However, there is a need for enforcement mechanisms within public and private institutions including a clear and safe reporting mechanisms.
- Reducing structural barriers that place women and girls at risk of multiple forms of violence and limit their advancement is demanded by civil society actors. More work and focus need to be directed towards implementation of Law 293 - *Protection of Women and Family Members Against Family Violence*, which foresees the establishment of the Internal Security Force (ISF) Specialized Unit on domestic violence. Reports from the on-going EU security programme showed that the ISF will not be able to implement one of the project’s activities in supporting establishment of this unit due to severe shortages of ISF staff and the current financial crisis. The proposed action will coordinate with the project team together with the ISF Academy and the Gender Focal Person of the ISF to assess alternative options for the establishment of this unit.

***Identification of main stakeholders and corresponding institutional and/or organisational issues (mandates, potential roles, and capacities) to be covered by the action.***

The main stakeholders of the proposed action will be civil society actors and the government of Lebanon. A demand driven technical support will be provided to Lebanese ministries, other government structures and public administration, including institutions working on gender equality and women’s rights to indirectly benefit Lebanese women. Civil society is a key stakeholder in the programme linked to the gender agenda due to its involvement in the policy making processes under the 3RF, its role in advocacy and as watchdog as well as its capacity for outreach and implement specific actions. Activities under the action will be mainly involving the key stakeholders, as follows:

*1. National Council for Lebanese Women (NCLW)*

Prior to 1998 there was no authority dedicated to women’s matters. The Department of women’s affairs at the Ministry of Social Affairs was the only official department dedicated to women. The *National Council for Lebanese Women (NCLW)* was created in 1998 with the mission to consult, coordinate and execute the promotion of women’s rights in the Lebanese society and to enhance gender mainstreaming in public institutions. The NCLW is affiliated to the Presidency of the Republic and its members are appointed by the Council of Ministers. NCLW is currently hosting the *National Gender Observatory* established with EU assistance. A two-year action plan for this observatory has been recently developed, which covers areas of action aligned with the strategic objectives of the Agenda 2030 and Lebanon’s global commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals. The action will contribute to the implementation of the national gender observatory action plan.

*2. Ministries and governmental institutions*

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<sup>15</sup> UN Women, 2017.

<sup>16</sup> Law 293 - “Protection of Women and Family Members Against Family Violence”,

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.legal-tools.org/doc/d0f1c2/pdf/>

The following ministries and institutions are engaged in the promotion of gender equality and mainstreaming. They are targeted as the main beneficiaries of a demand driven technical support proposed by this action through the *National Gender Observatory*:

- *Women and Children Parliamentarian Committee* which is mandated to review law proposals that will be contributing to the reform process to adopt laws, legislation and decrees to prevent discrimination against women and to support their participation and protection in political, economic and social life.
- *Ministry of Interior*: mainly in relation to electoral law and the quota system, personal status law and Nationality law. A number of draft laws aiming at amending the nationality law are ready for review by the relevant parliamentary committee. This will allow Lebanese woman to confer her nationality to her spouse and her children when marrying a foreigner.
- *Ministry of Economy and Trade; and the Ministry of Labour*: gender discrimination persists in the labour law and social security law prohibiting women’s participation in certain occupations (e.g. mining, industry, etc.), discrimination in parental rights, social security benefits, constraints on women's starting and running a business and others. Support through the programme for reforms that will enable a path towards a gender-responsive economic and financial recovery plan.
- *Law Enforcement Agencies*, namely the Lebanese security apparatus, including the General Security, the Internal Security Forces and the Lebanese Armed Forces, which are committed to make the work and operations in their agencies more effective. Capacity and knowledge of security sector personnel with regards to gender discrimination and violence will be addressed in the programme as well as promoting women’s participation in the security force as per Lebanon’s National Action Plan on Resolution 1325<sup>18</sup>.
- *Ministry of Social Affairs*: the dedicated department of Women’s Affairs is responsible for monitoring, promoting and protecting women’s rights under the “*Strategic Plan for the Protection of Women and Children for the period of 2020-2027*” launched recently by the ministry. Institutional empowerment of this department aims to contribute to preventing and protecting women from all forms of violence and promoting further cooperation and coordination with non-governmental organizations for the purpose thereof.

### 3. *National civil society organisations*

For more than a decade, several civil society organisations have been active in promoting women’s political, economic and social rights focusing on new laws and revisions, while advocating for the implementation of the international conventions ratified by Lebanon, in monitoring the implementation of existing laws and in conducting awareness raising campaigns to address social norms that are necessary to advance women’s role in various spheres.

These organisations, including think tanks, universities, platforms and community organisers across different areas in support of gender equality, will benefit from a financial and demand-driven technical support proposed under this action. The support will target also the civil society organisations (CSOs) members of existing gender working groups including the 3RF *Inclusion and Gender Working Group* to promote their role in ensuring a gender-responsive reform process.

Finally, the action will engage will all relevant stakeholders to contribute to the implementation of CEDAW recommendation, in particular in relation to promote the adoption and amendments of laws to address all forms of discrimination against women and to accelerate the achievement of equality between men and women in all areas.

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<sup>18</sup> <https://nclw.gov.lb/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Lebanon-NAP-1325-UNSCR-WPS-Summary.pdf>

### 2.3. Lessons Learned

Lessons learned are mostly derived from the implementation of past and ongoing EU programmes supporting gender equality namely *TF-Madad72018/T04.130- Strengthening access to protection, participation and services for women refugees, IDPs and host communities* and *ENI/2019/406-888- EU for Women Empowerment (EU4WE)* as well as an on-going G1 programme in the security sector: *ENI/2020/420-605 – Promoting Community Policing in Lebanon*, which includes among its objective the promotion of women in the security sector. While the support provided under EU Trust Fund programmes in response to the Syrian crisis focuses mainly on the humanitarian nexus, this action works on reducing social and legal barriers that cause prevalence of acts of violence against women in all its forms. Moreover, based on Results Oriented Monitoring (ROM) reports of past EUTF gender projects mentioned above (*TF-Madad72018/T04.130*) and evaluation of the on-going EU funded programme EU4WE, the action contributes to advance further the work of the National Gender Observatory currently hosted by the National Commission for Lebanese Women (NCLW) as the means of advocacy to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in government. This observatory was established in 2017, 2 years after the abolishment of the Office of the Minister of State for Women's Affairs (OMSWA) created in 2017. In view of the important role this observatory could play in ensuring that gender issues are taken into account in upcoming laws and policies, an important element of this action will be sustaining and expanding its role, independence and neutrality under the new hosting body<sup>19</sup>. The observatory needs to maintain its initial structure and will continue to work to provide a gender-sensitive approach among national institutions, policies and legislation. It will continue to enhance the institutional capacities of relevant stakeholders and ensure cross-sector coordination mechanisms.

Several studies<sup>20</sup> highlighted the legal barriers and the challenging gender norms that prohibit women's advancement in economic and public spheres. Support to grassroots' organizations using the Financial Support to Third Party (FSTP) sub-granting scheme proved to be successful in the on-going EU4WE programme implemented by Expertise France. The action will adopt similar sub-granting schemes to promote women's role in business and the labour market as well as to address the structural and legal barriers that limit advancement of women in political and socio-economic spheres.

Concerning gender-based violence (GBV) the support currently provided under various programmes funded through the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syria Crisis is mainly dedicated to service provision, namely access to legal assistance and provision of psycho-social support services to those affected by violence. Similar support is also provided in the form of humanitarian aid. To ensure complementarity, the action will focus mainly at policy level, contributing to reducing social and legal constraints which are the main cause for the increasing rate of violence against women in Lebanon.

The action builds on the achievements of past and on-going EU funded programmes to promote women's rights. The action gives continuity to ongoing efforts in the area of reducing social and legal barriers to women's participation in the political sphere through the EU funded programme LEAP, which contributed to promoting women candidates to the 2022 parliamentary elections. The action will take into consideration the findings and recommendations of the Electoral Observation Mission (EOM) during the 2022 parliamentary election. The action is also based on the findings of a legal study carried out under the on-going EU4WE programme, which identifies practices based on existing personal status laws and proposes recommendations for harmonization based on the same personal status laws and international law (mostly the General Recommendations of the CEDAW Committee). This includes activities addressing social barriers and contributing to lifting reservations on the aforementioned CEDAW articles for which Lebanon made reservations. The action will follow practical approaches recommended to reduce GBV and ensure proper interpretation and application of existing laws as well as harmonization with human rights approaches.

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<sup>19</sup> National Commission for Lebanese Women (NCLW)

<sup>20</sup> Legal and Market studies under EU4WE

### **3. DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION**

#### **3.1. Objectives and Expected Outputs**

The Overall Objective (Impact) of this action is to promote advancement and empowerment of women for effective realisation of gender equality.

The Specifics Objectives (Outcomes) of this action are to:

1. Increase women's leadership and participation in political and public spheres
2. Foster an enabling environment for better engagement of women in the workforce
3. Enhance key legislative reform and measures that protect women from all forms of violence

The Outputs to be delivered by this action contributing to the corresponding Specific Objectives (Outcomes) are:

##### **contributing to Outcome 1 (or Specific Objective 1)**

- 1.1. Structural barriers preventing women's participation and leadership in political and public sphere reduced
- 1.2. Internal governance of civil society organisations and relevant government stakeholders strengthened
- 1.3. Gender stereotypes and disparities in policies, practices, and social norms reduced
- 1.4. Spaces and platforms for common decision-making and dialogue around women's rights and gender equality in Lebanon supported

##### **contributing to Outcome 2 (or Specific Objective 2)**

- 2.1 Capacity of women and relevant civil society organisations in addressing discriminatory social norms and gender stereotypes improved
- 2.2 Legal environment addressing gender discrimination and inequalities enhanced
- 2.3 Access to employment and entrepreneurship opportunities, including decent work in non-traditional sectors, increased

##### **contributing to Outcome 3 (or Specific Objective 3):**

- 3.1 Women's rights, social movements and other civil society organisations are more influential in ending gender-based violence
- 3.2 Quality disaggregated data on different forms of gender-based violence and harmful practices are increasingly collected and used to inform laws and policies
- 3.3 Capacity and knowledge of local counterparts (security agencies and justice institutions among others) improved

#### **3.2. Indicative Activities**

##### Activities related to Outputs 1.1-1.4

- Initiatives to strengthen the protective environment for women in Lebanon, in particular in relation to reservations on CEDAW articles in relation to personal status laws governing women's rights
- Data collection, surveys, research and evidence based information and recommendations to policymakers through the *National Gender Observatory* to ensure the up taking of the principle of equality and non-discrimination in law and practice (e.g. CEDAW implementation, discriminatory articles in existing laws...etc.)

- Political and social awareness raising sessions around women’s role in political and public arenas
- Political mentoring and coaching services to prepare women for political work and enhance their political skills
- Advocating activities to reduce gender discrimination in laws (e.g. quota reservation, policies...etc.)
- Empowerment of women’s rights CSOs and gender working groups to better follow and monitor reforms on women’s issues
- Financial Support to Third Party (sub-granting scheme) to address social, legal and cultural barriers for women advancement in public and political sphere at community level

Activities related to Outputs 2.1-2.3

- Capacity building (on the-job support, knowledge transfer and coaching type of activities) following a demand driven approach for relevant stakeholders, including government institutions and civil society organisations
- Mapping/surveys/data collection on gender discrimination and inequalities in laws and practices to feed in the National Gender Observatory with evidence-based information and recommendations to policymakers to ensure better women participation in labour forces
- Networking activities across women-led businesses, and between women led businesses and national, regional and international business leaders and investors
- Lobbying initiatives for legal and policy reform to reduce inequality and discriminatory articles in existing labour law and practices (e.g. access to finance, registration, social protection, care, child care, maternity and paternity leave...etc.)
- Inclusive social dialogue initiatives through the Economic and Social Council to support women workers and employers’ engagement in laws and policies that address their need
- Financial Support to Third Party (Sub-granting scheme) to promote engagement of women in the business sphere including capacity building, mentoring, business development for better engagement of women in non-traditional sectors (e.g. security, digital...etc.)

Activities related to Outputs 3.1- 3.3

- Advocacy initiatives to promote Law enforcement to protect/assist victims and survivors of all forms of violence (GBV and sexual harassment laws)
- Capacity building of government bodies and civil society organisations working on preventing and responding to sexual and gender-based violence (e.g. security forces, ministries... etc.)
- Developing appropriate methodological tools to the existing gender observatory to monitor prevalence of all forms of violence against women
- Developing appropriate methodological tools to the gender observatory to collect and analyse Data, conduct evidence-based researches to inform policy makers/security institutions on needs to preventing and responding to all form violence faced by women
- Coordination activities among relevant institutions to strengthen and reinforce policies against GBV and SGBV namely with security agencies

### **3.3. Mainstreaming**

#### **Environmental Protection, Climate Change and Biodiversity**

**Outcomes of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening** (relevant for projects and/or specific interventions within a project). The EIA screening classified the action as Category C (no need for further assessment).

**Outcome of the Climate Risk Assessment (CRA) screening** (relevant for projects and/or specific interventions within a project). The CRA screening concluded that this action is no or low risk (no need for further assessment).

#### **Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls**

As per OECD Gender DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as G2. This implies that gender equality and empowerment of women will be addressed as main objective. Despite the many efforts made over the past years to achieve gender equality in line of SDG 5, 8, 10 and 16 calling for promotion and enforcing non-discriminatory laws and policies, Lebanon still lacks the "Gender Integration" approach in many legislations and policies. The Action will contribute to gender mainstreaming in policies and laws and promote meaningful and active participation of women in planning and decision making namely to ensure an inclusive 3RF recovery process.

#### **Human Rights**

The proposed action is fully aligned to the existing EU human rights strategies and action plans. Human rights concerns are mainstreamed throughout the action and will be taken into consideration in all activities to be drawn up during implementation stage. The action has been designed following a "rights-based" and "leave-no-one behind" approach. It promotes equal participation of women in the decision-making at various levels, and will respond to people's participation in public life and other support ownership of the action by local actors within the framework of international human rights standards. The action will also encourage and promote the civil society actors, mainly CSOs active in women's rights advocacy and monitoring.

#### **Disability**

As per OECD Disability DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as D1. This implies that the proposed intervention is a significant objective as inclusion will be mainstreamed within the action whenever possible and relevant, by favouring the participation of disabled women in public, political, economic and social spheres following a people-centred and inclusive approach.

#### **Democracy**

Respect of democracy Social awareness and right for gender equality in Lebanon are underlined under the objectives of the Action. In line with EU commitment to promote legally binding international standards to the fundamental rights and the rule of law, the action will promote Lebanon commitment to international conventions namely CEDAW. Working under a participatory approach with public sectors, civil society and citizens in the government recovery plan, special focus is on women's role and engagement to reinforce the democratic participation in the decision making process.

#### **Conflict sensitivity, peace and resilience**

This action proposes to address the priorities and recommendations identified in the recent EU conflict analysis, which has been prepared in line with Art. 12 of the regulation (EU) 2021/947 establishing NDICI.

#### **Disaster Risk Reduction**

Not applicable.

### 3.4. Risks and Assumptions

Category	Risks	Likelihood (High/ Medium/ Low)	Impact (High/ Medium/ Low)	Mitigating measures
1- External environment	Political gridlock and social tensions resulting in an overall deterioration of the situation, including security	High/ medium	High/ medium	Project execution will be contingent upon the possibility to operate under the prevailing conditions.
	Limited political will and lack of commitment from the government actors/institutions involved	Medium	Medium	Regular and continuous political dialogue, including with other EU and other donors to convey common messages mainly through the regular meetings of CSOs with government under the 3RF process.
	Lack of commitment for financial and technical sustainability of the National Gender Observatory	Medium	High/ Medium	Strong and regular political dialogue at the level of Presidency of Council of Ministers – PCM <sup>21</sup> to adopt long term approaches to maintain the observatory independence and neutrality.
2- Planning, processes and systems	EU assistance lack of responsiveness to emerging needs of beneficiaries	Medium	Medium	EU Delegation, in close coordination with implementing partner, will adapt activities to the actual needs within the main objective of the programme.
	Weak capacity of NCLW to carry on hosting the gender observatory	Medium	Medium	Advocating at political level to ensure financial independency, sustainability and autonomy of the observatory.
3- People and the organisation	The implementing partner does not have neutrality and independence to implement the programme with various stakeholders	Low	Low	The selection of the implementing partner will be based on definite criteria ensuring that it possesses mainly 1) professional experience and knowledge on women's rights in general and the Lebanese context in particular and 2) neutrality that allows working at equal distance with government and civil society actors in order to reach the expected impact.

<sup>21</sup> NCLW was established by the Presidency of the Council of Ministers (PCM).

4- Communication and information	Misperception of the nature of the EU intervention by the public leading to critical opinions mainly on CEDAW articles on which Lebanon had reservation	Medium	Medium	Strong efforts by implementing partner in close collaboration with the EU Delegation to ensure accurate transparent and communication on the action.
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### External Assumptions

- The Government of Lebanon is committed to the reform including legal reform to discriminatory laws.
- The Gender Observatory benefits from needed support to activate further its role.
- Continued support from international community and donor coordination in implementing the family violence law.

### 3.5. Intervention Logic

The underlying intervention logic for this action is that a comprehensive and sustainable approach is required to promote the implementation of the CEDAW convention in Lebanon through mainstreaming gender equality within laws, strategies, plans, policies, with a specific focus on issues related to the women’s political and socio-economic participation and protection. The action, which ultimately promotes advancement and empowerment for the overall realisation of gender equality, will be articulated around two main axes:

1. Supporting the existing *National Gender Observatory* to provide demand-driven technical assistance; produce knowledge and data (including on gender-based violence prevalence); secure a space for dialogue among various stakeholders to provide knowledge and data based information and recommendations; provide data to policymakers to facilitate the uptake of the principle of equality and non-discrimination in law and practice.
2. Providing *Financial Support to Third Party (FSTP)* to promote women’s role in the political, public and economic spheres with a focus on digital and green economy. This support will be complemented with capacity building, mentoring, and business development.

If, as a general assumption, the government is committed to the implementation of CEDAW, the international convention to which it is signatory since 1997, and if the government is committed to constitutional and legal reforms in the political and socio-economic sphere, then empowerment of women and other relevant stakeholders will contribute to reduce structural barriers prohibiting women’s advancement at all levels and in various areas.

If gender responsive data and knowledge are produced by existing tools and through local institutions (e.g. Gender Observatory, Central Administration of Statistics), then the gender disparities at economic, social, legal and economic level will be reduced.

If the internal governance of relevant stakeholders, including line ministries, civil society organisations and security forces is improved through the demand-driven technical support provided by this action and if the data and knowledge are produced and provided through the existing gender observatory, then an increase in women’s levels of empowerment and participation in public and political life will be reached: more women

in leadership positions, more women engaged in the reform process within the framework of the 3RF process, better quality of policies and laws produced promoting gender responsiveness in various sectors and at different levels such as in nationality law, personal status law and others that discriminate against women and restrict women's participation in public and economic life.

If well focused and demand driven technical and financial support is provided to women in business and women social entrepreneurs through the Financial Support to Third Party (FSTP) modality, then more employment opportunities will be created in both public and private sectors mainly in non-traditional areas including digital and green economy. Women's work force participation will improve if more attention is given to promote a more suitable working environment and conditions (e.g. hosting low-cost and high-quality childcare facilities, reviewing discriminatory laws/articles in labour code...).

If technical capacity and performance of civil society organisations and government entities to combat gender-based violence are improved, if the legal framework is adapted to reduce gender-based violence prevalence and if coordinated advocacy is supported to strengthen the protective and regulatory framework and the implementation mechanisms and responsibilities for survivors of gender-based violence (i.e. zero tolerance on all forms of violence be it physical or verbal, e.g. hate speech on social media, harassment, ...), then, the level of violence against women including domestic violence and sexual harassment will be reduced.

### **3.6. Indicative Logical Framework Matrix**

Results	Results chain: Main expected results [maximum 10]	Indicators [at least one indicator per expected result]	Baselines (values and years)	Targets (values and years)	Sources of data	Assumptions
Impact	To promote advancement and empowerment of women for overall realisation of gender equality	1. Gender Development Index (GDI)	0.892 (2019)	n/a	Global Gender Gap	Not applicable
		2. Gender Inequality Index (GII)	0.411 (2019)	n/a	World Economic Forum	
Outcome 1	Women's leadership and participation in political and public sphere increased	1.1 # of women appointed in high level position in public institutions compared to men (parliamentarian)	6.8% women members in parliament	A minimum of 10% increase to advance in meeting the 30% quota	Implementing partner report	Security situation in the country remain stable
		1.2 # of measures/actions taken to promote gender sensitisation and focus in policy and decision making	Gender Focal Points assigned in public institutions engaged in policy making	15% Increase in number of Gender Focal Points in public institutions engaged in policy making	Implementing partner report	
Outcome 2	An enabling environment for better engagement of women in workforce fostered	2.1 # of amendments / measures / actions taken that have women's right in labour force compliant with international standards of labour rights	Legislation protecting women from sexual harassment in employment enacted in 2021  Low index for	At least 15% increase in level of economic activity of women	Implementing partner report	Government committed for the reform including legal reform to discriminatory laws

			parenthood indicator			
		2.2 Participation of women in the tripartite social dialogue led by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)	2 women syndicates represented in ECOSOC	25% increase in women participation in ECOSOC meetings/policy dialogue	ECOSOC report	
<b>Outcome 3</b>	Key legislative reform and measures that protect women from all forms of violence enhanced	3.1 # of gender-sensitive laws and parliamentary/ ministerial corrective initiatives	Existing barriers to the fulfilment of the purpose of the domestic violence Law in protecting women from violence.	Increase in enactment of the law through advancing amendment of Article 22 <sup>22</sup>	Implementing partner report	Government continues to be committed to the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women
<b>Results</b>	<b>Results chain: Main expected results [maximum 10]</b>	<b>Indicators [at least one indicator per expected result]</b>	<b>Baselines (values and years)</b>	<b>Targets (values and years)</b>	<b>Sources of data</b>	<b>Assumptions</b>
<b>Output 1 related to Outcome 1</b>	1.1 Structural barriers preventing women's participation and leadership in political and public sphere reduced	1.1.1 # of reforms and specific measures taken by government monitoring bodies to monitor the implementation of CEDAW commitments on women's and girls' participation in decision-making	Tbd at the drafting stage of the description of the action (DoA)	Tbd at the drafting stage of the description of the action (DoA)	Gender Observatory	

<sup>22</sup> states that the rules of jurisdiction of the Personal Status Courts and the provisions on Personal Status remain solely applicable in their field of jurisdiction despite the enactment of the law

		1.1.2 # of reforms and specific measures taken by the women parliamentary committee to promote women's participation in decision-making	Tbd at the (DoA)	Tbd at the (DoA)		
<b>Output 2 related to Outcome 1</b>	1.2 Internal governance of CSOs and relevant government stakeholders strengthened	1.2.1 # of women who are recognised as leaders in community or taking initiatives for different civic activities in public	Tbd at the (DoA)	Tbd at the (DoA)	Implementing partner report	The Gender Observatory benefits from needed support to activate further its role
		1.2.2 # of social innovation events organised at community level	Tbd at the (DA)	Tbd at the (DoA)		
<b>Output 3 related to Outcome 1</b>	1.3 Gender stereotypes and disparities in policies, practices, and social norms reduced	1.3.1 # of measures taken to monitor/evaluate/reduce gender equality aspects in laws and policies	Tbd at the (DoA)	Tbd at the (DoA)	Implementing partner report	Political situation allows for proposed reforms against discriminatory policies and practices
		1.3.2 # of people reached by media campaign(s) on women's rights	Tbd at the (DoA)	Tbd at the (DoA)		
<b>Output 4 related to Outcome 1</b>	1.4 Spaces and platforms for common decision-making and dialogue around women's rights and gender equality supported	1.4.1 Extent of participation by women and by women's rights organisations in social dialogue at community level	Tbd at the (DoA)	Tbd at the (DoA)	Gender Observatory website	
		1.4.2 # of trainings in public spaces	Tbd at the (DA)	Tbd at the (DoA)		

<b>Results</b>	<b>Results chain: Main expected results [maximum 10]</b>	<b>Indicators [at least one indicator per expected result]</b>	<b>Baselines (values and years)</b>	<b>Targets (values and years)</b>	<b>Sources of data</b>	<b>Assumptions</b>
<b>Output 1 related to Outcome 2</b>	2.1 Capacity of women and relevant CSOs in addressing discriminatory social norms and gender stereotypes improved	2.1.1 # of of trainers trained	Tbd at the (DoA)	Tbd at the (DoA)	Final report of the service provider on the capacity building programme(s)	The newly elected parliament remains stable and social, political and economic situation improves
		2.1.2 # of women with increased training, financial resources, technology or other resources to access labour market	Tbd at the (DoA)	Tbd at the (DoA)		
<b>Output 2 related to Outcome 2</b>	2.2 Legal environment addressing gender discrimination and inequalities enhanced	2.2.1 Extent to which government acts to address discriminatory gender stereotypes to improve the access of women to labour market	Tbd at the (DoA)	Tbd at the (DoooA)	List of laws/articles/practices reviewed/amended addressing gender discrimination	
<b>Output 3 related to Outcome 2</b>	2.3 Access to employment and entrepreneurship opportunities including decent work in non-traditional sectors increased	2.3.1 # of digital start-up enterprises led/owned by women who benefit from Financial Support to Third Party (FSTP) and/or training	Tbd at the (DoA)	Tbd at the (DoA)	List of women benefiting from FSTP and/or training	
<b>Output 1 related to Outcome 3</b>	3.1 Women's rights, social movements and other civil society organisations are more influential in ending gender-based violence	3.1.1 # of campaigns/networking among various actors to lobby for common goal to end GBV	Tbd at the (DoA)	Tbd at the (DoA)	Final reports on GBV lobbying activities carried out	
<b>Output 2 related to Outcome 3</b>	3.2 Quality disaggregated data on different forms of gender-based violence and harmful practices are increasingly collected and used to inform laws and policies	3.2.1 # of statistical data gathered by public institutions/observatory	Tbd at the (DoA)	Tbd at the (DoA)	Gender Observatory tool	Continued support from international community and donor coordination in implementing the family violence law
		# of women who report gender-based discrimination at work	Tbd at the (DoA)	Tbd at the (DoA)		

<b>Output 3 related to Outcome 3</b>	3.3 Capacity and knowledge of local counterparts (security agencies and justice institutions among others) improved	3.3.1 # and details of capacity-building activities on women's rights for institutions, such as in the security and judicial systems in conflict settings	Tbd at the (DoA)	Tbd at the (DoA)	Number of security agencies/justice institutions reached out through the project/Gender Observatory activities	
		3.3.2 # of women who report gender-based violence at security forces	Tbd at the (DoA)	Tbd at the (DoA)		

## **4. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS**

### **4.1. Financing Agreement**

In order to implement this action, it is not envisaged to conclude a financing agreement with the Republic of Lebanon

### **4.2. Indicative Implementation Period**

The indicative operational implementation period of this action, during which the activities described in section 3.1 will be carried out and the corresponding contracts and agreements implemented, is **60 months** from the date of adoption by the Commission of this financing Decision.

Extensions of the implementation period may be agreed by the Commission's responsible authorising officer by amending this financing Decision and the relevant contracts and agreements.

### **4.3. Implementation Modalities**

The Commission will ensure that the EU appropriate rules and procedures for providing financing to third parties are respected, including review procedures, where appropriate, and compliance of the action with EU restrictive measures<sup>23</sup>.

#### **4.3.1. Indirect Management with a pillar-assessed entity<sup>24</sup>**

This action may be implemented in indirect management with a pillar assessed entity, which will be selected by the Commission's services using the following criteria:

- Specific expertise: Demonstrated technical and managerial capacities in working on taking forward political, economic and social empowerment of women in the country as needed.
- Logistical and management capacities: Adequate capacities in terms of human resources, organisational set-up to engage with a variety of Lebanese stakeholders working in the area of women's empowerment and rights in Lebanon.
- Experience in the country: Successful track record and demonstrated engagement in working on women empowerment and gender equality including Lebanon with special focus on addressing gender stereotypes and inequalities and promoting women's equal participation in decision-making, in the socio-economic development of Lebanon.
- Neutrality / security reasons: Proven neutrality with all actors in Lebanon across the political spectrum and civil society.

#### **4.3.2. Changes from indirect to direct management (and vice versa) mode due to exceptional circumstances**

In case any of the components in indirect management with a pillar-assessed entity as per section 4.3.1 cannot be implemented due to circumstances outside of the Commission's control, this component may be implemented under direct management through grants.

- a) The purpose of the grants will correspond to the description of objectives and outputs under section 3.2.

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<sup>23</sup> [www.sanctionsmap.eu](http://www.sanctionsmap.eu) Please note that the sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying the sanctions regimes. The source of the sanctions stems from legal acts published in the Official Journal (OJ). In case of discrepancy between the published legal acts and the updates on the website it is the OJ version that prevails.

<sup>24</sup> The signature of a contribution agreement with the chosen entity is subject to the completion of the necessary pillar assessment.

- b) The type of applicants would be “Non-Governmental Organisation (or a consortium of NGOs)” meeting the criteria laid out in section 4.3.1.

#### 4.4. Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement and grants

The geographical eligibility in terms of place of establishment for participating in procurement and grant award procedures and in terms of origin of supplies purchased as established in the basic act and set out in the relevant contractual documents shall apply, subject to the following provisions.

The Commission’s authorising officer responsible may extend the geographical eligibility on the basis of urgency or of unavailability of services in the markets of the countries or territories concerned, or in other duly substantiated cases where application of the eligibility rules would make the realisation of this action impossible or exceedingly difficult (Article 28(10) NDICI-Global Europe Regulation).

#### 4.5. Indicative Budget

<b>Indicative Budget components</b>	<b>EU contribution (amount in EUR)</b>
<b>Implementation modalities</b> – cf. section 4.3	
<b>Objective 1- Increase women’s leadership and participation in political and public sphere</b>	
<b>Objective 2 - Foster an enabling environment for better engagement of women in the workforce</b>	
<b>Objective 3 - Enhance key legislative reform and measures that protect women from all forms of violence. composed of</b>	
<b>Indirect management with EU Member States Institution or International Organisation</b> cf. section 4.3.1	6 000 000.00
<b>Evaluation</b> – cf. section 5.2 <b>Audit</b> – cf. section 5.3	Will be covered by another Decision
<b>Communication and visibility</b> – cf. section 6	N/A
<b>Contingencies</b>	N/A
<b>Totals</b>	6 000 000.00

#### 4.6. Organisational Set-up and Responsibilities

The EU Delegation will take part in the steering committee to be formed at the start of the project, which will include representatives from the various stakeholders engaged in the project, namely civil society organisations, government representatives, and other relevant groups. The EU Delegation will have the role of “Observer” in the Evaluation Committee to be formed under the Financial Support to Third Party (FSTP) component of the action.

As part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union, the Commission may participate in the above governance structures set up for governing the implementation of the action.

## **5. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT**

### **5.1. Monitoring and Reporting**

The day-to-day technical and financial monitoring of the implementation of this action will be a continuous process, and part of the implementing partner's responsibilities. To this aim, the implementing partner shall establish a permanent internal, technical and financial monitoring system for the action and elaborate regular progress reports (not less than annual) and final reports. Every report shall provide an accurate account of implementation of the action, difficulties encountered, changes introduced, as well as the degree of achievement of its Outputs and contribution to the achievement of its Outcomes, and if possible at the time of reporting, contribution to the achievement of its Impacts, as measured by corresponding indicators, using as reference the logframe matrix.

The Commission may undertake additional project monitoring visits both through its own staff and through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission for independent monitoring reviews (or recruited by the responsible agent contracted by the Commission for implementing such reviews).

Roles and responsibilities for data collection, analysis and monitoring:

Baseline and targets will be provided at the inception phase following a thorough situation analysis that identifies pressing and urgent needs under the 3 specific objectives of the programme

The implementing partner will ensure that all reports shall be laid out in such a way as to allow monitoring of the means envisaged according to the budget details for the action. The final report, narrative and financial, will cover the entire period of the Action implementation. All reports shall include Sex, Age, and Disability Disaggregated Data (SADDD).

Results monitoring will be requested at midterm and will be based on the principles of simplicity, and promoting a learning culture to inform and, where necessary, adapt delivery.

The EU Delegation will undertake regular project monitoring visits through its own staff for independent monitoring reviews at both operational and financial level (spot-check missions)

### **5.2. Evaluation**

Having regard to the nature of the action, a mid-term evaluation will be carried out for this action or its components contracted by the Commission.

It will be carried out for learning purposes, in particular with respect to the impact of the activities of sensitive nature (e.g. social and patriarchal norms, political lobbying...etc.) and in the intention to draw recommendations for corrective measures if and when needed.

The Commission shall form a Reference Group (RG) composed by representatives from the main stakeholders at both EU and national (representatives from the government, from civil society organisations (private sector, NGOs, etc.), etc.) levels. If deemed necessary, other donors will be invited to join.

The Commission shall inform the implementing partner at least one month in advance of the dates envisaged for the evaluation exercise and missions. The implementing partner shall collaborate efficiently and effectively with the evaluation experts, and inter alia provide them with all necessary information and documentation, as well as access to the project premises and activities.

The evaluation reports shall be shared with the partner country and other key stakeholders following the best practice of evaluation dissemination. The implementing partner and the Commission shall analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and, where appropriate, in agreement with the partner country, jointly decide on the follow-up actions to be taken and any adjustments necessary, including, if indicated, the reorientation of the project.

The financing of the evaluation shall be covered by another measure constituting a Financing Decision.

### **5.3. Audit and Verifications**

Without prejudice to the obligations applicable to contracts concluded for the implementation of this action, the Commission may, on the basis of a risk assessment, contract independent audit or verification assignments for one or several contracts or agreements.

## **6. STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY**

All entities implementing EU-funded external actions have the contractual obligation to inform the relevant audiences of the Union's support for their work by displaying the EU emblem and a short funding statement as appropriate on all communication materials related to the actions concerned. To that end they must comply with the instructions given in the [Communication and Visibility Requirements of 2018](#) (or any successor document).

This obligation will apply equally, regardless of whether the actions concerned are implemented by the Commission, the partner country, service providers, grant beneficiaries or entrusted or delegated entities such as UN agencies, international financial institutions and agencies of EU Member States. In each case, a reference to the relevant contractual obligations must be included in the respective financing agreement, procurement and grant contracts, and delegation agreements.

For the purpose of enhancing the visibility of the EU and its contribution to this action, the Commission may sign or enter into joint declarations or statements, as part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union. Visibility and communication measures should also promote transparency and accountability on the use of funds. Effectiveness of communication activities on awareness about the action and its objectives as well as on EU funding of the action should be measured.

Implementing partners shall keep the Commission and the EU Delegation fully informed of the planning and implementation of specific visibility and communication activities before the implementation. Implementing partners will ensure adequate visibility of EU financing and will report on visibility and communication actions as well as the results of the overall action to the relevant monitoring committees.