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WOMEN DELIVER ANNOUNCES NEW HUMANITARIAN ADVOCACY PARTNERS IN LEBANON

Five women-focused civil society organizations in Lebanon selected to join new program to drive gender equality and the health and rights of girls and women in humanitarian settings

New York, NY, 13 March 2019 – Today, Women Deliver — a leading global advocate for gender equality and the health and rights of girls and women — announced five women-focused civil society organizations (CSOs) in Lebanon that have been selected to participate in the organization’s new Humanitarian Advocates Program. Women Deliver knows that women-focused CSOs with access to the right people, platforms, and resources can accelerate progress for girls and women affected by humanitarian emergencies. To help demonstrate their power and potential, the Women Deliver Humanitarian Advocates Program partners with five women-focused CSOs from Lebanon: the **Lebanon Family Planning Association for Development and Family Empowerment**, **Marsa Sexual Health Center**, the **Palestinian Women’s Humanitarian Organization**, the **Lebanese Women Democratic Gathering (RDFL)**, and **Women Now for Development**.

The humanitarian advocates will receive access to training and resources to help extend their expertise and shape programs, policies, and investments that affect their communities. Opportunities provided by Women Deliver will include in-person and web-based technical assistance around advocacy and communications, opportunities to speak on national and global stages, and a scholarship for one representative from each organization to attend the Women Deliver 2019 Conference, the world’s largest conference on gender equality and the health, rights, and wellbeing of girls and women, taking place in Vancouver, Canada, from 3-6 June.

“Women-focused CSOs are unsung heroes in humanitarian settings,” said **Katja Iversen, President/CEO of Women Deliver**. “The Women Deliver Humanitarian Advocates Program is here to help strengthen and elevate their voices to reach the national and global audiences they need to drive lasting change and impact in their communities.”

Each of the selected organizations lead efforts to help advance the health and rights of girls and women across Lebanon, including Syrian and Palestinian refugees. As a group, they have already driven tangible progress on a wide range of issues, including sexual and reproductive health and rights, LGBTQ+ rights, gender-based violence, and political participation.

“From the World Humanitarian Summit to the Grand Bargain Agreement, there is growing international agreement that more power, influence, and funding must be placed in the hands of local and national humanitarian actors, particularly those focused on girls and women,” said **Marcy Hersh, Senior Manager of Humanitarian Advocacy at Women Deliver**. “This program aims to do just that – by ensuring women-focused CSOs from humanitarian settings are present at decision-making tables that need to hear from them.”

The Women Deliver Humanitarian Advocates Program partners with women-focused CSOs in Lebanon because of the country’s ongoing humanitarian situation and vibrant and diverse women’s

movement. The country currently hosts over one million registered refugees, who make up a quarter of the population – the highest per capita density of refugees worldwide. Women and children make up 80% of the refugee population, but many of their needs are still unmet by traditional humanitarian responses. Local women-focused CSOs have actively worked to fill in the gaps, setting up health clinics, facilitating women’s safe spaces, providing livelihood opportunities, ensuring access to sexual and reproductive health services, and beyond.

“We are looking forward for this partnership with Women Deliver in order to enhance our advocacy efforts and highlight our work on gender equality and reproductive and sexual health not only in Lebanon but at the global level as well,” said **Cecilia Chami, Program Director for the Lebanon Family Planning Association for Development and Family Empowerment**, one of the five organizations selected for the program.

Katja Iversen made the announcement today at an event hosted by Women Deliver on the sidelines of the Commission on the Status of Women in New York. The event, *“Does Humanitarian Aid Need a Feminist Facelift?”* brought together local, national, and global actors to share solutions for creating a humanitarian system that places girls and women at the center.

Each of the five organizations joined the event either in-person or virtually to share their work:

- [Lebanon Family Planning Association for Development and Family Empowerment \(LFPAGE\)](#) is the oldest organization working to expand access to contraceptive services and information in Lebanon. LFPAGE provides reproductive health services, advocacy, and community outreach throughout the country, with a focus on women and youth, including refugees.
- [Marsa Sexual Health Center](#) is a Beirut-based organization providing low-cost, LGBTQIA-friendly sexual health services without discrimination. They serve anyone who walks into their offices, including refugees, migrant workers, and undocumented persons.
- [Palestinian Women’s Humanitarian Organization](#) is one of the few organizations providing services for Palestinian girls and women in Lebanon. The organization runs a health clinic that specializes in ante- and post- natal care, breast cancer screenings, and other sexual and reproductive health services, while also working to dispel myths around contraception.
- [Lebanese Women Democratic Gathering \(RDFL\)](#) is one of the oldest, nonsectarian feminist organizations in Lebanon. Their grassroots advocacy efforts focus on policy change, particularly around nationality rights, domestic violence, and early marriage.
- [Women Now for Development](#) is a Syrian women-led organization that focuses on women’s empowerment, participation, and protection for refugees in Lebanon and Syria. The organization uses advocacy and research to amplify the voices of Syrian girls and women and conducts research on the gendered impact of war and displacement.

A more detailed description of each organization can be found [here](#).

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About Women Deliver: Women Deliver is a leading global advocate that champions gender equality and the health and rights of girls and women. Our advocacy drives investment – political and financial – in the lives of girls and women worldwide. We harness evidence and unite diverse voices

to spark commitment to gender equality. And we get results. Anchored in sexual and reproductive health, we advocate for the rights of girls and women across every aspect of their lives. We know that investing in girls and women will deliver progress for all.

Our humanitarian advocacy provides direct support to women-focused civil society organizations, as women are often overlooked leaders during emergencies and their aftermath. We help strengthen and elevate their voices through training and speaking opportunities, connecting them to the global and national conversations that affect their work and lives. The Humanitarian Advocates Program is supported by the Government of Canada.

Learn more at womendeliver.org/humanitarian and follow us on Twitter at [@WomenDeliver](https://twitter.com/WomenDeliver).