



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES  
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Lebanon



## Towards a more inclusive national social safety net *Gender and social inclusion study of the NPTP*

Since 2014, WFP has been committed to supporting the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) and the Presidency of the Council of Ministers (PCM) to provide social assistance to the most vulnerable families in Lebanon through the National Poverty Targeting Programme (NPTP). As the oldest safety net in Lebanon, the NPTP contributes to cushioning impacts of the worsening economic situation in Lebanon on the poorest population.

In 2022, up to 430,000 individuals will receive monthly cash assistance through the NPTP. In September 2022, 350,000 individuals were assisted through the NPTP. Fifty-one percent of NPTP beneficiaries are women and 15 percent of households are headed by women.

### *Gendered Impact of the Economic Crisis*

Lebanon is experiencing one of the most severe economic crises in its modern history, with over 2 million Lebanese vulnerable and in need of assistance.

The gendered impact of the crisis translates into higher unemployment rates amongst women: 43 percent in December 2021 compared to 18 percent amongst men (WFP Food Security Report July 2022). Evidence also shows that households headed by women are more likely to rely on family and community support for their main source of income compared to households headed by men (OCHA MSNA 2022).

Gender-based violence may also be on the rise as calls to the Internal Security Forces' gender-based violence reporting hotline have increased substantially since 2019.

## WFP'S COMMITMENT & ACTIONS TO BETTER UNDERSTAND & MAINSTREAM GENDER

### 1 QUALITATIVE GENDER STUDY OF THE NPTP

- ❖ Launched jointly with MoSA and UN WOMEN
- ❖ Understand the impact of assistance on women, girls, and other marginalized groups
- ❖ Provides recommendations on how the NPTP can improve its processes to ensure assistance is as safe and accessible to all of its beneficiaries.
- ❖ Targeted interviewee profiles (101 in total) included women head of households, pregnant and lactating women, elderly people with disabilities, and children.

### 2 GENDER TRAININGS TO STRENGTHEN CAPACITY OF CIVIL SERVANTS

- ❖ Increasing the gender responsiveness of the NPTP and ensuring it meets the needs of vulnerable groups requires frontline and coordination staff to have strong knowledge and practical skills of a cross-range of gender focused matters.



## Key Recommendations

1. Ensure sensitization and sustainability of gender and social inclusion knowledge and practice within the Ministry of Social Affairs
2. Accelerate the implementation of a Grievance and Redress Mechanism (GRM) for the NPTP
3. Create a standardized process to better support beneficiaries in cases of divorce, deaths, and separation.
4. Develop and implement gender and social inclusion action plan for NPTP implementation

## Study Findings

- **More empowerment, agency and decision-making** for women receiving NPTP assistance, especially where there was no husband or adult male present in the household.
- **Spending priorities mostly aligned between women and men:** Food and medicine were the most frequently reported expenditure items.
- **Gender roles, norms, responsibilities:** Only small direct impact on gender roles and responsibilities were observed. Overall, women appeared to be taking more active roles in pursuing and managing NPTP assistance while mapping the emergence of other assistance opportunities in the area and taking action for their household
  - Often women were the ones who took the initiative to apply for the NPTP, but typically reported putting it in the name of the husband as the head of the household.
  - Women were less ashamed when it came to the NPTP, whereas some men felt ashamed to collect assistance from a poverty targeting programme, likely due to social norms around masculinities.
- **Need for enhanced case management and referrals:** More up to date information on services and more support for referrals should be made available to NPTP beneficiaries, many who were not aware of referral pathways.
- **NPTP assistance contributed positively to family dynamics:** The study found no clear link between the receipt of assistance and an increase in gender-based violence. On the contrary, beneficiaries reported that the NPTP assistance has eased family tensions because it provided the security of a monthly income.
- **Women resorted to more consumption-based coping mechanisms:** Because of the exponential increase in prices, women resorted to rationing, reducing their own intake, and re-allocating food in the family to children and persons with disability.

## Gender Trainings

- Based on recommendations drawn from the qualitative study, gender trainings were delivered in August and September 2022 to almost 600 MoSA staff at central and local level. These trainings were aimed at mainstreaming gender and social inclusion in the design and implementation of the NPTP, including enhancing field staff knowledge and access to tools to recognize and identify gender-related issues and to improve data collection and analysis.