

WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY IN LEBANON - HOW CAN SWEDEN MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

The following recommendations have been developed by Operation 1325 with support from the the Lebanese civil society organization Sawa for Development Association.

SITUATION ANALYSIS

- Lebanon has the highest number of refugees per capita in the world and the majority of the refugees hosted in Lebanon are women and children.
- Despite being one of the more socially progressive and open societies in the region, Lebanon has one of the lowest rates of female political participation with 4.7 % women in Parliament and 10 % in Government.
- While Lebanon has a National Action Plan for Women, Peace and Security, Lebanese civil society is not sufficiently included in its implementation and lack ownership.

RECOMMENDATIONS IN SHORT

- Increase women 's participation in politics and peace operations
- Safeguard the rights of women refugees in Lebanon.
- Contribute to localizing and bringing the Women Peace and Security Agenda to the grassroots.

INCREASE WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS AND PEACE OPERATIONS

While Lebanon is considered socially progressive in relation to the surrounding region, and the last election in 2018 resulted in the highest political participation of women in Lebanon 's history, women representation in politics remains shockingly low with only 4.7 % women parliamentarians and 10 % women in Government. In contrast to this, women have played a significant role in the on-going protests and women activists have organized and led several responses in regard to the on-going governmental crisis. Moreover, the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), which is mandated to monitor cessation of hostilities and help ensure humanitarian access to civilian population, currently includes only 6 % women. Although the force is committed to the Women, Peace and Security Agenda, gaps persists particularly in regard to collaborating with civil society. Women have, furthermore, not been sufficiently included in the implementation of Resolution 1701, which stipulates a permanent ceasefire and disarmament of all armed groups in Lebanon.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- As the EU-Lebanon association agreement ends in 2020, Sweden should advocate that the new agreement includes increasing women 's political participation and safeguarding women 's rights as central priorities, in line with the EU 's Gender Action Plan.
- Sweden should support Lebanese women 's organizations to campaign and challenge cultural and societal norms which hinder women from partaking in politics and support the women 's movement and the women activists leading it.
- Sweden should advocate that the UN Security Council increases gender parity and gender expertise in UNIFIL mission and increases consultations with women civil society organizations.
- Sweden should advocate that the UN Security Council ensures that women 's meaningful participation in regard the implementation of Resolution 1701 as a key priority.



Operation 1325 is a Swedish civil society organization working for the implementation of UN Resolution 1325. Founded by several Swedish women's and peace organizations in 2003, the organizations objective is to increase women's influence at all levels of peace processes and in conflict resolution.

Sawa for Development Association was established in 2006 and works with community development in the Bekaa valley by raising awareness about human rights and educating women about their rights, in order to achieve gender equality.

SAFEGUARD THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN REFUGEES IN LEBANON

Lebanon hosts the highest number of refugees per capita in the world, with a refugee population of 4 million, most of whom come from conflict regions. 75 % of refugees in Lebanon are women and children. Women refugees in Lebanon face discrimination and vulnerability to sexual and physical violence both from within the refugee community and from the host community. 9 out of 10 Syrian refugees in Lebanon lack food security which has led to the increased prevalence of negative coping mechanisms such as child marriage. Due to the limited access to resources, there is also considerable tension between the refugee community and the host community. Furthermore, it is important that Syrian women in Lebanon are meaningfully included in sustainable peace building in Syria.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Sweden should support women led initiatives for community dialogue which contribute toward building peaceful societies.
- Sweden should support the provision of measures which allow refugee women in Lebanon to report gender-based violence and access protection and psychosocial support services for survivors. In addition, measures should be directed to combat the prevalence of child marriages.
- Sweden should support women Syrian refugees in Lebanon and provide platforms which these women can use to be part of the ongoing Syrian peace process.

CONTRIBUTE TO LOCALIZING THE WOMEN PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA

Lebanon's political system is divided according to religious and ethnic affiliation, which has implications on the ownership of the Women Peace and Security Agenda. While there is a National Commission for Women which is instrumental in the implementation of the National Action Plan, this council does not include civil society and is closely affiliated with ruling elites. In combination to this, international non-governmental organizations tend to dominate the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda and fail to sufficiently include local grassroots. Thereby local women's organizations need to have more ownership of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda and be supported to advocate for issues they identify as important.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Sweden should support local women's organizations by providing flexible funding and access to platforms to discuss and advocate for issues they identify as important.
- Sweden should advocate that UN agencies in Lebanon, such as UN Women, work actively to include local women's rights organizations and contribute to a localization of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda. In addition, Sweden should ensure that local women's organizations are included in the planning and implementation of humanitarian assistance.
- Sweden should in diplomatic dialogue with the Lebanese Government highlight the importance of including a plurality of women's voices in politics and share insight on how civil society can be included in political consultation processes.



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