NATIONAL REPORT: LEBANON

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EURO-MEDITERRANEAN RESEARCH COOPERATION ON GENDER AND SCIENCE

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INTRODUCTION

Lebanon has a small but diverse and dispersed science and technology community embedded in 41 universities and higher education institutions - 12 of them with science and/or technology faculties - and few research centers mainly those related to the National Council for Scientific Research, the Lebanese Agricultural Research Institute and the Industrial Research Institute. Given the small size of most manufacturing companies in Lebanon, private sector R&D is still very limited.

Convinced of the role that women should play in education and science, the Center for Educational Research and Development (part of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education) performs, since the academic year 2003-2004, a yearly census on schools, teachers, and students in public and private schools as well as in universities. All data are aggregated by sex. Moreover, the Central Administration of Statistics which is a public Administration within the Presidency of the Council of Ministers collects, processes, produces and disseminates social and economic statistics at the national level and provides all users with evidence–based information for decision-making. Gender indicators have been progressively integrated in the collection and analysis of data. However, the gender dimension has not been systematically tackled in the scientific fields.

When considering policies, the National strategy for women in Lebanon encompasses a range of policies aiming to empower women in the political and economic spheres in both private and public sectors, encouraging them to be more active and protecting them from discriminations such as unequal pay whilst encouraging female entrepreneurship. Moreover, efforts are deployed in different fields so that the participation of women ceases to be perceived as a right for women or as a gift awarded to them. It is, in fact, a duty for women to be included in bearing the responsibilities and obligations of citizenship, and a right for the Nation to benefit from all its active components. Although policies project the empowerment of women and despite many initiatives, concrete steps remain limited and lots of work is still required before we can show real improvement.

Sex-disaggregated data related to women in the labour force and in particular in scientific fields are of utmost importance, yet inexistent in Lebanon. The Lebanese team of the SHEMERA project aims to fill these gaps by analysing gender inequality in science, and developing recommendations for enhancing gender equality in science. To do so, a methodology focusing on statistics on women in all fields of science, gender equality policies in science, and research on gender inequalities in scientific careers was adopted.

1. STATISTICS ON WOMEN IN SCIENCE

Methodological and data issues

Main data sources:
- World Bank (WB)
- Central Administration of Statistics (CAS)
- Ministry of Higher Education (MHE)

Many of the Lebanese data are based on a subsample of three universities that together represent 48% of the tertiary student population in 2010:
- the Lebanese University (UL)
- the Saint-Joseph University of Beirut (USJ)
- the University of Balamand (UOB)

As all data have been collected from official government entities, the statistical expert judges that the data are accurate and reliable.
The main gaps in the Lebanese data concern researchers in the government sector, the business enterprise sector and the private non-profit sector. Data on researchers are available only for the higher education sector. Even in the higher education sector, it is impossible to study vertical segregation in research as, in the absence of an R&D survey, the category of researcher cannot be analysed by distinguishing between researchers, technicians and others.

Moreover, we have no information on R&D expenditure and all data relative to research funding (number of applicants and recipients) are missing.

Based on the subsample of universities, data were gathered on PhD students and graduates (by field of science) and personnel at grade A for just one year, 2010, but it is impossible to analyse the situation over time.

In the absence of a survey on wages, we have no raw data to estimate the gender wage gap in science or research.

Female underrepresentation in decision-making in science and research can be studied through three indicators: the share of female heads of higher education institutions, the share of female heads of universities and the proportion of women on scientific and research boards.

Introduction

In Lebanon, female and male employment rates are high and very similar. In the 25-64 age group, in 2009, the male employment rate stood at 79% and the female rate at 80% (Central Administration of Statistics, 2009). These figures contrast sharply with the World Development Indicators published by the World Bank according to which in 2012 the male employment rate, not for the population aged 25-64 but for the larger population of people aged 15+, stood at 65% compared with a much lower female rate of just 20%.

The Central Administration of Statistics reported a gender wage gap of 6% for 2007. Lebanon has 42 universities or other higher education institutions. The number of female students is higher than that of male students. In 2010, out of a total number of 180,850 students, 96,202 were women and 84,648 were men. The three biggest universities, in terms of number of students, are the Lebanese University, the Beirut Arab University and the Lebanese International University. Together these universities represented 57% of the total population of higher education students in Lebanon in 2010.

The presence of women in science

Women outnumber men among people who have successfully completed tertiary education in a Science & Technology (S&T) field of study. These fields are natural sciences, engineering and technology, medical sciences, agricultural sciences, social sciences, humanities, and others. In 2004, women represented 55% of this population and 56% in 2010.

On the contrary, the population of researchers in Lebanon remains male-dominated. In the higher education sector (no data are available for the government, the business enterprise and the private non-profit sectors), the share of women among researchers aged 25-64 stood at 37% in 2010. This nevertheless meant a significant improvement compared with 2004 when just 31% of researchers were female in Lebanon.

National data are lacking to break down the research population by age group. However, based on a subsample of three universities, the Lebanese University (UL), the Saint-Joseph University of Beirut (USJ) and the University of Balamand (UOB), which taken together represented 48% of the population of higher education students in 2010, it is possible to analyse researchers by age group. Graph 1 shows that female researchers are slightly younger than male researchers. The largest shares of both female and male researchers (44% for both sexes) are in the group of 45-54 year olds. In the younger age groups, the share of female researchers exceeds that of male researchers and in the older age category, the inverse is observed.
Scientific fields or horizontal segregation

In the subsample of three universities representing 48% of all students in higher education in 2010, UL, USJ and UOB, there were 194 PhD graduates in 2010, 52% were women. These women were distributed across the different fields of science as shown by graph 2. Women form a majority of PhD graduates in Humanities and arts (60% of women) and in Social sciences, business and law (63% of women). The PhD population is sex-balanced in Education but also in Science, mathematics and computing. In Health and welfare, a field which in Europe is generally highly feminized, just 40% of PhD graduates were women.

When we look at how the population of researchers is distributed across fields of science (graph 3) we see that most researchers in Lebanon are in the humanities, the social sciences and the natural sciences. Whereas the shares of female researchers are slightly larger than the shares of male researchers in the humanities and the social sciences, the opposite is observed for the natural sciences. The field with the greatest gender imbalance in 2010 is that of engineering and technology: 21% of male researchers compared with just 11% of female researchers are active in this field. 9% of female researchers were in the medical sciences and 6% of male researchers. The agricultural sciences host a very small and identical share of female and male researchers (2%).
The compound annual growth rate between 2004 and 2010 of the number of female researchers has been largest in the field where there is the largest gender imbalance in the research population, that of engineering and technology. In this field, the number of female researchers has grown at an annual rate of 12.2%. Growth rates of around 10% were also observed in the social sciences, the natural sciences and the agricultural sciences (which in 2010 still hosts just 2% of female and male researchers). The number of female researchers in the humanities has grown at a much slower pace, 4.2% on average per year. Finally, in the medical sciences the number of female researchers has been on the decline but still in 2010 their share (9%) was higher than that of male researchers (6%).

Table 1: Compound annual growth rates of female researchers in the Higher Education Sector (HES) by field of science, 2004-2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field of Science</th>
<th>Growth Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Natural sciences</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering and technology</td>
<td>12.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical sciences</td>
<td>-0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural Sciences</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social sciences</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To conclude, the dissimilarity index in the higher education sector stood at 0.10 in 2010 in Lebanon which is rather low. The distribution of male and female researchers across fields of science is not completely balanced but the situation is not catastrophic and there are clear signs of improvement over time.
Seniority or vertical segregation

As presented in graph 4 the scissors diagram was constructed based on data from the same subsample of three universities previously referred to (UL, USJ and UOB). The absolute numbers of women and men at the different academic grades refer to full-time academic staff, excluding people working as part-timers or “vacataires” in the universities.

The share of female PhD graduates is very close to that of men in Lebanon (52% are women). The PhD degree is often required to embark on an academic career. In Lebanon, there are also high shares of women at the early stages of the academic career: at grade 61% of Grade D were women in 2010. Once launched on the academic track, a widening gender gap is observed with ever smaller shares of women as we move up the grades: 34% of women at grade C, 33% at grade B and only 23% at grade A. The proportion of women is the smallest at the top of the academic hierarchy: 23% of grade A (the highest grade/post at which research is normally conducted) academic staff in Lebanon are women. These figures clearly indicate the existence of a glass ceiling composed of obstacles that hold women back from accessing the highest positions in the hierarchy.

A comparison between 2004 and 2010 shows an improvement in women’s relative position at the different stages of the academic career, as captured by grades A, B and C. This positive progress is nevertheless slow and should not mask the fact that, in the absence of proactive policies, it will take decades to close the gender gap and bring about a higher degree of gender equality.

Graph 4: Proportions of men and women in a typical academic career, students and academic staff, 2004/2010

Although a picture of strong vertical segregation transpires through the analysis of the overall situation in the academic world, the situation can vary considerably according to the field of science considered. In Europe, the under-representation of women is more striking in the field of science and engineering. Graph 5 depicts the academic career in science and engineering in Lebanon. Again the scissors diagram is based on data for the subsample of three universities.

---

1. Graph 4 is based on data from the subsample of three universities (UL, USJ and UOB) for all levels up from ISCED 6 graduates. The numbers of ISCED 5A students, ISCED 5A graduates and ISCED6 students are estimated from different sources: USJ, UOB and the Beirut Arab University for ISCED 5A students; UL, USJ, UOB and the Beirut Arab University for ISCED 5A graduates; the World Bank Education Statistics for ISCED 6 students.
As regards the student population in science and engineering, from the education statistics published by the World Bank we know that in 2010 39% of ISCED 5 and 6 students enrolled in science and engineering were women (compared with 35% in 2004) and that 43% of ISCED 5 and 6 graduates in science and engineering were women in 2010 (compared with 38% in 2004). The scissors diagram shows that in science and engineering women take off equally well as in general on the academic track: at grade D, 61% were women in 2010. Once launched on the academic track, however, the gender gap widens more in science and engineering than in general: 29% of women at grade C, 28% at grade B and only 12% at grade A. At the top of the academic hierarchy in science and engineering, we are thus left with just 12% of women.

A comparison between 2004 and 2010 shows only a slight improvement in women’s relative position at the different stages of the academic career, as captured by grades A, B and C. Especially among grade B academic staff the proportion of women has strengthened over time.

Graph 5: Proportions of men and women in a typical academic career in science and engineering, students and academic staff, 2004/2010

Source: National expert

Female grade A academic staff in Lebanon are best represented in the medical sciences where 35% of all grade A academics are women. The medical sciences are followed by the humanities where there are 31% of women among grade A academics. More than one fifth of grade A academic staff are women also in the social sciences and the agricultural sciences. In the natural sciences, 17% of grade A staff are women. Finally, the lowest share of women among grade A personnel characterizes engineering and technology where female grade A academics represent just 5%.

Graph 6: Proportion of female grade A staff by main field of science, 2010

Source: National expert
Compared with male grade A staff, women at this grade are overrepresented in the humanities and the medical sciences. Male grade A staff are overrepresented compared with female grade A academics in the natural sciences and especially in engineering and technology which host 18% of all male grade A academics compared with just 3% of all female grade A academics. Roughly equal shares of female and male grade A academics are active in the social sciences and in agriculture (although this field represents just 2% of all grade A staff).

Graph 7: Distribution of grade A staff across fields of science by sex, 2010

As shown by table 2, female grade A academics make up 29% of all grade A staff under 35 years of age and 28% of those between 45 and 54 years of age. Just 17% of grade A academics in the age group of 55+ are women.

Table 2: Proportion of female A grade staff by age group, 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Female (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;35</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55+</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The distribution of female and male grade A academics by age group is shown by graph 8. When we look at the distribution of female grade A staff, there is no convincing evidence for a strong generational effect. Whereas 76% of women at grade A are above 45 years of age, this share is roughly the same for men at 78%.
Access to decision-making in science

Lebanon has 42 higher education institutions, only 2 of which have a female head. In 2010, just 23% of the 240 members of the highest boards of five of Lebanon’s biggest universities (Lebanese University, Saint-Joseph University of Beirut, American University of Beirut, Holy Spirit University of Kaslik and Beirut Arab University) were women.

No data are available on access to and success in obtaining research funds.

### 2. GENDER EQUALITY POLICIES

#### 2.1 POLICY CONTEXT

**Legislative framework**

The Lebanese constitution clearly stipulates that all citizens have equal rights (article 7) and enjoy equal opportunities in all spheres of life (article 12).

The principle of equality was already stated in the Constitution of 1926, article 9 of which declared: “All Lebanese are equal before the law. They equally enjoy civil and political rights without any distinction as to sex or religion”. Lebanon was the first Arab country to recognize women's political rights in 1953 and to ratify the International Convention on the Political Rights of Women in 1955 without any reservation. Lebanon also recognized equality between men and women regarding inheritance in the non-Muslim communities in 1959. In 1960 Lebanon authorized married women to keep their nationality while at the same time adopting that of their husbands. In 1987 social security made the retirement age equal for men and women. Married women recovered their full capacity to testify before all authorities in 1993. Where commercial law is concerned, married women have since 1994 been entitled to engage in commerce without their husband’s authorization. Moreover, it should be noted that couples have the option to include in their marriage contracts the precondition of the separation of assets.

Lebanon acceded to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1997 and maintains reservations to several articles: 9 (2) (equal rights with regard to nationality), 16 (1) (c) (d) (f) (g) (equal rights in marriage and family life) and 29 (1) (related to the administration of the convention; arbitration in the event of a dispute). The main problem concerns the absence of a unified personal code status in Lebanon regulating marriage and family relationships. Lebanese legislation is greatly influenced by the fact that it needs to
govern communities with different religious beliefs, whose coexistence forms the Lebanese nation.

The CEDAW Committee\(^2\) has indicated that reservations to article 16 are incompatible with the Convention and has recommended to “adopt a unified personal status code which is in line with the Convention and would be applicable to all women in Lebanon, irrespective of their religion”. The Committee has also recommended the inclusion of provisions guaranteeing equality on the basis of sex, in the Constitution or in other appropriate legislation and to undertake a systematic review and revision of all existing legislation to bring it fully into compliance with the Convention.

**Institutions and policies**

The National Commission for Lebanese Women (NCLW) is the official national mechanism responsible for realizing women’s advancement and gender equality in Lebanon. It was first formed as a committee to prepare for the Beijing Conference in 1995 and subsequently established as an official body. Its main objective is to endorse the social status of women by improving women’s potentialities and safeguarding women’s rights. NCLW activities are actively led and managed by seven committees:

1. Legislation committee
2. Economy and Labour committee
3. Education and Youth committee
4. Studies and Documentation committee
5. Public Relations, Media, and Information committee
6. Health & Environment committee
7. Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)

The NCLW launched the National Strategy for Women (2011-2021) in 2012. It foresees a range of policies aiming to empower women in the political and economic spheres in both private and public sectors, encouraging them to be more active, protecting them from discriminations such as unequal pay and promoting female entrepreneurship. Despite the range of policies and initiatives to foster the empowerment of women - progress remains limited and lots of work is still required before real improvement can be demonstrated.

The NCLW presented a legal report to the Prime Minister as regards gender mainstreaming and the establishment of gender focal points in public institutions. This has resulted in the dissemination of a circular to all ministries and public institutions highlighting the necessity of appointing a gender focal point among its employees. The gender focal point has a consultative role with NCLW.

In parallel to the directive of the Council of Ministers on 19 October 2010, NCLW contacted all public administrations and ministries to appoint gender focal point officers among their staff. This initiative aims to activate cooperation between the NCLW and the public service to address and to promote gender issues in the policies of Public Administration. NCLW expanded the network of gender focal points to include additional ministries and departments in 2012. NCLW has established among its members a special committee to communicate and to coordinate with gender focal point officers.

\(^2\) Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Fortieth session, 14 January-1 February 2008 (CEDAW/C/LBN/CO/3)
2.2 GENDER EQUALITY POLICIES IN SCIENCE

Structures for gender equality in science

Science and research issues are directly linked to the Higher Education Ministry in which a gender focal point is actively represented.

The role of the gender focal point in each ministry is as follows

- Advise ministry on gender equality issues, practices and policies relevant to gender mainstreaming in each sector
- Assess proposals/documents for inclusion of gender issues and where appropriate suggest ways in which gender can be incorporated
- Liaise with NCLW, CAS, World Bank, UNDP, UN Women on Gender, and other development-partners. The collaboration between NCLW, NGOs, ministries and public institutions will be strengthened through a new Gender Equality program that was launched in February 2014 by the NCLW and funded by the EU
- Be involved in the process of drafting reports on women issues

Statistics and indicators

There is no official commitment to publish sex-disaggregated statistics. However the Central Administration of Statistics initiated the publication of such statistics in the early 2000’s.

Sex-disaggregated statistics in the field of science are very incomplete. There is no R&D survey in the country.

Gender balance measures

There is no official engagement with the promotion of gender balance on public committees, although the introduction of a gender quota in order to address the extremely low number of elected women is currently under debate. Women activists are requesting compliance with international conventions, which recommend a quota of 30% as a minimum. However, they are faced with a counteroffer (not yet guaranteed) for a 10% quota whilst other counteroffers recommend a 20% quota on electoral lists only.

There is no official measure to promote gender balance in scientific decision-making bodies or committees. To the best of our knowledge, there are no quotas or targets in universities or research institutions.

Equality plans and related gender equality measures

Universities and research institutions are not required to set up gender equality plans or related gender equality measures, such as gender units or gender observatories. If equality plans exist, they are not publicly claimed.

Mentoring

Mentoring is not an institutionalised practice as regards junior scientists of either sex. Some mentoring programmes for women in science are organised at an international level, for instance the programs of the Embassy of the United States of America: TechGirl, TechWomen, IVLP WISE (Women’s Innovation in Science and Engineering).

Funding

In Lebanon there are no measures specifically addressed to funding women’s research. Funding allocation is based on a merit-based approach without any gender-related criteria for ensuring equal access to funding. There are no special funds or prizes for women at the national level, although there are relevant international initiatives such as the UNESCO-L’OREAL fellowships, Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF) and Schlumberger.
Work and family balance

Maternity leave in Lebanon was extended to 10 weeks in April 2014. Previously, women were entitled to one of the lowest maternity leave periods in the world (49 days of paid maternity leave, half of the international recommended standard of 14 weeks). According to an amendment of article 207 of the Lebanese Labour Law, an employer cannot fire or warn of firing an employee who is on maternity leave nor can they decrease her salary. In April 2012, a draft law was approved by the Cabinet to extend maternity leave to 10 weeks, which was finally approved in April 2014.

No paternity leave exists in Lebanon.

To the best of our knowledge, neither official specific arrangement for scientists nor resources for returnees exist.

Women’s and gender studies

The Women’s Studies Diploma was launched in 2010 in one private university (Beirut Arab University). It is a one-year interdisciplinary program that combines the humanities, law and public health.

A Master’s degree in Women and Gender Studies will be launched in the autumn of 2014-2015 at the Lebanese American University in Lebanon. This M.A. degree is seeking to prepare graduates for professional employment and further higher studies. This degree integrates gender, class, race, religion, culture, ethnicity, and sexualities and enables students to generate interdisciplinary and quality research in the field of women and gender. The M.A. degree in Women and Gender Studies is vital not solely to the production of knowledge about women’s lives and status globally, but also as a platform to address women’s problems within the contemporary cultural, social, and political environment and challenge professed wrongs and abuses through academic research and intellectual rigor.

Lebanese American University and Saint Joseph University offer a variety of women and gender studies courses at the undergraduate level.

Networking

Lebanon has an active women’s rights movement that has been instrumental in pushing for the amendment of discriminatory laws.

Networks for women in science have been set up over the years. The most active ones are:

- The Collective for Research & Training on Development – Action (www.crtda.org.lb)
- The Lebanese League for Women in Business LLWB (www.llwb.org)
- Lebanese Association of Women Researchers (www.bahithat.org)

The Collective for Research and Training on Development-Action (CRTD.A) is a NGO registered in 2003 which seeks to contribute to citizenship, social justice and gender equality through four key programme areas: Gender and inclusive citizenship; Gender and economic rights; Gender, leadership and participation; Right to information and knowledge.

The Lebanese League for Women in Business (LLWB) is an NGO established in 2006 as a scientific and cultural organization that aims to bring together professional women by providing them with a forum in which they can exchange experiences and expertise, discuss common challenges and issues, provide specialized training, facilitate the exchange of information, network and promote the potential of women in the world of business

The Lebanese Association of Women Researchers (Bahithat) is an independent, non-profit association whose members have been engaged in scholarly activities in Lebanon and the Arab world. The principal aims of the association are to bring women researchers into contact with one another, to support and promote the research of its members, to encourage young women
researchers and to provide a forum for intellectual exchange. They received formal recognition in 1992. The idea for Bahihat arose during the long civil war in Lebanon when women scholars on both sides of the divide, refused the forced divisions along confessional lines, and wanted to carry on intellectual exchange despite the raging violence, so began to meet regularly to discuss matters of intellectual interest. The association presently consists of around forty members. They are women actively involved in research in different fields, including health, economics, social and behavioural sciences, education and humanities. The majority are university professors, mostly at the national Lebanese University.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

All quantitative indicators show that most of the research in Lebanon is carried out in three universities: the Lebanese University, the Saint-Joseph University and the American University of Beirut, sometimes in collaboration with one of the four specialized research centers of the National Council for Scientific Research and/or the Lebanese Agricultural Research Institute. Given the small size of most manufacturing companies in Lebanon, private sector R&D is still very limited. Hopefully, initiatives such as the creation of the Lebanese Industrial Research Association in 1997 and the promotion of joint industry-university research projects will increase private sector contributions and participation.

Evaluating the situation of gender equity in science in Lebanon shows that when it comes to commitment to mainstreaming, to determining reliable gender indicators, or even to collecting sex-disaggregated statistics, high levels of gender inequality related to pay, recruitment, funding, promotions... do persist at all levels and in all fields.

Many positive action measures in science could be implemented and/or developed at the national and/or institutional level. They can be divided into five main categories:

(i) Better indicators, for example by a regular collection of sex-disaggregated data in the different fields and at all levels

(ii) Positive action and quantitative incentives
    a. Enhancing and empowering the networks of women scientists (role models, mentors, coaches, etc.)
    b. Promotion of the mentoring programs at a national level as senior women scientists can be role models to junior scientists and can provide them support and advice related to work-life balance or other aspects of the career
    c. Setting-up of new women’s scientific networks
    d. Organization of workshops and scientific events
    e. Implementation of competitions and scientific contests
       − Rally of mathematics
       − Racing numbers
       − Olympiad of mathematics, physics, chemistry & geosciences

(iii) Promotion of women at university and throughout the educational system
    a. Examination of pedagogy, its methods and instruments, in order to avoid potential gender biases
    b. Orientation in schools
    c. Rejection of censorship, stereotypes, unconscious bias
    d. Encouragement of firms and industries to empower women scientists following the example of the UNESCO-L’Oréal program, within their corporate social responsibility activities
    e. Provide post-doctoral fellowships to Lebanese candidates

(iv) Structural change and creation of administrative structures, for example by creating a national observatory for gender or the adoption of quotas in order to facilitate women’s advancement to top positions, to fight the glass ceiling phenomenon and thus to achieve a gender balance
(v) Gender mainstreaming

a. Gender budgeting through the allocation of a part of the annual budget of institutions like UNESCO, CNRS-L, AUF, etc. for women scientists in order to increase:
   - The number of female trainees performing internship under their auspices
   - The number of women scientists receiving honours and recognition
   - The number of women scientists as experts in scientific committees and commissions
   - The participation of women scientists to conferences and workshops

b. Encouragement of Lebanese sociologists to address the issue of gender equality by providing them the funds

Although many policies, projects, and initiatives have been introduced, concrete steps remain limited and lots of work is still required to show real improvement.
This report aims to highlight some of the findings on gender imbalance in scientific careers in academic and non-academic sectors in Lebanon that have evolved from a joint research project undertaken by Saint-Joseph University in collaboration with other Arab and European institutions within the SHEMERA project. The overall objective of the SHEMERA project is enhancing research cooperation on gender and science between the European Union and the Arab Mediterranean countries: Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Syria and Tunisia. Research cooperation is intended to improve the understanding of the roots of gender inequality in science in the area, by taking into account cultural diversities and traditions, and analysing how the Arab Mediterranean countries are addressing this specific issue.

The research project aimed to collect national data in the Arab Mediterranean countries to form the basis for a comparative analysis of the current situation of gender equality in science in order to benchmark future development in this field and guide researchers, policy makers and other strategic players in identifying and addressing the key problem areas.

This report focuses on two key domains to map the situation of women in science in Lebanon:

- The compilation of sex-disaggregated statistics covering women’s and men’s distribution across scientific fields and careers, their seniority and participation in decision-making in science;
- The description of gender equality policies, legislations, national strategies and positive actions for women including equal opportunities legislation – with a special focus on gender equality policies and initiatives in the field of science.

There is an imbalance in the representation, seniority and participation of women and men in scientific fields and professions worldwide. The roots of this gender imbalance are deeply embedded in each society, profession and institution. Gender imbalance is not a self-correcting phenomenon and only concrete measures targeting specific aspects of its manifestations can lead to significant change in this area. The final section of this report provides a set of national recommendations to strengthen the position of women in science and promote gender equality in this field.