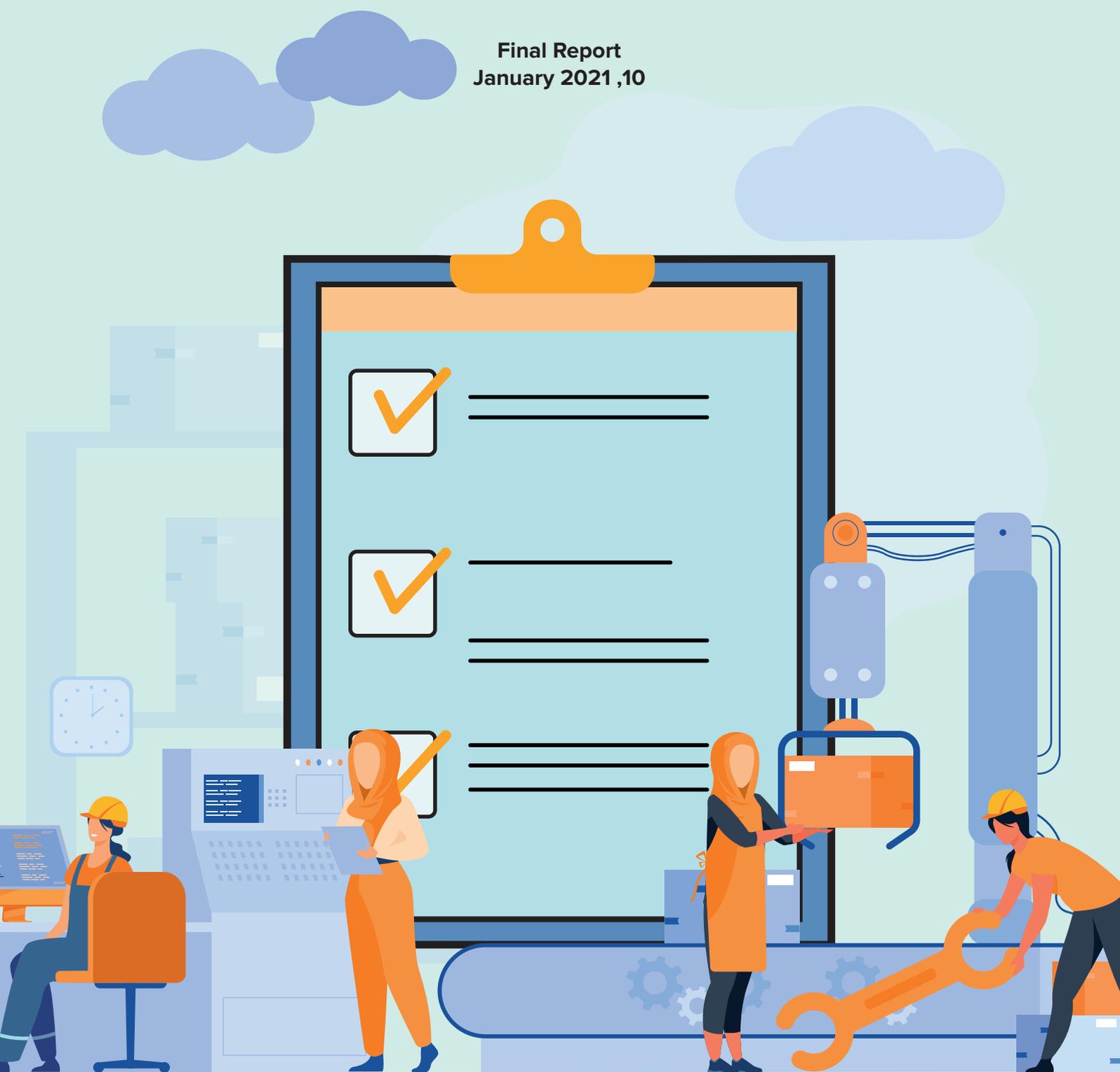




# Knowledge, Attitudes and Perceptions (KAP) Community Survey towards Women's Participation in Public Life

Final Report  
January 2021 ,10





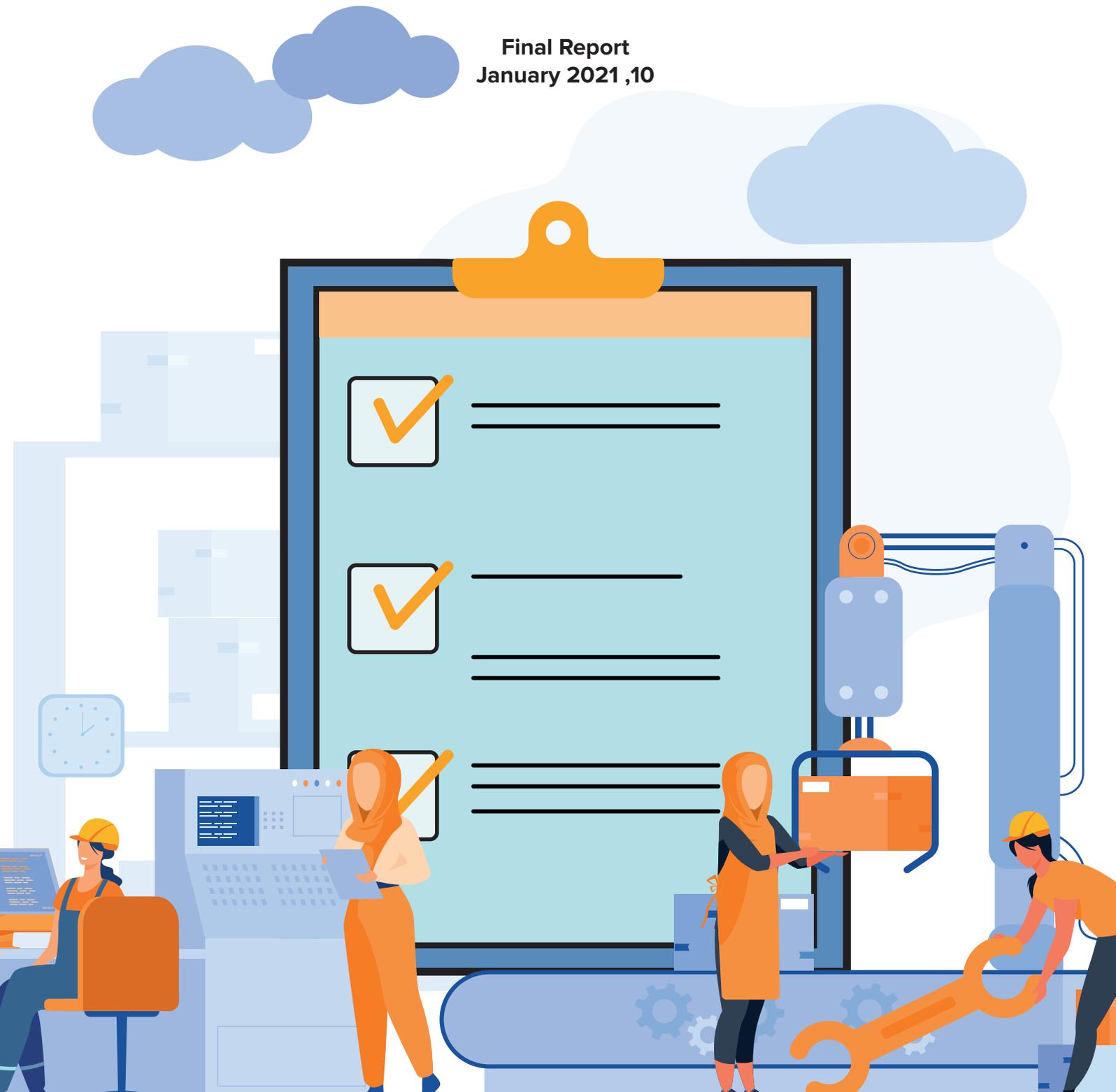
Canada 



UN  
DP

# Knowledge, Attitudes and Perceptions (KAP) Community Survey towards Women's Participation in Public Life

Final Report  
January 2021 ,10



## Table of contents

|   |    |
|---|----|
| <b>Acronyms</b>   | 3  |
| <b>List of Tables and Figures</b>   | 3  |
| Executive Summary   | 5  |
| Project Background  | 6  |
| Objectives  | 7  |
| Methodology   | 8  |
| <b>Desk Review</b>  | 8  |
| <b>Sample Design and Framework</b>  | 8  |
| <b>Data Collection Tools</b>  | 10 |
| <b>KAP Questionnaire</b>  | 10 |
| <b>Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)</b>  | 10 |
| <b>Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)</b>   | 10 |
| <b>Operational Definitions</b>  | 11 |
| <b>Quality Assurance (QA)</b>   | 11 |
| <b>Limitations</b>  | 11 |
| Socio-Economic Characteristics / Survey   | 13 |
| Socio-Economic Characteristics / FGDs and KIIs  | 14 |
| <b>Findings</b>   | 15 |
| <b>Women's Participation and Decision-Making in Public Spheres</b>  | 15 |
| <b>Women's Experience in Public Life Participation</b>  | 21 |
| <b>Women's Participation and Decision-Making in the Private Sphere</b>  | 25 |
| <b>Solid Waste Management (SWM)</b>   | 27 |
| <b>SWM and Decision-Making Process</b>  | 28 |
| <b>Public Attitudes and Perceptions towards Women's Participation and Representation in Leadership in Economic and Social Domains</b> | 29 |
| <b>Public Attitudes and Perceptions towards Women's Participation in SWM</b>  | 33 |
| <b>Women's Participation in Public Life and COVID-19</b>  | 33 |
| <b>Barriers against Enhancing Women's Economic Participation in Private sector, Civil Society and Local Governance</b>                | 36 |
| <b>Public Attitudes and Perceptions towards the role of CBOs in Raising Community Awareness about Women's Rights</b>                  | 41 |
| <b>Opportunities and Recommendations to Mitigate the Identified Barriers and Prevailing Social Norms and Expectations</b>             | 44 |

## Acronyms

|            |                               |
|------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>CBO</b> | Community-Based Organization  |
| <b>NGO</b> | Non-Governmental Organization |
| <b>KII</b> | Key Informant Interview       |
| <b>FGD</b> | Focus Group Discussion        |
| <b>QA</b>  | Quality Assurance             |
| <b>SWM</b> | Solid Waste Management        |

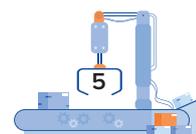


## List of Tables

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Table 1: Distribution of KIIs per sector  |    |
| Table 2: Distribution of FGDs participants per municipality   | 10 |
| Table 3: Limitations and mitigation measures  | 12 |
| Table 4: Distribution of FGDs and KIIs participants by municipality   | 14 |
| Table 5: Women's participation in public life by gender (N=1469)  | 15 |
| Table 6: Respondents' answers about the availability of opportunities for public participation of women by municipality and gender (N=1469)           | 16 |
| Table 7: Respondents' answers about the reasons behind insufficient opportunities for women's participation in public life by municipality and gender | 17 |
| Table 8: Women's participation in the household decision-making process   | 24 |
| Table 9: Respondents' perceptions towards women's role in household decision-making process   | 25 |
| Table 10: Respondents' attitudes towards women's role in SWM by municipality and gender   | 26 |
| Table 11: Respondents' attitudes and perceptions towards women's participation in public life by gender   | 30 |
| Table 12: COVID-19 negative impact on women according to FGDs' participants   | 33 |

## List of Figures

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Figure 1: Historical timeline of women's participation in public life - women's FGDs                            | 11 |
| Figure 2: Distribution participants per municipality  | 14 |
| Figure 3: Distribution of respondents by gender and municipality  | 14 |
| Figure 4: Distribution of respondents by age groups and municipality  | 15 |
| Figure 5: Distribution of respondents by educational level  | 15 |
| Figure 2: Distribution of FGDs by gender  | 16 |
| Figure 6: KIIs participants by gender   |    |
| Figure 7: Distribution of respondents' answers about women's participation in public life forms by municipality | 18 |
| Figure 8: Women's role in the decision-making process by municipality and gender                                | 19 |
| Figure 9: Women's role in the local decision-making process by gender   | 20 |
| Figure 10: Women's participation in public life by municipality   | 21 |
| Figure 11: Women's role in the local decision-making process and decisions women can participate in             | 22 |
| Figure 12: Women's actual engagement in the decision-making process and type of decisions                       | 23 |
| Figure 13: Women respondents' satisfaction with their participation in the decision-making process              | 23 |
| Figure 14: Reasons behind women's satisfaction with their participation in the decision-making process          | 24 |
| Figure 15: Women respondents' determination on their future participation in the decision-making process        | 25 |
| Figure 16: Women respondents' memberships   | 25 |
| Figure 17: Women's role in SWM according to respondents by municipality and gender                              | 28 |



|   |    |
|---|----|
| Figure 18: Women's role in SWM process by gender  | 29 |
| Figure 19: Women's role in decision-making process regarding SWM  | 30 |
| Figure 20: Reasons why a family member might oppose women working   | 32 |
| Figure 21: Respondents' attitudes and perceptions towards women in decision-making positions by gender                | 33 |
| Figure 22: Reasons behind respondents' distrustful attitudes towards women as decision-makers                         | 34 |
| Figure 23: Respondents' attitudes and perception towards women's role in SWM  | 34 |
| Figure 24: Respondents' attitudes and perceptions towards the impact of COVID-19 on women                             | 37 |
| Figure 25: Women's role regarding health and protection practices due to COVID-19                                     | 37 |
| Figure 26: Respondents' answers about women's economic participation fields   | 39 |
| Figure 27: Suitable jobs for women according to respondents by gender   | 39 |
| Figure 28: Barriers faced by women in the private sector according to respondents                                     | 40 |
| Figure 29: Barriers related to women's participation in the public sector and civil society                           | 40 |
| Figure 30: Barriers related to women's participation in local governance  | 41 |
| Figure 31: Barriers related to women's economic participation according to respondents                                | 41 |
| Figure 32: Barriers related to women's participation in SWM according to respondents                                  | 42 |
| Figure 33: Respondents' attitudes toward the role of local CBOs in women's participation in the public life by gender | 43 |
| Figure 34: Reasons for the respondents' preference of local CBOs by municipalities                                    | 44 |
| Figure 35: Needed steps to mitigate challenges to women's participation in the public life                            | 45 |



## Executive Summary

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) partners with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), at different levels, to help the establishment of resilient nations. Among several themes implemented by the UNDP, inclusive growth is considered important for Jordan's country Programme because it addresses vulnerable groups. The Programme aims to provide resilience-based development solutions for local economic recovery, including green economy opportunities. Additionally, it ensures equitable access to financial service solutions.

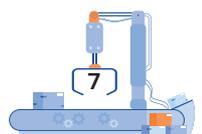
The overall aim of the current study is to provide a detailed and comprehensive understanding and overview on the current Knowledge, Attitudes and Perceptions (KAP) towards women's participation, representation, leadership and their role in decision-making in both public and private spheres, particularly in the Solid Waste Management (SMW) sector. The study was carried out in four selected municipalities located in Irbid governorate north, of Jordan; namely Dair Abi Said, Tabaqet Fahel, Mo'ath Bin Jabal and Sharhabeel Bin Hassnah. The current study also attempted to identify and investigate public attitudes and perceptions towards women's participation; their abilities in decision-making; barriers against enhancing women's economic participation; opportunities and recommendations to mitigate the identified barriers and prevailing social norms and expectations; public attitudes and perceptions regarding the role of local Community Based Organizations (CBOs) in raising community awareness on women's rights such as encouraging women engagement in public sphere and combating violence against women.

The Knowledge, Attitudes and Perceptions (KAP) Survey applies a stratified sampling method that represented the local communities in the four targeted municipalities. The sample size was estimated to be representative at the level of each of the four municipalities. The sample was 1,469 individuals aged 18-60 years old, with 36 KIs and 8 FGDs that included a total of 41 participants. The Survey utilized quantitative and qualitative data collection tools to achieve its objectives.

The study concluded that regardless of municipalities, there is a clear variation in women's participation, representation, leadership and their ability to take part in decision-making processes between the four municipalities. Also, 36 KIs stated that women's participation is much higher in urban areas than in rural areas due to population's density, better socio-economic factors and higher educational levels. Most respondents across the four municipalities reported that women participate in public life, particularly in the following economic sectors: agriculture, education and health. However, the lowest participation reported was in local decision-making (5.4% of men and 5.9% of women respondents) when they were asked about the main field that women were engaged with.

While 74% of community members had positive attitudes and perceptions towards women's participation in economic life as well as the decision-making process, 77% of respondents emphasized that women's participation in public life faces different challenges. In this regard, women participants in FGDs said that women's participation in public life is limited to local municipal councils, where they win their seats thanks to women supportive legislation that reserved seats for women (quota).

Regarding the role of women in the SWM, most respondents (64%) stated that both men and women are responsible for taking decisions regarding SWM at the household level, including recycling and sorting solid waste and home materials. Having said that, the respondents indicated that women are more engaged in decisions related to SWM at the household level than men, while at the community level, women had no role in SWM.



Gender roles, traditional expectations, and cultural restraints continue to limit women's advancement and contribute to excluding them from decision-making processes. From a gender perspective, men are believed to be more capable to make decisions compared with women. To respond to such misconceptions, local CBOs were found to be strongly involved in activities related to raising community's awareness regarding women's rights, encouraging women's engagement in public sphere and combating violence against women. In that framework, local CBOs were acknowledged by respondents as a key factor towards enhancing women's participation in public life and promoting women's rights.

Although women's economic empowerment enhanced their self-confidence and ability to make decisions and mitigate gender and social norms, according to women participants in the FGDs, they still face gender-based violence at home. Due to COVID-19 pandemic, men become more aggressive toward women the more empowered they become. Similarly, the vast majority of respondents (67%) stated that COVID-19 reduced women's ability to move inside and outside their home, and 65% of respondents stressed that COVID-19 increased the household burdens placed on women.

As for women's economic participation in the private sector, respondents said that the main barrier to women's participation was related to the conflict between women's role inside and outside their homes, and some mentioned barriers related to lack of work stability, low wages as well as lack of community support. Similarly, both men and women respondents across the four municipalities affirmed that local CBOs in their communities play an effective role in raising community awareness regarding women's rights and public engagement, with 77% and 72% of women and men respondents respectively.

## Project Background

UNDP partners with individuals at all levels of society to help build nations that can withstand crises and drive and sustain inclusive growth to improve quality of life for everyone. On the ground, in 177 countries, UNDP translates global perspective and local insight into interventions that empower lives and build resilient nations.

Inclusive Growth continues to be an important thematic area for Jordan's country Programme that addresses vulnerabilities at individual, community, and national institutional levels by supporting initiatives that foster an inclusive enabling environment for livelihoods and job creation especially among vulnerable youth, women and host communities in crisis-affected areas.

The evolving impact of the COVID-19 crisis in Jordan has deepened a sense of urgency to tackle the root causes of socio-economic fragility by promoting resilience through systems strengthening and enabling self-reliance in communities.

The Programme seeks to provide resilience-based development solutions for local economic recovery, including green economy opportunities, and to enable equitable access to financial service solutions to ensure no one is left behind.

The **“Enhancing Women's Participation in the Solid Waste Management Sector in Jordan”** project, funded by Global Affairs Canada (GAC), contributes to improving women's quality of life in the north of Jordan through enhancing their livelihoods, workforce participation and well-being. The entry point of this project is women's economic empowerment and equality as means to address barriers that hinder women from active participation in their communities



as workers, entrepreneurs and change makers, with an understanding that real women's economic empowerment exists when women and girls have similar opportunities as men and boys to knowledge, economic opportunities, gender-sensitive policies, decision-making power, and access to and control over assets and resources.

In addition, the **“Enhancing Women's Participation in the Solid Waste Management Sector in Jordan”** project tackles economic gender gaps and addresses inequalities in decision-making at the household level and the local governance policy level. The project targets women in four municipalities in Irbid Governorate: three municipalities in the Northern Shouneh county (**Liwa**) (Mo'ath Bin Jabal, Tabqet Fahel, and Sharhabeel Bin Hassnah) and the municipality of Dair Abi Said of Al Kourah county (**Liwa**). According to the Population and Housing Census results from 2015, the demographic and socio-economic data of the Northern Shouneh county shows that women constitute 46.4% of the total population while men represent 53.5%, indicating a difference of 7.1%. The number of households in Northern Shouneh is 24,659, with an average family size of 5.8 persons, which is higher than the national family size average of 5.5 (according to the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation's socioeconomic profile for Northern Shouneh). Social indicators show that women-headed households make up 12.2% of those.

### **The design of the project is built around three tracks:**

- 1) Enhancing and strengthening the role of CSOs to enable such organizations to work effectively and efficiently with women within the targeted communities to become a vehicle for women's voices in the decision-making processes.
- 2) Provision of financial support to CSOs and cooperatives to start working on increasing women's participation in the local economy, particularly in the solid waste sector, through designing and managing business groups' projects.
- 3) Working with national and local governments to enhance gender-informed and responsive policy-making in SWM at the local and national levels.

The Project aims to provide entrepreneurial opportunities for 660 women through green business projects in the SWM sector. It targets women in the communities and within CSOs for additional support. Furthermore, men are targeted to become advocates for women's empowerment and human rights.

## **Objectives**

### **This KAP study aims to achieve the following objectives:**

- Provide a snapshot of the current situation in terms of women's participation, representation, leadership and decision-making in public and private spheres; namely in economic, social and political domains in the targeted municipalities with a focus on women's engagement in the SWM sector. In addition, the study aims to highlight women's ability in making decisions at household and community levels through describing the gender situation in the targeted areas.
- Investigate public attitudes and perceptions towards women's participation, representation in leadership, and their decision-making abilities in public and private spheres - namely in economic, social and political domains. In addition, explore



community's perception towards gender roles and responsibilities, in general and during the COVID-19 pandemic in specific, at household and community levels regarding hygiene, protection, solid waste management and the 5Rs.

- Identify barriers against enhancing women's economic participation in the targeted rural and vulnerable communities in the private sector, civil society and local governance through advocating for an inclusive and gender-balanced local economic development leveraging on SWM, recycling and circular economy interventions. In addition, challenges to enhance women's economic participation and decision-making at the household level to be investigated with a focus on gender roles regarding hygiene, protection and the 5Rs.
- Identify and cluster opportunities and recommendations to mitigate the identified barriers and prevailing social norms and expectations.
- Identify public attitudes and perceptions regarding the role of local CBOs in raising community awareness concerning women's rights, encouraging women's engagement in the public sphere and combating violence against women, as well as determine community's aspirations regarding improving the role of CBOs in the above-mentioned thematic areas.

## Methodology

This survey utilized a structured methodology, which provided reliable results, as described in the following:

### Desk Review

The study started with a thorough desk-based review of key UNDPs project documents, followed by a revision of available secondary data sources about women's participation in public life in Jordan. The review of these documents informed this study by:

- Identifying cross-cutting factors and key actors.
- Identifying key issues and areas that need further analysis.
- Refining the methodology and developing the data collection tools.
- Facilitating the triangulation and cross-checking of primary and secondary data.

### Sample Design and Framework

The sample size was estimated to be representative at the level of each of the four municipalities and comprised 1,469 individuals aged 18-60 years old who were heads of their households. The sample was distributed among the targeted municipalities proportionally to size, with a confidence level of 95% and margin of error of  $\pm 2.53\%$ .

The KAP survey applied a stratified sampling method that represented local communities in the four targeted municipalities in Irbid Governorate.

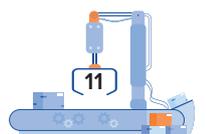


## Data Collection Approach

At the data collection stage, a mobile-friendly electronic platform (PC-Tablet) was employed and the Census and Survey Processing System (CSPro 7.0.4). Each enumerator received a tablet for offline data collection. The data was imported as an excel sheet after completion of the data collection.

Each household in the targeted areas was randomly selected, and only heads of households were targeted. Main steps of the data collection approach were:

1. Selecting a main or common site or building used by the local community and located in the center of the municipality such as a school, supermarket, etc.
2. Starting from that site, enumerators moved towards nearby households and interviewed heads of households. The gender of the interviewee (man or woman) was based on the sample distribution.
3. If the head of the household was unavailable, the enumerator interviewed the eldest son or daughter (twenty years of age or older) based on the targeted gender for that particular household. If they refused to do the interview, the enumerators thanked the family and moved on to another household.



## Data Collection Tools

The survey utilized quantitative and qualitative data collection tools to achieve the survey objectives.

### KAP Questionnaire

The questionnaire was utilized to collect data from a representative sample in order to investigate public attitudes and perceptions towards women's participation, representation, leadership and decision-making in public and private spheres, with a focus on women's engagement in the SWM sector. Also, the survey studied community perception towards gender roles and responsibilities in general, as well as during COVID-19 in specific, at household and community levels.<sup>1</sup>

The total number of completed questionnaires from the targeted locations is (N= 1,469).

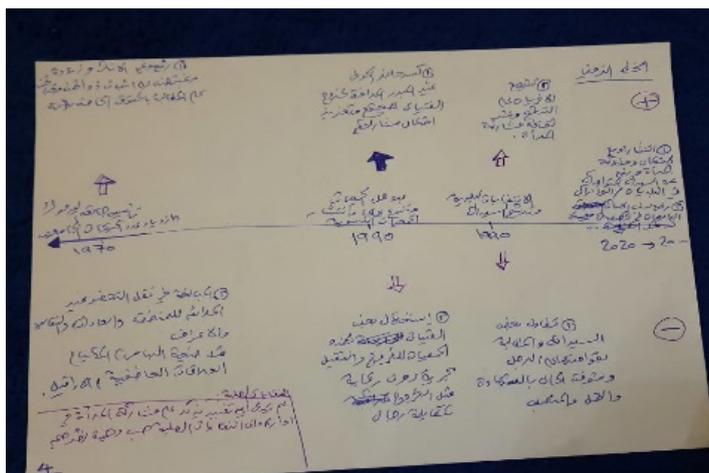
### Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)

KIIs were used to collect data from interviewees such as community leaders and local authorities.<sup>2</sup> A total of 36 KIIs were conducted across the four municipalities, with interviewees working in different sectors and positions as described in the table below.

| KIIs   | Number |
|--|--------|
| Mayors   | 3      |
| Municipal council members                              | 15     |
| Heads of Local Development Units at the municipalities | 4      |
| Heads of local NGOs and CBOs                           | 14     |
| Total  | 36     |

Table 1: Distribution of KIIs per sector

### Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)



A total of 8 FGDs were conducted separately with both men and women from the four targeted municipalities. These discussions provided valuable information, which complemented and validated data collected from individual interviews and surveys. FGDs participants were purposively selected and were inclusive of all segments of the population considering gender, age, disability as described in the table below<sup>3</sup>.

Figure 1: Historical timeline of women's participation in public life - women's FGDs

1. Annex # 1: Questionnaire  
 2. Annex # 3: KII Guide  
 3. Annex # 2: FGD Guide

| Municipalities                                    | No. of Participants<br>(N= 41) | Total sample % |
|---|--------------------------------|----------------|
| Mo'ath Bin Jabal/Northern Shouneh                 | 10                             | %24            |
| Tabaqet Fahel/Northern Shouneh                    | 11                             | %27            |
| Sharhabeel Bin Hassnah /Krayymeh/Northern Shouneh | 8                              | %20            |
| Dair Abi Said/Kourah County (Liwa)                | 12                             | %29            |

Table 2: Distribution of FGDs participants per municipality

## Operational Definitions

Women's participation in public sphere refers to women's participation in public life such as governmental and private sector, and non-governmental organizations sectors including women's participation in the local and national decision-making process.

Women's participation in private sphere refers to women's role inside the household including their participation in the household decision-making process.

## Quality Assurance (QA)

### Pre-testing

A pre-testing activity of the Survey tool was conducted for a total of **20** surveys, 5 per municipality. Based on the pre-testing findings, the questionnaire was amended and finalized.

### Training

13 enumerators were responsible for the data collection process; 10 for the quantitative data and 3 for the qualitative data. Although the vast majority of the survey team members had prior knowledge and experience of quantitative and qualitative data collection, they were trained on data collection tools, the survey objectives, ethical considerations and the use of paper and phone-based questionnaires.

It is important to note that the team comprised 8 women enumerators from the targeted municipalities - 2 from each municipality- who were selected by the UNDP project team.<sup>4</sup>

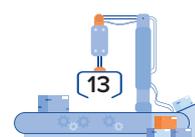
### Data Audit

To ensure data quality after the completion of the quantitative data collection, verification was made through phone calls for 3-5 questionnaires filled by each enumerator.

### Limitations

The following are main limitations faced by the team, and the mitigation measures taken to address them.

<sup>4</sup>. Annex # 4: Survey team



| Limitations   | Mitigation measures   |
|---|---|
| Low response rate in the survey and KIIs  | Replaced with other KIIs in the same sector and looked for other heads of households to reach the targeted sample number.   |
| Low response rate and unavailability of male respondents due to the olive harvesting season | Replaced with men respondents from the same municipality where possible.  |
| Escalation of COVID-19 in Jordan and curfew during weekends                                 | - Ensured that the field team applied the health protocol and disseminated gloves and masks among FGDs participants in order to be able to collect the needed data.<br><br>- Completed the surveys through phone calls. |

Table 3: Limitations and mitigation measures

### Socio-Economic Characteristics / Survey

A total of 1,469 respondents from the four municipalities were targeted in this survey as shown below. However, the total number of respondents was selected based on the actual population size of each municipality, which is reflected in the sampling method<sup>5</sup>. Therefore, the highest percentage of respondents was from Mo'ath Bin Jabal municipality (27%).

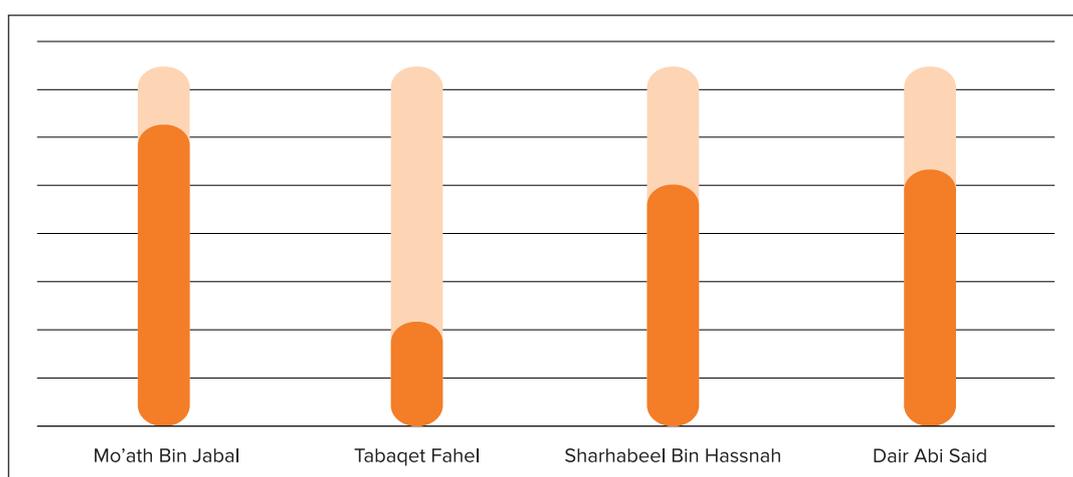


Figure 2: Distribution of participants per municipality (N=1,469)

Both men and women were equally targeted in the sample. Moreover, 97% of respondents were not suffering from any disability and 98% were Jordanian.

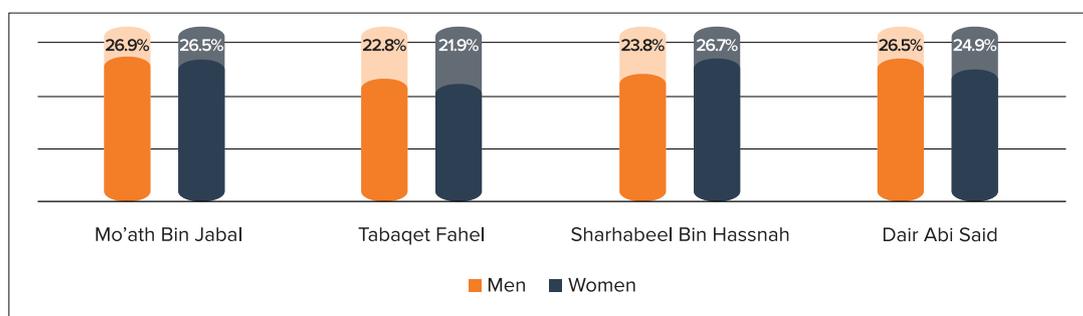


Figure 3: Distribution of respondents by gender and municipality (N=1,469)

The majority of respondents belonged to the age groups 26-30 and 31-40 as described in the below chart:

5. [dos.gov.jo/censuses/population housing/census2015](https://dos.gov.jo/censuses/population%20housing/census2015)

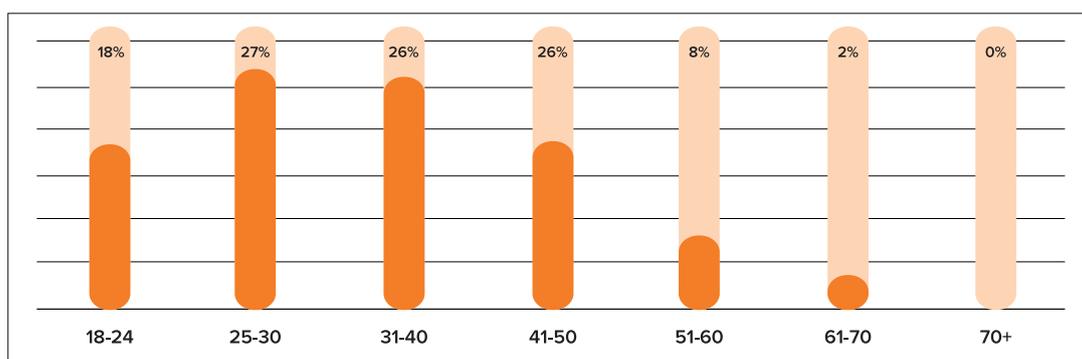


Figure 4: Distribution of respondents by age groups and municipality (N=1,469)

In addition, 64% of respondents were married; and 32% were employed compared with 24% who were unemployed. Furthermore, 63% of respondents had a monthly income of 200-499 Jordan dinars and 35% of respondents held a secondary education diploma compared with 27% who held a bachelor's degree.<sup>6</sup>

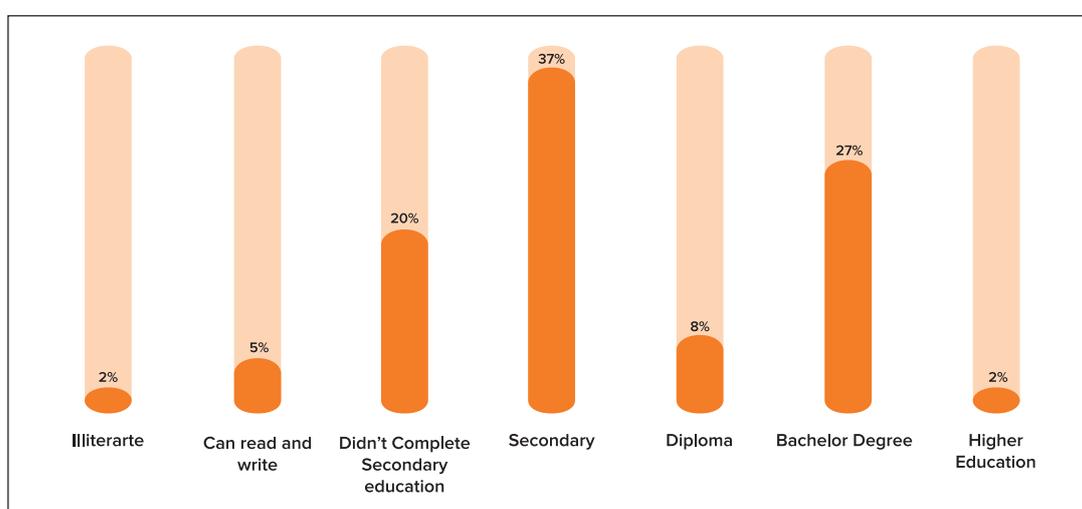


Figure 5: Distribution of respondents by educational level (N=1,469)

## Socio-Economic Characteristics / FGDs and KIIs

According to the below table, (N=41) respondents participated in the FGDs, of which 49% women and 51% men, and (N=36) interviewees took part in the KIIs – divided between 58% women and 42% men.<sup>7</sup>

| Municipalities                                     | FGDs participants |                | KIIs participants |                |
|--|-------------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|
|  | N= 41             | Total sample % | N= 36             | Total sample % |
| Mo'ath Bin Jabal/Northern Shouneh                  | 10                | 24%            | 8                 | 22.2%          |
| Tabaqet Fahel/Northern Shouneh                     | 11                | 27%            | 10                | 27.8%          |
| Sharhabeel Bin Hssnah /Krayymeh / Northern Shouneh | 8                 | 20%            | 8                 | 22.2%          |
| Dair Abi Said/ Kourah county (Liwa)                | 12                | 29%            | 10                | 27.8%          |

Table 4: Distribution of FGDs and KIIs participants by municipality

<sup>6</sup>. Department of Statistics (dos.gov.jo)

<sup>7</sup>. Annex # 5: list of KIIs.

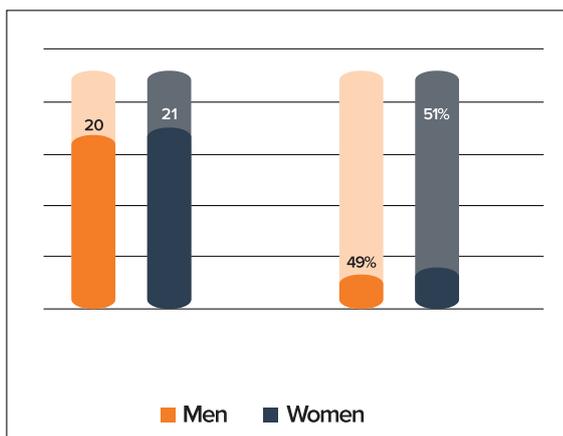


Figure 2: Distribution of FGDs by gender

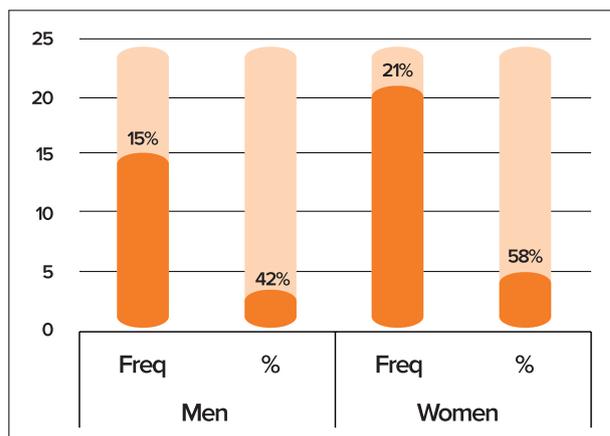


Figure 6: KIIs participants by gender

## Findings

This section presents the survey findings from all data collection sources, by gender and municipality where possible.

### Women's Participation and Decision-Making in Public Spheres

To provide a snapshot of women's participation in public life in the targeted municipalities, respondents were asked about the fields that women engage in. 28% of men respondents reported that women participate in the economy, compared with 28% of women respondents. On the other hand, 13% of men respondents reported that women are civically engaged, alluding in particular to being municipality council members.

| Fields of women's participation | Men   | Women |
|---------------------------------|-------|-------|
| Economic                        | 28.8% | 28.3% |
| Civic                           | 13.7% | 15.6% |
| Educational                     | 14.7% | 14.1% |
| Social initiatives              | 14.4% | 13.9% |
| Health                          | 7.5%  | 8.1%  |
| Local-decision making process   | 5.4%  | 5.9%  |

Table 5: Women's participation in public life by gender (N=1,469)

Although the vast majority of respondents reported that women are economically engaged, women's FGDs participants affirmed that women participation in public life is limited to being members of the local municipal council. In that framework, participants stated that they didn't accept women to be Mayors, in compliance with social and gender norms. Some women stated that **"We are committed to our husbands' orders and guidance"**<sup>8</sup>. On the other hand, the majority of men reported that **"women's participation in public life is limited and not effective because they are not decision-makers by nature and emotional. In addition, they do not have the required knowledge to participate."**<sup>9</sup>

8. Mouath Ben Jabl, women FGD.

9. Sharabeel Bin Hasnah, men FGD.

It is worth noting that the private sector is weak and has limited representation across the four locations/municipalities. There is a sewing factory in Mo'ath Bin Jabal municipality, and women prefer to work there because of the comfortable work environment it provides compared with the agricultural sector.<sup>10</sup>

Women and men economic participation is weak due to high percentage of poverty and lack of job opportunities both in private and governmental sectors. **Men FGD, Mo'ath Ben Jabal, Municipality,**

According to the chart below and based on respondents' feedback across the four municipalities, women's economic engagement is higher than that of other types of public engagement. As for the other sectors, (N=137) 18% of respondents stated that women participated in the educational sector; and respectively in Sharhabeel Bin Hassnah and Tabaqat Fahel, (N=120) 21% and (N=174) 19% reported that women participated in social initiatives.

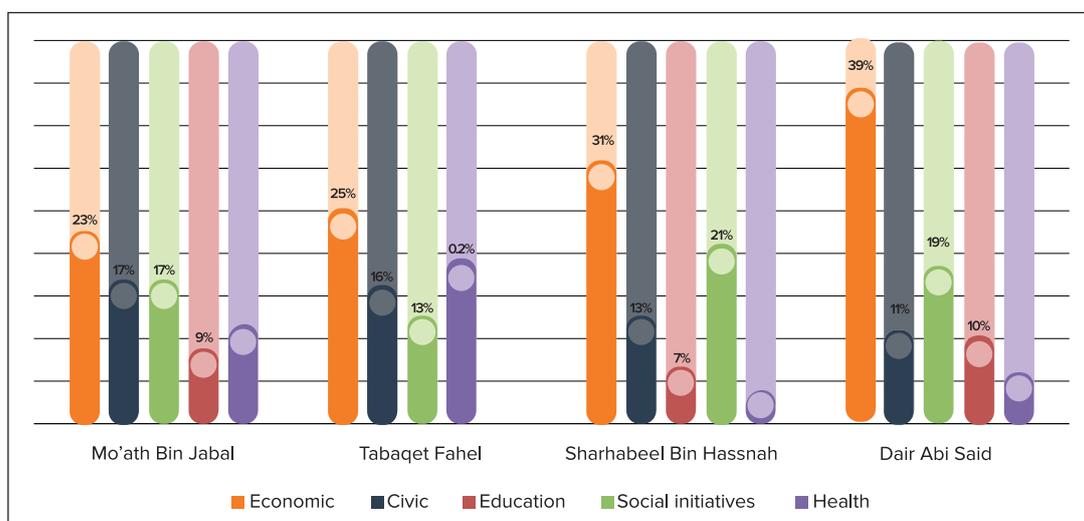


Figure 7: Distribution of respondents' answers about women's participation in public life forms by municipality (N=1469)

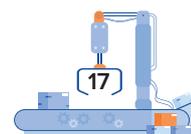
According to participants, the proportion of men in leadership positions is higher than that of women, except in the educational sector where women are found as directors of schools. **Men's FGD, Mo'ath Ben Jabal Municipality**

Although the vast majority of respondents (83.7% of men and 82.3% of women) across the four municipalities affirmed that women had the opportunity to participate in public life, it is worth highlighting that a quarter of respondents in Mo'ath Bin Jabal municipality 23% reported that women did not have these opportunities, which is not a negligible number.

|   | Mo'ath Bin Jabal | Tabaqet Fahel | Sharhabeel Bin Hassnah | Dair Abi Said | Men   | Women |
|---|------------------|---------------|------------------------|---------------|-------|-------|
| Do women have opportunities for public engagement |                  |               |                        |               |       |       |
| Yes   | 75.5%            | 86.6%         | 80.4%                  | 90.2%         | 83.7% | 82.3% |
| No  | 23.5%            | 7.6%          | 12.6%                  | 9.5%          | 13.0% | 14.2% |
| Don't know  | 1.0%             | 5.8%          | 6.5%                   | 3.0%          | 3.2%  | 3.3%  |

Table 6: Respondents' answers about the availability of opportunities for public participation of women by municipality and gender (N=1,469)

10. Tabaqet Fahel, CBO, KII.



The above findings are aligned with the results of men's FGDs participants who affirmed that men and women hold leadership positions equally, but women's leadership is only seen in the educational sector.<sup>11</sup> In addition, based on the same results, women appeared to have a stronger role in local CBOs than men.<sup>12</sup>

### Women's opportunities to participate in public life

Respondents were asked about women's opportunities to participate in public life, and the extent to which these opportunities were sufficient. In that framework, 71% of men respondents reported that available opportunities were sufficient, compared to only 30% of women respondents who agreed to this statement. In addition, 33% of men and 31% of women indicated women's responsibilities, gender roles and social norms as major reasons behind the insufficient opportunities.

| Reasons behind insufficient opportunities for women in public life       | Mo'ath Bin Jabal | Tabaqet Fahel | Sharhabeel Bin Hassnah | Dair Abi Said | Men   | Women |
|--|------------------|---------------|------------------------|---------------|-------|-------|
| Women's responsibilities according to gender roles                       | 33.0%            | 16.0%         | 27.3%                  | 44.0%         | 33.3% | 31.5% |
| Public participation targets men more than women                         | 34.1%            | 52.0%         | 20.0%                  | 22.0%         | 29.8% | 32.1% |
| Laws and legislation do not support women's participation in public life | 19.3%            | 0%            | 9.1%                   | 0%            | 12.1% | 13.3% |
| Rural women are not targeted by local NGOs                               | 10.2%            | 4.0%          | 21.8%                  | 2.0%          | 9.2%  | 11.5% |

Table 7: Respondents' answers about reasons behind insufficient opportunities for women's participation in public life by municipality and gender

Also, according to the charts below, 68% of respondents in Moath Bin Jabal reported that women play a role in local decision-making processes; compared to 86% of respondents from Tabaqet Fahel municipality and 85% from Dair Abi Said.

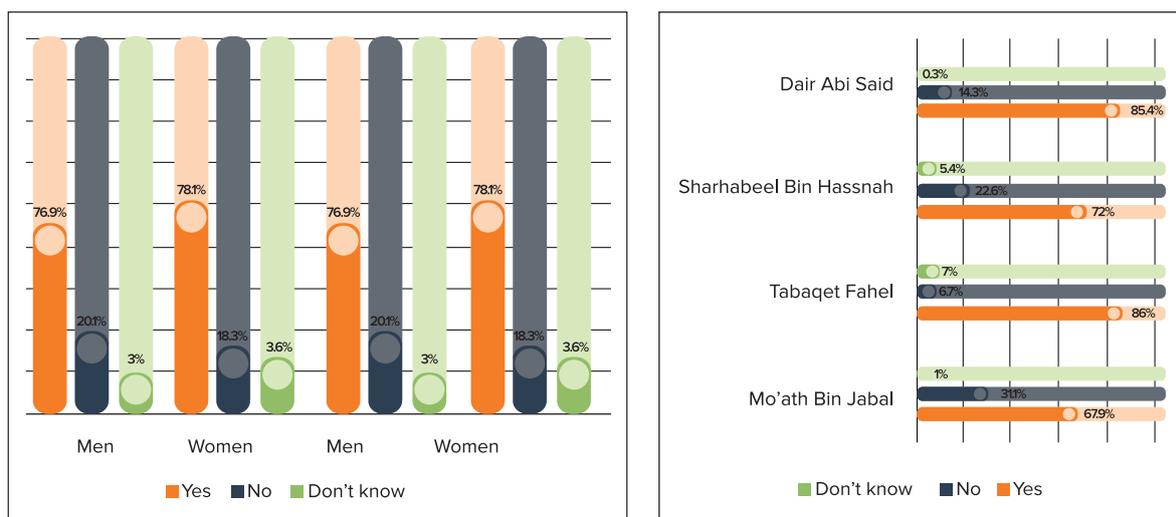


Figure 8: Women's role in the decision-making process by municipality and gender

11. Sharhabeel Bin Hassnah, men FGD.  
12. Sharhabeel Bin Hassnah, men FGD.

Having said that, the majority of men and women respondents across the four municipalities said that women’s role in local decision-making processes is only to execute decisions and not make them, (N=372, 34.5%) and (N=383, 42.7%) for both of them respectively. Underscoring that they mostly hold leadership positions in CBOs and educational institutions.

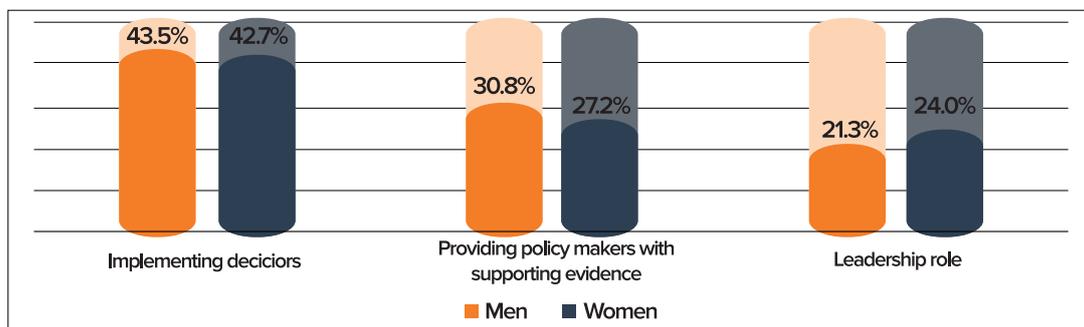


Figure 9: Women’s role in the local decision-making process by gender

In parallel, men emphasized that some leadership positions are not designed for women - such as local county executives, police station directors, and ministers - because women are emotional and they have a low ability to travel or stay outside their homes for long hours due to their gender roles.<sup>13</sup> This finding is aligned with statements of women participants in FGDs who said that “women leadership positions are limited to the educational and health sectors.”<sup>14</sup>

Simultaneously, the majority of respondents across the four municipalities (44% and 43% of respondents from Dair Abi Said and Mo’ath Bin Jabal respectively) said that women’s participation in the governmental sector is high compared with other sectors. In that framework, (N=30, out of 36) KIs reported that women’s participation in the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and the Security institutions is much higher than that of other sectors (private and CBOs).

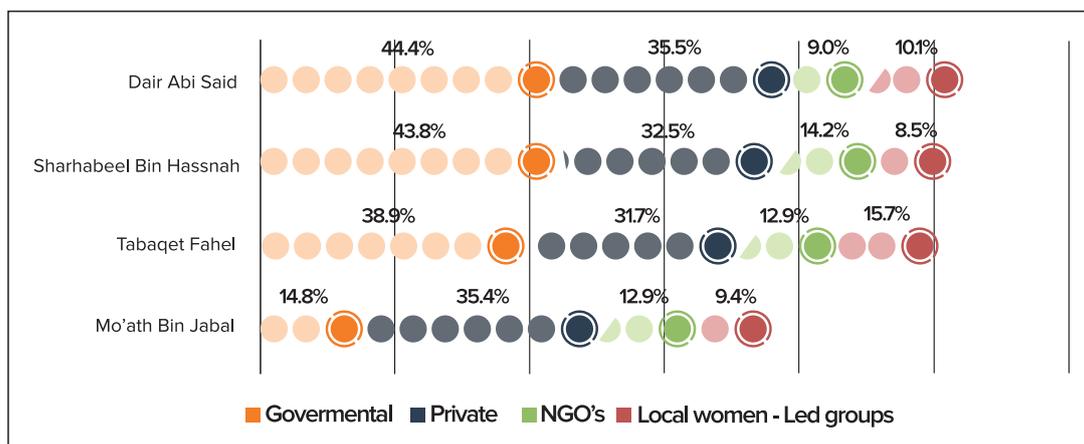


Figure 10: Women’s participation in public life by municipality

13. Dair Abi Said, men’s FGD.

14. Sharhabeel Bin Hassnah, women’s FGD.

*Women's participation in public life increases the load on men, who need to do childcare. Therefore, it is better for women to stay home and commit to their gender roles and obligations towards their family and children. Dair Abi Said, men's FGD*

Although the above findings reveal that women appear to participate in the private sector, both men and women FGDs participants said that **women economic participation is limited to agriculture and private farms, where females mostly hold primary roles. Also, women accept to work with lower salaries than men - who refuse to work in agriculture - to support their families.**<sup>15</sup> It is important to note that private farms fall under the control of the local

community, particularly men. This implies that women should avoid any communication with men while working.

### Types of decisions women engage in

54% of respondents stated that women can't participate in all types of decision-making processes. In this regard, 35% affirmed that women should not participate in decisions related to national issues, while almost 25% of respondents noted that women should not take part in decisions concerning their community's issues.

Based on these findings, it seems that women's role in the local decision-making process is limited and that the local community is not aware of the importance of including all social groups, such as women, in this process to ensure that their views, needs and priorities are being addressed by the local authorities and they are given the opportunity to voice their grievances.

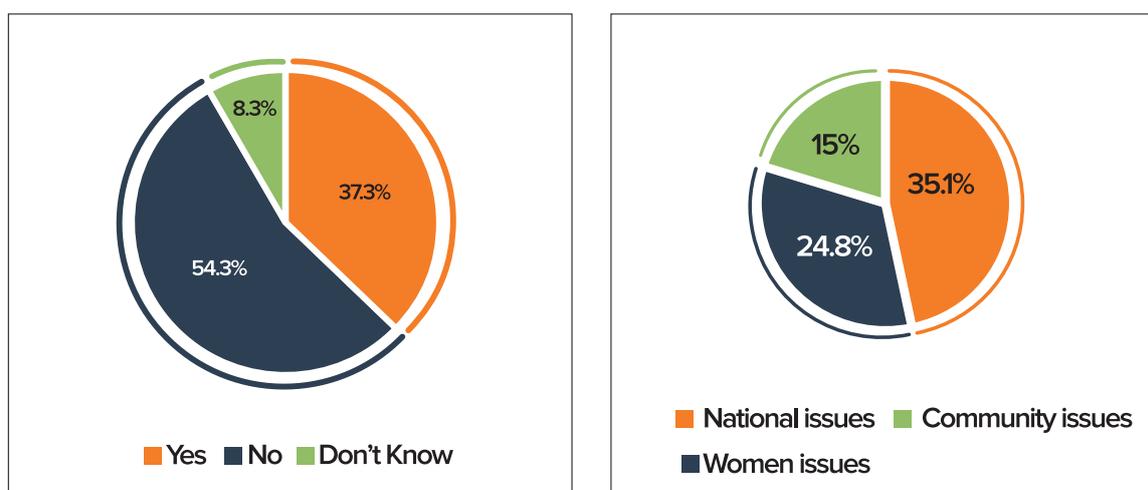


Figure 11: Women's role in the local decision-making process and decisions women can participate in

Participants in KIIs (N=15 out of 36) appeared to agree that women are well represented in the local decision-making process (either in municipalities or local government councils). They noted that this is mainly due to the existence of supportive legislation and laws such as the women's quota.

To conclude the above findings, the majority of respondents across the four municipalities reported that women participate in public life, particularly in the economy, agriculture, educational and health sectors. Women's participation in local CBOs is acceptable and supported by men in local communities because they are managed by women and target

<sup>15</sup>. Mo'ath Bin Jabal, women FGD, and Tabaqet Fahel, men FGD

women only. Additionally, there is a general acceptance to the extent to which women engage in the decision-making process as reflected in the KIIs, and certain engagement for women in the decision-making process is not perceived acceptable (i.e. national issues and issues related to the community).

## Women’s Experience in Public Life Participation

To obtain a better understanding of women’s participation in public life, women were asked about their actual, previous and current participation, as well as their aspiration towards their future participation in the decision-making process and public life. In addition, women were questioned about their level of satisfaction with this experience, and the changes they made in their communities.

In this regard, 72% of women respondents (N=795) reported that women were not asked by their community members nor the local authorities to participate in local decision-making.

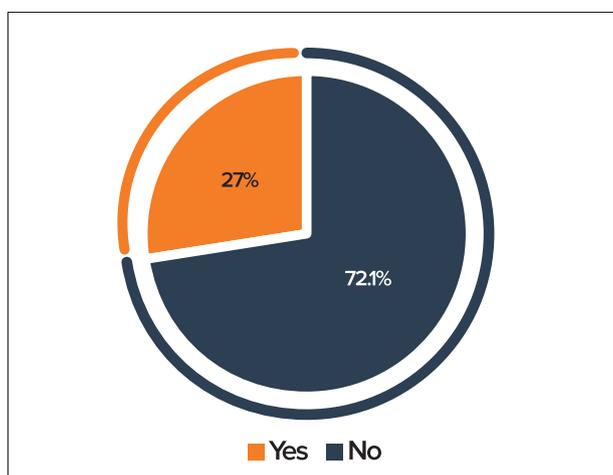


Figure 12: Women’s actual engagement in the decision-making process and type of decisions

As for FGDs participants, local CBOs increased women opportunities and ability to show strong and accountable participation in the decision-making process. According to men FGDs participants, women in leadership positions are under community’s mentoring and should demonstrate their capability to lead and make decisions.

As per the chart below, women respondents across the four municipalities asserted that they were satisfied with their participation and they are willing to share their experience with their peers in order to motivate them for future participation and become their role models.

*Women role models are very important, and men said that their attitude towards women leadership is based on women’s achievements and capacity to make decisions.*  
**Sharhabeel Bin Hassnah, men’s FGD**

Figure 13: Women respondents' satisfaction with their participation in the decision-making process

The reason behind respondents' satisfaction with their participation is that their expectations were limited and not necessarily aware of the extent to which they can engage in the decision-making process.

In that framework, 38% of respondents from Mo'ath Bin Jabal municipality stated that their participation enhanced their leadership skills, and 32% of respondents from Dair Abi Said municipality reported that their participation strengthened their role in their communities. However, although the percentage of women who were asked to participate in the decision-making process was low (N=205 = 27%, out of 795), the chart below reveals statistically significant findings regarding the positive impact of women's participation in the decision-making process.

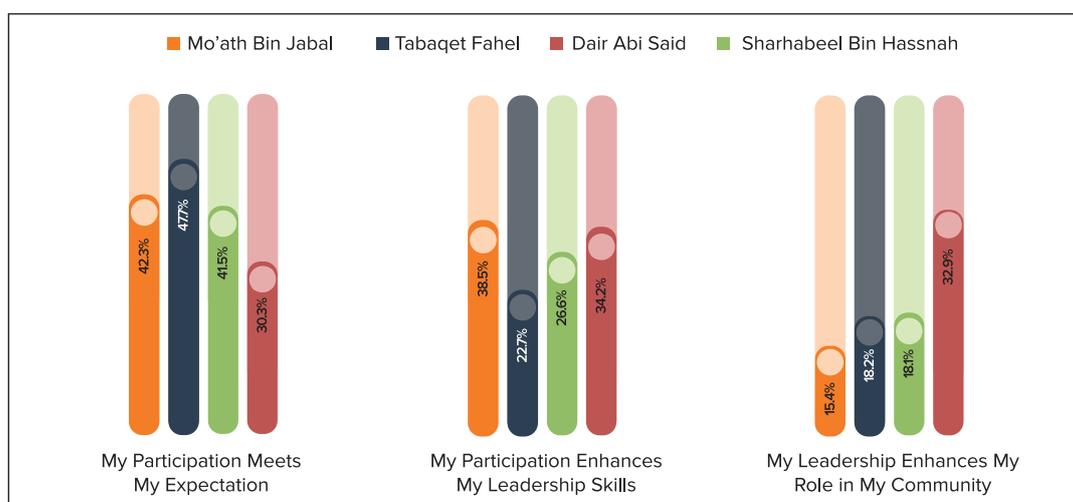
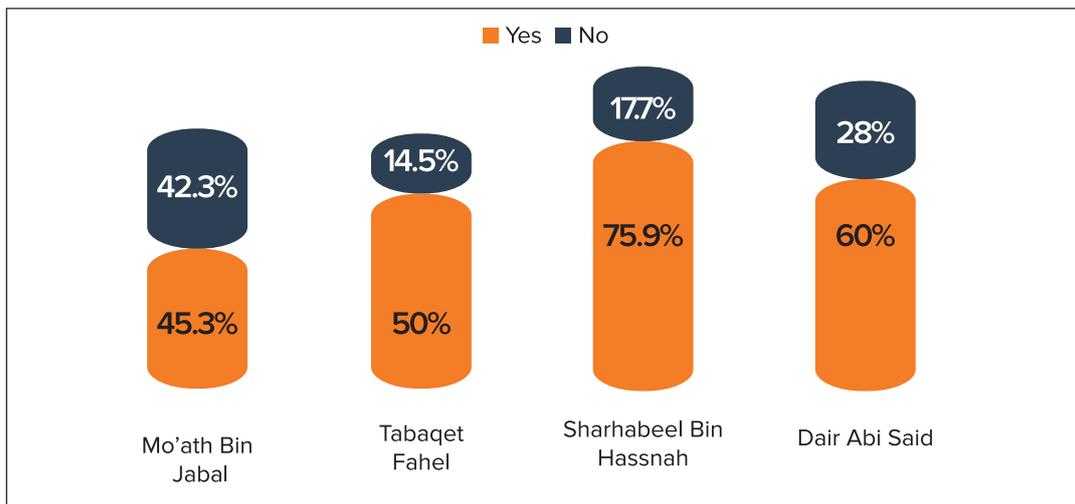


Figure 14: Reasons behind women's satisfaction with their participation in the decision-making process

Indeed, women's participation in the decision-making process should be maximized to enhance women's involvement in public life and to ensure that they are given the opportunity to voice their grievances and priorities in the future. In that context, it is vital to empower women with civic engagement skills and knowledge. Men and women FGDs across the four municipalities said that **“two main factors contributed to the enhancement of women's participation in public life; the establishment of local CBOs as part of the civil society, and the quota system, which increased women's participation in local municipal elections.”**

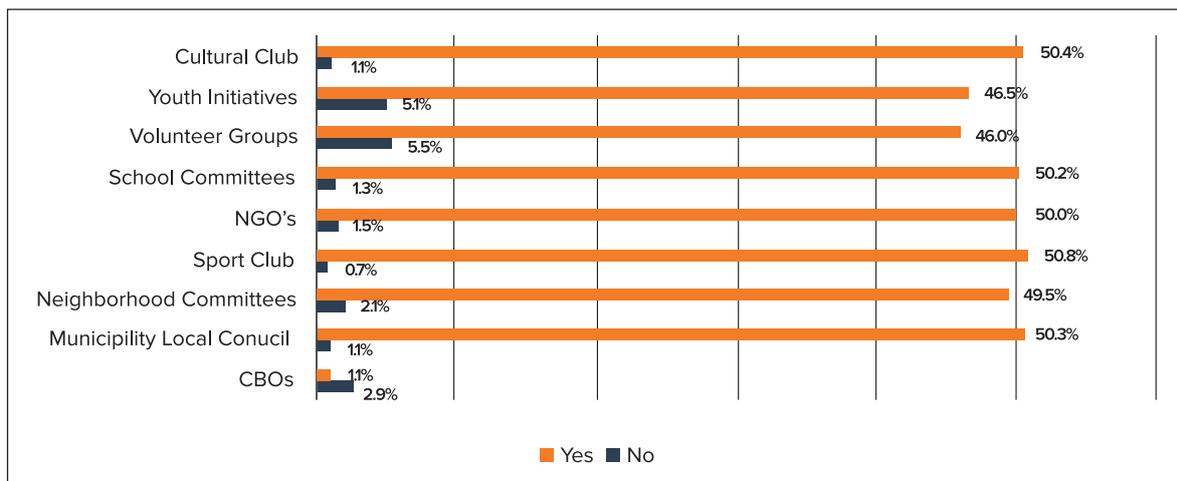


On the other hand, 42% of women respondents from Mo'ath Bin Jabal reported that they will not participate in the decision-making process in the future. This finding was explained by all FGDs' participants from both genders, who affirmed that communities' consideration of women in leadership positions depends on their capabilities, personal characteristics and leadership skills. Therefore, women are perceived to be having the knowledge, but lacking the required leadership skills such as communication and advanced managerial abilities. Also, women are considered emotional, which limit their ability to make decisions on a community level.



**Figure 15: Women respondents' determination on their future participation in the decision-making process**

To summarize the above findings, women's role in the decision-making process is limited to their participation in municipal councils as well as local CBOs, which are the main accessible and acceptable channels for women's participation in public life by the community. Therefore, 50.3% of women respondents reported that they were not members of any civic groups or committees - such as school committees and sport clubs.



**Figure 16: Women respondents' memberships**

## Women's Participation and Decision-Making in the Private Sphere

Women's role in the household was one of the main themes of this survey in order to gain a better understanding of women's public and private participation.

In that context, the vast majority of respondents stated that both men and women are responsible for household decisions; whereas men were responsible for financial decisions in particular. For instance, 43% of respondents said that men are responsible for taking loans. Similarly, 43% of respondents affirmed that men are in charge of spending decisions compared to 4% of women only, and 40% of respondents reported that men decide on buying properties compared to 3% of respondents who said that this is a decision that women make.

*Women can make all household decisions only in cases where men are working outside the municipality or the country but if he is available, she can only take decisions related to cleaning and decorating the house, as well as other decisions like planning visits to relatives.* **Mo'ath Bin Jabl, Men's FGD**

| Pattern of household decisions                    | Men only | Women only | Both men and women |
|---|----------|------------|--------------------|
| Spending and expenses                             | 34.0%    | 4.2%       | 61.6%              |
| Selecting higher education for males              | 14.4%    | 6.1%       | 79.0%              |
| Selecting husband for daughters                   | 18.6%    | 4.7%       | 75.9%              |
| Selecting wives for sons                          | 9.7%     | 12.0%      | 77.8%              |
| Buying property                                   | 40.5%    | 3.6%       | 55.1%              |
| Taking loans from financial entities              | 43.6%    | 3.7%       | 52.3%              |
| Sponsoring a family member financially            | 49.1%    | 2.9%       | 47.6%              |
| Voting for a candidate in municipal elections     | 18.8%    | 3.8%       | 75.8%              |
| Voting for a candidate in parliamentary elections | 18.7%    | 3.5%       | 76.2%              |
| Buying electrical appliances                      | 16.1%    | 14.5%      | 69.1%              |
| Visiting parents or relatives                     | 9.0%     | 6.5%       | 84.1%              |

**Table 8: Women's participation in the household decision-making process**

As for other decisions such as voting for a candidate running for a parliamentary or municipal election, the majority agreed that it is a decision made by both women and men, but 18% of respondents said that men are the solely responsible to make that decision.

Therefore, although the vast majority of respondents stated that women have their say inside the household, their participation is limited - in particular when it comes to financial decisions. To address this issue, women empowerment initiatives by different stakeholders - including CBOs, NGOs and INGOs - should shed light on these findings and invest in more qualitative efforts to enhance women's participation in financial decision-making of the household and improve their financial literacy.

This issue is mainly regarded to women's lack of confidence in themselves, in addition to social norms that undervalue men's encouragement of their wives to take decisions.<sup>16</sup> On another note, 67% of respondents agreed that most women are happier when they take

<sup>16</sup>. Tabqet Fahel, women, FGD.

care of the household and family while 43% reported that women are only responsible of small-scale decisions at the family level. Finally, and in alignment with the results mentioned earlier 55% of respondents reported that women can't make decisions on household expenditures without consulting men.

| Statements  | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
|---|-------------------|----------|---------|-------|----------------|
| Women are only responsible for small-scale decisions at the family level              | 4.0%              | 38.5%    | 7.8%    | 43.5% | 5.6%           |
| Most women are happier when they take care of the house and the family                | 5%                | 5.9%     | 3.7%    | 67.9% | 20.8%          |
| Men and women must share their home care tasks equally if women work outside the home | 1.0%              | 8.3%     | 4.7%    | 68.7% | 16.5%          |
| Women are responsible for decision-making at home, just like men                      | 1.1%              | 13.1%    | 8.3%    | 63.6% | 13.3%          |
| Women can't make decisions on household expenditures without consulting with men      | 3.7%              | 22.1%    | 8.6%    | 55.8% | 9.2%           |
| Women have a strong role in decision-making related to their households               | 2%                | 3.3%     | 5.0%    | 72.8% | 18.1%          |

**Table 9: Respondents' perceptions towards women's role in household decision-making process**

In general, all KIIs (N=36) reported that there is a clear variation in women's participation, representation, leadership and their ability to take part in the decision-making process between urban and rural areas. All KIIs reported that women's participation is much higher in urban areas than in rural areas due to population's density, better socio-economic factors and higher educational level. In rural areas, traditions and customs, male-oriented society, shame culture and low economic income strongly hinder women's daily activities and participation, compared to urban areas (all interviewees, public entities and CBOs). Increasing women's economic participation through imposing further supportive legislations and laws for women's participation will most likely improve it.

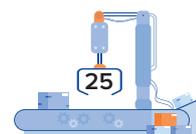
To conclude, it appears that women do not enjoy a high degree of autonomy in making decisions inside their households in spite of their significant contribution to economic activities. Women are given freedom to take their own decisions only in purely domestic matters like decoration of the house, purchase of domestic goods, making food, marriage of children, etc. but in matters related to children's education and finance, they enjoy limited freedom.

## Solid Waste Management (SWM)

Respondents were asked about women's roles and responsibilities regarding SWM, and the extent to which the community supports women's participation in men-oriented and non-traditional jobs.

According to women FGDs participants, women play a role in SWM, and often deal with supermarket owners to sell waste collected by women.<sup>17</sup> Indeed, respectively 67% and 61% of men and women respondents agreed to this statement.

<sup>17</sup>. Dair Abi Said, women, FGD.



On the other hand, men FGDs participants noted that young men collect waste, particularly scrap metal, and sometimes sell it to buy drugs and alcohol. This is a serious issue that should be considered by the local authorities. Participants also mentioned that the municipality is the local entity that manages waste, and they continue to face different challenges such as people's negative behaviors regarding solid waste, throwing waste, stealing waste containers or using them for their personal benefit.<sup>18</sup>

*While women are responsible of SWM inside the household, young men are the ones taking it to external trash bins. Tabaqet Fahel, Men's FGD*

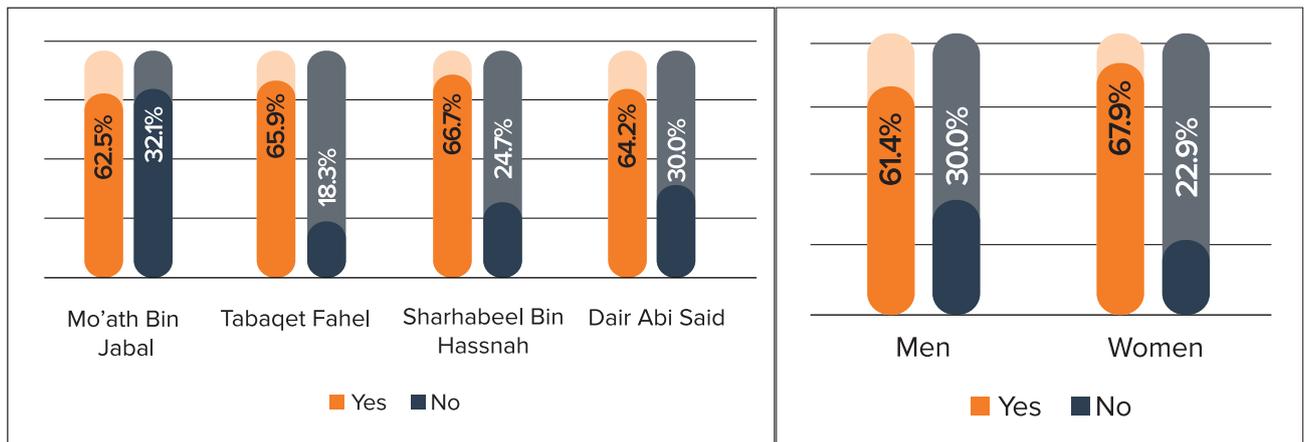


Figure 17: Women's role in SWM according to respondents by municipality and gender

Moreover, 13% and 17% of women and men respondents respectively reported that women cannot transport or transfer the waste outside their houses, as this task is limited to men according to the local context.

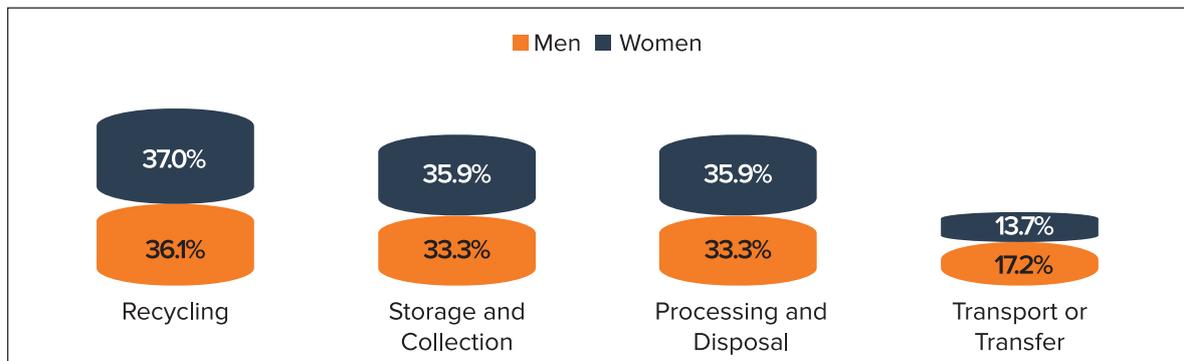


Figure 18: Women's role in SWM process by gender

A proportion of 26% of men and women respondents (N=319, out of 1,496) said that women had no role in SWM, explaining that it is men's responsibility. Also, 36% and 43% of men and women respondents respectively stated that women don't have time to care about solid waste. Therefore, gender roles and social norms still play a critical role in identifying women's role in SWM in the community and at a household level.

*Women's role in terms of SWM includes reduce, reuse, recycle, and responsible disposal. As women reduce the volume of waste at the household level, they ultimately affect the ability of the community to manage and handle waste. Dair Abi Said municipal council member.*

As for local CBOs Kils, women's role in SWM is limited to

18. Tabaqet Fahel, men, FGD.

household level. There are no recycling activities in households or at a community level apart from project-based activities. In addition, SWM culture and awareness is not considered important by the family nor the community. The vast majority of KIIs also suggested that if women established a SWM and 5Rs culture in their families, they would be able to promote it across the community. Ultimately, this would have a positive effect on local decision-making processes.

## SWM and Decision-Making Process

Simultaneously, the vast majority of respondents (64%) reported that both men and women are responsible for SWM decisions in the household, including recycling, sorting solid waste and home materials. On the other hand, (26%) of respondents stated that women only make SWM decisions, compared to 8% of respondents who stated men only, accordingly, women can take decisions related to SWM at the household level. The process is still controlled by social norms and gender roles, as described by women FGDs participants, who affirmed that women are the main responsible for SWM only inside the household, as men are in charge at community level.<sup>19</sup>

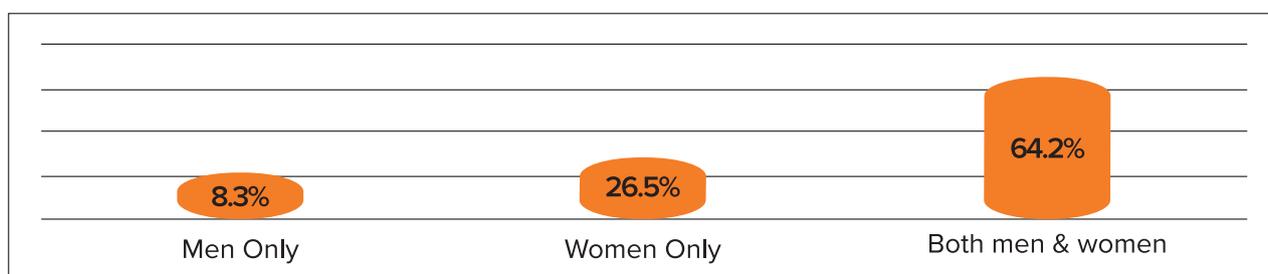


Figure 19: Women’s role in decision-making process regarding SWM

In general, the vast majority of respondents believed that women are responsible for SWM inside the household and as part of their domestic responsibilities, as per the results of the below table. Nevertheless, 21% of respondents from Tabaqet Fahel stated that women had no role in SWM.

| To what extent do you think women should have a role in the SWM process inside your household? | Mo’ath Bin Jabal | Tabaqet Fahel | Sharhabeel Bin Hassnah | Dair Abi Said | Men   | Women |
|--|------------------|---------------|------------------------|---------------|-------|-------|
| High   | 44.9%            | 24.4%         | 49.5%                  | 37.7%         | 35.9% | 43.1% |
| Somewhat   | 44.6%            | 54.6%         | 32.0%                  | 49.6%         | 45.4% | 44.5% |
| No role  | 10.5%            | 21.0%         | 18.5%                  | 12.7%         | 18.7% | 12.4% |

Table 10: Respondents’ attitudes towards women’s role in SWM by municipality and gender

19. Sharhabeel Bin Hassnah, women, FGD.

## Public Attitudes and Perceptions towards Women's Participation and Representation in Leadership in Economic and Social Domains

Women's participation in public life is one of the main elements of women's empowerment. The second objective of this study is to examine public perceptions and attitudes towards women in decision-making and leaderships positions and investigating root causes of negative and positive perceptions related to that; including societal position towards gender equality and women's empowerment.

The results in the table below reveal that 74% of community members have positive attitudes and perceptions towards women's participation in economic life as well as in the decision-making process. However, 77% of respondents assured that women's participation in public life faces different challenges. Indeed, negative perceptions were clearly mentioned during men's FGDs regarding women's participation and representation as they indicated that women should abide by social norms in order not to harm traditional gender roles in the society. This was particularly explained by the increase of tension inside families, leading to divorce or separation on accounts of women's involvement in public and economic life as well as the additional responsibilities added on women due to their engagement.<sup>20</sup>

In parallel, 71% of respondents agreed that their communities believed that men have a major role in household decision-making compared with women. In addition, 68% of respondents viewed that the majority of leadership positions are held by men, and 25% believed that females are not able to manage those in the same way as males.

---

<sup>20</sup>. Mo'ath Bin Jabal, men, FGD.

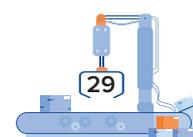


| STATEMENTS  | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly agree |
|---|-------------------|----------|-------|----------------|
| Women should have a strong role in public life, the same as men                               | 1.4%              | 9.0%     | 57.7% | 26.4%          |
| Women are capable of making community-wide and national decisions                             | .7%               | 9.6%     | 65.1% | 18.7%          |
| Women are aware of their role in the public life  | .3%               | 5.5%     | 71.1% | 15.5%          |
| Men are more capable of making community-wide and national decisions compared with women      | 1.0%              | 13.7%    | 56.6% | 21.4%          |
| Women manage leadership positions in the same way as men in your community                    | 2.5%              | 25.6%    | 50.7% | 10.3%          |
| The majority of local leadership positions are led by men                                     | .8%               | 8.1%     | 68.5% | 16.1%          |
| Community members support women's participation in public life                                | .5%               | 7.2%     | 74.6% | 8.9%           |
| Women's participation in public life faces different challenges                               | .4%               | 5.6%     | 77.1% | 10.5%          |
| Women's economic participation negatively affects their lives                                 | 2.2%              | 32.5%    | 47.6% | 5.9%           |
| Increasing women's economic participation will positively affect the national income          | .6%               | 6.1%     | 66.6% | 20.7%          |
| Women's economic participation is high in your community                                      | .7%               | 11.6%    | 69.5% | 7.7%           |
| The community believes that men have the major role in making decisions inside the household. | 1.2%              | 5.4%     | 71.1% | 17.6%          |

It is worth noting that according to men participants in FGDs, the majority of family decisions are made in a participatory manner, on the other hand, the main decisions that women can't make at family level are; financial decisions on expenditure, electing candidates in the parliamentary election, marriage and education of their children. **“Women can move the chair from one room to another, Also, “educated women can do their housekeeping roles and prepare food better than uneducated women”.**<sup>21</sup>

Despite respondents' positive perceptions and attitudes towards the importance of women's economic participation for the enhancement of the national economy, gender roles and social norms continue to frame respondents' conceptual understanding of women's economic participation. Thus, the results in the chart below clearly underline that gender roles and social norms are the main criteria to accept or refuse women's economic participation by the community.

<sup>21</sup>. Dair Abi Said, men, FGD.



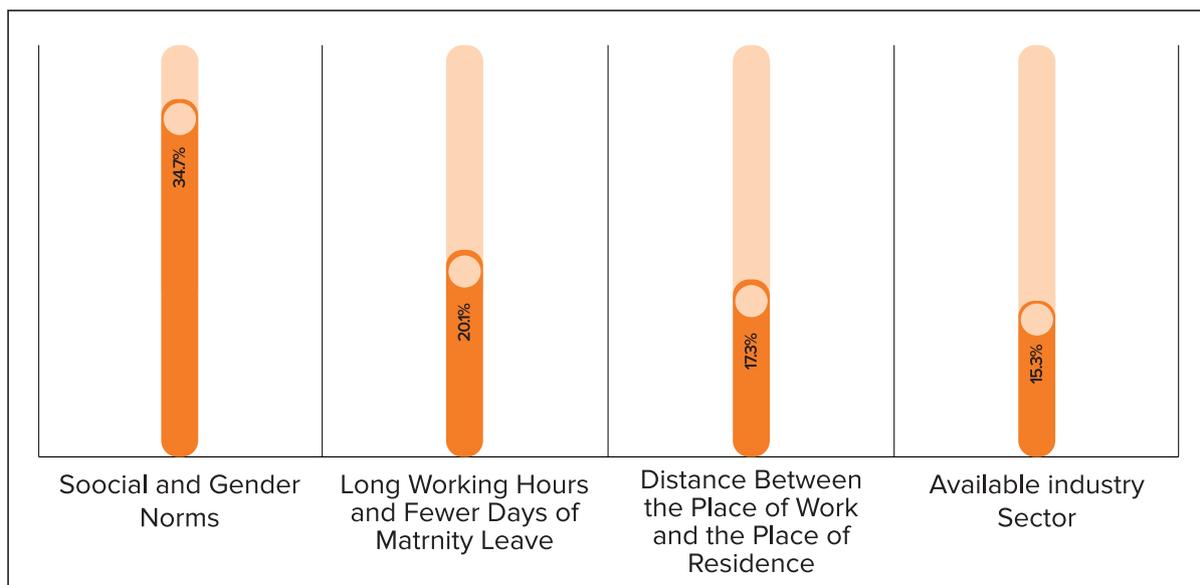


Figure 20: Reasons why a family member might oppose women working

As for the gender difference between male and female's attitudes and perceptions towards women's participation in public life and leadership positions, respectively 45% and 49% of women and men respondents believed that women's economic participation negatively affects their lives, and 62% of women respondents viewed that most women are happier when they take care of the house and the family, compared with 73% of men respondents who had the same view.

| Scale Statements   | Men               |          |       |                | Women             |          |       |                |
|--|-------------------|----------|-------|----------------|-------------------|----------|-------|----------------|
|  | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly agree | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly agree |
| The community believes that men have the major role in household decisions | 1.5%              | 3.8%     | 70.4% | 20.4%          | .9%               | 6.9%     | 71.8% | 71.8%          |
| Women can't decide on household expenditures without consulting with men   | 3.9%              | 21.5%    | 54.2% | 11.5%          | 3.4%              | 22.5%    | 57.3% | 7.0%           |
| Women's economic participation negatively affects their lives              | 1.8%              | 32.1%    | 49.7% | 6.1%           | 2.5%              | 32.9%    | 45.6% | 5.8%           |

|  |      |       |       |       |      |       |       |       |
|--|------|-------|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|-------|
| Women manage leadership positions in the same way as men in your community | 2.4% | 30.3% | 48.7% | 5.6%  | 2.5% | 21.2% | 52.6% | 14.6% |
| Most women are happier when they take care of the house and the family     | .3%  | 2.5%  | 73.4% | 18.7% | .7%  | 9.1%  | 62.8% | 22.8% |

Table 11: Respondents' attitudes and perceptions towards women's participation in public life by gender

Furthermore, according to the chart below, women are still lacking community trust in their capacities and the importance of their contribution in decision-making. Nevertheless, 32% of men and women respondents affirmed that women are **somewhat trusted** as decision-makers in their community. Also, 15% of men respondents assured that women are **not trusted** very much. These findings need to be addressed by policymakers, decision-makers as well as CBOs and NGOs in order to employ the most effective mechanisms to enhance community's trust in women's capabilities and the value of women's engagement in the decision-making process.

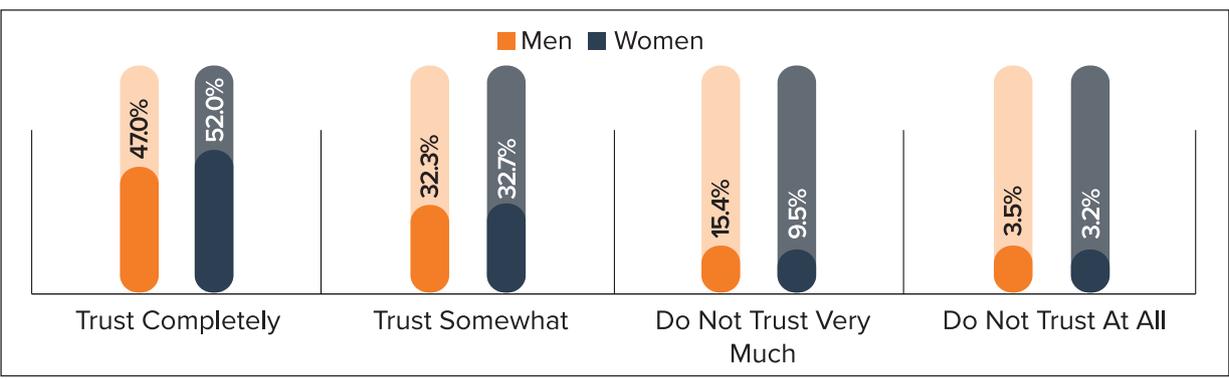


Figure 21: Respondents' attitudes and perceptions towards women in decision-making positions by gender

Despite recent policies and initiatives designed to promote gender equality in the household and workplace as well as gender diversity among local authority, women in leadership positions remain low across the four municipalities.

The results in the chart below revealed that the vast majority of respondents (56%) who did not trust women as decision-makers justified their positions by community's belief that leadership positions are solely for men. Also, 17% of respondents indicated that women cannot be trusted as policy-makers due to their lack of skills and knowledge.

*The majority of participants reported that women had the ability to take all family decisions such as daily domestic work and children's homework. Marriage decisions for both male and female is limited to men at the household level. Mo'ath Bin Jabal, Men's FGD.*

Consequently, it is important to highlight the need to strengthen women's capacities and skills in term of public participation, decision- making, advocacy and community organizing as well as civic engagement.

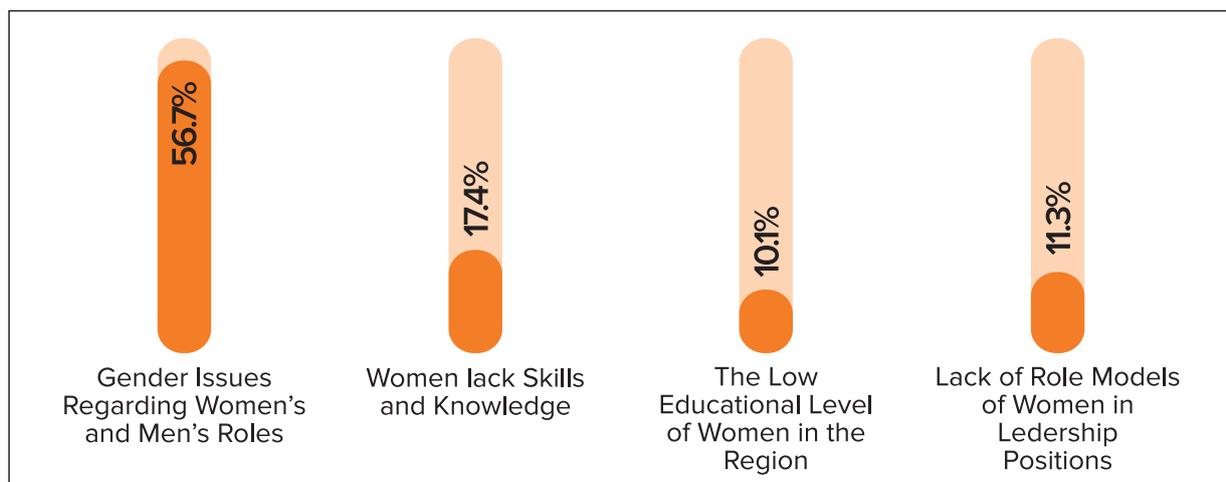


Figure 22: Reasons behind respondents' distrustful attitudes towards women as decision-makers

To reflect on the above, although respondents had some positive attitudes and perceptions towards women's participation in public life and decision-making, overall perceptions and attitudes of the community towards women's participation in public life and decision-making inside and outside the household are negative. Therefore, more in-depth and comprehensive efforts should be invested by national and international entities from different sectors to ensure that gender mainstreaming becomes a cross-cutting theme that is considered in Programmes' design and implementation in order to ensure that women are equally engaged in public life and decision-making processes.

### Public Attitudes and Perceptions towards Women's Participation in SWM

According to men participants in FGDs, women are mainly responsible for SWM in the household. At community level, women have no role in SWM. Nonetheless, 48% of respondents disagreed that the collection of waste is solely the role of men or women.

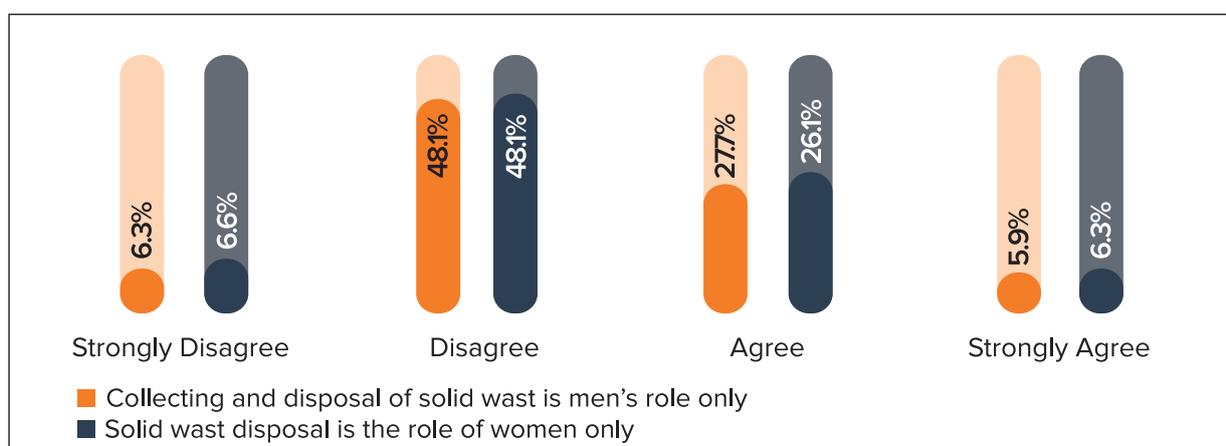


Figure 23: Respondents' attitudes and perception towards women's role in SWM

## Women’s Participation in Public Life and COVID-19

The current study was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic and took into consideration the impact of the pandemic on individuals and households. In particular, the study attempted to understand how COVID-19 affected women, their roles and responsibilities, as well as their ability to deal with all implications of COVID-19 in the targeted municipalities.

In that context, the vast majority of respondents said that women were affected negatively during COVID-19 pandemic at household level, as 47% of respondents stated that the crisis increased women’s gender roles regarding domestic work and childcare. Additionally, 44% of respondents stated that COVID-19 reduced women’s ability to move freely outside and inside their homes.

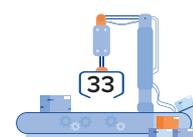
Simultaneously, the major negative impact of COVID-19 on women as indicated by all participants in the FGDs across the four municipalities is described in the matrix below:

|            | Dair Abi Said  | Tabqet Fahel   | Sharhabeel Bin Hassnah   | Mo’ath Bin Jabal  |
|------------|--|--|--|---|
| Women FGDs | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increased divorce cases, depression and trauma.</li> <li>2. Increased violence against women as a result of low economic situation and lockdown for long period.</li> </ol>                              | <p>Some home-based projects were affected negatively because of the huge demand on food production compared with other non-food products.</p>  | <p>COVID-19 impacted children’s education as the majority of women assured that their children were not able to learn through online platforms</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Limited women’s ability to market their small productive businesses.</li> <li>2. Limited ability to buy raw materials, which decreased their abilities to produce, sell and pay their debts.</li> </ol>   |
| Men FGDs   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. More pressure on women, new tasks and roles for both women and household.</li> <li>2. Lack of mobility, lack of social relationship with friends and relatives, and lack of income resources.</li> </ol> | <p>1. COVID-19 has a negative impact on the families; for instance, many employees lost their jobs, which reduced family income and the public services was limited to daily workers only which increase the economic obstacles faced by different households.</p> | <p>Increased divorce cases, depression and trauma, and increase in violence against women as a result of low economic situation.</p>               | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Limited women’s ability to move outside their homes</li> <li>2. Additional gender roles and housekeeping responsibilities such as cleaning and cooking.</li> <li>3. low economic situation and limited ability to provide basic needs.</li> </ol> |

**Table 12: COVID-19 negative impact on women according to FGDs’ participants**

The results in the matrix above indicate that COVID-19 played a critical role in increasing women’s gender roles and responsibilities in the household. Also, due to the lockdown and lasting curfew, women faced limited ability to move and practice their regular life, such as visiting their relatives and friends and participating in CBOs’ workshops.

Nonetheless, COVID-19 negatively affected women’s home-based projects, and particularly non-food projects such as clothes, makeup beauty and hairstyling. On the other hand, food and hygiene home-based projects were positively affected due to a higher demand on such products.



According to KIIs across the four targeted municipalities, COVID-19 has negatively affected women's participation in public life. Both men and women's roles have changed as men started practicing new roles at the household level, which were traditionally done by women such as childcare, teaching children and domestic work. On the other hand, tensions in relationships have risen, accompanied by a substantial increase in domestic work - such as cooking, washing and cleaning.

Nonetheless, FGDs' participants indicated some positive impact of COVID-19 such as:

- Increased family gatherings, in particular in presence of fathers.
- Enhanced women's access to internet, particularly websites and platforms, through online education of their children. This contributed to improving their abilities to use the internet and verify available information on the web.
- Enhanced social capital across the community.
- Enhanced a sufficient economy at home and created new consumption patterns such as recycling, home-made food, and reducing organic waste.
- Changed women's perceptions towards their economic participation to contribute to family income. Due to lockdown, women started to look for economic opportunities inside their homes to support their families as they felt more compelled to do so than before. Therefore, COVID-19 pandemic enhanced women's positive attitudes towards their roles in their families, and the critical need for more collaboration between men and women to provide for their families and meet their needs and priorities.

Simultaneously, according to the chart below, the vast majority of respondents (67%) stated that COVID-19 reduced women's ability to move inside and outside their houses. In addition, 65% of respondents said that COVID-19 increased the household burdens placed on women. Therefore, knowing that COVID-19's negative impact on women is ongoing, it is crucial to support women across the Kingdom to mitigate the negative implications of COVID-19 through adopting positive coping strategies.

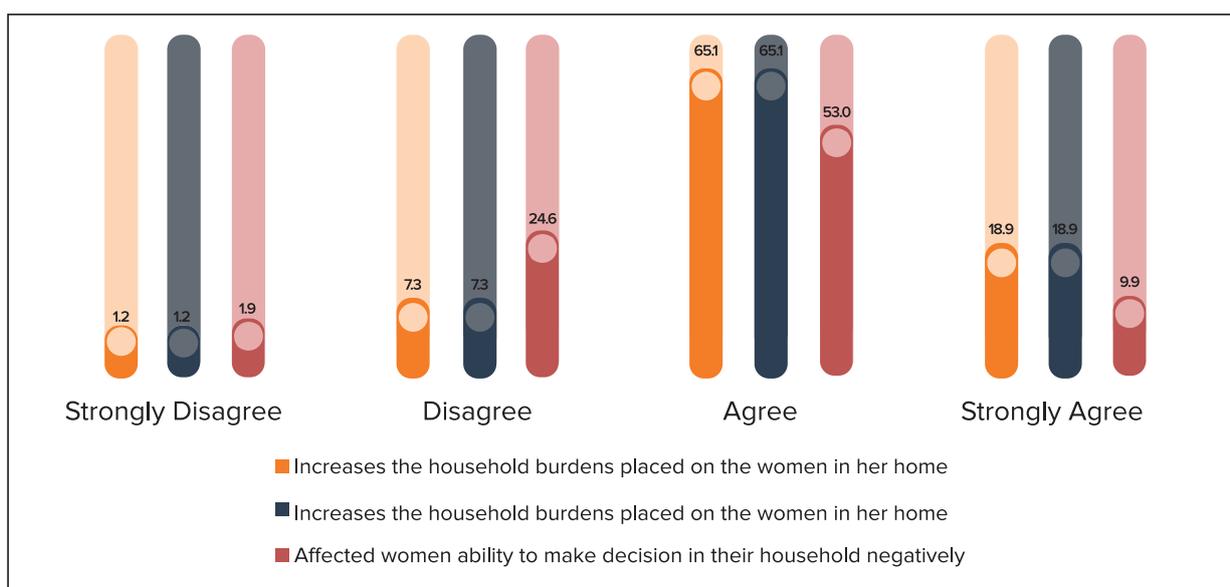
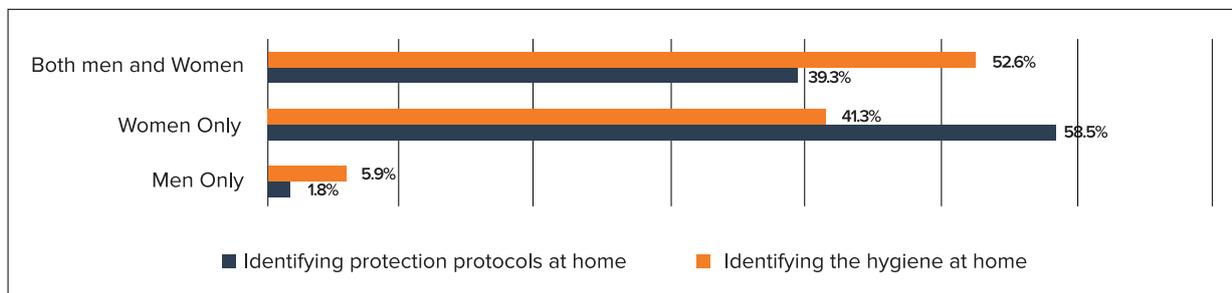


Figure 24: Respondents' attitudes and perceptions towards the impact of COVID-19 on women

As for women’s roles and responsibilities regarding COVID-19 such as abiding by health protocols, according to the chart below, 58% of respondents reported that women only are responsible for identifying hygiene protocol to be followed at home - such as frequent hand washing, allocating shoes in a specific location; as well as protection measures, which includes reducing the number of visitors, cleaning groceries, etc.



**Figure 25: Women’s role regarding health and protection practices due to COVID-19**

To conclude the above finding, the primary role of women is that of caregivers inside the household; all other activities are deemed as secondary. Women FGDs participants said that household and childcare responsibilities limited their participation in public life. Despite all that, in some municipalities, women were more active than men, particularly in agricultural, educational and CBOs sectors.

### **Barriers against Enhancing Women’s Economic Participation in Private sector, Civil Society and Local Governance**

According to findings related to women’s participation in public life, and particularly in the economic and social domains, the vast majority of both men and women respondents said that women face barriers to their economic participation on accounts of their gender roles, traditional expectations, and cultural restraints, which continue to limit women’s advancement, and exclude women from their roles in decision-making processes. From a traditional perspective, men are more capable to make decisions compared to women. Ultimately, this prevented women from participating in the local decision-making process.

Needless to say, there is a culture of shame and disrespect, which discourage women’s public participation in SWM jobs.

In general, the KIs mentioned that women have good knowledge and educational backgrounds to get involved in decision-making processes and leadership positions. Around **(N=20, out of 36)** KIs emphasized stereotypes related to the way men and women are expected to deal with their emotions to explain why leadership is usually awarded to men.

In addition, because women are perceived as homemakers and caregivers, their responsibilities at home (childcare and domestic work) should come first, limiting their availability to take part in the local governance process, particularly after the official working hours. However, women sometimes have to attend meetings and conference outside the municipality which required from women to stay after the official working hours outside their households. All KIs suggested that in order to strengthen women’s leadership capacities and participation in local governance, they should undergo a set of training courses on communication skills, decision-making skills and stress management.

In addition to the KIIs indication to gender and social norms as one of the key barriers against women's participation in public life, according to men FGDs, the main barriers against women's participation in decision-making process is their inability to manage their roles and responsibilities inside and outside the household, and men's negative and discouraging attitudes towards women's participation in the local – decision making process may lead to violent behaviors towards women.<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, women participants in FGDs reported that women financial illiteracy reduces their ability to commit to repay their loans and increases financial burden on their families.

**“The best place for a woman is her home”. KII, Head of local CBO, Dair Abi Said.**

On another note, women's participation in the private sector also faces barriers, such as community's negative perceptions towards women's participation given the fact that available private sector entities in the targeted areas are men-oriented and community refusal of women's participation in bodies such as factories and agricultural farms unless they employ women only or segregate between genders.

As for the education sector, results in the chart below reveal that women's economic participation is clearly significant in the education sector with a total of 36%. Education is followed by health sector with 25% of women. However, these sectors have not experienced a high job creation rate for the past 10 years, and consequently women have not benefited much from the country's overall growth rates.

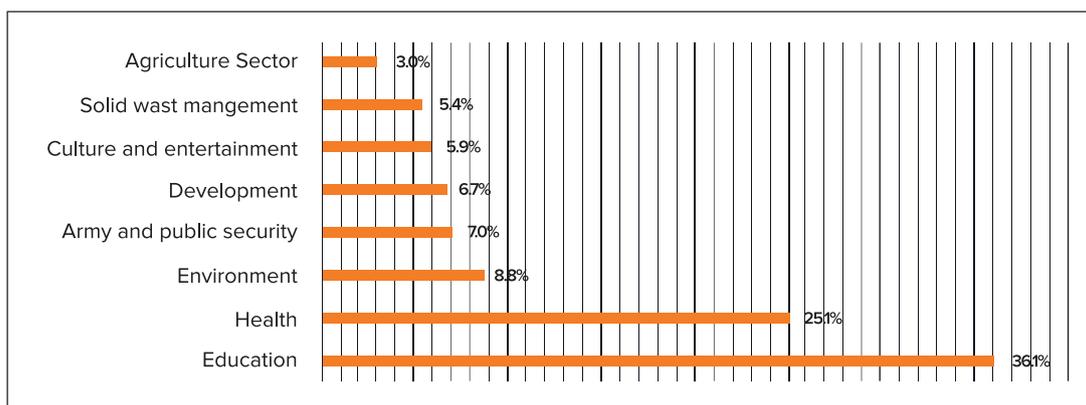
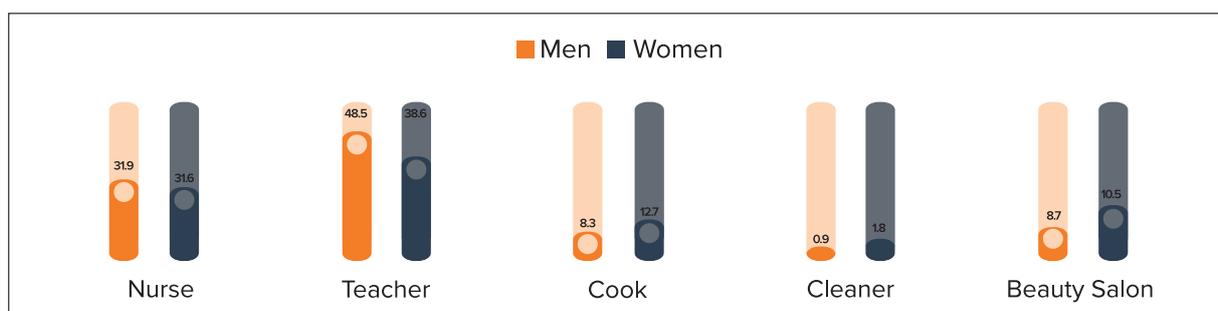


Figure 26: Respondents' answers about women's economic participation fields

Also, according to respondents, working as a “teacher” was the most suited job for women indicated by 48% of men respondents and 38% of women respondents. Thus, both categories appear to still follow traditional stereotypes around women, their roles, and economic participation outside home which is accepted by the community only if it abides by their actual roles and responsibilities inside the home (childcare and domestic work).



(Figure 27: Suitable jobs for women according to respondents by gender (N=1469)

22. Dair Abi Said, men, FGD.



Although women’s economic empowerment enhanced their self-confidence and ability to make decisions and mitigate gender and social norms, according to women FGDs participants, women still face gender-based violence at home. Moreover, men became more aggressive towards women the more empowered they become.<sup>23</sup> Therefore, it is important to note that women empowerment initiatives and Programmes should engage both males and females in order to enhance their positive attitudes toward women and their role in the household and community level.

As for main barriers that face women’s economic participation in the **private sector**, 16% of respondents reported that the main barrier was related to the conflict between women’s role inside and outside their homes, and 11% indicated lack of work stability and low wages as well as lack of community support.

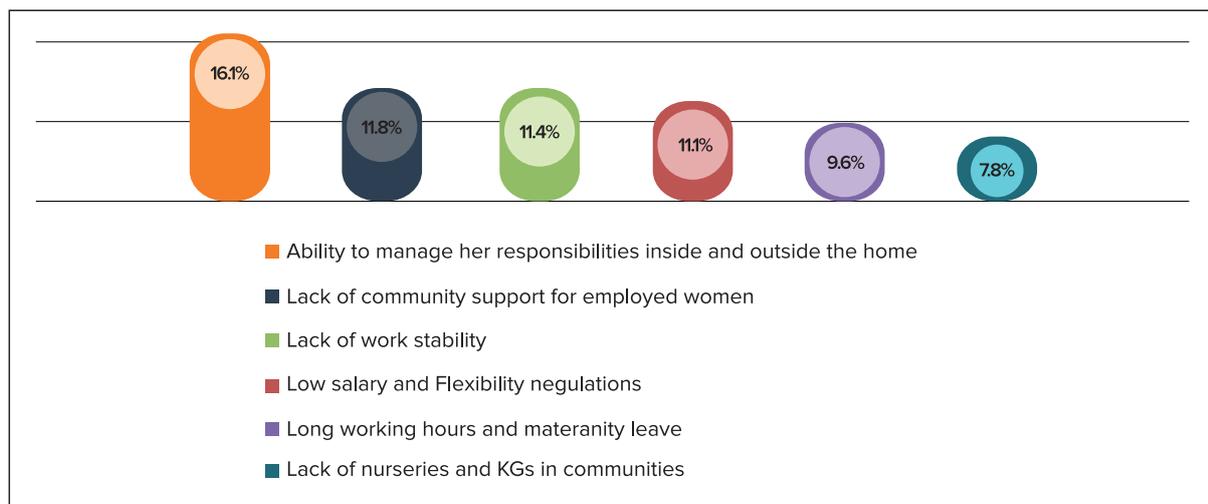


Figure 28: Barriers faced by women in the private sector according to respondents

As for women’s participation in **civil society organizations** such as NGOs and INGOs, the vast majority of respondents indicated that the main barrier faced by women was related to conflict between their home and work responsibility, with a total of 20% and 22% for both sectors respectively. Added to that the low wages and absence of flexibility, which increase the pressure on women and reduce their ability to manage between their dual responsibilities inside and outside the household.

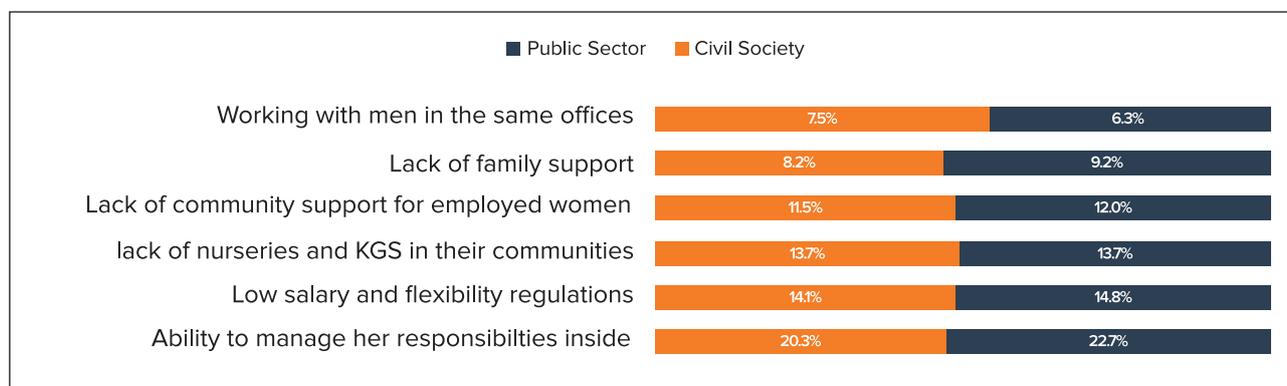


Figure 29: Barriers related to women’s participation in the public sector and civil society

23. Sharhabeel Bin Hassnah, Women’s FGDs.

Furthermore, 13% of respondents stated that women lack gender-sensitive support and services, such as nurseries and Kinder Gardens, across the four municipalities. Ultimately, these findings need to be taken into consideration in order to reduce disparities and empower women to realize their rights to access the labor force, determine their own life goals and help strengthen their communities.

In that framework, women participants in FGDs indicated that major barriers that hinder their participation in **local governance structures** are linked to work-life balance, gender roles and responsibilities inside their houses. In addition, some leadership positions require traveling, working long hours and working closely with men, which is not acceptable by the community.<sup>24</sup>

The improvement of women's participation in municipal and local councils' leadership positions enhanced community's acceptance of women's public involvement and trust in women's ability to make decisions.  
**Men's FGD, Mo'ath Bin Jabal.**

Moreover, the community underestimates volunteer work due to associated lack of income. In addition, weak infrastructure and public transportation limit women's capacity to participate in local governance structures.<sup>25</sup>



Figure 30: Barriers related to women's participation in local governance

Constantly, women are also held back economically due to poverty, lack of adequate time for self-care and development, which forces them to remain exclusively responsible for unpaid care work at home.<sup>26</sup>

Therefore, according to 21% of respondents, women's low ability to manage between their responsibilities inside and outside the home is a barrier to their economic participation.

<sup>24</sup>. Dai Abi Said, Men's FGDs.

<sup>25</sup>. Mo'ath Bin Jabal, Women's FGDs.

<sup>26</sup>. Sharhabeel Bin Hasnah, women's FGD.

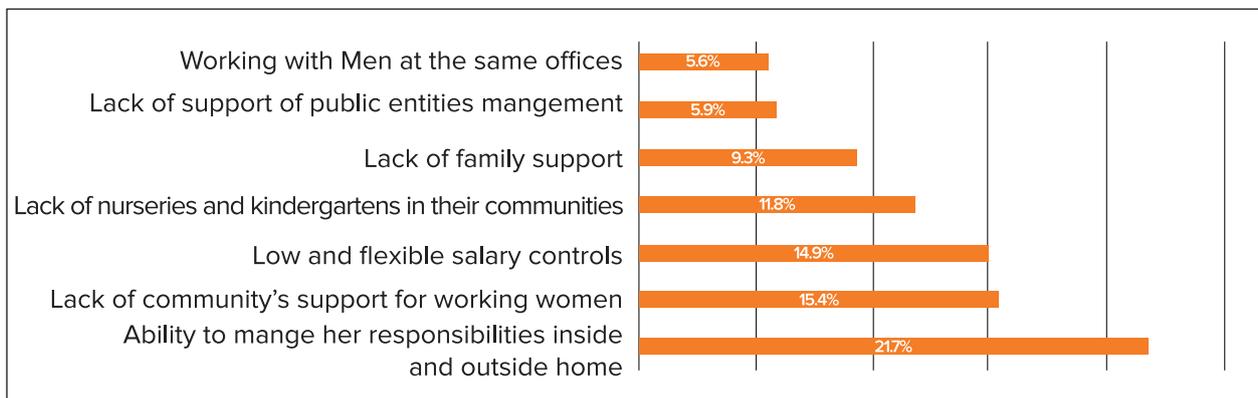


Figure 31: Barriers related to women's economic participation according to respondents

Moreover, according to men's FGDs participants, women suffer from financial illiteracy, which limits their ability to start businesses. Needless to mention the negative competition among females who establish the same productive projects, which limits the available market for their products and reduces profit. Also, women's low educational attainment and management skills reduces sustainability of their home-based projects.<sup>27</sup>

Home-based projects are the most effective and appropriate form of economic participation. Women's FGD, **Sharhabeel Bin Hassnah**

As for the barriers related to women's participation in **SWM**, 25% of respondents said that it lacks community's support, and respectively 16% and 15% of respondents said that women lack experience in the field as well as lack the required skills.

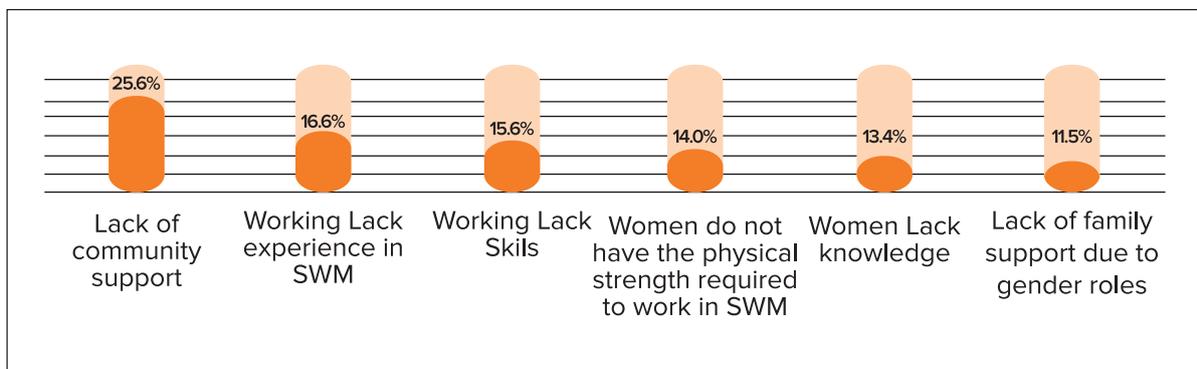


Figure 32: Barriers related to women's participation in SWM according to respondents

27. Tabaqet Fahel, women's FGD.

## Public Attitudes and Perceptions towards the role of CBOs in Raising Community Awareness about Women's Rights

It is important to highlight that 40 out of 66 CBOs in Dair Abi Said are led by women. Despite that, the majority of local CBOs in the targeted four municipalities are charity-based. Their main activities are related to distributing financial and in-kind aid/assistance, especially during Ramadan, back-to-school season and winter.<sup>28</sup>

Around **(N=27, out of 36)** KIIs mentioned that local CBOs are strongly involved in activities aimed at raising community's awareness regarding women's rights, encouraging women's engagement in public sphere and combating violence against women. For instance, local CBOs provided lectures and conducted workshops regarding early and child marriage, inheritance rights and the disadvantages of early marriage. Furthermore, all KIIs **(N=36)** affirmed that local CBOs have strong and trusted relationships with the local community. The community trusts these local CBOs and their role in enhancing women's participation in public life.

*The majority of CBOs have female staff members, and CBOs headed by men also engage women.*  
**KII, Head of CBO. Tabaqet Fahel.**

Moreover, local CBOs create more space and opportunities for women's economic and public participation through raising men's awareness on the importance of women's participation in public life and engaging local decision-making authorities in women-targeted activities. Similarly, both men and women respondents across the four municipalities said that local CBOs in their communities have an effective role in raising community awareness regarding women's rights and public engagement, with 77% and 72% of women and men respondents respectively.



Figure 33: Respondents' attitudes toward the role of local CBOs in women's participation in the public life by gender

Additionally, women participants in FGDs stated that local CBOs' role is to empower women economically through small productive projects and conducting awareness-raising workshops. The major impact of these CBOs is to enhance women's engagement with the local community and in public life: **'I started my outside life and relationship with other women since I joined these CBOs. They are able to voice women's needs and thoughts to the local authorities.'**<sup>29</sup> Also, the community, particularly men, accepted and encouraged women's participation in local CBOs activities because they are women-targeted projects.

<sup>28</sup>. Dair Abi Said, women's FGD.

<sup>29</sup>. Mo'ath Bin Jabal, women's FGD.



Also, KII participants stated that local CBOs are very effective in raising awareness of women and local community about women’s economic participation and legal rights. They play a connecting role between local communities and international NGOs and voice community’s grievances to the relevant agencies, such as local municipalities.<sup>30</sup>

*According to participants, although local CBOs vary between active and inactive, the majority of them have a low impact and approach the community by focusing on charity and aid support. Mayor, Dair Abi Said Municipality*

Despite positive attitudes of participants in KIIs and FGDs towards the role of CBOs in raising community’s awareness towards women’s rights and participation in public life, local CBOs still need to enhance their role in the following angles:

1. Review their approach with the local community in order to target new groups and expand their coverage.
2. Adopt local governance approach to ensure transparency among target groups.
3. Change their training Programmes to focus more on women’s rights as well as municipal and parliamentary elections
4. Local CBOs usually implement regular awareness activities that lack sustainability and coordination with local communities and other agencies from other sector. Therefore, local CBOs need to enhance their networking and coordination.

Simultaneously, 45% of respondents across the four municipalities said that women in their communities prefer specific CBOs because they target women from all groups.

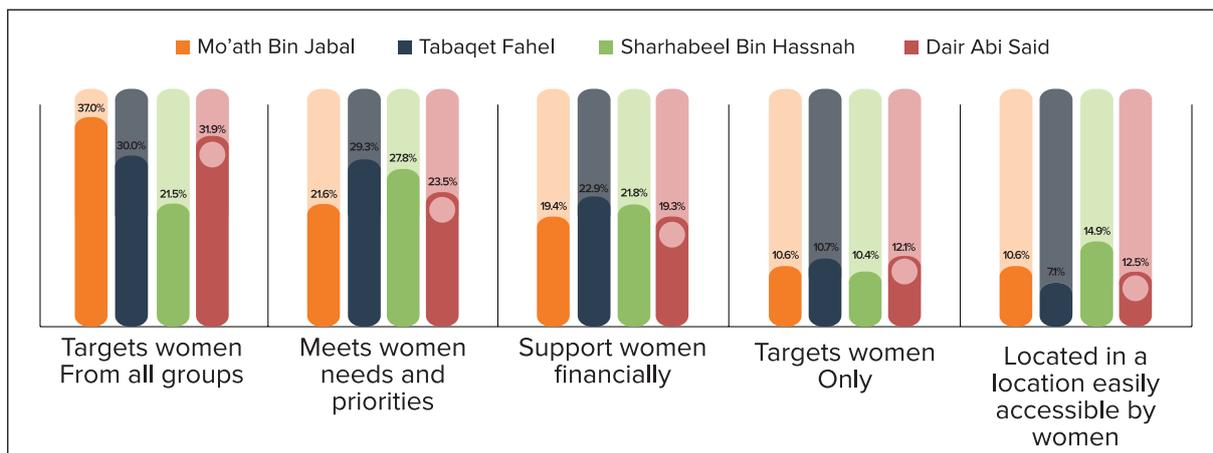


Figure 34: Reasons for the respondents’ preference of local CBOs by municipalities

It is important to note that COVID-19 affected the capability of local CBOs to target the most vulnerable due to the Government Defense Order (curfew).<sup>31</sup>

In general, local CBOs are acknowledged by respondents as key to enhance women’s participation in public life, and to promote women’s rights. Although the four municipalities had a significant availability of CBOs, still, they lacked the technical expertise needed to enhance their capacities in order to conduct more relevant activities. Also, it was acknowledged that local CBOs need to coordinate with relevant donors and international expertise, as well as create more sustainable Programmes and conduct capacity-building workshops on women rights and financial literacy.

*In 1970 the establishment of Al Yarmouk University was a critical phase regarding women participation in public life due to women educations, which raised women awareness and increased women self-confidence, and their ability to advocate for women rights. Women ‘s FGD, Tabaket Fahel*

<sup>30</sup>. Moa'th Bin Jabal, Local municipality council member.

<sup>31</sup>. Sharhabeel ben Hassnah, men’s FGD.

## Opportunities and Recommendations to Mitigate the Identified Barriers and Prevailing Social Norms and Expectations

### 1. Recommendations about the needed steps to be taken by different sectors to enhance women's participation in public life according to respondents

All KIIs indicated that there is an urgent need to actively promote women's participation in public life, in particular because of available funding related to this topic. This opportunity implies that local CBOs in collaboration with local authorities, such as municipalities, to apply for projects that aim at empowering women economically and promote their engagement in public spheres.

According to the chart below, in order to enhance women's participation in public life and mitigate major barriers they face, the vast majority of respondents underlined the importance of supporting women financially (17% of respondents for all entities and 16% for local CBOs). Also, 15% of respondents reported that local CBOs need to consult with women to identify their needs and design responsive Programmes accordingly. Furthermore, 20% of respondents assured that local authorities should increase economic projects.

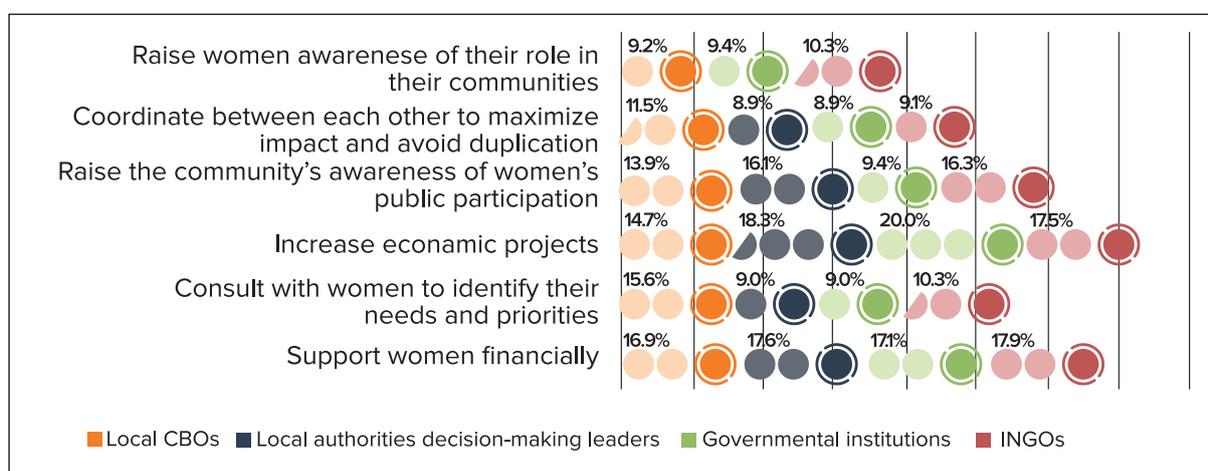


Figure 35: Needed steps to mitigate challenges to women's participation in the public life

Simultaneously, according to KIIs (N=36), local CBOs are encouraged to organize more training courses, roundtable discussions, sessions and capacity-building programmes targeting their own staff members and other society members to enhance women's participation in their activities. Local CBOs should promote, facilitate and allow more people to join them (avoid family-based CBOs) to increase the number of participants. Furthermore, it was recommended that all local CBOs work as a team and further strengthen the collaboration and coordination between them to avoid any duplication in the activities.

According to all KIIs (N=36), it is crucial to receive further support from local authorities and municipalities (financial, technical and logistical) targeting local CBOs in order to promote and enhance women's participation. Moreover, there is a need for further technical, logistical and financial support from international donors, in addition to the monitoring and evaluation of their projects. Also, capacity building programmes should be developed, such as project management, budget management, writing successful proposals and financial literacy, gender mainstreaming and do no harm approach.

## **2. Recommendations to enhance women's participation in public life based on the study's findings.**

Women's economic empowerment has a direct positive impact on the community for generations to come. There are many ways in which women could be empowered, particularly in the SWM sector, in the targeted municipalities. Based on the above, the KAP study recommends the following:

1. Support women's participation in public life by establishing gender-sensitive infrastructure such as nurseries and kindergartens across the four municipalities.
2. Build human and institutional capacities of local CBOs in order to have a stronger contribution in women's participation in public life through long-term and cross-sectorial programmes with more inclusion of men and other stakeholders to maximize impact and avoid duplication.
3. Establish SWM sorting facilities in the four municipalities to enhance women's economic participation.
4. Activate the Women Economic Empowerment Unit at Mo'ath Bin Jabal municipality to become an official hub for women's participation in public life as well as establish similar units in the other municipalities.
5. Conduct more advocacy campaigns and awareness raising session for community members both men and women to create better understanding of women's rights and promote a positive impact for women's participation in public life.
6. Support women role models in leadership positions to inspire other women and encourage them to resist negative norms and stereotypes against women in leadership positions.
7. Conduct capacity building programmes for local and public authorities, laws enforcement bodies, amongst other relevant stakeholders to guarantee their commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment.
8. Conduct psychosocial support programmes at household and community levels, with a focus on promoting positive coping mechanisms to the negative impact of COVID-19.
9. Support mobilization and advocacy on key challenges facing women in labor force participation.
10. Provide integrated policy advice and technical assistance to the government on legislation, policies, and strategies for women's improved access to income security and decent work.
11. Support innovative partnerships and platforms with the private sector, civil society and government for delivering training for women in non-traditional technical and vocational areas, as well as building their entrepreneurship skills.





