

## Partnering for Peace Through Women's Economic Empowerment

Violette Safadi\*

Peace and economic stability are inherently linked - as are women and men - in building a sustainable future for Lebanon. The country's development depends on the effective engagement of women at all levels - from decision-making to political, social and economic participation. The recent launch of the Mashreq Gender Facility, which aims at increasing women's participation in the labor market, as well as of Lebanon's National Action Plan on UN Resolution 1325 are testaments to the Government of Lebanon's strategic commitment to advancing the role of women in furthering peace, security and economic growth.

Governmental entities, civil society, media and private sector are key partners to ensure this reform agenda results in concrete action and real change. The Ministry of State for Economic Empowerment of Women and Youth (EEWAY) is designing and implementing programs and partnerships that champion gender-sensitive policies and opportunities that enable women to more effectively participate in the labor market. This includes advocating for an improved enabling environment that ensures the rights of women in the work place, promotes family-friendly policies and practices, and upholds the positive roles that women play at work, at home, and in society at large.

We are partnering with private sector companies and membership organizations, such as the Women Leaders Council and the Lebanese League of Women in Business, to advance economic opportunities for women, close the gaps they face in access to markets and finance, as well as to advocate for the legal framework that facilitates equality in the labor market, promotes leadership of women, and combats discrimination and sexual harassment in the work place.

But to ultimately transform the structures of the Lebanese economy, we must improve the position of women by proactively engaging men. Men are our allies in transforming inequitable gender norms into positive ones; in reducing gender-based violence; and in promoting more equal relationships at home and at work. Ensuring women's agency will enable women to make choices that benefit their own well-being and that of their families' and of Lebanon as a whole.

\* Minister of State for Economic Empowerment of Women and Youth

## The Giant Worker

I wish my body were my land. I would put up my tent on it. No one would be exasperated by me. I wish my hammer was not made to knock down my house nor my little bucket to fill my debris.



Mohamad Khayata, Visual Artist



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The UNDP «Peace Building in Lebanon» project works since 2007 on enhancing mutual understanding and promoting social cohesion by addressing root causes of conflict in Lebanon. The project has been also lately working on addressing the impact of the Syrian crisis on social stability in Lebanon. The project supports different groups from local leaders and local actors, to educators, journalists, youth and civil society activists, in developing medium and long-term strategies for peace building, crisis management and conflict prevention.

### For more information:

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