Final Narrative Report

Women’s Employment in the Public Sector: Towards Empowerment and Representation

November 30, 2019

Executive Summary

As part of its activities under the project “Women’s Employment in the Public Sector: Towards Empowerment and Representation”, LLWB worked on gathering knowledge around the context surrounding women’s employment in the public sector. Within this process, the association held meeting with stakeholders working or affiliated with the public sector as well as launched a qualitative study around the topic. Findings revealed the barriers and challenges that are faced by women at the level of promotion within the public sector revolving around the lack of merit-based mechanisms for promotion, the lack of mechanisms for addressing harassment within the workplace, and the lack of awareness around gender-based discrimination among employees.

The findings and recommendations that resulted from the knowledge gathering activities were disseminated across stakeholders and LLWB’s networks through (1) a social media campaign that was launched over a period of 15 days, (2) networking events that were held in each of the regions of Beirut, North Lebanon and Beqaa, and (3) the dissemination of the executive summary from the study among members, partners and stakeholders.

In line with the findings mentioned above, LLWB organized training workshops tackling the above topics. Two workshops were held in each the regions of Beirut, North Lebanon and Beqaa around (1) Gender-based Discrimination and (2) Harassment in the Workplace. Additionally, LLWB organized a workshop in Beirut around Mechanisms for Recruitment and Promotion.

In parallel to the above activities, LLWB organized a total of five roundtable discussions inviting women in senior level positions from the public and private sectors to share their challenges, knowledge and recommendations for supporting women in decision making positions. The recommendations that were identified throughout the roundtable discussions mainly revolved around (1) lobbying for legal reform in the process of addressing gender-based discrimination in the workplace, (2) developing and putting in place mechanisms that ensure equal access to opportunities for women and men within the workplace context an (3) creating awareness around gender-based discrimination among employees across grade levels within the public sector.

The details of the implementation of project activities are presented in this final report, along with LLWB’s recommendations for moving forward with the work to support women in the public sector.
Objective 1: Knowledge gathering and dissemination around the current context surrounding women’s employment in the public sector

Activity 1.1. Gathering existing knowledge around current landscape surrounding women’s employment in the public sector.

Launching of Project Activities: Knowledge Gathering

As part of LLWB’s efforts to gather existing knowledge around the current landscape surrounding women’s employment in the public sector, meetings were held between LLWB and stakeholders, representatives from the public sector and organizations that are involved with the public sector.

The first meeting was held on October 15, 2018 with representatives from the “Institut de Finance Basil Fuleihan” including Ms. Lamia Mubayed, Institute Director and Ms. Roula Darwich, Director of Partnership and Cooperation. During this meeting, the LLWB team discussed the launching of the project activities with the institute team.

Ms. Moubayed and Ms. Darwich in their turn shared the institute’s experience with working around gender-related issues with the public sector. Ms. Moubayed noted that gender-based discrimination is more present at the level of promotion given that recruitment takes place through the civil service council based on standardized exams that candidates are requested to undertake and that are assessed while ensuring that personal information remain anonymous.

Ms. Moubayed noted that statistics related to the gender segregation by grade level is available at the civil service council. Names of key stakeholders to be approached in the process of gathering knowledge on this topic were also shared by the institute’s team, including the names of Ms. Nisrine Mashmoushi and Ms. Fatima Sayegh, head of the civil service council.

In addition to the above, partnership was also discussed for the implementation of project activities, and the institute expressed willingness to support with the below:

1. Knowledge gathering around the context surrounding women’s employment in the public sector.
2. Outreach to public sector stakeholders.
3. The development of trainings for public sector employees.

The project team also held a meeting with Dr. Naziha el Amine, former director of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers on November 5, 2019. Dr. el Amine shared her experience working with the public sector and the challenges she faced throughout this time. In line with the information shared by the Basil Fuleihan Institute, Dr. el Amine noted that gender-based discrimination is more present at the level of promotion. She also added that discrimination based on candidates’ sect and political affiliations is more present and predominant than gender-based discrimination.

LLWB contacted Ms. Sayegh for the purpose of scheduling a meeting with her in the process of getting access to existing data and statistics around the number of women employed within different grade levels in the public sector. Challenges were however faced in scheduling a meeting due to Ms. Sayegh’s unavailability.
Within the same process, LLWB held a meeting with the “Consulting and Research Institute” on October 26, 2019 to discuss the requirements for conducting the data collection around the context surrounding women’s employment in the public sector.

CRI is a research consultancy firm that was identified by LLWB based on Basil Fuleihan Institute’s recommendation, and the fact that the service provider has previous experience working with the public sector and has therefore broad reach among public sector stakeholders.

CRI’s team proposed developing a qualitative study that aims to understand the barriers faced by women in the public sector at the levels of recruitment and promotion. The qualitative study involved a review of existing literature on women’s employment in the public sector, in addition to primary data collection to better understand the barriers for recruitment and promotion faced by women in the public sector. Data collection would be conducted through semi-structured interviews with women currently employed with the public sector across entities and grade levels.

A total of 22 studies and reports were reviewed by the CRI team throughout the literature review. The identified academic and research data related to the topic of study mostly focused on general trends of female employment in the MENA region, with an emphasis on the private sector. Gaps in the literature therefore explained the need for field research to better understand the issue at stake. The literature review took place over a period of two weeks starting November, 2018.

Activity 1.2. Holding Focus Group discussions for identifying the barriers and facilitators for women’s employment in the public sector.

With regards to holding focus group discussions, and based on their experience, CRI’s team expressed that these might be faced with resistance from the public sector entities. They also noted that delays might be faced with securing the required approvals from various public sector entities to have their employees attend the focus groups.

Given that the interviews will be designed to provide in-depth knowledge around women’s employment in the public sector, decision was therefore made on moving forward with carrying out interviews while dropping the focus group discussions.

Data collection was launched around mid-November 2018, and was scheduled to take place over a period of two months ending January, 2019. A total of 40 interviews were conducted with public sector employees across various public sector entities including:

- Ministries and independent public sector institutions – 25 interviews:
  - Central Inspection Board
  - CRDP
  - Civil Organizing
  - Ministry of Social Affairs
  - Ministry of Industry
  - Ministry of Agriculture
  - Ministry of Justice
  - Ministry of Environment
  - Ministry of Water and Energy
  - Ministry of Youth and Sports
Ministry of Economy and Trade
Ministry of Telecommunications
Ministry of Education and Higher Education

Security Forces – 15 interviews:
- Internal Security Forces
- Lebanese Army

Due to the delays faced with securing the required approvals for carrying out interviews with employees at the Internal Security Forces, the CRI team completed data collection in February, 2019. A final report summarizing the findings from the data collection and resulting recommendations was shared with LLWB on February 15, 2019. The main findings from the study can be summarized below:

- Predominant gender stereotypes within the public sector affect perceptions of women’s competence.
- Women’s lack of access to networks reduces their chances of getting promoted within the public sector.
- The lack of awareness on the definition of harassment, as well as the absence of reporting mechanisms of incidents of harassment create barriers for promotion for women.
- Politics and sectarianism hinder the implementation of merit-based mechanisms for promotion.

Recommendations for moving forward with supporting women’s employment in the public sector were also shared in the report. These can be summarized as follows:

- Design training modules and workshops to raise awareness regarding the definition of gender dynamics
- Form influential working groups to work on draft laws addressing existing gaps related to gender-based discrimination within the public sector.
- Procure funding for quantitative research on female employment in the public sector.
- Implement training workshops on harassment in the workplace targeting both men and women.
- Put in place independent reporting structures for incidents of harassment.
- Launch a media campaign to create awareness on the value of women and gender diversity in the workplace.

Further details on the findings and recommendations from the needs’ assessment can be accessed in the full report included in Appendix I.

Activity 1.3. Disseminating gathered knowledge through public awareness campaign and networking events.

In the process of disseminating the knowledge gathered throughout the implementation of activities 1.1. and 1.2. LLWB conducted the below:

Online Campaign

LLWB launched an online campaign for the purpose of sharing the knowledge gathered around women’s employment in the public sector. The online campaign material included (see material in Appendix II):

- A video summarizing main findings and recommendations.
- Online visuals summarizing the main findings from the study.
Online visuals summarizing the recommendations for moving forward.
Online visuals including individual testimonies shared by interviewees during the interviews.

The visual and video content were translated into Arabic and the material was shared in both languages. The campaign was launched on July 30, 2019 and took place over a period of 15 days. In terms of reach, the English version of the campaign video reached 26,404 people while the Arabic version reached 84,460 people. The audience reached was spread geographically across various governorates including Beirut, Mount Lebanon, North, Beqaa and South governorates.

**Networking Events in Beirut, Tripoli and Beqaa**

In the process of disseminating the knowledge gathered throughout the various project activities, LLWB organized a total of six networking events in the areas of Beirut, Tripoli and Beqaa.

A total of 218 participants attended the networking events across the regions, including representatives from the public and private sectors, civil society in addition to community members interested in learning about the topic. Details about the networking events are included below:

**Networking Events: Beirut**

In Beirut, LLWB organized a networking event on May 2, 2019 for the purpose of sharing the work conducted under the project including mainly the needs’ assessment around the context surrounding women’s employment in the public sector (see PPT in Appendix III).

The event was kicked off with a presentation of the scope of the project, as well as of the main findings from the data collection. This was followed by an intervention from the guest speaker during the event, Dr. Naziha el Amine, Director of the Council of Presidency. Dr. el Amine shared her experience working with the public sector with the audience, as well as the barriers she faced throughout her career. A total of 36 people attended the event including representatives from the public and private sectors and engaged with the speaker in a Q&A (see attendance list in Appendix IV).

On September 13, 2019, LLWB organized the closing event for the project the purpose of which was sharing with the audience the activities implemented under the project scope, the findings from the implementation of the various project activities, and the recommendations forward (please see PPT in Appendix V). A total of 15 participants attended the event and engaged in a discussion with the LLWB team on the ways forward in the process of supporting women in the public sector (see attendance list in Appendix VI).

**Networking Events: Tripoli**

LLWB organized its first networking event in Tripoli on May 20, 2019. The event was kicked off with a presentation of project scope and activities, as well as the findings and recommendations from the needs’ assessment. Guest speaker Dr. Halimeh Kaakour, Professor at the Faculty of Law and Political Sciences at the Lebanese University shared her perspective around the barriers faced by women at the level of promotion, and the importance of having mechanisms that ensure recruitment and promotion based on merit. A total of 50 participants from the public and private sectors attended the event (see attendance list in Appendix VII).

LLWB organized a closing event in Tripoli on August 26, 2019 during which the findings and recommendations from project activities were shared with the participants. The floor was then open for women in senior level positions across various sectors to share their experiences and the challenges
faced. This was perceived by LLWB as an opportunity to provide participants with a platform for sharing knowledge and recommendations for supporting women’s employment and promotion. Guest speakers during the closing event included:

- Abla Chamra, LLWB member.
- Sarah el Charif, Lebanon Director, Ruwwad el Tanmiyah.
- Zeina Saber, Interim Head of the Cooperative of Government Employees in Akkar.

A total of 42 individuals attended the event from the public and the private sectors (see attendance list in Appendix VIII).

**Networking Events: Beqaa**

Two networking events were held in Beqaa as well throughout the project duration. The first networking event took place on May 24, 2019 and was attended by 43 participants from the public and private sectors (see attendance list in Appendix IX). The event was kicked off with a presentation of project activities and scope, as well as the main findings from the needs’ assessment and plan of activities for the upcoming period. Guest speaker included Ms. Christine Zaatar, Director General of the Lebanese Parliament shared her perspective around the importance of women’s employment in the public sector.

The closing event for the project activities took place in Beqaa on August 23, 2019 at Massabki Hotel in Chhtaura. Findings and recommendations from project activities were shared with the participants. Guest speakers included LLWB members and employees in the public sector who shared their experiences working within the sector and the challenges they faced throughout their careers. Speakers included:

- Rima Bou Faysal, Ministry of Industry
- Fatima Wehbi, Member of the Municipal Council, Sultan Yacoub
- Gizelle Khoury, Head of Municipal Council, Beit Lahia
- Dalal Rahbani, Former Director of General Security.
- Mada Akil, Professor, Lebanese University.
- Dallouli Orra, LLWB Member and Owner and Manager at Delora Hotel and Suites.

A total of 33 participants attended the event including representatives from municipalities, the Lebanese university, and public administrations. Representatives from the private sector were also present during the event (see attendance list in Appendix X).

**Dissemination of Executive Summary Among Members, Partners and Stakeholders**

In addition to the above, LLWB worked on designing the executive summary of the report which was then shared with members, partners and stakeholders from the private and public sectors and from civil society (see lists of public sector contacts in Appendix XI). The executive summary was therefore shared with 400 individuals by email during the period between May and June, 2019 (please see executive summary in Appendix XII). The final report was also uploaded to the LLWB website for the purpose of making it accessible to the public.

In addition to the above, the executive summary was translated and the English and Arabic versions were printed in a brochure format and disseminated during the networking events and training workshops implemented in Beirut, Tripoli and Beqaa as part of the project activities. A total of 300
brochures were disseminated during these events between the period of June and September, 2019. The executive summary was therefore disseminated among 700 members and stakeholders in total.

Objective 2: Skills development for women interested in taking part in the public sector
Activity 2.1. Implementing trainings for women on the skills required for entry level positions in the public sector
LLWB designed its training workshops to address the gaps identified throughout the data collection conducted under activities 1.1. and 1.2, which are summarized again below:

- The lack of implementation of merit-based mechanisms for promotion.
- The predominance of gender stereotypes within the public sector affecting perceptions of women’s competence.
- The lack of awareness on the definition of harassment, as well as the absence of reporting mechanisms of incidents of harassment create barriers for promotion for women.

LLWB therefore decided to focus its workshops in the regions of Beirut, North Lebanon and Beqaa around “gender-based discrimination” and “harassment in the workplace”. Given the relevance of the topics to employees across sectors, LLWB perceived it to be useful to open the workshops to different employees interested in learning more about the topics. The decision to open the workshops to employees across sectors was also related to the fact that many public sector entities already implement in-house trainings for their employees, and have the expertise in designing and implementing trainings that address public sector employees’ needs. Therefore, LLWB did not perceive itself to be in a position to design and implement trainings specifically targeting public sector employees.

With regards to employees from the public sector, and given the fact that the identified topics are of concern to women across grade levels, LLWB decided to open its workshops to women in entry level positions and senior level positions within the public sector.

Training Workshop: Gender-based Discrimination
This workshop was designed to provide participants with knowledge around Gender-Based Discrimination generally and in the workplace more specifically. The three-hour workshop was facilitated by Maître Myriam Jabre, Attorney at Law and took place in Tripoli, Beirut and Chtaura as per the below. A total of 75 participants attended the three training workshops (see attendance lists in Appendix XIII).

- Gender-based Discrimination – Tripoli: the workshop took place in Tripoli on June 29, 2019 at the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture. A total of 31 participants attended the workshop – out of whom 16 are employees in the public sector. Representatives from the private sector and from civil society also attended the training.
- Gender-based Discrimination – Beirut: a workshop on gender-based discrimination was also organized in Beirut, at Antwork on July 05, 2019 and a total of 22 employees from various sectors attended the training including representatives from the public and the private sectors as well as from civil society.
• **Gender-based Discrimination – Beqaa:** a third workshop on gender-based discrimination, took place in Beqaa, BAU University on July 06, 2019. A total of 22 participants attended the training, 10 of whom are employees in the public sector.

The workshop shed the light on gender-based discrimination within existing legal frameworks in Lebanon broadly, before moving to address discrimination under the labor law and within the workplace context. Social and cultural norms around gender roles were also tackled throughout the workshop.

Pre- and post-assessment surveys were distributed at the beginning and by the end of the workshop for the purpose of assessing participants’ change in knowledge with regards to gender-based discrimination (see pre- and post-assessment surveys in Appendix XIV).

An analysis of participants’ responses across the three workshops was conducted. The major findings from the data analysis revealed a change in knowledge around participants’ perceptions of women’s access to rights compared to men, as well as around women’s career opportunities and career choice (see full analysis in Appendix XV).

To elaborate further, prior to the workshop, 81.8% of all participants stated that they have equal rights to men in their society. This percentage decreased by 16.7% after the workshop, where the participants acknowledged the existing discriminatory landscape in the legal, societal and cultural frameworks.

With regards to women’s career opportunities and choice, prior to the workshop, 57.7% of all participants stated that women cannot have the same professions as men, based on cultural reasons, physical ability and gender roles. This percentage decreased by 9.3% after the workshop.

**Training Workshop: Harassment in the Workplace**

LLWB organized a workshop around “Harassment in the workplace” in Beirut, North and Beqaa regions. This workshop was designed to equip employees in the public and private sectors with knowledge around harassment in the workplace, and provide more details about the preventive measures against harassment, and existing laws and regulations.

The full-day workshop was prepared and facilitated by Maître Youmna Makhlouf, Attorney at Law. A total of 66 participants attended the three training workshops that took place across the regions (see attendance lists in Appendix XVI).

• **Harassment in the Workplace – Beirut:** the workshop took place on June 29, 2019 at antwork and a total of 10 employees from the public sector and private sector were present during the training.

• **Harassment in the Workplace – Tripoli:** The workshop was held at the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture in Tripoli on July 06, 2019 and was attended by 26 employees from the public and private sectors.

• **Harassment in the Workplace – Beqaa:** the workshop took place at BAU University on July 13, 2019 and a total of 30 employees from the public, private and NGOs attended the training.

Throughout the training workshop, the trainers tackled the definition of sexual harassment, the existing legal frameworks surrounding sexual harassment in the workplace within the Lebanese context and the ways for moving forward for addressing this issue in the absence of national legislation.
Pre- and post-assessment surveys were disseminated during the workshops in order to assess participants’ change in knowledge around the topic (see pre and post assessment surveys in Appendix XVII). The results from the pre- and post-assessment surveys revealed the below:

- Prior to the workshop, only 4.7% of the participants acknowledged the impact of sexual harassment in the workplace on the work environment and employees’ productivity as well as perceived protection from sexual harassment to be one of the employees’ rights in the workplace. This percentage increased drastically after the workshop, with 60.3% improvement rate. This captures the achievement of the aim of the workshop and increasing the awareness around the impact of sexual harassment on the business, employee and the work environment.

- Prior to the workshop, 53.9% had broad understanding of what is sexual harassment, as 19% of all participants defined sexual harassment as rape, sexual assault and/or child abuse. Whereas, after the workshop, there was a drastic decrease of 33.2% of such misconceptions and only 6.3% of all participants mistakenly identified harassment as rape, child abuse and/or sexual assault. Similarly, the post workshop questionnaire signified a 25.4% improvement of what sexual harassment is.

- After the workshop, there was a 30% improvement rate of the participants’ understanding of the current legal efforts around sexual harassment in Lebanon.

### Activity 2.2. Implementing Trainings for women interested in accessing managerial level positions in the public sector

For the purpose of addressing the gap in implementation of merit-based mechanisms for promotion within the public sector, LLWB organized a training workshop around “Mechanisms for Recruitment and Promotion” in Beirut on June 15, 2019.

The workshop facilitator tackled merit-based mechanisms for recruitment and promotion broadly, before addressing the implementation of such mechanisms within the public sector, among other sectors. Although the workshop was promoted across LLWB’s networks and stakeholders from the public sector, as well as across online and social media platforms, challenges were faced with reaching the target number of attendees for the workshop. Among the 26 participants that registered for the training, a total of 16 participants were present during the training including employees from the public and the private sectors (see attendance list in Appendix XVIII).

Pre- and post-assessment surveys were distributed throughout the workshop in order to assess participants’ change in knowledge with regards to the topic at hand (see surveys in Appendix XIX). The results of the pre-assessment questionnaire showed that the participants lack the knowledge on recruitment and promotion mechanisms. Specifically, the recruitment process, recruiting yield pyramid, selection techniques as well as the types of recruitment interviews. The participants knew more about promotion, gender-sensitive interviewing and external recruitment than the other elements. The workshop content was tailored according to these gaps in order to achieve the workshop goal.

One of the major findings from comparing participants’ responses to the pre and post assessment questionnaires was that there is a significant improvement of the participants’ understanding of the recruitment process with a 75% improvement rate. Further, the participants’ conception of the relation between the unemployment rate and the recruitment process increased 25% after the workshop. Similarly, the common understanding of the recruiting yield pyramid increased drastically after the
workshop, as it showed 43.8% improvement rate. Moreover, their knowledge around the different selection techniques improved by 56.3%. Lastly, the participants showed great improvement in terms of the types of interviews at 59% improvement rate. On the other hand, the participants understanding of external recruitment was not improved as well as the concept of promotion.

**Objective 3: Creating dialogue between women in senior level positions in the public and private sectors**

A total of five roundtable discussions were held throughout the project duration inviting women in senior level positions from the public and private sectors to share challenges, lessons learned and recommendations for moving forward with supporting women in leadership positions across sectors. Participants were also invited to identify potential areas of collaboration within this process.

The roundtable discussions focused around the main challenges related to women’s promotion within the public sector, as discriminatory practices were perceived to be more present at this level. A presentation of the structure of the public sector as well as of the existing mechanisms for recruitment and promotion was also conducted during the discussions, and recommendations were shared by participants for moving forward. A total of 73 women in senior level positions from the public and the private sectors attended the five roundtable discussions. Further details on each of the roundtables are included below:

**Roundtable discussion 1**

The first roundtable discussion took place on December 12, 2018 at Phoenicia Hotel. A total of 11 women in senior level positions from the public and the private sectors attended the discussion (see attendance list in Appendix XX). The objective of the first roundtable was to present the project scope, objectives and activities, and to define the scope of discussion during the upcoming roundtables.

The roundtable discussion was kicked off with a presentation by Ms. Asmahan Zein and Ms. Lara Fakhreddine of the “Women’s Employment in the Public Sector” Project. The floor was then given to the moderator Ms. Rana Salhab, Talent and Communications Partner at Deloitte who requested from participants to reflect on three major questions:

- What does success look like in supporting women in senior level positions in the public sector? How do we measure this success? In what timeframe(s)?
- What are the barriers, challenges and gap areas that affect the outcome? Two specific areas to focus on: 1) attraction and 2) advancement of women in the Public Sector.
- How can the public and private sectors profit from this partnership to promote women in leadership? How would you perceive a successful and sustainable partnership between both sectors?

Participants noted that discriminatory practices are mainly faced by women at the level of promotion. Recommendations were therefore made to have the roundtable discussions focused around identifying the challenges faced by women in this regard, and developing recommendations and action items for addressing these challenges. A number of recommendations were also shared by participants for advancing women in the public sector. These mainly revolved around:
• Developing joint initiatives between the public and private sectors that aim to support women in the workplace.
• Creating lobbying forces that include representatives from both sectors and that can work on addressing gaps in policies and legislation related to women’s participation in the workforce.
• Putting in place mechanisms for addressing gender-based discrimination in the workplace.
• Developing and implementing initiatives that aim to create awareness around gender-based discrimination in the workplace.

Building on the above, agreement was reached over having the upcoming roundtable discussions focused on identifying the barriers faced by women with regards to promotion within the public sector (see notes from roundtable in Appendix XXI).

**Roundtable discussion 2**
The second roundtable discussion took place on February 5, 2019 at Monroe Hotel, Beirut. A total of 9 participants from the public and private sectors attended the discussion (see attendance list in Appendix XXII). The second roundtable discussion built on the outcomes of the first meeting, and participants were invited to identify challenges and opportunities related to women’s promotion in the public and private sectors.

The discussion was facilitated by Ms. Suzanne Abou Chakra, Program Manager at the Institut des Finances Basil Fuleihan. The moderator requested from participants defining their perception of gender equality, as well as sharing their experiences throughout their careers and lessons learned.

The conversation was then narrowed down further to focus more on the mechanisms for promoting women to senior level positions within the private and the public sectors. An overview on the mechanisms for recruitment and promotion as well as on the structure of the public sector was shared by Ms. Nisrine Mashmoushi, First Controller, Civil Service Council.

Recommendations for supporting women’s promotion within the public and private sectors were also shared by participants. More specifically, participants shared their input on the various ways through which culture can be transformed within organization towards one that is more inclusive and that promotes gender equality and diversity. These include:

• Getting the buy-in from top management for promoting gender equality within the organization.
• Assessing the current policies and procedures within organizations in the process of addressing gaps in gender equal policies and practices.
• Highlighting the impact of having more women in leadership positions on the bottom line as well as promoting it as part of good governance.
• Creating more awareness among men and providing trainings for men in decision making positions around gender equality.
• Identifying and promoting women that are competent and that are qualified for taking on executive level positions.
• Working on internal recruitment and promotion policies in the process of ensuring there are no gender discriminatory practices taking place in this regard.
Participants suggested using a participatory approach that involves representatives from both the public and private sectors for developing public policies promoting gender equality (see notes from roundtable discussion in Appendix XXIII).

**Roundtable discussion 3 & 4**

In order to be able to develop more informed recommendations and ones that can better be incorporated within existing organizational structures and practices, LLWB decided to focus the scope of its third and fourth roundtable discussions the current mechanisms for recruitment and promotion in the public sector.

During the third and fourth roundtable discussions, a presentation of the structure of the public sector as well of the mechanisms for recruitment and promotion was conducted by Ms. Nisrine Mashmoushi from the civil service council.

The roundtable discussions took place on March 20, 2019 and September 3, 2019. A total of 12 participants attended the third roundtable discussion, and 18 participants attended the fourth discussion (see attendance lists in Appendix XXIV). The details of the discussion can be referred to in the minutes of meeting in Appendix XXV.

**Roundtable discussion 5**

The fifth roundtable discussion took place on September 17, 2019 at Monroe Hotel and was attended by 23 women in senior level positions from the public and the private sectors (see attendance list in Appendix XXVI). The purpose of the discussion was to present the findings and recommendations that were gathered throughout the implementation of the various project activities, and invite participants to share their final recommendations for supporting women’s promotion within the public sector.

The main recommendations that were shared revolved around (1) lobbying for legal reform in the process of addressing gender-based discrimination in the workplace, (2) developing and putting in place mechanisms that ensure equal access to opportunities for women and men within the workplace context and (3) creating individual awareness around gender-based discrimination among employees across grade levels within the public sector.

**Lobbying for legal reform in the process of addressing gender-based discrimination in the workplace**

- Setting a quota for women in decision making positions.
- Creating lobbying networks advocating for reform of gender-discriminatory laws, and which would liaise with decision makers in this regard.
- Advocating for the passing of the draft law that penalizes sexual harassment.

**Developing and putting in place mechanisms that ensure equal access to opportunities for women and men within the workplace context**

- Developing mechanisms for addressing sexual harassment in the workplace and for monitoring the implementation of such mechanisms.
- Developing gender-responsive budgeting across various public sector institutions.
- Setting in place mechanisms for ensuring promotions are conducted based on merit and for ensuring that women are considered among the list of candidates nominated for promotion.
Creating awareness around gender-based discrimination among employees across grade levels within the public sector.

- Implementing training workshops around gender-based discrimination targeting decision makers within the public sector, as well as employees across various grade levels within the public sector.
- Conducting media campaigns that aim to create awareness around the importance of women’s representation in the workplace, and the impact of excluding women from the workforce as well as from decision making positions.
- Conducting media campaigns that aim to lobby the public sector to appoint women in decision making positions.

In addition to the above, recommendations also revolved around addressing gender-based discrimination in school textbooks and curricula as a way of ensuring that these issues are tackled through education.

LLWB will work with stakeholders from the public sector and the private sector in order to identify ways through which the various recommendations shared can be taken forward.

Concluding Remarks and Steps Forward

This project was an eye-opening to the challenges faced by women within the public sector, shedding the light on major issues related to women’s promotion within this context.

LLWB, with the support of its members and partners, perceives that the work towards supporting women within this context needs to be taken forward. One of the major gaps that need to be addressed based on the project findings includes the gap in legislation that supports women within the workplace context, in the public and private sectors. A quantitative study that sheds the light on women’s current participation in the public sector would also contribute towards creating further knowledge around this topic.

Finally, and in line with stakeholders’ recommendations, trainings around gender-based discrimination broadly and sexual harassment more specifically are also needed in the process of advocating for gender equality within the public and private sectors.