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**POST PROJECT EVALUATION
FOR THE
UNITED NATIONS DEMOCRACY FUND**

EVALUATION REPORT

**UDF-16-707-LEB
Towards strengthening fair legislation for women affected by sexual violence and
exploitation in Lebanon**

24-04-2020

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Disclaimer

The views expressed in this report are those of the evaluator. They do not represent those of UNDEF or any of the institutions referred to in the report.

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I. OVERALL ASSESSMENT

(i) Project data

The project “Towards strengthening fair legislation for women affected by sexual violence and exploitation in Lebanon” started on 15 January 2018 and was originally planned to end 14 July 2019. Although designed for a period of 18 months, it was extended for 4 months. Therefore, the end date of the project was 31 October 2019.

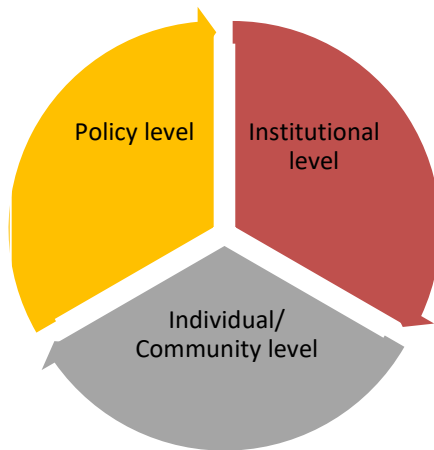
With a total grant of USD 220,000 it was implemented by ABAAD– Resource Center for Gender Equality.

This project is a continuation of ABAAD's legal reform and public campaigning efforts started in 2016 to ensure women and girls are legally protected from sexual and gender-based violence.

The project worked on three levels: the individual/community, the institutional, and the policy level. It had two major objectives: (i) creating an enabling environment for women-survivors of sexual violence by empowering women to develop a community-based and context-specific Information and Education Communication (IEC) tool, and to lead peer-to-peer awareness and sensitization sessions, and (ii) strengthening fair legislation through capacity building with security providers, advocacy meetings with key actors in the field of protection of women and girls from violence, and a regional conference with women’s rights organizations.

The project intervenes through different levels, aimed at reaching the following groups of beneficiaries:

- 15 members of the Parliaments’ Justice and Administration Committee
- 4 religious leaders
- 10 Women’s Rights NGOs from the Arab world



- 100 Internal Security Forces’ Officers

- 40 Women and girls’ survivors of sexual violence from both refugee and host communities
- 560 community members from underprivileged host and refugee communities

The main outcomes identified in the Project Document were:

Outcome 1:

Women and men from both refugee and host communities (including university students, right-holders and the general public) are actively engaged in campaigning against sexual exploitation and rape-marriage laws in Lebanon.

Outcome 2:

Key decision makers in Lebanon are actively engaged in efforts to effectively and fairly implement the amended penal code after the abolition of article 522 in the Lebanese Penal Code.

Outcome 3:

Increase in knowledge for advocacy efforts among Women Rights activists with regard to rape laws in the MENA region through regional discussions and coordination.

(ii) Evaluation Findings

ABAAD have an intricate internal strategy leading a targeted, methodical and tactical intervention in a complex and dynamic socio-political context like that of Lebanon. **The activities of this project were fully in line with the objectives set out in the internal strategic plan of ABAAD, ensuring utmost consistency with all of the organization's projects.**

ABAAD's success rests on the deep understanding of the context and the different factors influencing the change process at the political, institutional and community levels, as well as the adoption of a solid political strategy that ensures synergy and collaboration between the various actors to achieve the promotion of women rights and gender equality through different activities and projects. **The implementation of this project is in coherence with other organizations' efforts and initiatives and is aligned with UNDP's program "Ending Gender-Based Violence and Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals."**

This project's relevance is unquestionable given the circumstances. From the political context to the timely opportunity given by the abolition of rape marriage" law in the Lebanese Penal Code article 522¹, there was an urgent need to influence the existing survivor-blaming norms, and increase awareness about women's rights

¹ According to Article 522 of Lebanon's Penal Code, prosecution or execution of a penalty stops when the perpetrator of a rape, kidnapping, or statutory rape marries the person he has raped or kidnapped. It is to be noted that Article 522 does not only apply to rape, but to all articles in the section (503 – 521) that include rape of a minor, rape of a person with a mental or physical disability, sex with a minor, molestation of children, sexual harassment of children, exploitation of someone in a weaker position and forcing someone into sexual acts, kidnapping of women or girls.

and gender-based violence (GBV) at the institutional, community and individual levels in order to facilitate the fair and effective implementation of the law amendment.

The project's commendable degree of effectiveness is reflected in the achievement of all activities and targets. It was enhanced by the partner's vast network of key stakeholders on a multisectoral level, namely feminist movements and CSOs, religious leaders, and government agents and parliamentary members that facilitate the timely and adequate implementation of activities.

Efficiency is assessed as globally satisfactory. With the budget, ABAAD managed to mobilize a significant and representative number of target group(s)/beneficiaries. Expenditure on workshops was in line with the number of participants, the duration of the workshops, and the expertise of the trainers and facilitators who were hired. Whether the regional conference and the TOT on Clinical Management of Rape were the best use of scarce resources remains debatable.

Even though the project activities were not interlinked, they did contribute, through other projects, to ensuring a tangible impact that recognized by all interviewed stakeholders. It is not clear from the project's documentation how the project outputs had a direct impact on achieving the objectives described in the proposal. It is as such difficult to estimate the extent to which the project contributed to attaining the impact, especially given this complex context, but it is possible to capture the change on several levels.

The project presented a chance for UNDEF to support a sound, well-connected partner at a crucial point in time and to contribute to a long-term change intervention in favour of women's rights and survivors of GBV.

II. PROJECT CONTEXT AND STRATEGY

(i) *Development context*

Regional context

“Rape marriage” laws that exempt the rapist from punishment if they marry the victim are considered to be among the most harmful and discriminatory laws against women in the Mena region. During the last years, civil society and human rights’ organizations in Arab countries lead a regional campaign against these “rape laws”.

In 2014, Morocco abolished similar legislation after the suicide of an adolescent girl forced to marry her rapist in 2012. In July 2017, Tunisia abolished the article 227a after a national campaign against the marriage of a 13-year-old girl with her 20-year-old rapist who made her pregnant. In August 2017, the Jordanian Parliament repealed the rape law.

Focus on Lebanon

Violence against women in Lebanon is still widespread and systemic, with a legal framework that contains certain discriminatory provisions against women, especially the rape marriage article. In 2016, ABAAD led a nation-wide campaign aiming to abolish rape marriage laws, namely article 522 of the Lebanese Penal Code. The advocacy efforts led to the decision of the Parliamentary Justice and Administration Committee to abolish article 522 on 16 December 2016, and the Lebanese Parliament formally abolished article 522 of the Penal Code on 16 August 2017.

(ii) *Project objective and intervention rationale*

Problem statement

Generally, law amendment or abolishment does not automatically result in effective and fair implementation. Thus, the abolition of article 522 in Lebanon wouldn’t be effective without tackling the existing survivor-blaming norms, and increasing awareness and knowledge about women’s rights and GBV at both the institutional and community levels.

In this respect, the project based its strategy on three main areas of intervention:

Influence public opinion or community beliefs

- Organize 4 community engagement workshops (of 5 sessions each) with 10 women survivors of Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) in each (a total of 40 women) to engage them in identifying the key messages that should be communicated through the development of an Information and Education Communication (IEC) tool;

- Develop a community-based and context-specific IEC tool; and
- Organize 20 community-based awareness sessions targeting a total of 900 men and women in both Syrian and Lebanese host communities from different regions in Lebanon, aiming to sensitize on the new legal framework and the existing prevention and protection services.

Advocacy

- Organize 19 bilateral meetings with different stakeholders, namely the ministry of Social Affairs and State-Ministry for Women’s Affairs as well as the National Commission of Lebanese Women;
- Organize bilateral meetings with different stakeholders, namely the representatives of the four (4) biggest sects in Lebanon; and
- Organize a regional roundtable gathering women rights’ NGOs from various countries (Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia, Palestine) aimed to strengthen advocacy coordination efforts at the regional level with regards to rape laws in the MENA.

Train and strengthen institutional capacity

- Provide two (2) training/awareness sessions for Internal Security Forces.

The intended outcomes of the project were:

- **Outcome 1:** Women and men from both refugee and host communities (including university students, right-holders and the general public) are actively engaged in campaigning against sexual exploitation and rape-marriage laws in Lebanon.
- **Outcome 2:** Key decision makers in Lebanon are actively engaged in efforts to effectively and fairly implement the amended penal code after the abolition of article 522 of the Lebanese Penal Code.
- **Outcome 3:** knowledge on advocacy efforts for MENA rape laws increase among Women Rights activists, through regional discussions and coordination.

Logical Framework Matrix

<p><i>Outcome1: Women and men from both refugee and host communities (including university students, right-holders and the general public) are actively engaged in campaigning against sexual exploitation and rape-marriage laws in Lebanon.</i></p>	
<p>Output 1.1: Relevant and culturally sensitive IEC tools developed.</p>	<p>1.1.1: Organize four community engagement workshops with 40 women survivors of GBV to engage them in the development of the IEC tools.</p>
	<p>1.1.2: Develop a community-based, context-specific IEC tool on sexual exploitation and sexual violence.</p>
<p>Output 1.2: Increase in awareness about the existing legal framework relevant to SGBV and its mechanisms of implementation.</p>	<p>1.2.1: Twenty community-based sensitization sessions targeting around 560 men and women in different regions in Lebanon, both Syrian and Lebanese host communities.</p>
<p><i>Outcome:2 Key decision makers in Lebanon are actively engaged in efforts to effectively and fairly implement the amended penal code after the abolition of article 522.</i></p>	
<p>Output 2.1: Religious and governmental institutions better equipped with the needed information and skills for enhanced justice for sexual assault survivors and put an end to the practice of rape marriage.</p>	<p>2.1.1: Organize bilateral meetings with different stakeholders, namely the Ministry of Social Affairs and State Ministry for Women’s Affairs.</p>
	<p>2.1.2: Organize bilateral meetings with different stakeholders, namely the representatives of the four biggest sects in Lebanon.</p>
	<p>2.1.3: Provide four training/sensitization sessions for Internal Security Forces.</p>
<p><i>Outcome 3: Increase in knowledge of advocacy efforts among women rights’ activists with regard to rape laws in the MENA region through regional discussions and coordination.</i></p>	
<p>Output 3.1: Regional communication and exchange platform created.</p>	<p>3.1.1: Organize a regional roundtable gathering women rights’ NGOs from different countries (Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia, Palestine) and developing a product.</p>

III. METHODOLOGY

(i) Purpose and objectives of the evaluation

This evaluation is intended to assist UNDEF with devising future projects and with project-short listing for future funding rounds by building on the experience, achievements and lessons learned from project implementation, and to propose recommendations for continued interventions.

Moreover, it aims to:

- Answer the mean evaluation criteria;
- Capture lessons learned and best practices from the implementation of the project; and
- Provide clear recommendations for future UNDEF interventions.

The evaluation rationale was inspired by the ‘People-Centred Evaluation’ (PCE) approach and conducted in accordance with the Norms and Standards for Evaluations developed by the United Nations Evaluation Group and the OECD criteria of evaluation.

It took place from February to April 2020, with the fieldwork in Lebanon conducted from 24 to 29 February, and the evaluator reviewed available project documentation and contextual/background materials prior to the field trip (**Annex 2**). The schedule was set by the ABAAD team, it included workshop participants, consultants, facilitators, religious leaders, ABAAD team program officers, and ABAAD’s senior management.

The evaluation was carried out in a very participative manner with the ABAAD team, all available project staff were interviewed, and a final debriefing was held at ABAAD’s Lebanon office.

The evaluation methodology aimed to seed the evaluation thinking within ABAAD’s team members and to empower them to capture main lessons learned by themselves.

For the evaluator, the contribution of the ABAAD team was considerable, thanks to their availability and significant involvement in arranging and facilitating meetings, and to their input in contributing to and discussing feedback on the most important conclusions and lessons learned.

This made it possible to target and approach key stakeholders and to cross opinions from different participants in the different project phases so as to finally have a contextualized and realistic vision on what was achieved through the project, how the program generated and contributed to change, and what lessons were learned to improve programming and empower ABAAD’s capacity.

The evaluator was able to hold focus groups with direct beneficiaries in Jbail, but it was difficult to reach beneficiaries who participated in the full process of creating the IEC tools.

(ii) Limitations of the evaluation

Limited time to conduct field work: The fieldwork timeframe was relatively tight given the very tense political context in Lebanon, the unavailability of several stakeholders, and the absence of the implementation team, with one passing away and the other being on travel abroad. The mission did however go very smoothly, thanks to the invaluable support of the ABAAD team in coordinating meetings and facilitating contact with beneficiaries.

Measurement of impact:

Some limitations to assessing impact are to be expected in this evaluation. It is difficult to measure impact and estimate sustainability upon completion, due to the project's design and the lack of a strong monitoring and evaluation system that captures change during the project's lifetime.

IV. EVALUATION FINDINGS

(i) Coherence

Internal coherence

ABAAD have a highly detailed internal strategy leading a targeted, methodical and tactical intervention in a complex and dynamic socio-political context like that of Lebanon. The activities of this project were fully in line with the objectives set out in the internal strategic plan of ABAAD, ensuring utmost consistency with all the organization's projects. ABAAD's intervention rationale is very clear and exhaustive; it has a human rights-based approach that is centered around victims and survivors; pre-determined fields of intervention; and well-defined target groups. This project therefore falls within the scope of the organization's areas of intervention, and its activities are complementary to those of other projects, therefore ensuring close continuity and synergy among them all.

External coherence

Even though ABAAD is a young organization that started in 2011, its founders have always been part of the Lebanese feminist movement. They have thorough knowledge of the various stakeholders involved in the advancement of women's rights and they constantly coordinate with other associations and actors who work on the protection and advancement of the legal framework in favour of women's rights. The ABAAD team also coordinated with State institutions and religious groups and ensured ongoing conversations with them to explore possible collaborations and overcome potential oppositions.

This project's implementation approach was pragmatic, inclusive and rather systematic, ensuring excellent consistency and continuity with what has already been done and what was being done in parallel by other stakeholders.

(ii) Relevance

The former, now abolished, Article 522 of the Lebanese penal code stipulates that, following rape or abduction, if "a valid marriage is contracted between the perpetrator of one of these crimes and the victim, the prosecution is suspended [...] ". Also, a marriage subsequent to rape or abduction could have the immediate effect of releasing the perpetrator.

At the time of project design, the prioritized area of intervention was very relevant to the socio-political context and the situation of women in Lebanon. The chosen objective, namely the strengthening of equitable legislation for women victims of violence and sexual

exploitation in Lebanon, is very relevant and fully meets the needs of target groups. The project is also part of the continuity of extensive advocacy and communication work started by the organization since 2016.

At the time of starting the project, the Lebanese parliament abolished the law and ended the amnesty for rape through marriage on August 17, 2018. The organization and the UNDEF decided to keep the same project activities, assuming that the abolition of Article 522 in Lebanon would not be effective without addressing the existing norms of survivor-blame and without raising awareness and knowledge of women's rights and gender-based violence at the institutional and community level. Despite the change, the project remained very relevant and in line with the needs of target groups.

In examining the relevance of the project, the evaluator distinguished between two levels of analysis: (i) the relevance of project activities in relation to the continuity of ABAAD's intervention strategy through different projects, including that of UNDEF -as discussed in the internal coherence section-, and (ii) the relevance of project activities for the achievement of a specific objective at the time of the intervention.

For the former, project activities are deemed to be valid and greatly relevant, and to be part of a political and systemic change logic. This is despite the absence, in the ABAAD strategic plan, of smart indicators to capture the results of each intervention and to illustrate the proposed scheme of change over time.

For the latter, project activities were diverse and focusing on several levels, including community, institutional, and political levels, and did not revolve around a clear theory of change. It was therefore difficult to demonstrate the relevance of certain activities, such as (i) the regional conference which brought together 10 women's rights activists from the MENA region to share lessons learned on changing advocacy and the legal framework for women's rights, and (ii) the police technical training on how to conserve evidence of rape, which was delivered to randomly chosen participants among thousands of agents, without selection criteria.

On the other hand, participant selection for the 20 bilateral meetings with the various stakeholders was very suitable. ABBAD succeeded in mobilizing several diverse and inclusive representatives of influential institutions in the process of changing the legal framework in favour of Lebanese women. They engaged religious leaders who were influential in their communities, and decision-makers who were influential in the legal framework change process.

(iii) Effectiveness

In exploring the project's effectiveness, the evaluator looked at how it was implemented and how the different activities contributed to progress under outcomes. Effectiveness was enhanced by the partner's vast network of key stakeholders on a multisectoral level, namely feminist movements and CSOs, religious leaders, and government agents and parliamentary members that facilitate the timely and adequate implementation of activities.

The implementing agency, ABAAD, showed a significant capacity of mobilization, with a high rate of engagement in activities and a large audience reached through the various advocacy campaigns. Overall, the project met all its targets in relation to the number of participants, trainees, and community members reached through advocacy campaigns.

On the other hand, and since 2011, ABAAD has demonstrated substantial mastery of the Lebanese legal framework and continues to gain profound expertise on campaigning and advocacy for women rights using innovative communication tools and wholistic inclusive approaches. This expertise instigated the success of the novel approaches to engage women survivors of sexual and gender-based violence who participated in the creation of IEC tools. This participation enhanced the relevance of the materials and ensured that they are context-based and culturally sensitive.

When women and men from underprivileged communities were asked about the video, they agreed that the IEC tool was very relevant and had a remarkable impact on the awareness of people like them regarding sensitive topics like periods and puberty, self-confidence, the body and the notion of “your body is yours”, as well as rape and victim-blaming, etc.

Nonetheless, the participant selection process for different activities is not delineated. The effectiveness of the Internal Security Forces training is only partially captured, as participants who do not respond to precise criteria receive training in a very specific topic such as handling GBV survivors and the Clinical Management of Rape (CMR). There was no evidence that trainees were able to transfer this knowledge to other colleagues, or that they will be the person responsible for managing rape cases in their stations.

Despite the partner’s effective implementation of the activities, there was no evidence demonstrating how these activities contributed to progress under the project objectives. As aforementioned in the coherence section, activities under this project were more oriented towards contributing to ABAAD’s strategic plan than to responding to a specific project intervention theory, making it consequently difficult to measure the effectiveness of these activities in relation to the said objectives.

(iv) Efficiency

The project achieved an acceptable level of efficiency, since, with the budget, it managed to mobilize a significant and representative number of target group(s)/beneficiaries:

- Women and girl survivors of sexual violence from both refugee and host communities;
- 900 community members- women and men;
- 15 members of the Parliaments’ Justice and Administration Committee;
- 4 religious leaders;
- 50 Internal Security Forces (ISF) Officers; and
- 15 Women Rights organizations in the MENA region.

On the one hand, some activities were considered less efficient than others, as there were questions raised regarding the recruitment of a consultant with a very expensive daily rate to

moderate ToT workshops targeting ISF members on issues related to the Clinical Management of Rape, with the consideration that it would be very difficult for participants to duplicate such technical training.

On the other hand, it was not possible to select participants from specific ISF stations to implement the agreed standards of the hearing and investigation room to ensure an efficient application of the training.

Also, there was some concern about the proportion of funds provided to the regional conference, and the development of the learning document without any note on how this document will be used later and to what extent this activity contributed to progress under the project objectives.

(v) Impact

Even though the project activities were not interlinked, they did contribute, through other projects, to ensuring a tangible impact that was recognized by all interviewed stakeholders. From the project's documentation it is not clear how the project outputs had a direct impact on achieving the objectives described in the proposal. It is as such difficult to estimate the extent to which the project contributed to attaining the impact, especially given this complex context, but it is possible to capture the change on several levels.

Because of the inadequate design, the project extended as a series of unconnected activities, which reduced prospects of impact. The project document states that the IEC tool would provide a hub for the awareness sessions, it explained that this output will motivate men and women in communities to lead their own initiatives that aim to tackle violence and increase knowledge about existing protection and human rights' frameworks through peer-to-peer sensitization.

However, there is no mention in it on how the created IEC tool on sexual exploitation and sexual violence will be used in the future.

The absence of a sustainability strategy isolates the personal initiatives that may be taken by women who have developed networks and undertaken communication actions, so their impact and sustainability could become random.

However, the project was highly successful in publicizing its activities through local and national media, including on the Internet, and has provided UNDEF with a full media-coverage report. However, there was a tendency for the UNDEF-sponsored workshops to be mixed up with the full range of ABBAD's advocacy campaigns, which made it very difficult to distinguish the specific impacts of this project.

The individual level

Project beneficiaries, who are also beneficiaries of other ABBAD projects, expressed the general impact of ABAAD's work on their beliefs and attitudes towards sexual violence and women's rights.

Women, in particular, stated that they believed they could more effectively represent the concerns of other women, and that the project gave them the opportunity to do so and to

voice the questions of young women about subjects deemed taboo in their communities. Several of them said that they feel more liberated and stronger thanks to contributing to community workshops.

Men said that the trainings they received helped them to better communicate and interact with their wives and children. Many expressed views against the amnesty of rapists and appreciated ABAAD's efforts to change mentalities.

The head of the Shia religious group also praised the contribution of ABAAD in creating a space for dialogue and exchange to find common grounds between the various stakeholders on sensitive subjects such as marital rape and violence against women, etc. He explained that although the change does not affect his beliefs because they are dictated by religion, it affects his willingness to collaborate and to be open to listening to opposing opinions.

The community levels

It was palpable to all those interviewed that ABAAD's strategy of carrying out mass communication for the change of beliefs and attitudes of the whole community had a positive impact on public opinion and probed the debate on several themes that were up until then deemed as taboo in the communities.

Observers considered ABAAD's communication campaigns as innovative, targeted and memorable. It is not demonstrated in the project's documentation how the project activities contributed to the "Shame_on_who" campaign, but numbers show that this campaign reached a very large audience and triggered several reactions on social media networks as well as in the public sphere debates.

The political level

Partnership is key for a sustainable impact: Thanks to its professionalism and its solid network, ABAAD succeeded in mobilizing various stakeholders, gaining their trust and making their opposing positions neutral. And thanks to multiple rallying attempts, and to an inclusive and pragmatic approach, ABAAD could mobilize and engage influential parties that were often absent from the dialogue on the subject of sexual violence, such as religious leaders and government institutions.

Although this approach had a positive impact on the creation of a collaboration mechanism, ABAAD have yet to define this intervention approach and make it systematic to ensure a sustainable impact.

A clear process is needed to ensure impact: Prior to this project, ABAAD had already been undertaking efforts to institutionalize the work with the Lebanese Internal Security Forces (ISF); signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with High-level, officials to ensure their commitment to a national GBV response effort throughout Lebanon, and building on the signed MoU and the ISF's commitment to actively participate in the training workshops. However, this agreement was not followed by an internal strategy for professional training by ISF, and the selection of participants remains subjective and often without predetermined criteria, rendering it impossible to capitalize on any added value to the institution. It would thereupon be challenging to claim that the training of a number of security agents could elicit any impact on the Lebanese ISF, which count more than 30,000 agents. Additionally, it would not be possible to prove whether ISF trainees became veritably skilled enough to provide support to GBV victims.

(vi) Sustainability

The impact of the project on individual women and men, their beliefs and attitudes, and their positions within their communities in favor of GBV victims is an important factor in the sustainability of its outcomes.

Nonetheless, participants in the community engagement workshop could build a stronger group of advocates for gender-sensitive planning at local and national levels.

Sustainability can also be enhanced if the ISF training could be extended to more specific participants working in critical stations with a particularly high rate of violence.

Creating a learning and exchange platform between regional feminist associations and activists can improve the sustainability of the learning and foster collaboration and resource-sharing.

Overall, more planning on the systematic use of resources created during the project and on their sustainability remains to be undertaken.

(vii) UNDEF Added Value

UNDEF added considerable value to financing this project, largely by supporting a successful high-profile civil society organisation and by contributing to the funding of a progressive and pragmatic long-term change strategy.

However, there was a tendency for the UNDEF-sponsored workshops to be mixed up with the full range of ABBAD's advocacy campaigns, which made it very difficult to distinguish the specific added value and contribution of UNDEF sponsoring.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

(i) Conclusion

1. ABAAD believes that achieving gender equality requires systemic changes in policy and modes of social interactions at all levels of the society. The project intervention falls under these 360-degree approaches, and it has benefitted from the trustworthy stakeholders interviewed. Thanks to their inclusive and pragmatic approach, ABAAD have won the trust of different actors and good, well-connected leading partners in lobbying for women rights.

2. A pragmatic approach can achieve results even in a fractured political landscape.

One of the greatest challenges in supporting women rights in Lebanon and the Mena region was to navigate different sects and religious groups whose ideas of women rights are very different from the Western liberal model.

This project shows that an inclusive approach and alliances with religious leaders who are able to join forces, can create a shared purpose at the grassroots level.

3. The long-term effort of ABAAD to create partnership and mechanisms of coordination and women networks in the civil society has been a major factor in facilitating the implementation of the project's activities, in reaching and engaging women survivors of GBV, and in expanding its outreach to underprivileged communities outside of Beirut.

4. More than a technical implementation partner, ABAAD has a feminist objective and an elaborate internal strategy leading a targeted, methodical and tactical change intervention in a complex and dynamic socio-political context like that of Lebanon. They are clearly looking for several sources of funding to finance their long-term multi-level change plans described in their internal strategic plan, but the project's documentation does not explain how these different projects with different sponsors (or that are co-sponsored) are interlinked and complement each other. It is noteworthy that it's not clear how activities sponsored by the UNDEF contributed to the achievement of the objectives described in the proposal.

5. Despite the very strong capacities of ABAAD in understanding the context and the different dynamics influencing the process of change in favor of women rights at various levels, and despite proposing a 360-degree approach to achieve concrete results in the longer run, ABAAD unfortunately did not develop a strong M&E system to track change at different levels during the project lifetime.

6. The project has a very relevant topic, and all activities were relevant to its broad objectives, but these objectives lacked clarity and linkages, so that they did not provide the required overarching goal around which the project might be organized.

7. Because of the inadequate design, the project unfolded as a series of unconnected activities, which reduced prospects of impact.

The absence of a sustainability strategy isolates the personal initiatives that may be taken by women who have developed networks and undertaken communication actions, so their impact and sustainability could become random.

8. Undoubtedly, civil society's women protection efforts remain limited without the involvement and collaboration of actors from the State's institutions, which is why building the capacity of institutions such as the ISF and institutionalizing this collaboration on the basis of conventions and official memorandums is key. This approach to better equip security providers with knowledge and good practices to protect survivors of GBV, along with developing the national toolkit on "the psychological considerations of dealing with couple dynamics in cases of IPV or GBV survivors" are distinguished steps towards prospects of sustainability.

Nonetheless, capacity-building is a long process that needs to include regular coaching of the trainees and monitoring of their performance, without which it would be difficult to achieve sustainability of the training results. Impromptu trainings for a few agents cannot make a tangible change without adopting specific ISF stations and selected agents to apply the agreed standards of the hearing and investigation.

9. The reporting on the project, while well-written, is very descriptive, with little detail on the logic behind intervention, political context, selection process, challenges, and main lessons learned.

(ii) Recommendations:

Based on conclusions 1, 2, and 3, UNDEF should continue supporting grantees like ABAAD, which have proven their ability as a leader partner in Lebanon and the region, especially given the work they intend to carry out, as per their internal strategic plan. UNDEF may wish to advise that grantees follow the example of ABAAD, and showcase how an inclusive approach, continuous coordination, and strong networking can help feminist organizations to achieve more results.

Based on conclusions 4 and 5, ABAAD need to have clearer funding, branding and donor-visibility strategies. It should clearly mention if activities are sponsored or co-sponsored and demonstrate effect of synergy between activities to make it possible for funders to evaluate their interventions and be accountable for their contribution.

Based on conclusion 8, it's advisable that ISF take ownership of the training initiative and develop their internal capacity-building program with specific criteria to target participants who maybe more suitable to apply for the training.

Based on conclusions 6, 7, and 8, it is advisable that UNDEF provides more support to grantees in terms of project design and results monitoring. ABAAD should in turn seek expert advice on how to shape an integrated project design with both strategic objectives and

practical results. It's also essential for ABAAD to strengthen its monitoring and evaluation process with smart indicators for both organizational and project objectives to showcase their large-scale work. ABAAD should prepare project budgets with careful attention to cost-effectiveness and deployment of resources in a manner that is consistent with the activities' contribution to progress under results.

The UNDEF report format does not shed light on the implementation process and lessons learned, so it is highly advisable to keep tracking all the challenges faced during the implementation and how the organization overcame these challenges, especially when dealing with common problems in the region like the religious institutions' pressure, the political instability, or the existing survivor-blaming norms.

ABAAD's experience and success in creating contextualized and community-based communications tools should be shared with other grantees and women rights defenders in the Mena region.

ABAAD's 360-degree approach to create strong networking among a large range of stakeholders for advocacy can be further formulated and tested, and can later be turned into methodical tools that can be shared and used by other grantees working in similar contexts. This recommendation follows from Conclusions 3-4 and 9.

VI. LESSONS LEARNED

1. Successful women rights' programs require the below elements, which were all present in this project:

- Belonging to a feminist movement to work as part as of it and in coherence with the diversity of contributions;
- A strong sense of political tactics and understanding of the legal framework and the religious and cultural barriers to find entry points and possibilities of change;
- A high level of personal and organizational commitment to gain trust and credibility; and
- An open mind to develop innovative approaches.

2. The fact that the subject matter was at the heart of the organization's expertise and strategic plan was a key factor in the successful implementation and completion of the project, despite the politically unstable environment.

3. The ongoing engagement of all relevant stakeholders consisting of civil society organizations and networks, governmental officials, judges, religious leaders, and Internal Security Forces' members has been crucial in the awareness-raising on efforts being made to effectively implement the penal code after the abolition of article 52 and the success of the advocacy campaign #Shame_on_who.

4. Engagement of women survivors of GBV and other women from different ages and the participatory process of developing the IEC tool, whereby women survivors of GBV and other women from different ages and background were engaged and influenced each part of it, was also a success factor for the contextualized tools.

5. A long-term political and/or social change program needs a strong M&E system and ongoing context monitoring, risk analysis to adapt management, realistic reporting, and accurate narratives on what was done, how and why, in order to capitalize on knowledge and lessons learned.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Example evaluation questions

<p>Relevance: Is the intervention doing the right things?</p> <p>The extent to which the intervention objectives and design respond to beneficiary, global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities, and continue to do so if circumstances change.</p>	
<p>Adequacy:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Were the target groups the most appropriate? - Did the project address the needs and priorities of targeted beneficiaries?
<p>Design:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Were the project activities/outputs adequately linked up and did they provide the best approach to achieve the project's outcomes? - Should another project strategy have been preferred rather than the one implemented to better reflect those needs, priorities, and context? - Were risks and mitigation strategies appropriately identified?
<p>Coherence: How well does the intervention fit?</p> <p>The compatibility of the intervention with other interventions in a country, sector or institution.</p>	
<p>Internal coherence:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To what extent are there synergies and interlinkages between the intervention and other interventions carried out by ABAAD?
<p>External coherence:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To what extent is there consistency with other actors' interventions in the same context? - To what extent is there complementarity, harmonization and coordination between the organization/the project and other organizations/projects working in the same context and on the same issue. - To what extent is the intervention adding value while

	avoiding the duplication of efforts?
EFFECTIVENESS: is the intervention achieving its objectives?	
The extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives and its results, including any differential results across groups.	
Progress:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What has the project achieved? Where has it failed to meet the outputs identified in the project document? Why? - Were the project activities adequate to make progress towards the project objectives? If no, why? - To what extent have the project objectives been reached?
Monitoring Learning and Adaptation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How appropriately was progress towards results monitored? - How did this information feed into the project to promote learning?
EFFICIENCY: How well are resources used?	
The extent to which the intervention delivers, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way.	
Design:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Was there a reasonable relationship between project inputs and project outputs?
Operational efficiency:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To what extent did the implementation processes and the management arrangements ensure a cost-efficient and timely implementation of the project? - Did the rotation of project management staff have an impact on the effectiveness of the project implementation? - Was the budget designed, and then implemented, in a way that enabled the project to meet its objectives?
Impact: What difference is the intervention making?	
The extent to which the intervention has generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, higher-level effects.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To what extent has the achievement of the project objective(s) and project outcomes had an impact on the specific problem the project aimed to address?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have the targeted beneficiaries experienced tangible impacts? Which were positive; which were negative? - To what extent has the project caused changes and effects, positive and negative, foreseen and unforeseen, on democratization? - Is the project likely to have a catalytic effect? How? Why? Examples?
<p>Sustainability: Will the benefits last? The extent to which the net benefits of the intervention continue, or are likely to continue.</p>	
Political will:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To what extent did key stakeholders (policy-makers and religious leaders) remain involved in this process once the project ended?
Beneficiary' s ownership:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are the involved parties able to continue the project activities on their own? - To what extent has the project established processes and systems that are likely to support continued impact?
<p>UNDEF added value and visibility</p>	
Added value:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What was the value of UNDEF specific support to the project? Could the objectives have been achieved through alternative projects, other donors, or other stakeholders (Government, NGOs, etc.)?
Visibility:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is there evidence showing that UNDEF support to the ABAAD project appears in all printed materials distributed during the project? - Is there UNDEF visibility in all project-related events organized by CIPRODEH?

Annex 2: Documents Reviewed:

All project related documents (signed project document, Annual progress reports, interim report and final narrative report, Budget, and media articles)

Human Rights Watch, 2015, the CEDAW Committee of Lebanon's Periodic Report
Dima Dabbous, 2017, Legal Reform and Women's Rights in Lebanese Personal Status Laws, CMI report.

ABAAD strategic plan; 2018, ABAAD centre for gender equality resources

Ghanim, David. 2013. 'Gender-based violence in the Middle East and North Africa'

Annex 3: Persons Interviewed

24 February 2017	
Mohamad. Mansour	Deputy Director - Head of Operations ABAAD
25 February 2020	
Mohamad. Mansour Ghida Anani Rana Rahal Daniel Hoyek	ABAAD project team
26 February 2020	
Hayat Mershad	Co-funder- Femen
Joumana Merhi	Director- Arab Institute for Human Rights Participant in the regional conference
Abed El Halim Chrara	Religious leader
27 February 2020	
Elie Asmar	Colonel- Internal Security Forces
Chucri Sader	Judge/ Consultant to develop the learning document
Rana Khoury	Consultant
28 February	
Focus group with women beneficiaries	Project beneficiaries
Focus group with men beneficiaries	Project beneficiaries

Annex 4: Acronyms

ABAAD	Resource Center for Gender Equality
GBV	Gender Based Violence
UNDEF	United Nations Democracy Fund
ISF	Internal Security Forces
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
IEC	Information and Education Communication
TOT	Training of trainers