

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IN LEBANON

Impact evaluation of the project 'Women's
Access to Justice' in Lebanon

Effectiveness Review Series 2017/18



Photo credit: LECORVAW

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ABBREVIATIONS

ARS – Awareness-Raising Sessions

GBV – Gender-based violence

JWF – Justice Without Frontiers

LECORVAW – Lebanese Council to Resist Violence Against Women

MEL – Monitoring Evaluation and Learning

MENA – Middle East and North Africa

PSL – Personal Status Law

PSM – Propensity Score Matching

QCA – Qualitative Comparative Analysis

TOC – Theory of Change

WAJ2 – Women’s Access to Justice Programme: Phase 2

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Oxfam GB's Global Performance Framework is part of the organization's effort to better understand and communicate its effectiveness, as well as enhance learning across the organization. Under this Framework, a small number of completed or mature projects are selected each year for an evaluation of their impact, known as an Effectiveness Review. The project 'Women's Access to Justice Programme: Phase 2' was one of those selected for an Effectiveness Review in the 2017/18 financial year. The project was selected under the global outcome indicator of Women's Empowerment, which is defined as change in empowerment of supported women – measured by a composite index assessing indicators of empowerment that are relevant to the socio-economic context of the project under analysis.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project 'Women's Access to Justice Programme: Phase 2' (WAJ2) is a multi-country programme, operating in Yemen, Jordan, Lebanon and Egypt. Phase 1 started in May 2011 and finished in July 2014. Phase 2 started in December 2014 and concluded in December 2017. Given the complexity and diversity of the interventions, the evaluation team – in coordination with the programme management – decided to focus the attention of the Effectiveness Review on one specific country, Lebanon. As such, the results coming from this Effectiveness Review are not meant to be indicative of the overall impact of WAJ2 but are a focused impact assessment for the activities implemented by the Lebanese Council to Resist Violence Against Women (LECORVAW).

The overall objective of the project was to contribute to equitable access to formal and informal justice for poor and vulnerable women in targeted countries, and it aimed to achieve four main results. First, to increase voice and confidence to claim access to legal systems for poor and vulnerable women. Second, to increase support from communities to equal access to justice for poor and vulnerable women. Third, for policy makers and legal stakeholders to increasingly take action towards a more equitable and accessible justice system. Fourth, for women's rights civil society organizations in the Middle East to foster engagement of communities, legal stakeholders and policy makers around women's access to justice. The project's Theory of Change identified three areas of intervention: personal, community and systemic. The expectation was that at the personal level, if women are empowered to stand up for their rights they will be more likely to use judicial institutions and claim their rights when they are violated. At the community level, if communities are supportive of women's rights and subscribe to the principles of equal access to justice, then women will be more likely to claim their rights through the judicial system. Finally, at the systemic level, if law and policies ensure equal access to justice for all, women are more likely to claim their rights using the formal judicial institutions.

In Lebanon, the project worked with two partner organizations. This evaluation is focused on the activities implemented by LECORVAW, which started its activities in 2014 and worked with Sunni Muslim women, mainly in the region of Tripoli in the north of the country.

LECORVAW implemented a variety of activities at personal, community and systemic level. Activities conducted at personal level included training paralegals, who then conducted awareness-raising sessions with over 2,000 women on the Personal Status

Law (PSL). It established peer-to-peer support groups for nearly 140 women and provided over 840 legal consultations to over 600 women, 160 of which consisted of litigation cases. At community level, LECORVAW conducted awareness-raising sessions for community members and established community support networks. Finally, at systemic level, LECORVAW organized meetings and public events and presentations with duty bearers, including religious leaders, judges, bar associations and other NGOs from Tripoli.

EVALUATION DESIGN

The Effectiveness Reviews are impact evaluations that focus on impact questions. This evaluation aimed to answer three main questions:

- What has been the impact of the project on women's empowerment?
- What has been the impact of the project in changing trust in, willingness to use and accessibility of the legal system?
- What are the factors and characteristics that cause a woman to start a legal case and leave an intimate-partner relationship?

Given the complexity of the project, the evaluation adopted the framework suggested in Bamberger et al. (2016) to unpack and evaluate complex interventions. It then identified and used evaluation methods that aligned evaluation questions with available resources and attributes of the intervention (Stern et al., 2012).

The evaluation employed a quasi-experimental impact evaluation design to assess the impact of awareness-raising sessions conducted at individual and community level. It investigated whether awareness-raising sessions are effective in leading women to increase their knowledge, awareness, trust and accessibility with regard to the legal system. The evaluation used a composite index for measuring women's empowerment combining indicators associated with changes taking place at three levels: personal, relational and environmental, to measure and estimate the impact on women's empowerment.

Life-history interviews were used to provide deep contextual knowledge and understanding of the lives of women who sought legal consultation and chose to litigate. Life-history interviews were then codified and analysed with a configurational analysis tool (EvalC3), which combines methods drawn from Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) and Predictive Analytics (PA). This was used to identify which attributes help to explain why women start a litigation for divorce and/or leave an intimate-partner relationship.

RESULTS

What has been the impact of the project in promoting women's empowerment?

Despite very low levels of recall of attendance at the awareness-raising sessions – less than one third – women involved in the awareness-raising sessions, on average, scored positively in 54 percent of the women's empowerment indicators, compared with matched women who scored positively in only 48 percent of the indicators. This difference is positive and statistically significantly different from zero.

There is evidence of positive and significant effects on some indicators of empowerment, including participants' knowledge of women's rights, their willingness to react to violence, level of social capital, and access to appropriate services. However, there was no

evidence of positive impact on several other indicators that were linked to the project's Theory of Change. At personal level, these include self-confidence, personal autonomy, financial independence and recognition, and non-acceptability of violence. At relational level, there is no evidence of change in household decision making.

It appears that the awareness-raising sessions had a good impact on group membership. This is an interesting and/or surprising finding, given the short duration of the awareness-raising sessions. It may be interesting for future research to further explore the link between group membership and women's access to justice.

What is the impact on women's access to justice?

In terms of the impact of the intervention on access to justice pathways, we found evidence that through awareness-raising sessions, the project had a positive and significant effect in increasing trust in reporting problems to the police and organizations supporting women, and towards seeking legal advice. However, despite increased trust in some organizations, awareness-raising sessions did not increase trust in the key focus institution – the courts. There was similarly no evidence of impact on overall perception of the quality of the legal process (in terms of cost, timelines and level of stress). There was also no evidence of the awareness sessions impacting on perceptions of the level of support from the community towards women who take legal action, nor their own supportiveness towards family members or friends in their community who take legal action – although support levels were very high in both groups, which may be due other community-focused interventions in the project.

Despite the mixed picture above, we found that women involved in awareness-raising sessions *are*, on average, more likely to report having had a legal consultation (8 percentage points) and undertake legal action (5 percentage points) compared with women who didn't.

For these women who did take legal action, we found no difference in satisfaction with the result of the legal outcome/verdict, or on women's perception of fairness of the courts. However, the intervention had a significant positive effect on women's *experience of the legal process* (31 percentage points higher than comparison women), this finding was also supported by the life-history interviews, where women describe LECORVAW's support during what is often a challenging and traumatic process.

What are the factors and characteristics that cause a woman to start a legal case and leave an intimate-partner relationship?

Analysis conducted on the life-history data identified the three most important factors in predicting whether a woman decides to initiate a divorce were *attending awareness raising sessions*, *confidence in LECORVAW* and *self-confidence*.

As not all litigants proceed to a divorce, the evaluation also considered the attributes that predicted whether women were no longer in an intimate-partner relationship (where the majority were experiencing violence). '*Starting a litigation*' was identified as a Necessary and highly accurate attribute (79 percent), meaning that all women in the sample who are no longer in a relationship with their husbands also started litigation. Another important attribute for predicting a woman not being in an intimate-partner relationship was '*not being concerned about negative stereotypes of divorced women*', which is also Necessary and highly accurate (84 percent). When combined, these two attributes form a model that is Necessary, with 95 percent accuracy, with only one False Positive.

This evaluation did not assess the impact of the project on the systemic component, as it was deemed too early at the time of the evaluation to be able to expect measurable changes. However, during the design of the evaluation, the evaluation team had the

chance to witness public meetings held with local religious authorities, as well as appearances on national TV shows promoting LECORVAW work and activities.

LESSONS LEARNED

From discussions and critical reflections with Programme Staff based on these results, the following learning points emerged.

- **Review model of awareness-raising sessions (ARS)**

The evaluation found evidence that suggests women who attend awareness-raising sessions have higher levels of participation in legal consultation and litigations than similar women not attending. This may provide evidence to support the assumption that women's knowledge, understanding and perception of their legal rights is a critical factor for access to justice. However, given the low recall of the session (with only one third of participants remembering participation) and lack of impact on several key empowerment indicators, future projects should more clearly articulate how the one-hour, one-off sessions expect to achieve change.

For example, although the programme had a statistically significant impact on women's knowledge of legal service providers, overall knowledge remained low, with 70 percent of women who participated in an ARS still not aware of legal service providers.

The ARS may be working as a simple, yet effective, gateway/introduction to LECORVAW/a LECORVAW paralegal, but if the session *itself* is intended to lead to wider changes in women's empowerment, then critical questions need to be asked about whether the duration and intensity of these activities is enough to prompt and sustain change. Other practices may be considered, such as using videos and other mass media, to reach a wider population for a more prolonged time.

- **Continue to focus on social norm change, particularly on stereotypes of divorced women**

There is good evidence from this evaluation that not holding negative stereotypes towards divorced women is an important factor in predicting if a woman will leave an intimate-partner relationship (i.e. divorce or separation) in which she experiences violence. This provides good support to the programme Theory of Change that social norm change is critical. The programme is therefore encouraged to maintain its focus on social norm change, in particular considering how to influence harmful and negative stereotypes towards divorced women in the society. These stereotypes are a form of gender inequality that stops women from seeking justice.

- **Articulate a more explicit Theory of Change to address violence against women and girls**

The life histories showed that intimate-partner violence was a major theme in women's descriptions of their lives and a pathway to legal justice. Divorce or legally recognized separation is often an important form of justice (although not complete in itself). Although implicit in the rationale for access to justice work in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, this is an area that was not conceptualized clearly enough in the programme documentation or Theory of Change. Theories of Change on Women's Access to Justice should be more explicit in articulating the causal pathways or chain between access to justice and ending violence against women and Girls. This includes both the intersection between personal status laws and criminal law in access to justice for violence against women. It is also important to better understand the barriers and

enabling factors with regard to leaving an abusive relationship as a critical part of women's decision to litigate or not.

- **Ensure programmes' working access to justice includes activities and budgets for addressing intimate-partner violence for project participants**

Although not a focus of the evaluation, the extent to which the project had articulated the mechanisms that need to be in place (across partners and countries) to detect, prevent and mitigate against episodes of violence for project participants, was not clear. Especially in projects working on access to justice, where violence is a recurring threat for project participants, there should be more explicit procedures – and ideally infrastructure – to protect and provide immediate support and shelter to women who decide to seek legal support.

- **Develop a long-term strategy for addressing women's lack of trust in the Sunni Family Courts**

Literature on how change happens in the context of access to justice shows that trust in judicial institutions is a critical component. Although women in the intervention group were more likely to advise a friend to seek support from police, lawyers and women's organizations – a positive finding – there was no statistically significant impact on increased trust in the courts (i.e. 'going to court can help solve problems related to personal status law') (Table 6.2). This suggests that the project had an impact on trust in some institutions, but not the key target of the programme, the Sunni Family Court. This was an important part of the programme Theory of Change, and therefore future programme interventions may wish to consider further how to build this trust.

- **Importance of self-confidence as a predictor of litigation – reiterates/supports the TOC**

Although no evidence was found that the ARS led to increased self-confidence, the qualitative analysis showed that having self-confidence was an accurate predictor of filing for divorce. This supports the Theory of Change for the programme and is an area that future programmes should continue to focus on in their work, developing clear strategies and techniques for building confidence with women they work with at all stages of the programme.

- **Litigation not necessarily leading to a perception of more power and freedom – the empowerment pathway needs greater planning and design**

Future programmes should consider more explicitly which individual and societal level changes are required for divorced women to experience increased power and freedom. This should include, among other things, psychosocial support and peer-to-peer support, as well as addressing more explicitly the links between access to justice and women's empowerment.

- **Monitoring data**

Whilst the programme had a detailed Monitoring Evaluation and Learning (MEL) strategy and framework, some monitoring data that was collected was of poor quality, which made sampling for the evaluation a challenge. Greater focus on building an evaluative culture, in which all partners are interested in the power of data and the insights it can bring into learning about justice and empowerment pathways, may lead to better quality data. Similarly, greater investments in ICT for data collection may enable smaller feedback loops for more frequent adaptations to the programme.

1 INTRODUCTION

Oxfam GB's Global Performance Framework is part of the organization's effort to better understand and communicate its effectiveness, as well as enhance learning across the organization. Under this Framework, a small number of completed or mature projects are selected each year for an evaluation of their impact, known as an Effectiveness Review. The project 'Women's Access to Justice Programme: Phase 2' was one of those selected for an Effectiveness Review in the 2017/18 financial year.

The project was selected under the global outcome indicator of Women's Empowerment, which is defined as change in empowerment of supported women – measured by a composite index assessing indicators of empowerment that are relevant to the socio-economic context of the project under analysis.

The project 'Women's Access to Justice Programme: Phase 2' (WAJ2) is a multi-country programme, operating in Yemen, Jordan, Lebanon and Egypt. Phase 1 started in May 2011 and finished in July 2014. Phase 2 started in December 2014 and concluded in December 2017. Given the complexity and diversity of the interventions, the evaluation team – in coordination with the programme management – decided to focus the attention of the Effectiveness Review on one specific country, Lebanon. A final project evaluation was simultaneously conducted covering all four countries, but not, however, aiming to evaluate the project's impact.¹

Figure 1.1: Map of Lebanon



Source: Maps Open Source

The WAJ2 project in Lebanon was implemented by two partner organizations: Justice Without Frontiers (JWF) and the Lebanese Council to Resist Violence Against Women (LECORVAW). JWF conducted its activities mainly within Mount Lebanon with Christian Maronite women, and LECORVAW conducted its activities with Sunni Muslim women in the region of Tripoli, in the north of the country. As a previous Effectiveness Reviews conducted in 2014 already assessed the impact of JWF under Phase 1,² it

was decided to focus the attention of this Effectiveness Review on the activities conducted in Tripoli by LECORVAW, and to explore instead the impact of different activities conducted by LECORVAW only.

As such, the results coming from this Effectiveness Review are not meant to be indicative of the overall impact of WAJ2, but are a focused impact assessment of the activities implemented by LECORVAW.

The questions this evaluation tried to answer are:

- What has been the impact of the project's activities implemented at individual and community level in promoting women's empowerment?
- What was the impact of the project in changing trust in, willingness to use and accessibility of the legal system?
- What are the factors and characteristics that cause a woman to start a legal case and leave an intimate-partner relationship?

This report presents the findings of the Effectiveness Review. Section 2 describes the project. Section 3 presents the evaluation design, and Section 4 explains the data sampling procedure. Section 5 describes how women's empowerment was measured for this evaluation. Section 6 presents the results of the data analysis. Section 7 concludes with a summary of the findings and some considerations for future learning.

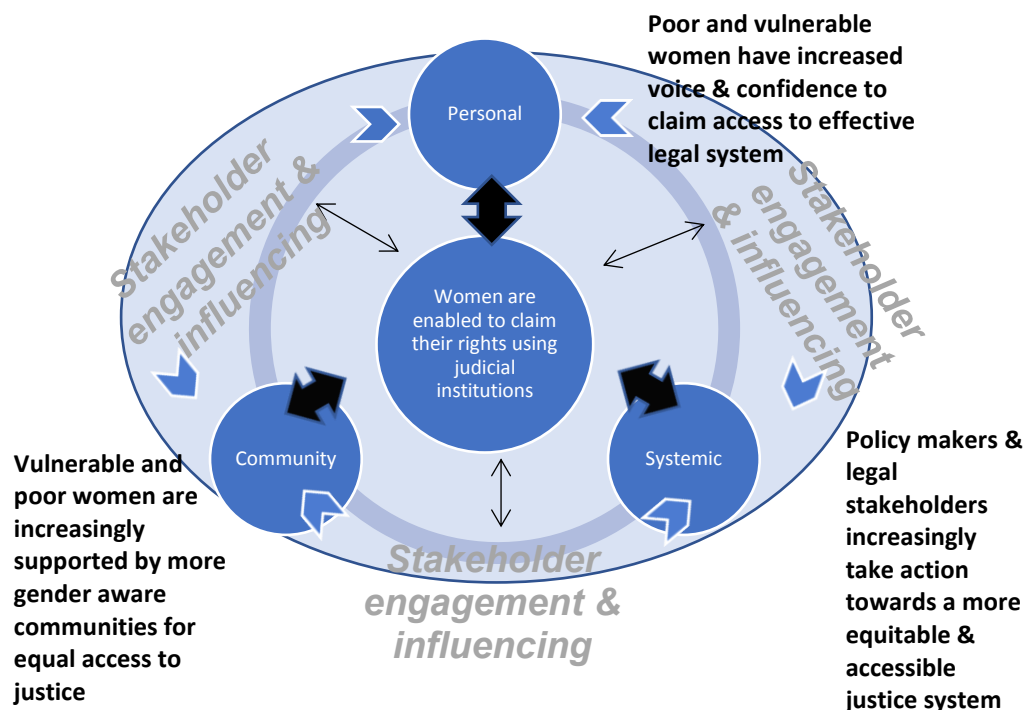
2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

'Women's Access to Justice programme: Phase 2' was a three-year project implemented by Oxfam GB in partnership with five NGO partners in Lebanon, Jordan, Yemen and Egypt. It was designed to build upon the successes of Phase 1 (April 2011–March 2014) and Oxfam's other legal protection work.

The overall objective of the project was to contribute to equitable access to formal and informal justice for poor and vulnerable women in targeted countries, and it aimed to achieve four main results. First, to increase voice and confidence to claim access to legal systems for poor and vulnerable women. Second, to increase support from communities to equal access to justice for poor and vulnerable women. Third, for policy makers and legal stakeholders to increasingly take action towards a more equitable and accessible justice system. Fourth, for women's rights civil society organizations in the Middle East to foster engagement of communities, legal stakeholders and policy makers around women's access to justice.

The project's Theory of Change identified three areas of intervention: personal, community and systemic. The expectation was that at personal level, if women are empowered to stand up for their rights, they will be more likely to use judicial institutions and claim their rights when they are violated. At the community level, if communities are supportive of women's rights and subscribe to the principles of equal access to justice, then women will be more likely to claim their rights through the judicial system. Finally, at the systemic level, if law and policies ensure equal access to justice for all, women are then more likely to claim their rights using the formal judicial institutions. A visual representation of the overall Theory of Change is given in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1: Theory of Change of the WAJ2 project



The key assumptions that underpin this theory of change are:

- Self-efficacy (one's belief in one's own ability to address/solve a legal problem) is a necessary condition for women's access to justice.
- Women's knowledge, understanding and perception of their legal rights is a critical factor for access to justice.
- Women need self-confidence to stand up to pressure from the community to not act to claim their legal rights.
- Women need increased voice and power to act to make their first legal claim.
- Economic independence is a critical step towards empowerment.
- Women who have the support of social workers and peer-to-peer support are more likely to continue with their claims.
- Women's perceptions of the cost and quality of the path to justice play a key role in whether or not they claim their legal rights.

The project consisted of several activities, depending on the country and the partner organization. In Lebanon, the project worked with two partner organizations. The first was JWF, who started its activities in 2011 and worked predominantly with Christian Maronite women within Mount Lebanon. The second, LECORVAW, started its activities in 2014 and worked with Sunni Muslim women mainly in the region of Tripoli, in the north of the country. According to Hiil (2017), 64 percent of women in Lebanon have a legal problem, of which 19 percent are family related.³

LECORVAW implemented a variety of activities at personal, community and systemic level. Activities conducted at personal level included training 27 paralegals, who then conducted awareness-raising sessions with over 2,000 women on the Personal Status Law (PSL). It established peer-to-peer support groups for nearly 140 women and provided over 840 legal consultations to over 600 women, 160 of which consisted of litigation cases. At community level, LECORVAW conducted 565 awareness sessions for community members and established community support networks. Finally, at systemic level, LECORVAW organized meetings and public events and presentations with duty bearers, including religious leaders, judges, bar associations and other NGOs from Tripoli.

3 EVALUATION DESIGN

This section presents the choices made for the evaluation design. WAJ2 is a highly complex multi-country programme. In order to rigorously assess its impact, the evaluation team had to make a number of choices to define which components of the project should be assessed. Section 3.1 presents the framework used to deal with this complexity and unpack the project into evaluable components. Sections 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4 provide a short introduction to the evaluation tools employed as part of the impact assessment.

3.1 DEALING WITH COMPLEX INTERVENTIONS

Many development interventions are becoming more complex, posing several challenges for evaluations aiming to assess their impact. The WAJ2 is an example of a complex programme, with activities conducted in four different countries (Lebanon, Jordan, Yemen and Egypt), and interventions conducted at different levels (personal, community and systemic), and with different partner organizations within each country implementing a wide range of activities.

The Effectiveness Reviews are impact evaluations that focus on impact questions. Given the complexity of the project, we adopted the framework suggested by Bamberger, Vaessen and Raimondo (2016) for dealing with complex interventions.⁴

Bamberger et al. (2016) suggest a five-step approach to unpack and evaluate complex interventions. Step one involves mapping the dimensions of complexity. Step two selects the unit of analysis. Step three identifies the best evaluation designs for each component. Step four re-assembles the findings of the component evaluations. Step five gets the big picture.

In step one we confirmed that the project was a highly complex intervention. Particularly in the nature of its implementation, with a large number of components implemented within highly complex social groups and difficult-to-reach populations. Appendix 1 provides a summary of the assessment of the level of complexity.

In step two, we identified the unit of analysis and unpacked the interventions into evaluable components. As the primary goal of the Effectiveness Review conducted under the thematic area of Women's Empowerment is to assess the impact of the project on supported women in terms of empowerment, we decided to keep individual women as the main unit of analysis.

We then unpacked the project by its different implementation components. Among the four countries where the project was implemented, Lebanon was chosen as the country to conduct the Effectiveness Review. This was driven by three factors. First, the amount of resources available for data collection was sufficient to collect quality data only in one country. Second, there were security concerns in conducting fieldwork in Egypt and Yemen. Thirdly, activities conducted in Jordan were not included as the country team was already involved in conducting another Effectiveness Review in the Za'atari camp.

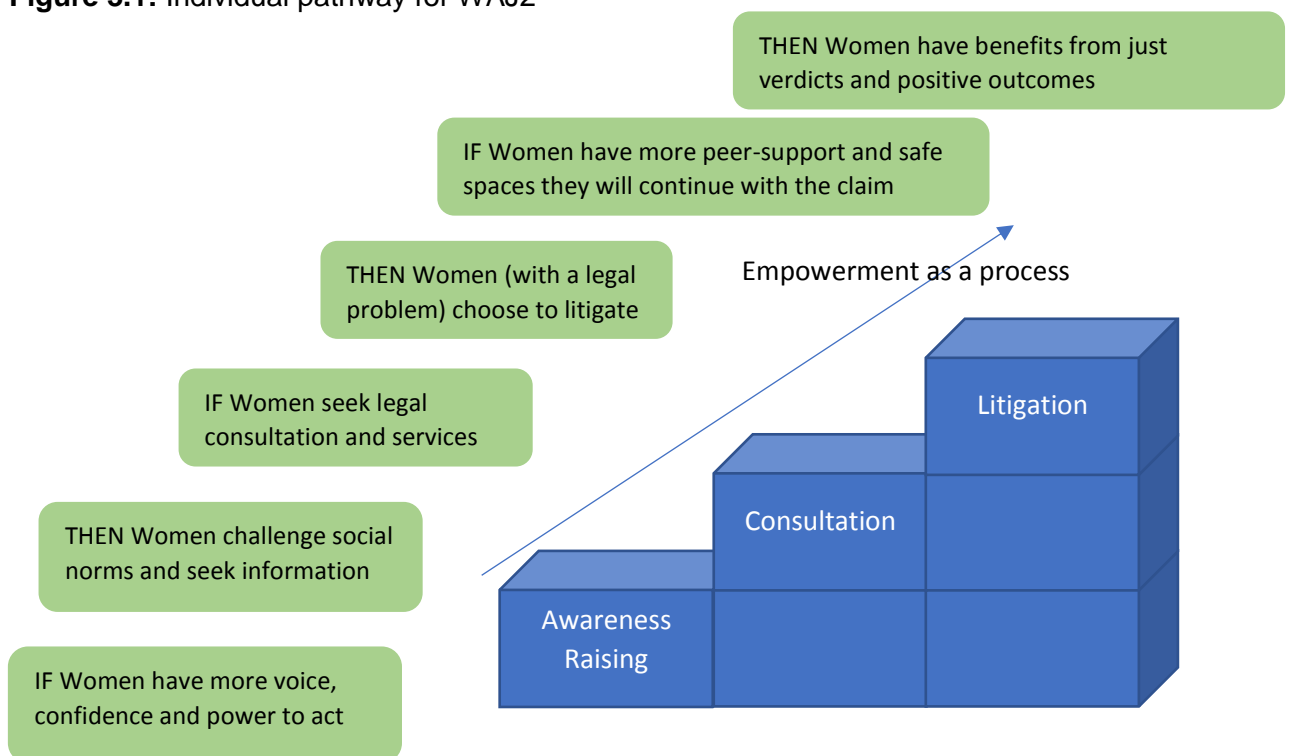
Two partner organizations implemented project activities in Lebanon: JWF and LECORVAW. As JWF was already assessed in a previous Effectiveness Review in

2015, the country team expressed a preference to focus the evaluation on the project component implemented by LECORVAW, which started its activities in 2014, mainly working with Sunni Muslim women in the region of Tripoli.

As described in Section 2, LECORVAW conducted a variety of activities at personal, community and systemic level. The project considered empowerment as a process in which activities such as awareness-raising sessions enable the changing of social norms and stereotypes towards divorced women. If social norms change in favour of women, then women with legal problems are more likely to seek information and legal consultation and services. With legal and peer-support, women with legal problems will then choose to litigate and consequently benefit from a just verdict and a positive outcome. Figure 3.1 summarizes this pathway.

This evaluation focus on two components. First, on the awareness-raising sessions conducted at individual and community level. Second, on the legal consultation and litigation services provided by LECORVAW's lawyers and paralegals.

Figure 3.1: Individual pathway for WAJ2



In step three we chose an evaluation design for the two different components. Stern et al. (2012) suggests that selecting the designs and methods for impact evaluations should be a process of balancing and aligning the evaluation questions together with the available resources and the attributes of the programme.⁵ The evaluation employed a quasi-experimental impact evaluation design to assess step one (awareness-raising sessions), investigating whether awareness-raising sessions are effective in leading women to increase knowledge, awareness, trust and accessibility in the legal system. Life-story interviews were then used to provide a deep contextual knowledge and understanding of the lives of women who sought legal consultation and chose to litigate (or not) (steps two and three). Life-history interviews were then codified and analysed with EvalC3,⁶ to identify which configurations of attributes help to explain why women litigate (primarily this litigation is divorce) and/or leave an intimate-partner relationship. Sections 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4, provide a short theoretical presentation of these research and evaluation tools.

Finally, steps four and five of Bamberger's approach reassemble the various parts and go back to the big picture by assessing the programme contribution to national and international goals.

3.2 QUASI-EXPERIMENTAL INDIVIDUAL SURVEY

In the evaluation of programmes that involve a large number of units (whether individuals, households or communities), common practice is to make a comparison between units that were subject to the programme and units that were not. As long as the two groups can be assumed to be similar in all respects except for the implementation of the specific programme, observing the situation of units where the programme was not implemented can provide a good estimate of the counterfactual.

In the case of this Effectiveness Review, the evaluation assesses the individual as the unit of analysis. A 'quasi-experimental' evaluation design was adopted in which the situation of women who were engaged in awareness-raising activities implemented by the LECORVAW were 'matched' and compared against women with similar characteristics who engaged in different projects *not* related to access to justice. Comparison women were chosen among women who engaged in development projects run by other NGOs in neighbouring communities. Such interventions included activities on child education, capacity building, cash assistance and healthcare, but not on personal status law and access to justice. In this way, the comparison group represents a group of self-selected women who are more likely to be involved in development interventions.

Individual women were then also matched using a statistical technique called propensity-score matching (PSM) on the basis of a variety of characteristics – including age, marital status, education, employment, household wealth, engagement in productive activities and participation in group meetings. Since some of these characteristics may have been affected by the project itself (particularly those relating to marital status and group engagement), matching was performed on the basis of these indicators *before* the implementation of the project. Relevant baseline data were not available, so survey respondents were asked to recall some basic information about their household and personal situation from 2014, before the project was implemented.⁷ Although this recall data is unlikely to be completely accurate, it should not have led to significant bias in the estimates as long as measurement errors due to the recall data were not significantly different for respondents in the intervention and comparison groups.

Section 4 will provide more details on the sampling strategy. Tests on the validity of the propensity-score matching procedure are reported in Appendix 3. A Risk of Bias table is given in Appendix 4.

3.3 LIFE-HISTORY INTERVIEWS

Given the complexity of the topic under analysis, as well as personal and social factors at play, the evaluation conducted life-history interviews with a small sample of women who decided to seek legal advice from LECORVAW and who also litigated. Life-history interviews are a qualitative method of data collection in which in-depth interviews are conducted to create a subjective narrative upon a person's life. The method considers

temporality and change, and it accounts for personal meaning and perspective in relation to key events in the respondent's life⁸.

Life-history interviews were conducted with a random sample of 19 women who'd had at least one legal consultation with LECORVAW (more details on the sampling process in Section 4). The interviews used a structured guide to discuss questions about the social, legal and economic history of the respondents, and understanding social norms. The guide also employed tools such as a ladder of power & freedom⁹ and positional graphs to better understand the experiences of the women's life now, 10 years ago, and when they first came to LECORVAW.

The translated transcripts from the interviews were subsequently coded and analysed by one of the authors of this study using Nvivo, in order to provide the base data for the EvalC3 configurational analysis

3.4 CONFIGURATIONAL ANALYSIS

The data generated from the life-history interviews were coded and analysed to identify a set of attributes (see Table 3.1) that predicted the following outcomes:

I – Woman has litigated for divorce in the Sunni Family Court

II – Woman is no longer in an intimate-partner relationship

The definition for the first outcome is that the woman (at the time of interview) has litigated in the Sunni Family Court for divorce. Women who filed a legal case only for alimony or expenses are not considered to have achieved this outcome. It is worth noting that not all women in our stories who litigated did this with LECORVAW.

The definition for the second outcome is that a woman (at the time of interview) is no longer in an intimate-partner relationship with the husband to which their legal problem related. This includes both women who completed a divorce *and* women who are separated (i.e. no longer co-habiting). This outcome does not include women who divorced but had their claims annulled and are now re-married (i.e. back in a relationship) with their husbands. This outcome should not be read to infer choice over decision to divorce/separate in all cases.

The attributes summarized in Table 3.1 were identified by the authors based on a combination of attributes identified from the existing Theory of Change and stories coming from the life-history interviews.

A configurational analysis was conducted using the EvalC3 software.¹⁰ An EvalC3 analysis involves a workflow that begins with a cross-case analysis, looking for configurations of attributes associated with an outcome occurring, and leads to a within-case analysis stage where representative cases are chosen for an in-depth examination of any causal processes that might be at work behind such configurations. The analysis process makes use of Predictive Analytics (PA) search algorithms and a Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) view of causality.

Table 3.1: Attributes analysed to predict if a woman takes legal action and/or leaves an intimate-partner relationship

#	List of Attributes
1	Living in abusive relationship
2	Has attended awareness raising
3	Has self-confidence
4	Had employment at time of litigation
5	Had prior knowledge of family law
6	Children had been abused by father
7	Has major concerns about husband's character
8	Has equitable concept of gender equality
9	Has high level of confidence in LECORVAW
10	Has support of majority of family members
11	Has support of community
12	Has perception of high cost, time or effort of legal process
13	Is not concerned about negative stereotypes of divorced women
14	Is abandoned (husband left her or forced her out of the marital home)

Based on a set of attributes that emerged from the life-history interview, this analysis explored which attributes, as well as combinations of attributes (also known as configurations), are Sufficient and/or Necessary for a woman to file a divorce (outcome 1) and to leave an intimate-partner relationship (outcome 2). In other words, the analysis explored the drivers for the two outcomes to materialize.

Appendix 5 of this report provides a more in-depth description of the methodology adopted.

4 DATA SAMPLING PROCEDURE

In this section, we describe the sampling procedure for the individual survey as well as for the life-history interviews. We then explore how different the two sample groups are.

4.1 SAMPLING FOR THE INDIVIDUAL SURVEY

Intervention group

The sampling for the intervention group was conducted on women who attended awareness-raising sessions on PSL conducted by 11 specifically trained paralegals. There are 2,438 women registered to have participated in awareness-raising sessions. The sample frame included only Lebanese women aged above 18. From these, 250 respondents were randomly sampled stratifying by the paralegal who conducted the session and awareness-raising session (proportional to the size for each group trained). Another 241 women were also identified as potential replacements if women in the original sample were not available. The data collection team encountered several challenges in reaching these women. Almost 40 percent either had the wrong number or did not answer to the phone; 41 percent refused to arrange an appointment or cancelled it; and only 9 percent of the project participants in the original sample were surveyed. This led to a change in strategy, making use of all available lists with project participants and available phone numbers. Paralegals made the first contact in order to gain the women's trust and increase the chances of obtaining an interview. This process was followed until the desired sample size was reached.

Comparison group

The comparison group was identified from project participants from other NGOs working on child education, capacity building, cash assistance and healthcare. Most of these projects were also targeting mothers, but not including PSL and access to justice as a thematic activity. Projects were selected from areas of Tripoli where awareness-raising sessions did not take place, in order to minimize the risk that women participated in both activities. Women participating in these projects were randomly selected and invited to participate in the interview. Significantly fewer challenges were faced in reaching this population compared with the respondents in the intervention group. In order to be interviewed, the respondent had to be female, a Lebanese citizen, be aged 18–65, and a Sunni Muslim.

Analysis of baseline characteristics

Before analysing the effects of the project on women's empowerment, we compared women from intervention and comparison groups in terms of their socio-economic characteristics in 2014 (that is, before the project began). This helped to check the suitability of the comparison group and ascertain what variables should be included in the main analysis to control for observable differences between project and non-project households. These data were based on information recalled during the questionnaire or reconstructed from the household composition at the time of the survey. The full comparison is shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Baseline characteristics before matching

	Intervention mean	Comparison mean	Difference
Household size	5.471	5.225	0.246
1[Household in the 1st wealth quintile in 2014]	0.282	0.167	0.114***
1[Respondent is able to work]	0.937	0.872	0.065**
1[Group meetings in 2014]	0.121	0.068	0.054**
1[Head of household at baseline is able to work]	0.913	0.893	0.019
1[Respondent has more than primary education]	0.417	0.400	0.018
1[Income share >= 50% in 2014]	0.175	0.162	0.013
1[Household in the 2nd wealth quintile in 2014]	0.189	0.199	-0.009
1[Respondent engaged in productive activities in 2014]	0.223	0.254	-0.031
1[Household in the 5th wealth quintile in 2014]	0.175	0.211	-0.036
1[Head of household is male]	0.777	0.826	-0.049
1[Head of household at baseline has more than primary education]	0.233	0.295	-0.062
1[Respondent married at baseline]	0.578	0.651	-0.074*
1[Household in the 4th wealth quintile in 2014]	0.141	0.230	-0.089***
1[Relationship with husband was good at baseline]	0.374	0.484	-0.110***
Head of household's age]	47.034	47.191	-0.157
Respondent's age	35.859	37.392	-1.533
Observations	206	413	

Notes: * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$;

Table 4.1 suggests that there are no significant differences between the intervention and comparison groups on engagement in productive activities, income share, household size, respondent's age and education, or the head of household's age and education. However, data suggest there are significant differences on marital status and relationship with husband in 2014. A greater proportion of women in the comparison group reported to being married and defined the relationship with their husband as 'good', compared with women in the comparison group. Moreover, women in the intervention group seems to be more likely to come from a less wealthy household, compared with women in the comparison group. Finally, women in the intervention group were more likely to being engaged in group meetings in 2014, compared with comparison women.

These differences, which existed before the project, had the potential to bias any comparison of the project's outcomes between the project and comparison groups. It was therefore important to control for these baseline differences when making such comparisons. As mentioned in Section 3, the approach used in the quasi-experimental component of this Effectiveness Review was propensity-score matching (PSM). The full details of the matching procedure applied are described in Appendix 3. After matching, women in the project and comparison villages were reasonably well-

balanced in terms of the recalled baseline data, with few significant differences between them (Table A3.2). Not all of the women could be matched, and accordingly three of the 206 women surveyed in the comparison group and seven of the 413 women surveyed in the intervention group had to be dropped from the analysis.

4.2 SAMPLING FOR THE LIFE-HISTORY INTERVIEWS

Previous analysis indicated 20 respondents would be a desired sample size for the qualitative life-history interview component. This number was identified considering practical constraints of time and resources, as well as analysis by Given (2018)¹¹ who identified 20 observations to be likely to be reaching a 'saturation point' in which there is enough data that few new patterns and categories are emerging. While the validity of this choice applies to the life-history interviews, it does not apply to the configuration analysis where the number of cases depends on the number of attributes investigated. As other authors have argued (O'Reilly and Parker, 2012¹²) this does not invalidate our findings; rather it means that the area of study has not yet been fully explored and should be reported with our findings.

All women in this sample were deemed to share common characteristics. They had a legal problem¹³ and received a consultation service with LECORVAW within the scope of the WAJ2. Moreover, they were also required to be Lebanese citizen, aged 18–65, and a Sunni Muslim.

In order to provide sufficient diversity for a configurational analysis it was decided to maximize the variation in the decision to litigate. The aim was to reach a sample of ten respondents who had a legal problem and had decided to litigate (named litigant women), and ten women who had a legal problem but, for any reason, had decided not to litigate (named non-litigant women).

For the litigant women, we randomly sampled from LECORVAW's database of 170 women who had started a legal case with their support. However, it was not possible to reach six out of 10 of the originally designated respondents because they were either no longer in Lebanon, did not answer the phone, or contact details were not up to date. This meant that replacement respondents had to be found by working in order through the randomized list of all 170 women until 10 women had been identified.

For the non-litigant sample (i.e. women who had consultations but did not litigate) we also randomized a sample from the LECORVAW database of 750 women who'd had legal consultations with LECORVAW. However, insufficiently detailed data were recorded on each woman to ascertain whether any of these women had a legal problem. This meant that instead, lawyers and paralegals from LECORVAW reconstructed a list of women who fit the criteria and had available phone numbers. This process was followed until the desired sample size was reached.

One observation had to be dropped because she was not 18 years old and a replacement could not be found because of the challenges of getting to this hard-to-reach group of women, leading to a final sample size of 19 women: 10 women with legal problems who litigated with LECORVAW support and nine women with legal problems who'd had a legal consultation but had decided to not to litigate with LECORVAW support.

Despite this selection, it was found during the course of the interviews that six out of the nine non-litigants had, in fact, started a litigation process in the past, although they

had dropped the case, or had it annulled. As a result, the final sample was – more precisely – made up of women with the following status in terms of their litigation:

Ever-litigated			Never-litigated
15			5

Although there is nuance within the sample:

Litigated to Verdict with LECORVAW	Litigated to Verdict without LECORVAW	Litigation dropped before Verdict/Verdict Annulled	Never-litigated
10	2	3	5

This sample reflects the complexity of legal cases in Lebanon, which is also supported by recent research, which shows that in family related legal problems, only four out of 10 problems are resolved either partially or completely, with nearly half of family related legal problems still ongoing, which is a clear sign of delay in the resolution process (Hiil, 2017).

4.3 LIMITATIONS

The evaluation faced many challenges and limitations, which are important to consider when reading the results.

First, the population involved in the study was extremely hard to reach. This had consequences for both the quasi-experimental and life-history interview components. Special arrangements were put in place, for example using lawyers and paralegals to build trust with the women or changing interview locations to suit women's circumstances. However, reaching project participants and scheduling interviews proved to be particularly challenging. Both samples have high non-response rates, which may affect their representativeness.

Second, the original evaluation was designed with the intention of exploring the factors that explain why a woman with a legal problem litigates or not. However, it was found during the course of the interviews that six out of nine of the non-litigant sample had, in fact, started a litigation process in the past, although had dropped the case or had it annulled. This did not allow enough variation in the sample to explore this outcome, and it was therefore decided to focus on whether a woman litigated for divorce.

Finally, while it was the intention to analyse life-history interviews with EvalC3 from the beginning of the evaluation design, specialist advice on how to implement this component was obtained at a later stage. Because of limited time availability, combined with the necessity to complete the evaluation within a defined timeline, there were limited opportunities for the authors to explore within-case analysis.

4.4 OVERLAP BETWEEN THE TWO SAMPLES

It is important to note that the two samples, women interviewed as part of the individual survey and women interview as part of the life-history interviews, represent two different groups of people within the same project. While women interviewed in the

individual survey are representative of women involved in awareness-raising sessions (step 1 in Figure 3.1), women interviewed in the life-history interviews are intended to be representative of the women who received consultation and who started litigation with LECORVAW (steps 2 and 3 in Figure 3.1).

Comparing the two groups based on a wealth index, which summarizes women's household wealth, suggests that there are no significant differences between the two groups. This, however, is not considering other important socio-economic factors differentiating the two groups. For this reason, in the sections below of the report, when presenting the results from the individual survey, all the quotes and interpretations provided by the life-history interviews are provided in separate boxes.

5 MEASURING WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IN LEBANON

The project under review specifically aimed to promote women's access to justice. Additionally, this evaluation investigated the effect of the project on women's empowerment more broadly.

In order to be able to measure women's empowerment, Oxfam GB have developed a measurement tool based on a composite index designed to assess this complex and hard-to-measure concept. The tool is based on a framework that remains unchanged from one evaluation to the next, while the characteristics and indicators that make up the index change from context to context, aiming to capture the characteristics of an 'empowered woman' in the socio-economic context of analysis. The index provides a concise, but comprehensive, measure of women's empowerment, while also allowing analysis by level of change or the individual indicator.

Women's empowerment is defined as the process whereby women's and girls' lives are transformed from a situation where they have limited power to a situation where their power is enhanced. The measurement framework recognizes three levels where change can take place: personal, relational and environmental. Changes at a personal level refer to changes taking place within the person – changes in how the person sees herself, how she considers her role and that of other women in her society: their economic role and their confidence in deciding and taking actions concerning themselves. Changes at the relational level refer to changes in the relationships and power relations within the woman's surrounding network. This includes, for example, changes within the household, the community, markets and local authorities. Finally, changes at environmental level take place in the broader context. These can be informal changes, such as social norms, attitudes, and the beliefs of wider society, as well as formal changes in the political and legislative framework.













During the design stage, the evaluation team, together with programme staff and the partner organization, identified 12 characteristics that describe an empowered woman in Tripoli province in Lebanon. Each characteristic was transformed into an indicator and measured with an individual questionnaire.

Table 5.1 provides a summary of the indicators describing an empowered woman in Tripoli, Lebanon. It is important to note that while not all characteristics considered in measuring women's empowerment may be directly linked to the project activities, all were deemed to be important in describing an empowered woman in this particular context.

In order to combine all 12 indicators into a unique composite index, a benchmark was defined for each characteristic to identify what it means for a woman to be empowered in relation to the characteristic in question. The composite index measures the proportion of characteristics in which a woman scores positively across the 12 empowerment indicators. Details of the thresholds employed in each indicator can be found in Appendix 1.

Further details of the measurement approach can be found in the Oxfam publication *A 'How to' guide to measuring women's empowerment*.¹⁴

Table 5.1: Women's Empowerment in Lebanon

Personal level				
1		Self-confidence	She believes in her own skills	
2		Personal autonomy	She is able to make decisions about her own life	
3		Financially independent	She has her own money and finances	
4		Recognition and non-acceptability of violence	She considers it unacceptable for a man to beat his wife	
5		Knowledge of her rights	She knows her rights	
Relational level				
6		Household decision making	She is able to make and influence decisions within her household	
7		React to violence	She takes action to stop violence	
8		Social capital	She participates in meetings and events in the society	
9		Access to community leaders	She is able to access community leaders if necessary	
Environmental level				
10		Communities are supporting	She lives in a community supporting women's rights	
11		Access to appropriate services	She has access to a legal system that is protecting her rights	
12		Safe and free of fear	She feels safe in her community	

As part of the life-history interviews, we used a ladder of power and freedom as a useful participatory tool to see how women who'd had legal consultations with LECORVAW believed their power and freedom – key aspects of empowerment – has changed over time. Whilst it is not possible to infer causal claims about the programme intervention from these data, the findings provide useful insights to help frame the following sections of this impact evaluation.

6 RESULTS

This section will present the results of the evaluation based on the questions and focus of the project.

Section 6.1 will present the results on the evidence of impact of the project activities implemented at individual and community level (step 1 in Figure 3.1) on improving women's empowerment and changing trust, willingness and accessibility of the legal system. Section 6.2 will investigate what factors and attributes cause a woman with legal problems to move from consultation to beginning a litigation process (steps 2 and 3 in Figure 3.1). Whenever appropriate, data from the life-history interviews will be used to provide examples and better understanding of the context and women's experiences.

6.1 INDIVIDUAL SURVEY

The results shown in this section are mainly stated as the average difference between women directly involved in the project (the 'intervention group') and matched comparison women (the 'comparison group'), after correcting for observable baseline differences between them using a propensity-score matching (PSM) procedure.¹⁵

6.1.1 PROJECT PARTICIPATION

Before considering the project's effect on outcomes, it is important to examine whether respondents from the individual survey reported having participated in the activities implemented under this project. As presented earlier, the project conducted activities in several different ways. This included training and other engagement activities with women in the Tripoli area. Table 6.1 shows the proportion of women in the intervention and comparison groups that reported having received training in the following thematic areas since 2014.

Table 6.1: Project exposure

	Trainings on human rights	Trainings on Personal Status Law	Training on gender justice	Trainings on GBV
Intervention group mean:	0.35	0.28	0.27	0.29
Comparison group mean:	0.05	0.03	0.02	0.04
Difference:	0.30***	0.26***	0.25***	0.25***
	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.04)
Observations intervention:	203	203	203	203
Observations:	609	609	609	609

Notes: Standard errors in parentheses; * p<0.1, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01; PSM estimates are bootstrapped with 1,000 repetitions. All means are calculated after matching.

Only 35 percent of surveyed women in the intervention group reported having have received a training in human rights. This proportion decreases to 28 and 27 percent to Personal Status Law trainings and gender justice. While the difference with the comparison group is positive and significant, the proportion of respondents who

reported having received training on Personal Status Law and gender justice is surprisingly small. This could be explained by the fact that women involved in such awareness-raising sessions did not recognize them as trainings.

Another possible explanation highlighted within the Final Evaluation of the project is that inconsistencies were revealed in the content shared with participants of awareness-raising sessions; paralegals and community facilitators were given a high degree of flexibility and their content was not always closely monitored. As a result, it might be that the descriptions given in the wording of the questionnaire were not sufficient triggers for recall. It might also be possible that one awareness-raising session was not enough to cement in the memory of having attended such a session. Alternatively, it could be that women that were supposed to have attended awareness-raising sessions did not, in fact, attend the session. Regardless of the interpretation, questions on the content and intensity of the exposure remain. This, however, should not have implications for the interpretation of the estimates of the impact for this component.

6.1.2 ACCESS TO JUSTICE

This section examines the differences between the intervention and comparison groups on access to justice indicators.

The outcomes of interest in this section are:

- Trust
- Willingness to take legal action and accessibility of the legal system
- Satisfaction, including perception of quality and fairness.

These were key indicators set at the beginning of the programme. A literature review of access to justice measurement approaches confirmed that these indicators are appropriate and in line with global measurement approaches to the demand-side of access to justice (Marchiori, 2015;¹⁶ Tilburg, 2009¹⁷).

Trust

Questions in Table 6.2 aim to measure the level of trust in the legal system. The level of trust women place in institutions matters because if women do not trust lawyers, courts or non-governmental organizations then it is difficult to support them in accessing the justice system.

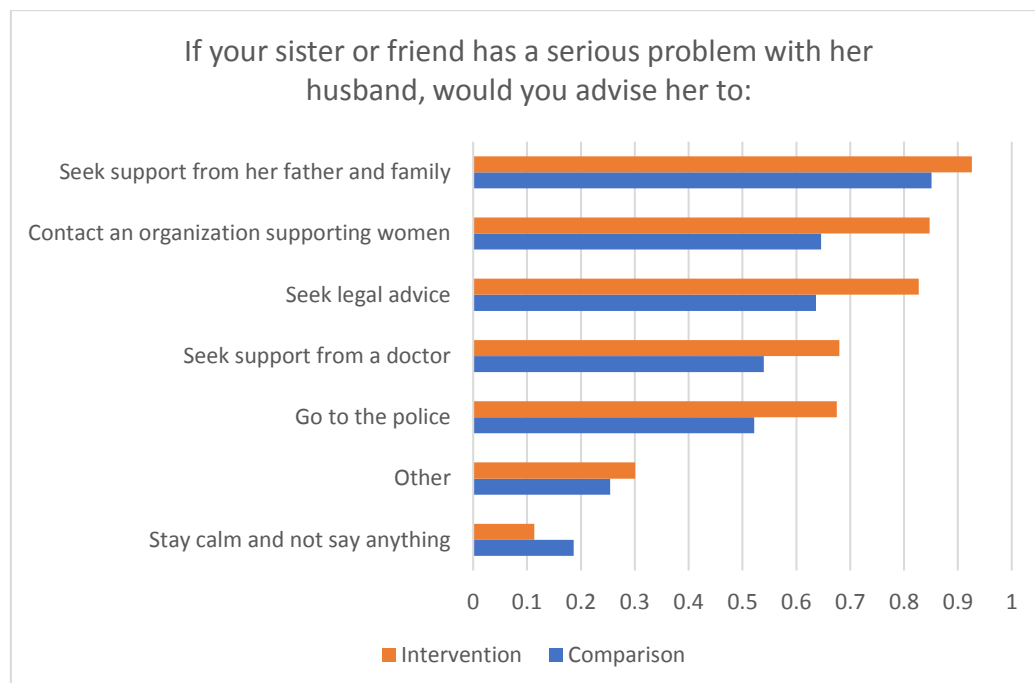
To ascertain levels of trust, respondents were asked to specify which advice they would give to a friend or sister if she has 'serious problems' with her husband. Estimates in the first column suggests that 90 percent of the respondent in the intervention group would suggest their friend to either go to the police, seek legal advice or legal consultation, or contact an organization supporting women, if she has 'serious problems'. This compared with only 71 percent of women in the comparison group.

Table 6.2: Access to justice – Trust

	She would advise her friend to go to police, seek legal advice or contact an organization supporting women	Agree: going to court can help solve problems related personal status law
Intervention group mean:	0.90	0.70
Comparison group mean:	0.71	0.63
Difference:	0.19***	0.07
	(0.03)	(0.04)
Observations intervention:	203	203
Observations:	609	609

Notes: Standard errors in parentheses; * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$; PSM estimates are bootstrapped with 1,000 repetitions. All means are calculated after matching.

Figure 6.1 shows a breakdown of the actual responses for the first column. While seeking support from the father and family is still the most popular response, this is followed by contacting an organization supporting women, seeking legal advice, seeking support from a doctor, and going to the police. These estimates suggest higher trust in the justice system among those women who participated to the awareness-raising sessions, compared with women who didn't.

Figure 6.1: Access to justice – What would you advise a friend to do if she has problems with her husband?

However, the same results cannot be found in the estimates in the second column in Table 6.2. Here 70 percent of the respondents in the intervention group agreed with the statement 'In some cases, going to court can help solving problems related to personal status law', compared with 63 percent in the comparison group, a difference that is not statistically significant. This might suggest that while seeking help from organizations

supporting women or seeking legal advice is seen as more advisable as a result of the project, the same cannot be said for going to court.

Willingness and accessibility

Table 6.3 provides estimates of willingness to take a legal action and accessibility of the legal system. While column one in Table 6.3 suggests that there is no difference on the self-reported willingness to file a lawsuit in court between the two groups, the second and third columns provide evidence that a significantly higher proportion of women in the intervention group had sought legal consultation, legal advice, and undertaken legal action in the past three years, compared with the comparison group.

Table 6.3: Access to justice – Willingness and accessibility

	Would be willing to file a lawsuit in court	Had legal consultation or legal advice in past 3 years	Has undertaken legal action in past 3 years
Intervention group mean:	0.82	0.23	0.16
Comparison group mean:	0.76	0.14	0.11
Difference:	0.06	0.08**	0.05*
	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.03)
Observations intervention:	203	203	203
Observations:	609	609	609

Notes: Standard errors in parentheses; * p<0.1, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01; PSM estimates are bootstrapped with 1,000 repetitions. All means are calculated after matching.

Box 1: Life Histories – Awareness-Raising Sessions

During the life-history interviews, women were prompted to discuss whether they had attended any of the awareness-raising sessions run by LECORVAW. One woman remembers clearly that LECORVAW *‘had an awareness-raising campaign. My sister took their number and told me about them, about three years ago’*.

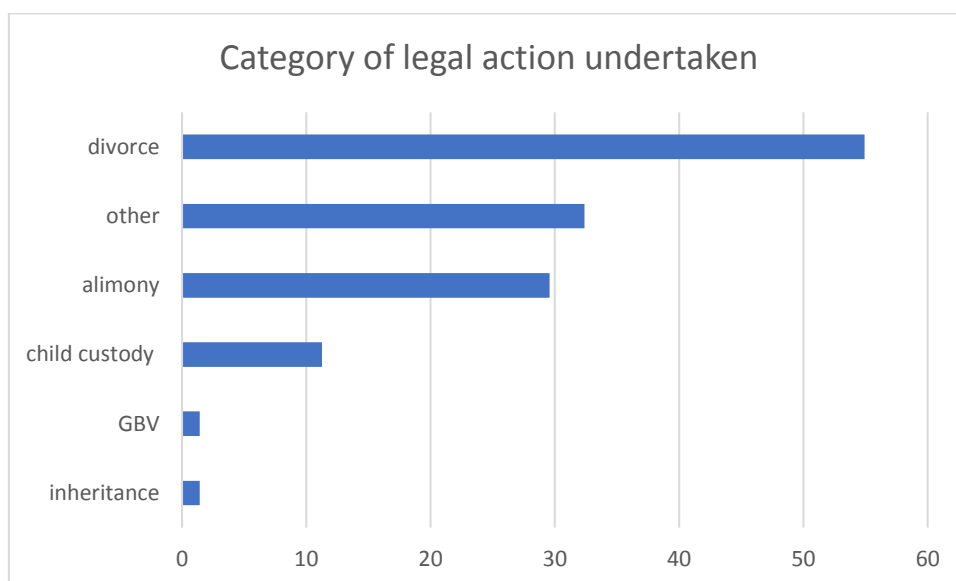
However, many women did not attend a session (13). A variety of reasons were given as to why women did not attend these sessions, including not being able to take time off work (2), being busy (1), or being forced not to attend by a husband (1).

The women who did attend described how the sessions helped them: *‘It gave me strength when I heard other people’s stories; it made me see my story as an easy one. My situation is easier, it has a solution.’* Another woman said: *‘The sessions were great. It improved my morale. The discussion is very important and not waste of time.’*

The role of the awareness-raising sessions in women’s decision to litigate will be discussed more in the section on configuration analysis.

Figure 6.2 provides a breakdown of the number of women who took a legal action in the last three years by type of legal problem (intervention and comparison groups are combined as there are no differences in spread of type between the two groups). Most of the legal cases refer to divorce, followed by other legal cases and alimony.

Figure 6.2: Number of legal actions undertaken in the past three years by category



Perception of quality, fairness and satisfaction with the legal process

Table 6.4 investigates the perceived quality in the legal system by women by the total sample of 609 women (i.e. not only those who took legal action). Estimates suggest that the majority of respondents would consider filing a case in court too expensive (80 percent), too long (64 percent) or too stressful (80 percent). There are also no statistically significant differences between the two groups.

Table 6.4: Access to justice – Perception of quality

	Consider filing a case would be too expensive	Consider not worth starting a case because too long	Consider filing a case would be too stressful
Intervention group mean:	0.79	0.64	0.80
Comparison group mean:	0.80	0.62	0.83
Difference:	-0.00	0.02	-0.04
	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.03)
Observations intervention:	203	203	203
Observations:	609	609	609

Notes: Standard errors in parentheses; * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$; PSM estimates are bootstrapped with 1,000 repetitions. All means are calculated after matching.

Interestingly, although there is no difference in the perception of quality in the total sample, Figure 6.3 and Figure 6.4 show the self-reported levels of satisfaction on the legal process, as well as the level of satisfaction on the final results among those women who have undertaken legal action in the last three years. While the level of satisfaction with the result of the legal case is high for both intervention and comparison women (75 and 70 percent respectively), the most interesting aspect is the difference between the two groups on the level of satisfaction in the process. Estimates suggests that 73 percent of project participants who undertook legal action in the last three years were satisfied with the process, while only 42 percent of the women in the comparison group were satisfied. This result seems to suggest that being linked with the project had a positive effect on making the litigation experience more satisfactory.

Figure 6.3: Satisfaction with the process (N=71)

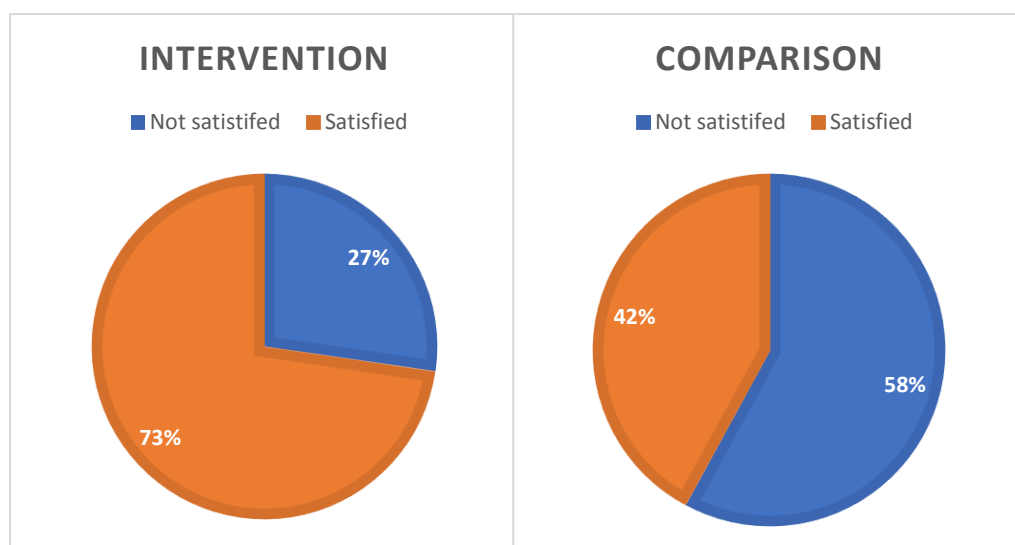
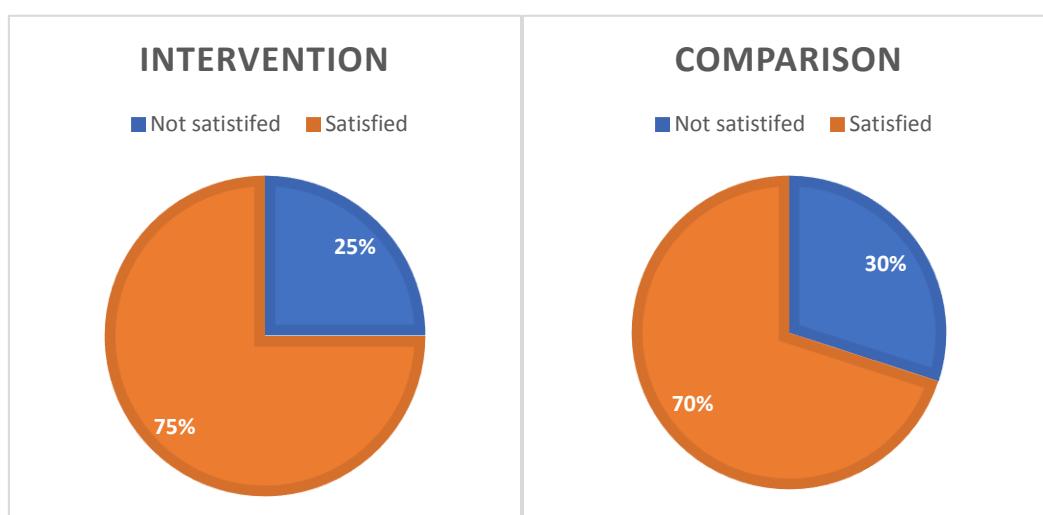


Figure 6.4: Satisfied with the result (N=44)



Box 2: Life Histories – Satisfaction With the Legal Process

The life histories provide good examples of the challenges faced by women in the legal process. Two women shared their stories of litigating independently, without the support of LECORVAW, which demonstrated the kind of challenges women face in terms of emotional hardship and timeliness of the judicial process.

‘It took two days, but it was so stressful.’

‘It seems that while I was finalizing the paper, he spoke to the judge and convinced him to postpone the trial. I thought that we would divorce instantly. He went to the judge behind my back and convinced him to postpone.’

Concerns about the cost, duration or effort of the litigation process were only raised by few women who litigated with the support of LECORVAW (three out of 10), with the majority describing less negative experiences. Here two women describe their experience:

‘But luckily, the judge in the legal court was very nice and calm and he listened to the children. He directly told the father that the custody is for the mother.’

'They told me to file the lawsuit and let the judge take care of it. Don't be afraid, nobody can harm you. They enlightened me on many things I didn't know before. People working at the court played a positive role.'

Yet, hardship is also experienced by women who litigated with the support from LECORVAW, with one such litigant describing her experience as follows:

'The lawyer told me the judge will study your case, but until now I didn't see the judge doing that. He is making it hard for me. I told him he is insulting me and beating me, the judge didn't care.'

Describing the exhaustion of the process and her pleas to the judge she said:

'How can you postpone the hearing? I am telling you that I am living with him by force. Now, the hearing is postponed for 1.5 months. I have to confront him again . . . it was exhausting.'

Table 6.5 shows the perceived perception of respondents of the judges' understanding of women's point of view and treating men and women equally without bias. In the intervention group 72 percent of women reported agreeing that judges are generally able to understand women's point of view, compared with only 65 percent of comparison women. This difference is marginally significant. Only half of the respondents believed the judges treated men and women equally, with no differences between the two groups.

Table 6.5: Access to justice – Perception of fairness

	Judges in court are generally able to understand women's point of view	Judges in court usually treat men and women equally without bias
Intervention group mean:	0.72	0.51
Comparison group mean:	0.65	0.47
Difference:	0.07*	0.04
	(0.04)	(0.05)
Observations intervention:	203	203
Observations:	609	609

Notes: Standard errors in parentheses; * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$; PSM estimates are bootstrapped with 1,000 repetitions. All means are calculated after matching.

Support from family or community

Finally, Table 6.6 presents estimates on support from and to other women that face a lawsuit. Estimates in the first column suggest that 76 and 74 percent of the respondents believe other people in their family or community would support them if they did file a lawsuit. Estimates in the second column suggest that 93 and 91 percent of women are willing to support sisters or friends if they decide to face a family legal action. Self-reported willingness to support seems to be high both in the intervention and comparison groups, and there is no significant difference between the two groups. It cannot be ruled out that other activities at higher level might have had a positive effect on these two indicators.

Table 6.6: Access to justice – Support from the community

	If I did file a lawsuit, at least someone in my family or community would support me	I am willing to support my sisters or friends if they decided to face a family legal action
Intervention group mean:	0.76	0.93
Comparison group mean:	0.74	0.91
Difference:	0.02	0.02
	(0.04)	(0.02)
Observations intervention:	203	203
Observations:	609	609

Notes: Standard errors in parentheses; * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$; PSM estimates are bootstrapped with 1,000 repetitions. All means are calculated after matching.

Box 3: Life Histories – Support from Family and Community

The findings in Table 6.6. are consistent with the experiences of women in the life-history interviews who have had a legal consultation or have litigated. Across most cases (16/19), women had at least one person (often another woman) – an aunt, daughter, mother – who provided support, strength and hope. Their words illustrate powerfully, with phrases like ‘She’s the only person that gives me hope and makes me stronger’, or ‘My relationship with my mum was the one that strengthened me and made me take my decision’.

However, despite support from individuals, a frequent theme in the histories (10 out of the 19) is the description women make of the negative role some individual family members play in opposing their legal action, often encouraging them to stay in violent relationships. Here, three women’s words help to illuminate the negative role they feel individual family members played in their decision to litigate.

‘There is a man in his extended family. He is more like an elder who we listen to a lot, like the head of the family. I know that his advice is for my own wellbeing, but he advised me to marry him again, but I don’t want to.’

‘They told me to go back with him. I fainted here when I heard that. When they saw that, they never mentioned it again . . . my mother supported me even though she felt guilty for forcing me to go back to him.’

‘Then in comes his dad and he says, “Darling, if you please, I have one request, which is that you stay here and the kids stay here and no divorce would take place and you’d keep his family name”.’

The role played by family members in women’s legal problems is – perhaps unsurprisingly – one of the themes that comes up most consistently when women describe their life histories. It appeared in 18 cases (out of 19) and it is referenced 79 times, our most coded theme in the dataset. The role of family and community members as a factor in women’s decision to litigate and/or leave an intimate-partner relationship is described in more detail in the Qualitative and Comparative Analysis section later in this report.

In another case, a woman living in an abusive relationship describes the interventions of neighbours to interrupt violence.

'My neighbour also gave my husband a job to make money, not stay at home all the time and calm down. My neighbour is very good. He went with me with to the police station when I put my husband in jail for beating me. He stood by me and prevented my husband from attacking me. Other neighbours as well.'

6.1.3 WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT










This section examines the differences between the intervention and comparison groups on women's empowerment indicators and the overall women's empowerment index described in Section 5.




The outcome measures examined in this section are:

- Overall women's empowerment.
- Personal-level indicators of change.
- Relational-level indicators of change.
- Environmental-level indicators of change.

The measure wants to look empowerment in a holistic way, not simply indicators expected to be directly affected by the project. Table 6.7 provides a summary of all the indicators, and for each if they link to the Theory of Change of the project and if there is evidence of impact.

Table 6.7: Women's empowerment indicators

			Linked to the project Theory of Change	Evidence of impact
1		Self-confidence	Yes	No
2		Personal autonomy	Yes	No
3		Financially independent	Yes	No
4		Recognition and non-acceptability of violence	Yes	No
5		Knowledge of her rights	Yes	Yes
6		Household decision making	Yes	No
7		React to violence	Yes	Yes
8		Social capital	Yes	Yes
9		Access to community leaders	No	No

10		Communities are supporting	Yes	No
11		Access to appropriate services	Yes	Yes
12		Safe and free of fear	Yes	No

Overall Women's Empowerment

Table 6.8 shows the two measures of women's empowerment presented in Section 5. The first column in Table 6.8 presents estimates of the average difference in the overall empowerment index between the intervention and comparison groups. This measure represents the proportion of characteristics in which women scored positively across the 12 indicators describing empowerment. Estimates suggest that women involved in project activities score positively in, on average, 54 percent of the indicators, compared with matched women not involved in the project, who score positively, on average, in only 48 percent of the indicators. Appendix 1 provides a definition for each indicator when a woman scores positively. This difference is statistically significant, showing a positive and significant impact of the project on overall women's empowerment.

Table 6.8: Women's Empowerment Index

	Women's Empowerment Index (unweighted)
Intervention group mean:	0.54
Comparison group mean:	0.48
Difference:	0.05***
	(0.01)
Observations intervention:	203
Observations:	609

Notes: Standard errors in parentheses; * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$; PSM estimates are bootstrapped with 1,000 repetitions. All means are calculated after matching.

The following sections present in detail indicators and dimensions included in the index.

Personal

This first level of change refers to changes taking place within the person. This dimension measures changes in personal self-confidence, opinions, attitudes and beliefs. It measures changes in how a woman sees herself and perceives herself in society, and what capability she has to decide her actions and carry them out. In the context under analysis, the following indicators have been identified:

1. Self-confidence
2. Personal autonomy
3. Financial independence
4. Recognition and non-acceptability of violence
5. Knowledge of her rights

The project explicitly tried to change recognition and non-acceptability of violence as well as knowledge of their rights among the women who received awareness-raising sessions. Table 6.9 provides estimates for the five indicators identified under changes at personal level. The discussion below will only cover a brief interpretation of the results. For more details on the exact wording and cut-off points used for constructing the individual indicators, please refer to Appendix 1.

Table 6.9: Personal

	P1 – Self-Confidence	P2 – Personal autonomy (makes decisions for herself)	P3 – Financial independence	P4 – Respondent DOES NOT accept violence	P5 – Knowledge of her rights
Intervention group mean:	0.61	0.49	0.26	0.78	0.88
Comparison group mean:	0.59	0.45	0.24	0.75	0.74
Difference:	0.02	0.04	0.02	0.03	0.14***
	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.03)
Observations intervention:	203	203	203	203	203
Observations:	609	609	609	609	609

Notes: Standard errors in parentheses; * p<0.1, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01; PSM estimates are bootstrapped with 1,000 repetitions. All means are calculated after matching.

Self-confidence measures the attitude the respondent has towards herself. A key programme assumption was that women need self-confidence to stand up to pressure from the community not to act to claim their legal rights. The first column in Table 6.9 provides estimates on the proportion of women in the intervention and comparison groups who were considered to have provided answers indicating high levels of self-confidence. Estimates suggest that, on average, both intervention and comparison groups present similar levels of self-confidence, with no difference between the two groups.

Box 4: Life Histories – Personal Autonomy

As shown above, less than half of the women in the survey sample reported being able to take decisions for themselves. Lack of autonomy was also a major theme in the lives of women having legal consultations and litigating. To illustrate, we share the moving words of one of LECORVAW's litigants, who describes marital rape and with it, the lack of autonomy she had over her body and choice to have children.

'My first three children were positive but fourth and fifth were by force. I love my children but my problem was with my husband. So, the last two children were negative. I started crying when I gave birth to the last child. I wanted to do an abortion but couldn't.'

Another litigant described a similar pattern of control.

'There was a lot of problems and fighting me. It is not only that he wasn't educated, he lacked awareness, and he doesn't have ambition in life. He only cares about children and eat and drink. When I had three children, I told him I don't want more. I put in IUD but he started beating me until I removed it and brought the fourth child. He imposed his authority through caring only about children and eating and drinking. I have two boys and three girls now.'

Even when women litigate or leave an intimate-partner relationship characterized by violence, some women still report limited autonomy. Several divorced women describe the role parents or other family members play in controlling the movement and decision making of women, in some cases even more so as an unmarried or separated woman. As can be seen in Section 5.2 using the ladder of power and freedom, women who have litigated do not necessarily perceive themselves as having more autonomy.

Personal autonomy measures whether the respondent reported being able to take decisions for herself. This includes decisions such as: visiting relatives outside the

house, participating in group activities, deciding where to take a paid job, and deciding what political party to vote for. The second column in Table 6.9 provides evidence that less than half of the women in both the intervention and comparison groups reported being able to take decisions for themselves, with no difference between the two groups.

Financial independence measures whether the respondent has her own money and finances. The third column in Table 6.9 suggests that only a quarter of the women in the sample engaged in income-generating activities in the previous 12 months. There appears to not be statistically significant differences between the two groups.

Non-acceptability of violence measures whether the respondent considers it unacceptable for a man to beat his wife. The fourth column in Table 6.9 suggests that three quarters of women in the sample consider it unacceptable for a man to beat his wife. However, this difference is not statistically significant between the two groups.

Box 5: Life Histories – Acceptability of Violence

The majority of women interviewed in our life histories were survivors of intimate-partner violence and their interviews revealed detailed descriptions of violence. In one case, a woman's concerns were not based on the unacceptability of violence against herself, which she described as something she bears, but rather the concern for the bad example it sets to their children.

'He used to beat me and insult me and his mother in front of the children. I didn't want. I can bear the violence, but I am setting a bad example for the children as they see their grandmother being beaten. How will the children treat me when I grow older?'

Despite a high proportion of women from the survey reporting violence as unacceptable, many of the women from the life-history interviews continued to live with men who have perpetrated serious and sustained emotional and physical violence, as examples from these women describe.

'I had three kids with him, two girls and one boy. I suffered a lot with him. He used to beat me a lot to insult me. He had another wife. Stuff happened that his other wife put him in jail. He used to beat me a lot and physically abuse me even though I didn't leave him.'

'I was very patient with him. He used to shout and argue with me. His voice is always loud. I had to be patient. I was raising them. [. . .] Sometimes he would beat if he had a rough day at work. When he pushed me and I hit my head on steel rod, he took me to the hospital. He started crying. He has good heart but his mind . . .'

'Anyway, I got pregnant after three months of marriage. [. . .] And he used to beat me a lot. Yes, he tried to hit me a lot on my back on my eye; I had a picture with me when I first came to the organization. He displaced my eye out of my face just because I asked him about where he was going out.'

'Enduring' emotional violence was also mentioned by one of our non-litigants. She describes how the fact that physical violence has stopped is a key factor in her staying.

'Another reason is that there's no violence now . . . he didn't get to . . . he still tries to break things . . . okay . . . but as long as he didn't get to beat me . . . you endure it. But when beating starts, it'll be enough . . . it would be over . . . it's scary.'

Knowledge of her rights measures whether the respondent possess knowledge of their rights regarding the Sunni Personal Status Law. This was tested by asking the respondent six questions designed to assess her knowledge. The theory of change for the programme posited that women's knowledge and understanding of their legal rights was a critical factor for access to justice.

The final column in Table 6.9 suggests that the project had a positive and significant effect on this indicator, with an increase of 14 percentage points in the proportion of women who know their rights.

Relational

The second level of change measures changes taking place in power relations within the woman's surrounding network. This can be expressed as changes in power relations between individuals. In the context of the project, the evaluation identified the following indicators:

1. Household decision making
2. Reaction to violence
3. Social capital
4. Access to community leaders

The project explicitly tried to change social capital (specifically, women's access to networks of other women) and reaction to violence among the women who received awareness-raising sessions. Table 6.10 provides estimates for the four indicators identified under changes at relational level. Appendix 2 presents in more detail the exact wording and cut-off points used for constructing the indicators.

Table 6.10: Relational

	R1 – Household decision making	R2 – React to violence	R3 – Social capital	R4 – Access to community leaders
Intervention group mean:	0.60	0.80	0.18	0.33
Comparison group mean:	0.61	0.71	0.07	0.28
Difference:	-0.01	0.09**	0.11***	0.05
	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.04)
Observations intervention:	203	203	203	203
Observations:	609	609	609	609

Notes: Standard errors in parentheses; * p<0.1, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01; PSM estimates are bootstrapped with 1,000 repetitions. All means are calculated after matching.

Household decision making measures the extent to which the respondent is involved in taking decisions in her own household. Each respondent was asked about who normally makes decisions on how to spend the money in the household and how much should be spent in education for children. The first column of Table 6.10 reports the proportion of women that reported having sole decision-making power within the household or being able to influence at least to some extent both activities investigated. On average, 60 percent and 61 percent of the respondents reported being able to influence these household decisions. There appear to be no statistically significant differences between the two groups.

Reaction to violence measures whether the respondent would take action to stop violence (defined as if her sister or friend was beaten by her husband, she would advise her to go to the police, seek legal advice, contact organizations supporting women, or seek support from a doctor). Estimates in the second column of Table 6.10

suggest that 80 percent of the women in the intervention group reported being willing to take action in the case of violence. This is compared with almost 71 percent of the women in the comparison group. This result suggests more confidence in acting to stop violence coming as a result of the project.

Box 6: Life Histories – Reaction to Violence

The survey data above provides us with an estimate of whether respondents believe, hypothetically, that they would take ‘an action’ to stop violence. To provide further illustration, it is pertinent that 16 out of 19 of the women interviewed for the life histories are actual survivors of intimate-partner violence. Their words allow us to understand what actions were taken in reaction to specific episodes of violence. Several survivors of violence mentioned reporting multiple episodes of violence to family members, neighbours, the police, medical examiners, lawyers at LECORVAW and to judges. This example from one respondent can be used to illustrate a pattern of repeated actions to attempt to stop the violence. This example shows how one single action is unlikely to lead to immediate change, and how women navigate a range of actors over time.

‘Yes, the neighbour tried to help me stop the violence, but he couldn’t. [. . .] I went to the police station three times. They don’t act quickly when I file a complaint. They arrest him, but they advise me not to submit a legal claim against him. [. . .] Once I was going to the police, he tried to choke me.’

Ultimately, the respondent describes how LECORVAW’s intervention led to a cessation of violence for the last two years at least.

‘I didn’t want a legal claim. I went to the house. My husband confronted me and started shouting. I told him what the lawyer said, but I didn’t mention the lawyer. He turned violent. So, then I told my daughter to call the lawyer. The lawyer started shouting and my husband shouted. He didn’t believe that I assigned a lawyer. That was it. He never beat me again.’

This episode raised two important aspects which are likely to prevent women from accessing justice; First, the threat and risks of further violence that might come from the husband as a reaction for seeking help, and second, the role of the police in advising women to not take legal action against the perpetrator.

Social capital measures whether the respondent is member of groups or associations.¹⁸ Estimates in the third column in Table 6.10 suggests that 18 percent of the women in the intervention group reported being a member of group, compared with only 7 percent in the comparison group. This result suggests higher social capital and interconnection coming as a result of the project.

Finally, **Access to community leaders** measures whether the respondent is able to access community leaders if necessary. Approximately one third of the respondents reported being able to express concerns to community leaders if needed. There appear to be no statistically significant differences between the two groups.

Environmental

The final level of empowerment measures changes in the broader environment. The following indicators were identified for this evaluation:

- 1 Communities are supporting women
- 2 Access to services
- 3 Feeling safe

Table 6.11 provides estimates of the indicators identified under this dimension. Appendix 2 provides details on the how the indicators were constructed.

Table 6.11: Environmental

	E1 – Communities are supporting women	E2 – Access to services	E3 – Feeling safe
Intervention group mean:	0.60	0.30	0.61
Comparison group mean:	0.60	0.17	0.60
Difference:	-0.00	0.13***	0.01
	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)
Observations intervention:	203	203	203
Observations:	609	609	609

Notes: Standard errors in parentheses; * p<0.1, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01; PSM estimates are bootstrapped with 1,000 repetitions. All means are calculated after matching.

Communities are supporting women measures whether the respondent lives in a community that is supporting women's rights. Sixty percent of the respondents, in both the intervention and comparison groups, reported that if they did file a lawsuit, they believed at least someone in their family or community would support them. There appears to be no statistically significant difference between the two groups.

Access to services measures whether the woman has access to a legal system that is protecting her rights. Of the women who participated into the awareness-raising sessions, 30 percent were aware of organizations in their city or town where a woman can go is she needed legal advice. This compared with 17 percent of the comparison group. This difference is positive and statistically significant, demonstrating a positive effect of the project on this characteristic. However, given the focus of these activities, 30 percent appears low, and may show limitations in the course content or delivery.

Finally, **safe and free from fear** measures whether the woman feels safe in her community. Approximately 60 percent of the respondents in both groups reported that a woman can feel safe, with no significant difference between the two groups. It is worth noting that 40 percent of respondents do not feel safe and free from fear.

Box 7: Life Histories – Feeling Safe and Free from Fear

According to the life-history interviews, several women who litigated described how they still felt unsafe and were not yet free from fear of further violence and threats. Quotes from these women illustrate this:

'Every now and then my husband comes to yell at me in front of everyone and insults me. Things are very bad and I want to put limits. I went to the judge to make him sign a pledge that he will leave me alone and for us to part in different ways.'

'I am not working now because I can't walk alone in case he attacks me. So today my sister is with me because he works close by.'

'My biggest fear is him does something to hurt me.'

'Now he still threatening the kids. He tells my 16-year-old girl when I want, I can take you.'

'I am afraid from his reaction. Because his reactions are filthy.'

6.1.4 EXPOSURE TO VIOLENCE

This section will explore more in detail exposure to violence. The evaluation investigated if the respondent had been the victim of episodes of violence in the 12 months prior to the survey.

Table 6.12 and Table 6.13 indicates that there are no statistically significant differences between the two groups on exposure to physical and sexual violence. However, it is worth noting that 33 percent of the women in the intervention group reported having been insulted or made to feel bad in the last 12 months, compared with 26 percent of the women in the comparison group. This difference is marginally significant. It could be argued that this might be due to greater awareness, though it is possible it might be a negative unintended effect as a result of the project. More research should be conducted on this.

Table 6.12: Exposure to violence

	Insulted you or make you feel bad about yourself	Said something to embarrass you in front of others	Threatened to hurt you or someone you care about
Intervention group mean:	0.33	0.31	0.15
Comparison group mean:	0.26	0.27	0.10
Difference:	0.08*	0.04	0.05
	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.03)
Observations intervention:	203	203	203
Observations:	609	609	609

Notes: Standard errors in parentheses; * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$; PSM estimates are bootstrapped with 1,000 repetitions. All means are calculated after matching.

Table 6.13: Exposure to violence (continued)

	Slapped or threw something that could hurt you. Pushed or shoved you or pulled your hair	Hit, kicked, dragged, pushed, choked, or beat you up	Forced you to have sexual intercourse when you did not want to, or perform sexual acts you did not want to	Forced you to do something against your will
Intervention group mean:	0.10	0.11	0.05	0.08
Comparison group mean:	0.12	0.11	0.04	0.06
Difference:	-0.01	0.00	0.01	0.02
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.02)	(0.02)
Observations intervention:	203	203	203	203
Observations:	609	609	609	609

Notes: Standard errors in parentheses; * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$; PSM estimates are bootstrapped with 1,000 repetitions. All means are calculated after matching.

In Table 6.14 we explore whether those women who reported exposure to violence spoke to anyone about what happened and whether they received support from anyone. It appears that 33 percent of the women in intervention group who reported having received violence in the last 12 months spoke about what happened to someone, and 26 percent received support from someone. In the comparison group the estimates are 24 percent and 19 percent, with differences only marginally significant. Most of the women spoke about this to a family member (74 percent), followed by a friend (34 percent), lawyer (4.5 percent), or other (2.7 percent).

Table 6.14: Exposure to violence – support

	Spoke about what happened to anyone	Received support
Intervention group mean:	0.33	0.26
Comparison group mean:	0.24	0.19
Difference:	0.08*	0.06
	(0.04)	(0.04)
Observations intervention:	178	162
Observations:	537	503

Notes: Standard errors in parentheses; * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$; PSM estimates are bootstrapped with 1,000 repetitions. All means are calculated after matching.

6.2 CONFIGURATIONAL ANALYSIS

The analysis in this section make use of the 19 cases derived from the life-history interviews and identifies which attributes, as well as combinations of attributes (also known as configurations), are good predictors for the following outcomes linked to the programme's Theory of Change for women's empowerment and access to justice.

1 Start a litigation for divorce in the Sunni Family Court

The definition for this outcome is a **woman with a legal problem who has ever started a litigation in the Sunni Family Court for divorce** (alimony/expenses claim *alone* is excluded). This outcome also includes women for which no legal verdict has been reached, or who dropped their legal claim, or had it annulled. This outcome should also not be read to infer support from LECORVAW as some women litigated before their interactions with LECORVAW.

2 No longer in an intimate-partner relationship (i.e. divorced or separated)

The definition for this outcome is that a **woman (at the time of interview) is no longer in an intimate-partner relationship with the husband to which their legal problem related**. This includes women who completed the divorce and women who are separated (i.e. no longer co-habiting). This outcome does not include women who divorced but had their claims annulled and are now re-married (i.e. back in an intimate-partner relationship) with their husbands. This outcome should not be read to infer choice over the decision to divorce/separate in all cases.

It is important to clarify that the original evaluation design was intended to explore the factors that explained why a woman with legal problems litigated (any litigation). It was found during the course of the interviews and analysis that six out of nine of the non-litigant sample had, in fact, also started a litigation process. This meant that this outcome did not have enough variation in the sample. It was then decided to focus the analysis

on the factors that explain why women file a case for divorce (10 women out of 19 in our sample), as this is often the first legal action for women with legal cases, which is then followed by other legal cases, such as custody, alimony/expenses, etc. It is important to note, however, that filing a divorce should not be considered by itself to be a final goal – in fact, as noted above, a number of the cases went on to be dropped or were annulled – which we will explore further. For this reason, we also explored the factors that explain why women want to leave an intimate-partner relationship.

For each outcome, we started by conducting an analysis of single attributes. We then conducted an analysis of the combinations with the most relevant attributes.¹⁹ Finally, Decision Trees were created. These represent a model in each branch that predicts the outcome of a specific subset of cases.

6.2.1 START A DIVORCE

Table 6.15 provides a list of attributes which emerged from the life-history interviews and specifies whether each attribute is Necessary and/or Sufficient and its level of accuracy in predicting if a woman will file a divorce case. It should be noted that this does not mean a legal verdict was achieved – as mentioned above, a number of these cases were dropped or annulled. When women did not divorce, it also does not mean that they took no other legal action – they may have litigated for expenses (i.e. alimony).

An attribute is Necessary if the outcome (in this case starting to file a divorce case) is only present when that attribute (or a configuration of attributes) is present. An attribute is Sufficient if the outcome is always present when the attributes (or a configuration of attributes) is present. Finally, accuracy is a performance measure that represents the proportion of all cases that are True Positive (attribute present, woman filed a divorce) and True Negative (attribute absent, woman did not file a divorce).

Table 6.15: Single attributes predicting a woman will start to file a divorce

#	Attributes	Sufficient	Necessary	Accuracy
1	Has attended awareness raising sessions	No	No	68%
2	Has self-confidence	No	No	68%
3	Has prior knowledge family law	No	No	63%
4	Has major concerns with husband's character	No	Yes	63%
5	Has high level of confidence in LECORVAW	No	No	63%
6	Intimate-partner violence in relationship (ever)	No	No	58%
7	Has perception of high cost, time or effort of legal process	No	No	58%
8	Children are being/have been abused by father	No	No	47%
9	Has employment at time of litigation	No	No	42%
10	Is not concerned about negative stereotypes of divorced women	No	No	42%
11	Reported support from majority of family members	No	No	42%
12	Has equitable concept of gender equality	No	No	42%
13	Reported support from community	No	No	37%
14	Is abandoned (husband left her or forced her out of marital home)	No	No	26%

None of the attributes reported in Table 6.15 appears to be both Necessary and Sufficient. Yet, the analysis found that *'Major concerns with husband's character'* is Necessary, meaning that all women in the sample filed a divorce case when they also have major concerns with husband's character. *'Major Concerns with husbands' character'* is a theme which includes a husband's adultery, mental health problems, drug use, gambling, inadequate role as a father, lying, control of movement, and a 'mean' or 'unkind' character.

The attributes that are individually most accurate (meaning that they predict the outcome correctly) are *'Has attended awareness raising sessions'* (68 percent) and *'Has self-confidence'* (68 percent). Among the six women who attended awareness raising sessions, five filed a divorce case; and among the 13 women who have not attended awareness raising sessions, eight did not file a divorce, predicting the outcome in 13 out of 19 cases (68 percent). Similarly, among the 10 women who presented signals of self-confidence, seven filed for a divorce, and among the remaining nine who did not appear self-confident six did not file a divorce. Women themselves recognize the importance of self-confidence. In the life histories, one woman who litigated with LECORVAW said: *'Thank God for my self-confidence. It's not 100 percent because I still get shaken at some points, but the important thing for me is to voice out my problems, and when people talk about a problem they get to a solution.'* The respondent later explained that talking with people gave her confidence.

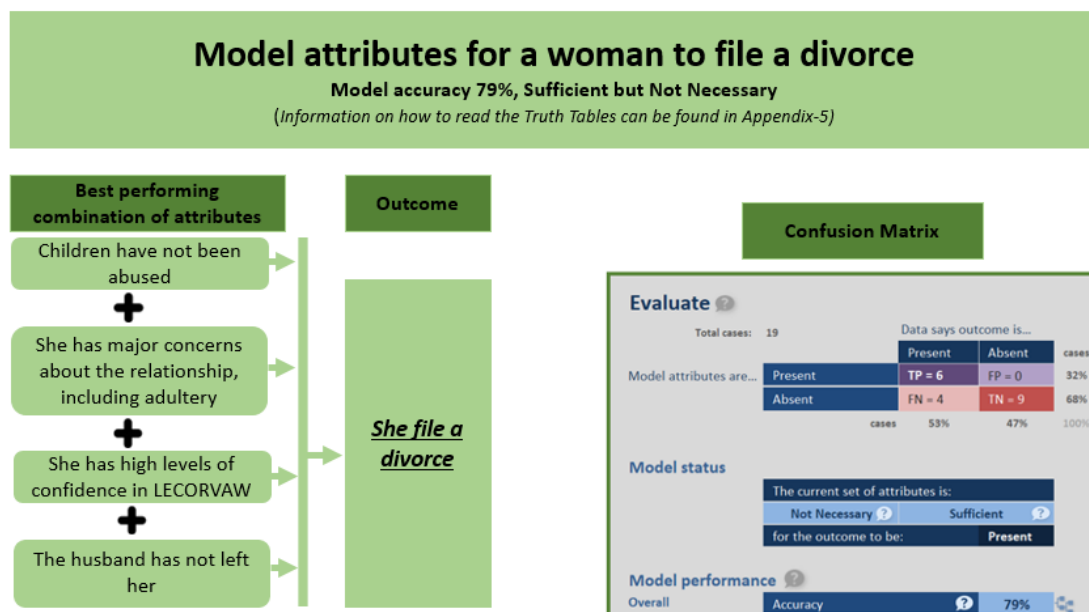
The analysis investigated the most predictive model (i.e. combinations of attributes) that is most predictive for a woman with legal problems to start a divorce. This was done by finding the combination of attributes that gave the best performance in terms of accuracy. The most predictive model had the following four attributes:

- Children have not been abused
- She has major concerns about the relationship, including adultery
- She has high levels of confidence in LECORVAW
- The husband has not left her.

This set of attributes is considered Sufficient, meaning that there are no cases of women with the above combination of attributes who did not file a case of divorce. However, the analysis found four cases where women filed for divorce but did not have the exact combination of the above four attributes. It is therefore the case that this configuration was not Necessary for the outcome

This model (i.e., combination of attributes) is 79 percent accurate, as all six women with the above four attributes filed for a divorce, and it predicts accurately nine out of 13 women who do not present the combination of the above attributes.

Figure 6.5: Most predictive model for a woman to file a divorce

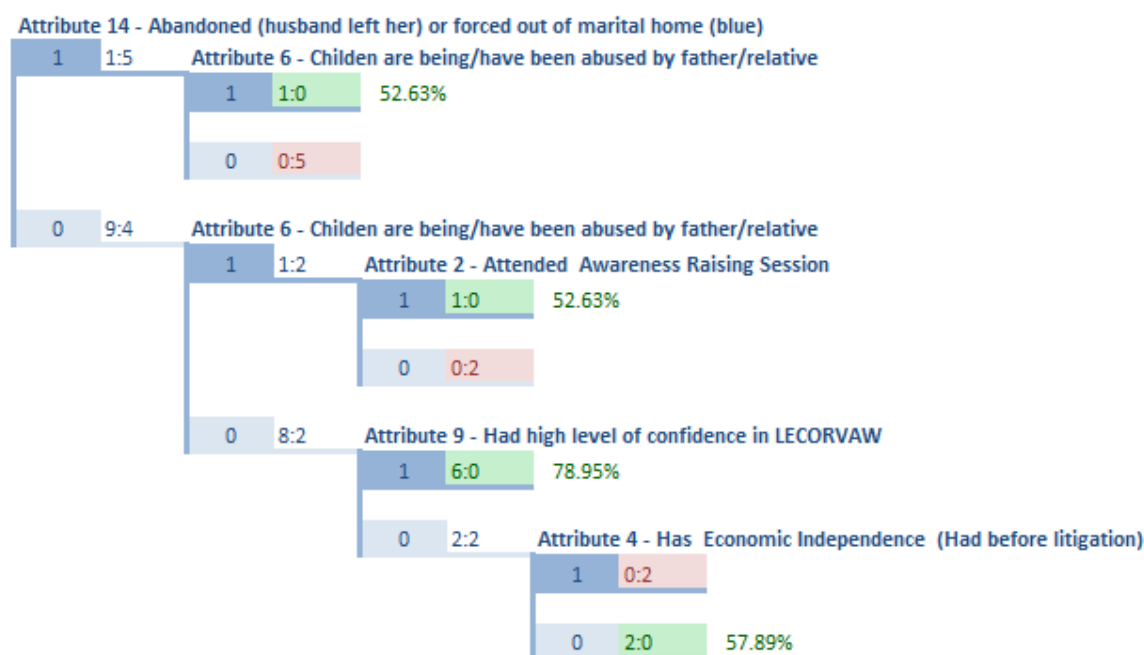


While this is the single most predictive model, a Decision Tree search algorithm²⁰ was used to find a set of predictive models that best accounted for *all* the outcomes (Figure 6.6). Each ‘branch’ in Figure 6.6 represents a configuration that accounts for one or more outcomes.

The first attribute on which the Decision Tree splits is ‘*abandonment*’, which is when a woman was left by her husband without mutual agreement or she was forced out of the marital home without her consent. Among those six women in our sample who were abandoned by their husbands, only one woman decided to file a divorce, and she was the one whose children were abused by the father or a relative (more in the box below).

Among the women who were not abandoned and whose children were abused, the only respondent who attended awareness-raising sessions filed for a divorce. In cases where a woman was not abandoned and there was no violence against children, confidence in LECORVAW was a determinant factor in predicting filing a divorce (six out of 10 cases). Otherwise, if confidence in LECORVAW was not present (the remaining four cases), it was lack of economic independence at the time of starting the divorce that predicted filing for a divorce.

Figure 6.6: Decision Tree filing for a divorce



This Decision Tree, as well as the predicting model, seems to point to violence towards children, as well as confidence in LECORVAW, being key predictors for a woman's decision to begin a divorce.

Box 6: Life Histories – Violence Within Marriage

In this within-case study, we summarize the story of the women who was 'abandoned' and decided to start a divorce case.

The woman was engaged as a child to her father's friend. Both her father and her husband were drug users. The physical violence towards her from her husband started during their engagement. He forced her to stop her education. Although they didn't have a formal legal marriage, her husband came to live with her in her family home. Her husband would beat her in front of her parents, and serious events of violence towards her and the child came out during the story. She gave birth to two children when still a child herself. She was referred to LECORVAW by another organization.

The support from LECORVAW is also a key in her decision to litigate: *'Most important was my relationship with the organization here. The difference is that they helped me. They helped reach the thing that I wanted, like improved my morale. There is a therapist here that helped me a lot. They gave me hope in life. A person reaches a point where they don't have hope any more. I had the capacity to take my own decisions in my life. I was scared about divorcing, but when I saw here the power and protection, I decided I wanted to divorce.'*

6.2.2 NOT IN AN INTIMATE-PARTNER RELATIONSHIP

As mentioned earlier, starting a legal case should not be considered a final goal, but rather the possibility for a woman to start a process of empowerment, which may include leaving an intimate-partner relationship. In this section, we will explore which attributes predict that a woman will leave an intimate-partner relationship, including filing a legal case.

Table 6.16 provides the list of single attributes emerging from the life-history interviews against this outcome, also adding 'starting litigation' as an attribute. This table specifies whether each attribute is Necessary or Sufficient and its level of accuracy in predicting a woman leaving an intimate-partner relationship, in this case with a husband. As before, an attribute is Necessary if the outcome (leaving an intimate-partner relationship) is only present when the attribute is present. An attribute is Sufficient if the outcome (leaving an intimate-partner relationship) is always present when the attribute is present. Finally, accuracy is a performance measure that represents the proportion of all cases that are True Positive and True Negative.

Table 6.16: Single attributes predicting a woman not being in an intimate-partner relationship

#	Attributes	Sufficient	Necessary	Accuracy
1	Is not concerned about negative stereotypes of divorced women	No	Yes	84%
2	Starting a litigation	No	Yes	79%
3	Has self-confidence	No	No	74%
4	Has no employment at time of litigation	No	No	63%
5	Has perception of high cost, time or effort of legal process	No	No	63%
6	Has prior knowledge of family law	No	No	58%
7	Children are not being/have been abused by father	No	No	58%
8	Has major concerns about husband's character	No	No	58%
9	Has equitable concept of gender equality	No	No	58%
10	Has high level of confidence in LECORVAW	No	No	58%
11	Reports support from majority of family members	No	No	58%
12	Presence of intimate-partner violence (ever)	No	No	53%
13	Has attended awareness-raising sessions	No	No	53%
14	Is abandoned (husband left her or forced her out of marital home)	No	No	53%
15	Reports support from community	No	No	42%

Out of the 19 women in the life-history interview sample, 11 are no longer in an intimate-partner relationship with their husbands. None of the attributes reported in Table 6.13 appears to be both Necessary and Sufficient. Yet, '*Being a litigant*' is Necessary, meaning that all women in the sample who are no long in a relationship with their husbands also litigated. Similarly, '*Not being concerned about negative stereotypes of divorced women*' is a Necessary condition.

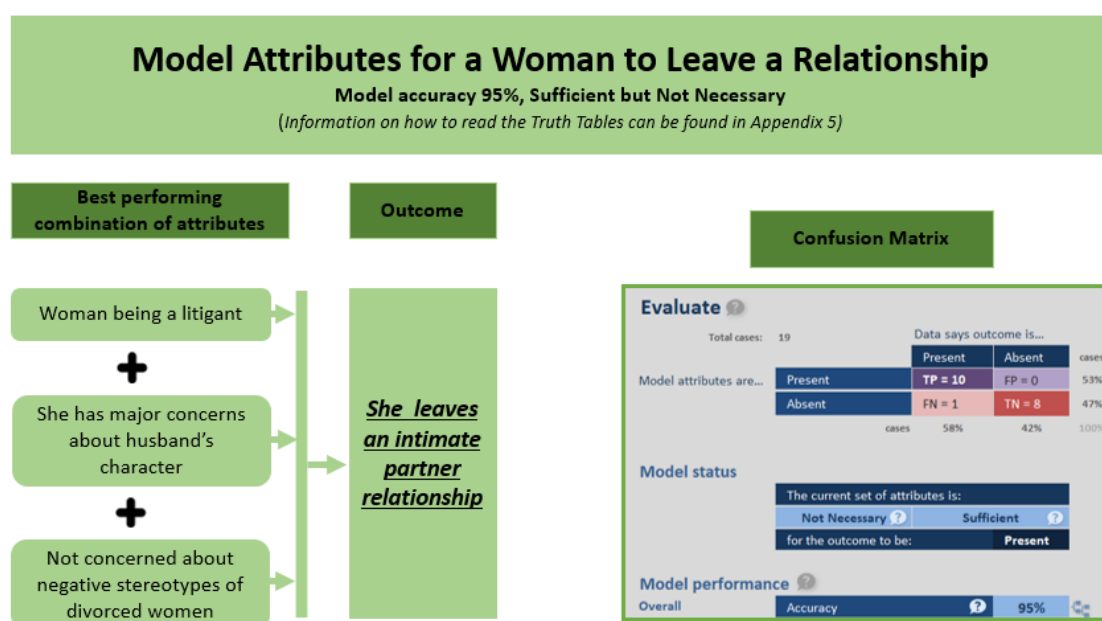
The above two attributes are also individually the most accurate ones: ‘*Is not concerned about negative stereotypes of divorced women*’, 84 percent accuracy and ‘*Being a litigant*’, 79 percent accuracy. When combined, these two attributes form a model that is Necessary with 95 percent accuracy and with only one False Positive.

In the case of the analysis of the most predicting model (i.e., combination of attributes for a woman to leave an intimate-partner relationship) the resulting model is composed of the following three attributes:

- Woman being a litigant
- She has major concerns about husband’s character
- Not concerned about negative stereotypes of divorced women.

This model provides a level of accuracy of 95 percent and it is Sufficient, meaning that there are no women with the above combination of attributes who remained in an intimate-partner relationship. There is, however, one case (one False Negative) in which the woman left the abusive relationship without having concerns about the husband’s character.

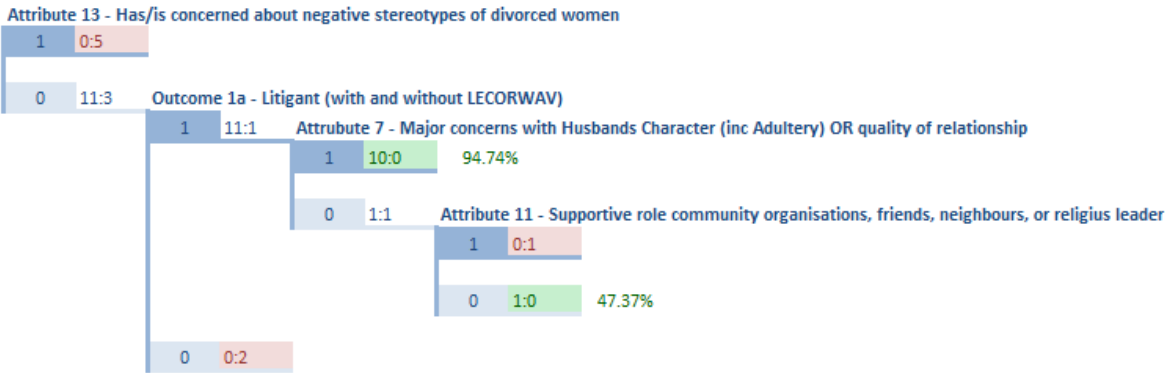
Figure 6.7: Most predictive model for a woman to leave a relationship



The Decision Tree in Figure 6.8 presents predictive models for all the observed outcomes. It shows that none of the women who had concerns about negative stereotypes of divorced women have left an intimate-partner relationship.

On the other hand, among women who do not have concerns over negative stereotypes, those who did not initiate a litigation process did not leave a relationship. While among those women who initiated a litigation process, those who left the relationship had major concerns about the husband’s character.

Figure 6.8: Decision Tree: leaving an intimate-partner relationship



These findings highlight the importance of concerns about the negative stereotypes of divorced women. Also, litigation in conjunction with concern about a husband’s character appears to be a major factor in predicting a woman will leave an intimate-partner relationship.

7 CONCLUSIONS

This section reassembles the findings of the different components and get back to the big picture of the project (steps 4 and 5 in the framework suggested by Bamberger et al. (2016)).

The evaluation team wanted to explore if the project supported women in their pathway to empowerment and access to justice. As described in Section 3, the project considered empowerment as a process in which activities implemented at individual and community level aimed to change social norms and stereotypes towards divorced women. If women are empowered, then women with legal problems are more likely to seek information and legal consultation. With legal and peer support, women with legal problem will chose to litigate and will then benefit from a just verdict and positive outcome. Finally, at the systemic level, if law and policies ensure equal access to justice for all, women are more likely to claim their rights using the formal judicial institutions.

What was the impact of the project in promoting women's empowerment?

Despite very low levels of recall of attendance at the awareness-raising session (less than one third) women involved in the awareness-raising sessions, on average, scored positively in 54 percent of the women's empowerment indicators, compared with matched women who scored positively in only 48 percent of the indicators. This difference is positive and statistically significant different from zero.

There is evidence of positive and significant effects on some indicators of empowerment, including participants' knowledge of women's rights, their willingness to react to violence, level of social capital and access to appropriate services. However, there was no evidence of positive impact on several other indicators that were linked to the project's Theory of Change. At personal level these include self-confidence, personal autonomy, financial independence and recognition, and non-acceptability of violence. At relational level, there is no evidence of change in household decision making.

It appears that the awareness-raising sessions had a good impact on group membership. This is an interesting and/or surprising finding, given the short duration of the awareness-raising session. Future research may be interested in exploring further the link between group membership and women's access to justice.

What was the impact on women's access to justice?

We found evidence that through awareness-raising sessions, the project had a positive and significant effect in increasing trust in reporting problems to the police and organizations supporting women, and towards seeking legal advice. However, despite increased trust in some organizations, awareness-raising sessions did not increase trust in the key focus institution – the courts. There was similarly no evidence of impact on the overall perception of the quality of the legal process (in terms of cost, timelines and level of stress). There was also no evidence of the awareness-raising sessions impacting on perceptions of the level of support from the community towards women who take legal action, nor their own supportiveness towards family members or friends in their community who take legal action – although support levels were very high in both groups, which may be due other community focused interventions in the project.

Despite the mixed picture above, we found that women involved in awareness-raising sessions *are* on average more likely to report having had a legal consultation (8 percentage points) and undertake legal action (5 percentage points) compared with women who didn't.

For these women who did take legal action, we found no difference in satisfaction with the result of the legal outcome/verdict, or on women's perception of the fairness of the courts. However, the intervention had a significant positive effect on women's *experience of the legal process* (31 percentage points). This finding was also supported by the life-history interviews, where women describe LECORVAW's support during what is often a challenging and traumatic process.

The evaluation also sought to **understand the factors that help to explain why women litigate or leave an intimate-partner relationship**.

Analysis conducted on the life-history data identified that the three most important single attributes (i.e. factors) in predicting whether a woman decides to initiate a divorce were attending *awareness-raising sessions*, *confidence in LECORVAW*, and *self-confidence*.

As not all litigants proceed to a divorce, the evaluation also considered the attributes that predicted whether women were no longer in an intimate-partner relationship (where majority were experiencing violence). '*Starting a litigation*' was identified as a Necessary and highly accurate attribute (79 percent), meaning that all women in the sample who are no longer in a relationship with their husbands also started litigation. Another important attribute for predicting a woman not being in an intimate-partner relationship is '*not being concerned about negative stereotypes of divorced women*', which is also Necessary and highly accurate (84 percent). When combined, these two attributes form a model that is Necessary, with 95 percent accuracy, with only one False Positive.

This evaluation did not assess the impact of the project on the systemic component, as it was deemed too premature at the time of the evaluation to expect measurable changes. However, during the design of the evaluation, the evaluation team had the chance to witness public meetings held with local religious authorities, as well as appearances in TV shows on the national TV promoting LECORVAW work and activities.

7.1 LESSONS LEARNED

From discussions and critical reflections with Programme Staff based on these results, the following learning points emerged.

- **Review model of awareness raising sessions (ARS)**

The evaluation found evidence that suggests women who attend awareness-raising sessions have higher levels of participation in legal consultation and litigations than similar women not attending. This may provide evidence to support the assumption that women's knowledge, understanding and perception of their legal rights is a critical factor for access to justice. However, given the low recall of the session (with only one third of participants remembering participation) and lack of impact on several key empowerment indicators, future projects should more clearly articulate how the one-hour, one-off sessions expect to achieve change.

For example, although the programme had a statistically significant impact on women's knowledge of legal service providers, overall knowledge remained low, with 70 percent of women who participated in an ARS still not aware of legal service providers.

The ARS may be working as a simple yet effective gateway/introduction to LECORVAW/a LECORVAW paralegal, but if the session *itself* is intended to lead wider changes in women's empowerment then critical questions need to be asked about whether the duration and intensity of these activities is enough to prompt and sustain change. Other practices may be considered, such as using videos and other mass media to reach a wider population for a more prolonged time.

- **Continue to focus on social norm change, particularly on stereotypes of divorced women**

There is good evidence from this evaluation that not holding negative stereotypes towards divorced women is an important factor in predicting if a woman will leave an intimate-partner relationship (i.e. divorce or separation) in which she experiences violence. This provides good support to the programme Theory of Change that social norm change is critical. The programme is therefore encouraged to maintain its focus on social norm change, in particular considering how to influence harmful and negative stereotypes towards divorced women in the society. These stereotypes are a form of gender inequality that stops women from seeking justice.

- **Articulate a more explicit Theory of Change to address violence against women and girls**

The life histories showed that intimate-partner violence was a major theme in women's descriptions of their lives and a pathway to legal justice. Divorce or legally recognized separation is often an important form of justice (although not complete in itself). Although implicit in the rationale for access to justice work in MENA, this is an area that was not conceptualized clearly enough in the programme documentation or Theory of Change. Theories of Change on Women's Access to Justice should be more explicit in articulating the causal pathways or chain between access to justice and ending violence against women and girls. This includes both the intersection between personal status laws and criminal law in access to justice for violence against women. It is also important to better understand the barriers and enabling factors with regard to leaving an abusive relationship as a critical part of women's decision to litigate or not.

- **Ensure programmes' working access to justice includes activities and budgets for addressing intimate-partner violence for project participants.**

Although not a focus of the evaluation, the extent to which the project had articulated the mechanisms that need to be in place (across partners and countries) to detect, prevent, and mitigate against episodes of violence for project participants was not clear. Especially in projects working on access to justice, where violence is a recurring threat for project participants, there should be more explicit procedures – and ideally infrastructure – to protect and provide immediate support and shelter to women who decide to seek legal support.

- **Develop a long-term strategy for addressing women's lack of trust in the Sunni Family Courts**

Literature on how change happens in the context of access to justice shows that trust in judicial institutions is a critical component. Although women in the intervention group were more likely to advise a friend to seek support from police, lawyers and women's organizations – a positive finding – there was no statistically significant impact on increased trust in the courts (i.e. 'going to court can help solving problems related to personal status law') (Table 6.2). This suggests that the project had an impact on trust in some institutions, but not the key target of the programme, the Sunni Family Court. This was an important part of the programme Theory of Change, and therefore future programme interventions may wish to consider further how to build this trust.

- **Importance of self-confidence as a predictor of litigation – reiterates/supports the TOC**

Although no evidence was found that the ARS led to increased self-confidence, the qualitative analysis showed that having self-confidence was an accurate predictor of filing for divorce. This supports the Theory of Change for the programme and is an area that future programmes should continue to focus on in their work, developing clear

strategies and techniques for building confidence with women they work with at all stages of the programme.

- **Litigation not necessarily leading to a perception of more power and freedom – the empowerment pathway needs greater planning and design**

Future programmes should consider more explicitly which individual and societal level changes are required for divorced women to experience increased power and freedom. This should include, among things, psychosocial support and peer-to-peer support, as well as addressing more explicitly the links between access to justice and women's empowerment.

- **Monitoring data**

Whilst the programme had a detailed MEL strategy and framework, some monitoring data that was collected was of poor quality, which made sampling for the evaluation a challenge. Greater focus on building an evaluative culture, in which all partners are interested in the power of data and the insights it can bring into learning about justice and empowerment pathways, may lead to better quality data. Similarly, greater investments in ICT for data collection may enable smaller feedback loops for more frequent adaptations to the programme.

APPENDIX 1: CHECKLIST FOR ASSESSING THE LEVEL OF COMPLEXITY

Checklist for assessing the level of complexity of development interventions								
		Complexity rating						
	Low	1	2	3	4	5	High	
Dimension 1: The nature of the intervention								
1. Objectives	Few and well-defined				X		Multiple, broad and often not clearly defined	
2. Size	Affecting small population				X		Affecting large population	
3. Stability of programme design	Relatively stable				X		Emergent design	
4. Implementation procedures	Clearly defined in project design					X	Often not clearly defined and changing	
5. Services or components	Relatively few					X	Large number	
6. Technical complexity	Low					X	High	
7. Social complexity	Low					X	High	
8. Duration	Clear start and end date		X				No clear end date and sometimes no clear start date	
9. Is the programme design well tested	Well tested and used many times			X			Relatively new and untested	
Dimension 2: Institutions and stakeholders								
10 Budget	The use of the funds is clearly defined		X				General budget support with no clear definition of services to be funded	
11 Funding and implementing agencies	Relatively few				X		Large number	
12. Stakeholders	Relatively few and with similar interests			X			Many and diverse	
Dimension 3: Causality and change								
13. Causal pathways	Single and linear causal pathway					X	Multiple causal pathways (non-linear, interconnected, recursive feedback loops)	
14. Certainty on outcomes	Relatively high degree of certainty				X		Low degree of certainty	
15. Agreement on appropriate actions to address problems	Relatively high agreement				X		Relatively low agreement	
Dimension 4: Programme context: Embeddedness and the nature of the system								
16. Context and embeddedness	Relatively independent of context					X	Contextual factors are critical	
17. Processes of behavioural change	Simple processes that are well understood				X		Multiple mechanisms to promote complex behavioural change	
Source: Adapted from Bamberger, Vaessen and Raimondo (2015) Chapter 1								

APPENDIX 2: THRESHOLDS FOR CHARACTERISTICS OF WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

Level	Characteristic	Threshold: a woman scores positively if...
Personal	Self-confidence	<p>She partly agrees or strongly agree to the statements:</p> <p>I handle new situations with relative comfort and ease</p> <p>I feel positive and energized about life</p>
	Personal autonomy	<p>She solely takes decision on, or she can influence to a large extent at least three of these decisions:</p> <p>Whether you personally can visit relatives and friends outside the house</p> <p>Whether you personally can participate in group activities (NGOs, associations, political parties)</p> <p>Whether you personally decide what political party to vote for</p> <p>Whether you personally decide to take a paid job</p> <p>Agree or strongly agree to the statement 'I have some free time which I can use however I like'</p>
	Financially independent	She engaged in at least one income-generating activity in the last 12 months.
	Recognition and non-acceptability violence	<p>She considers it not acceptable for a man to beat his wife for any of the following reasons:</p> <p>She disobeys her husband or other family members</p> <p>He suspects that she has been unfaithful</p> <p>She neglects children</p> <p>She spends money without permission</p> <p>She goes out without permission</p> <p>If he is drunk</p> <p>Any other case not mentioned above</p>
	Knowledge of her rights	<p>She answered correctly to at least 4 out of 6 questions on knowledge, which included:</p> <p>According to the Sunni personal status law, are women allowed to obtain divorce? (Correct answer: Yes)</p> <p>According to the Sunni personal status law, a woman who has a conflict over inheritance rights, divorce or child custody, can hire a lawyer to represent her without the consent of a family member? (Correct answer: Yes)</p> <p>According to the Sunni personal status law, does a woman have the right to ask for alimony to her husband? (Correct answer: Yes)</p> <p>According to the Sunni personal status law, if a woman wants to obtain alimony, does she need to hire a lawyer? (Correct answer: No)</p> <p>According to the Sunni personal status law, is it only the father who has the right to child custody? (Correct answer: No)</p>

Level	Characteristic	Threshold: a woman scores positively if...
		Up to which age does Sunni personal status law allow children to remain in the custody of the mother? (Correct answer: 4)
Relational	Household decision making	She solely takes decision on, or she can influence to some or large extent to these two decisions: How to spend the money in the house How much should be spent on education for the children
	React to violence	In the case of her sister or friend being beaten by their husband, she would advise them to: Go to the police Seek legal advice Contact an organization supporting women Seek support from a doctor
	Social capital	She is a member of any of the following groups: Women's association Credit or saving group Development association Civil society organization Religious association Cultural group Other civil society organization
	Access to community leaders	She is confident that she can express her concerns to community leaders
Environmental	Communities are supporting	She reported that if she did file a lawsuit, at least one person in her family or community would support her
	Access to appropriate services	She knows organizations where a woman can go if she needs legal advice
	Safe and free of fear	She agrees or strongly agrees with the sentence 'I think it is better for a woman to be out of the home with other friends or family members' or agrees more with the statement that 'A woman can feel safe outside the house' than 'Women should be careful outside the house'

APPENDIX 3: METHODOLOGY USED FOR PROPENSITY-SCORE MATCHING

The analysis of outcome variables presented in Section 6.2 of this report involved group mean comparisons using propensity-score matching (PSM). The basic principle of PSM is to match each participant with a non-participant that was observationally similar at baseline and to obtain the treatment effect by averaging the differences in outcomes across the two groups after project completion. Unsurprisingly, there are different approaches to matching, i.e. to determining whether or not a household is observationally ‘similar’ to another household. For an overview, we refer to Caliendo and Kopeinig (2008).²¹ This appendix describes and tests the specific matching procedure followed in this Effectiveness Review.

Estimating propensity scores

Given that it is extremely hard to find two individuals with exactly the same characteristics, Rosenbaum and Rubin (1983) demonstrate that it is possible to match individuals using a prior probability for an individual to be in the intervention group, naming it *propensity score*. More specifically, propensity scores are obtained by pooling the units from both the intervention and comparison groups and using a statistical probability model (e.g. a probit regression) to estimate the probability of participating in the project, conditional on a set of observed characteristics.

Table A3.1 presents the probit regression results used to estimate the propensity scores in our context. To guarantee that none of the matching variables were affected by the intervention, we only considered variables related to baseline, and only those variables that were unlikely to have been influenced by anticipation of project participation (Caliendo and Kopeinig, 2008).

Table A3.1: Estimating the propensity score

	Marginal effect	Standard error
Household size	0.01	0.01
1[Respondent married at baseline]	-0.01	0.06
1[Relationship with husband was good at baseline]	-0.06	0.05
Respondent's age	-0.00	0.00
1[Respondent is able to work]	0.15**	0.06
1[Respondent has more than primary education]	0.04	0.05
1[Head of household is male]	-0.07	0.06
Head of household's age]	0.00	0.00
1[Head of household at baseline is able to work]	0.04	0.07
1[Head of household at baseline has more than primary education]	-0.01	0.03
1[Household in the 1st wealth quintile in 2014]	0.12	0.06
1[Household in the 2nd wealth quintile in 2014]	-0.03	0.06
1[Household in the 4th wealth quintile in 2014]	-0.13*	0.05
1[Household in the 5th wealth quintile in 2014]	-0.10	0.06
1[Income share >= 50% in 2014]	0.06	0.06
1[Respondent engaged in productive activities in 2014]	-0.09	0.05
1[Group meetings in 2014]	0.15*	0.07
	618	

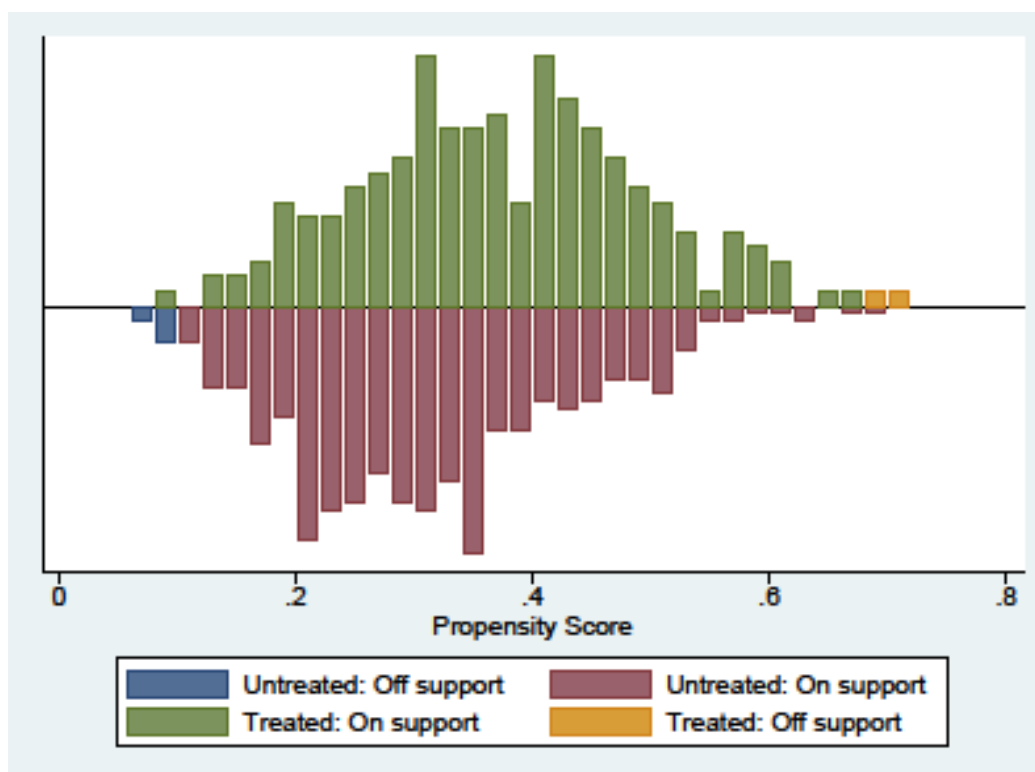
Marginal effects. Variables dated 2011 are estimates, based on recall data. Dependent variable is binary, taking 1 for women involved in the project, and 0 otherwise. * p < 0.1, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01.

Defining the region of common support

After estimating the propensity scores, the presence of a good *common support area* needs to be checked. The area of common support is the region where the propensity-score distributions of the treatment and comparison groups overlap. The common support assumption ensures that 'treatment observations have a comparison observation "nearby" in the propensity-score distribution' (Heckman, LaLonde and Smith, 1999). Since some significant differences were found between the intervention and comparison groups in terms of their baseline characteristics (as detailed in Section 4.1), some of the women in the intervention group were too different from the comparison group to allow for meaningful comparison. We used a minima and maxima comparison, deleting all observations whose propensity score was smaller than the minimum and larger than the maximum in the opposite group (Caliendo and Kopeinig, 2008). Only three of the 206 women interviewed in the intervention group was dropped because they lay outside the area of common support, and seven of the 413 in the comparison. Therefore, there are limited concerns regarding the sample not being representative of the intervention population.

Figure A3.1 illustrates the propensity scores and shows the proportion of women lying on and off the areas of common support, by treatment group.

Figure A3.1: Propensity score on and off area of common support



Matching intervention and comparison households

Following Rosenbaum and Rubin (1983), after estimating the propensity scores and defining the area of common support, individuals are matched on the basis of their propensity score. The literature has developed a variety of matching procedures. For the main results presented in this Effectiveness Review we chose to employ the method of kernel matching. Kernel matching weights the contribution of each comparison group member, attaching greater weight to those comparison observations that provide a better match with the treatment observations. One common approach is to use the normal distribution with mean zero as a kernel, and weights given by the distribution of the differences in propensity score. Thus 'good' matches are given greater weight than 'poor' matches.

The psmatch2 module in Stata was used with a bandwidth of 0.06 and with the analysis restricted to the area of common support.

When using PSM, standard errors of the estimates were bootstrapped using 1,000 repetitions, to account for the additional variation caused by the estimation of the propensity scores and the determination of the common support.²²

Check balancing

For PSM to be valid, the intervention group and the matched comparison group need to be balanced, in that they need to be similar in terms of their observed baseline characteristics. This should be checked. The most straightforward method to do this is to test whether there are any significant differences in baseline covariates between the intervention and comparison groups in the matched sample, as reported in Table A3.2. None of the variables implemented for the matching are statistically significant in the matched sample.

Table A3.2: Balancing test

Variable	Un-matched Matched	Treated Mean	Comparison mean	% bias	% reduction in bias	t	p> t	V_e(T) / V_e(C)
Household size	U	5.4483	5.2537	9.2		1.06	0.291	0.92
	M	5.4483	5.4629	-0.7	92.5	-0.07	0.947	0.81
1[Respondent married at baseline]	U	.57635	.64532	-14.2		-1.66	0.098	1.18
	M	.57635	.56081	3.2	77.5	0.32	0.753	1.06
1[Relationship with husband was good at baseline]	U	.37931	.47783	-20.0		-2.31	0.021	1.02
	M	.37931	.37324	1.2	93.8	0.13	0.900	1.05
Respondent's age	U	35.862	37.123	-9.4		-1.09	0.274	1.01
	M	35.862	35.624	1.8	81.1	0.18	0.857	1.02
1[Respondent is able to work]	U	.93596	.8867	17.4		1.94	0.053	0.59*
	M	.93596	.93336	0.9	94.7	0.11	0.916	0.93
1[Respondent has more than primary education]	U	.41872	.40394	3.0		0.35	0.727	1.02
	M	.41872	.41989	-0.2	92.1	-0.02	0.981	1.00
1[Head of household is male]	U	.77833	.82512	-11.7		-1.39	0.166	1.17
	M	.77833	.77925	-0.2	98.0	-0.02	0.982	1.00
Head of household's age	U	47.148	47.086	0.5		0.06	0.953	0.97
	M	47.148	47.277	-1.1	-110.6	-0.11	0.913	1.03
1[Head of household at baseline is able to work]	U	.91133	.89901	4.2		0.48	0.629	0.88
	M	.91133	.90613	1.8	57.8	0.18	0.856	0.91
1[Head of household at baseline has more than primary education]	U	.23645	.2931	-7.1		-0.80	0.422	0.72*
	M	.23645	.2334	0.4	94.6	0.04	0.966	1.15
1[Household in the 1st wealth quintile in 2014]	U	.27094	.16995	24.5		2.93	0.003	1.33*
	M	.27094	.25523	3.8	84.4	0.36	0.720	1.04
1[Household in the 2nd wealth quintile in 2014]	U	.19212	.20197	-2.5		-0.29	0.774	0.95
1[Household in the 4th wealth quintile in 2014]	U	.14286	.22167	-20.5		-2.32	0.021	0.76*
	M	.14286	.13486	2.1	89.9	0.23	0.816	1.05

1[Household in the 5th wealth quintile in 2014]	U	.17734	.20936	-8.1		-0.93	0.351	0.87
	M	.17734	.17107	1.6	80.4	0.17	0.868	1.07
1[Income share >= 50% in 2014]	U	.17241	.15764	4.0		0.47	0.642	1.07
	M	.17241	.16154	2.9	26.5	0.29	0.770	1.08
1[Respondent engaged in productive activities in 2014]	U	.22167	.25369	-7.5		-0.87	0.386	0.93
	M	.22167	.22015	0.4	95.2	0.04	0.971	1.01
1[Group meetings in 2014]	U	.1133	.06897	15.4		1.86	0.063	1.51*
	M	.1133	.10204	3.9	74.6	0.37	0.715	1.03

* if 'of concern', i.e. variance ratio in [0.5, 0.8) or (1.25, 2]

** if 'bad', i.e. variance ratio <0.5 or >2

Sample	Ps R2	LR chi2	p>chi2	MeanBias	MedBias	B	R	% concerns	% bad
Unmatched	0.044	34.01	0.008	10.5	9.2	51.1*	0.95	29	0
Matched	0.001	0.79	1.000	1.7	1.6	8.8	0.94	0	0

APPENDIX 4: RISK OF BIAS TABLE

Not all quasi-experimental impact evaluations are the same. Choices made during sampling, selection of the comparison group, and at the analysis stage are crucial in assessing the overall level of confidence in the results. This document provides a framework to assess the risk of bias against ten predetermined parameters, specifically for ex-post quasi-experimental impact evaluations. Lower overall risk provides higher confidence in the results.

	Title	Description	Assessment	Description
Sampling				
1	Random sampling	<p>Score LOW risk if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sampling is conducted using probability random sampling methods on a clearly established sample frame. <p>Score MEDIUM risk if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sampling is conducted using probability random sampling methods at geographical level (e.g. village level), and use random sampling to select respondents within the geographical area. <p>Score HIGH otherwise.</p>	LOW	The sampling was conducted on a clearly established sample frame.
2	Representativeness of project participants	<p>Score LOW risk if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project participants have been involved for the entire duration of the project and have been involved in the project with the same level of exposure. Project participants have been exposed to a variety of different activities, some may have dropped out from some activities, but sampling is conducted on the entire list of project participants. <p>Score MEDIUM risk if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project participants have been exposed to a variety of different activities. Sampling is conducted only among those project participants that have been 	LOW	Project participants have been exposed to a variety of different activities, but sampling is conducted on the entire list of women involved in the awareness raising sessions.

		<p>enrolled for the entire duration of the project or that have been enrolled in all the activities. These are not less than 80% of the entire list of project participants OR it is clear the results apply only to a particular group of project participants.</p> <p>Score HIGH otherwise.</p>		
4	Selection of survey respondents	<p>Score LOW risk if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The survey has a clear protocol to identify who in the household should be interviewed and this is respected by the enumerators <p>Score HIGH otherwise</p>	LOW	The sampling and unit of analysis was at individual level.
Selecting comparison group				
4	Potential for contamination (spillovers)	<p>Score LOW risk if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The units for comparison group are selected in geographical areas where it is not reasonable to expect for the project to have had spillover effects. The project also implemented some activities (which are not considered the most relevant under analysis) which are expected to have had an impact also in the comparison group. (e.g. the project implemented campaigns using radio and other digital media, but these are only a minor component of the activities implemented). The report makes clear which impact is assessed (added-value of other components, taking into account exposure to those minor components) <p>Score HIGH risk if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Units for the comparison group are selected within the same geographical area as the intervention group, and it is reasonable to expect that project activities had spillover effects. (e.g. comparison observations within the same village, for awareness raising projects) 	HIGH	Women from the comparison group are selected from nearby neighbourhoods. It is reasonable to expect that project activities did have spillover effects, particularly those conducted at systemic level.

5	Self-selection of project participants	<p>Score LOW risk if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The comparison group is exploiting an experiment or natural experiment. • Units are randomly selected at community level both in the intervention and comparison group. • The selection process for the comparison group is mimicking the same selection process used by the project. <p>Score MEDIUM risk if</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the self-selection is corrected during the matching procedure (e.g. controlling for group participation at baseline) <p>Score HIGH risk if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project participants were selected or self-selected based on idiosyncratic or unobservable characteristics, and the selection of comparison respondents is done randomly from neighbouring geographical sites. 	LOW	<p>The selection process for the comparison group is mimicking the same selection process used by the project by interviewing women involved in projects child education, capacity building, cash assistance, and healthcare, but not on personal status law and access to justice.</p> <p>During matching women were also matched based on characteristics such as marital status at baseline, quality of the relationship with the husband at baseline, engagement in community meetings at baseline.</p>
6	Other interventions in the comparison group	<p>Score LOW risk if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no other actors in the area (e.g. INGOs, NGOs, governmental programmes) • Other actors are conducting activities which are not linked to the project's Theory of Change <p>Score MEDIUM risk if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other actors are conducting similar activities linked to the project's theory of change in both the intervention and the comparison group <p>Score MEDIUM-HIGH risk if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other actors are conducting similar activities linked to the project's theory of change in the comparison group only, but the evaluation purposefully chooses to compare these activities to the intervention making it clear that the impact is compared with these other activities (e.g., as a natural experiment). 	HIGH	<p>Given the nature of the urban setting, it is not possible to completely rule out the possibility that there are other organizations providing similar support to the one provided by LECORVAW.</p>

		<p>Score HIGH risk if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other actors are conducting similar activities, in the comparison communities only • Other actors are conducting activities in the comparison communities, which are not the same, but are partially related to the project's Theory of Change. 		
Analysis				
6	Representativeness	<p>Score LOW risk if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During analysis or matching procedure less than 10% of the sample in the intervention group is excluded. <p>Score HIGH risk if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During analysis or matching procedure more than 10% of the sample in the intervention group is excluded. 	LOW	Only 3 of the 206 women interviewed in the intervention group was dropped because they lay outside the area of common support, and 7 of the 413 in the comparison.
7	Robustness checks	<p>Score LOW risk if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Magnitude and statistical significance of the results are approximately consistent with different econometric models <p>Score HIGH risk if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results are not consistent with different econometric models and sub group analysis. 	N/A	Robustness checks with alternative econometric tools have not been conducted
8	Triangulation	<p>Score LOW risk if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results are triangulated and consistent with other evaluation methods within the same evaluation. • Results are triangulated and consistent with other data on the same project but from different evaluations. <p>Score HIGH risk if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results are not consistent or triangulated with other evaluation methods. 	LOW	Results are broadly consistent with the evidence from the life-history interviews
9	Multiple hypothesis testing	<p>Score LOW risk if:</p>	LOW	A pre-analysis plan was conducted prior data analysis.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multiple hypothesis tests apply Benjamini or Bonferroni tests. The evaluation drafted a pre-analysis plan prior data analysis, and followed the plan. <p>Score HIGH otherwise</p>		
10	Clustering	<p>Score LOW risk if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clustering is applied Clustering was tested but rejected as providing higher standard errors than non-clustering estimates. <p>Score HIGH otherwise.</p>	LOW	Clustering was tested but rejected as providing higher standard errors than non-cluster estimates.

APPENDIX 5: METHODOLOGY USED FOR EVALC3

Finding Sufficient and/or Necessary attributes or a combination of attributes (i.e., a model) is a core function of EvalC3 software. Through EvalC3 we identified predictors that are important (i.e. Necessary and/or Sufficient) for the outcome to come true. These configurations of attributes were supplemented by within-project enquiries to identify the causal mechanisms at work.

EvalC3 is an Excel application designed to find single-attributes or a combination of attributes of cases (aka models) that are the best predictors of an outcome of interest.

For each model, the results are posted in a truth table counting the number of cases for each combination of attributes and outcome as below:

- True Positive (TP), both the attribute(s) and the outcome is seen; the model is a positive predictor
- True Negative (TN), neither the attribute(s) nor the outcome is seen; the model is a negative predictor
- False Positive (FP), the attribute(s) are present, but the outcome is not; the model does not work for these cases; other factors not in the model may have hindered the outcome
- False Negative (FN), the attributes are not present, but the outcome is; other mechanisms are likely to have led to the change in the absence of the model attributes

The EvalC3 analysis used 'Averaged accuracy' (termed 'accuracy' elsewhere for short), to measure the performance of each model. This calculates the average of TP as a proportion of cases where the outcome is present (i.e. positive predictor of the outcome), and TN as a proportion where the outcome is not present (i.e. negative predictor of the outcome). The higher the averaged accuracy score, the better the model's predictive ability for the desired change outcome.

Sufficient: Models where $FP=0$ are classed as Sufficient. This means that within the sample of projects analysed, if the model's combination of attributes is present, the change outcome will be present.

Necessary: Models where $FN=0$ are classed as Necessary. This means that within the sample of projects analysed, for the change outcome to be present, the model's combination of attributes must be present, but there may be cases where the attributes are present, but the outcome is not.

NOTES

- ¹ Final Project Evaluation: Women's Access to Justice in the MENA region Phase 2. 2018
- ² Lombardini (2015) *Women's Empowerment in Lebanon: Impact evaluation of the project 'Women's access to justice in the Middle East and North Africa region'*. Effectiveness Review Series 2014/15
- ³ Hiil (2017) Justice Needs and Satisfaction in Lebanon 2017. Legal problems in daily life.
- ⁴ Bamberger, M., J. Vaessen, E. Raimondo (2016) *Dealing with Complexity in Development Evaluation. A Practical Approach*. SAGE Publications
- ⁵ Stern, E., N. Stame, J. Mayne, K. Fross, R. Davies, B. Befani. (2012) *Broadening the range of designs and methods for Impact Evaluations*. Department for International Development Working Paper 38
- ⁶ An Excel app that combines concepts and methods drawn from Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) and Predictive Analytics (PA)
- ⁷ See Chapter 5 in Bamberger M., Rugh J., Mabry L., (2012) *RealWorld Evaluation: Working Under Budget, Time, Data, and Political Constraints*. SAGE Publications
- ⁸ Bertaux, D. (ed.) (1981). *Biography and society: the life history approach in the social sciences*. Sage Publications: Beverly Hills, California, USA.
- See: Davies, Julia, Chandini Singh, Mark Tebboth, Dian Spear, Adelina Mensah, Prince Ansah (2018) *Conducting Life History Interviews: A how-to guide*. International Development Research Centre
- ⁹ Petesch, P., Bullock, R. (2018). Ladder of power and freedom: a qualitative data collection tool to understand local perceptions of agency and decision-making: GENNOVATE resources for scientists and research teams. Mexico. CIMMYT
- ¹⁰ <https://evalc3.net/> EvalC3 by Rick Davies is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License](#).
- ¹¹ Given, L. M. (2008). *The SAGE encyclopaedia of qualitative research methods* (Vols. 1–0). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications
- ¹² O'Reilly, M. and Parker, N., 2012. 'Unsatisfactory Saturation': a critical exploration of the notion of saturated sample sizes in qualitative research. *Qualitative Research*, [online] 13(2), pp.190–197. Available at: <http://qrj.sagepub.com/cgi/doi/10.1177/1468794112446106>
- ¹³ Legal problem is defined as a problem for which there is a legal solution.
- ¹⁴ Lombardini S., Bowman K., Garwood R., A 'How to' Guide to Measuring Women's Empowerment: Sharing experience from Oxfam's impact evaluations. Oxford: Oxfam GB.
- ¹⁵ This report is intended to be free from excessive technical jargon, with more detailed technical information being restricted to the appendices and footnotes. However, there are some statistical concepts that cannot be avoided in discussing the results. In the tables of results on the following pages, statistical significance will be indicated by asterisks, with three asterisks (***) indicating a p-value of less than 1 percent, two asterisks (**) indicating a p-value of less than 5 percent and one asterisk (*) indicating a p-value of less than 10 percent. The higher the p-value, the less confident we are that the measured estimate reflects the true impact. Results with a p-value of more than 10 percent are not considered to be statistically significant.
- ¹⁶ Marchiori, T. (2015). UN Women. A Framework for Measuring Access to Justice Including Specific Challenges Facing Women. Accessed 23.10.2017 at: <https://rm.coe.int/1680593e83>
- ¹⁷ Tilburg Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies of Civil Law and Conflict Resolution Systems (2009) *A Handbook of Measuring the Cost and Quality of Paths to Justice 2009* https://pure.uvt.nl/portal/files/1370156/Gramatikov_Measuring_the_cost_and_quality_120307_publishers_embargo_1_y.pdf
- ¹⁸ Such as women's associations, credit or saving groups, development associations, civil society organizations, religious associations, cultural groups, other civil society organizations.
- ¹⁹ i.e. finding the model that provided the most 'True Positives' (i.e., where the model works) and the fewest 'False Positives' (i.e., where the model does not work) and 'False Negatives' (i.e., where other models are more relevant)
- ²⁰ A Decision Tree decides which attribute to split the sample in order to maximize information gain and continues until all the observations at the end are in the same class (O'Neil and Schutt, 2013).
- ²¹ Caliendo, M. and Kopeinig, S. 2008. Some Practical Guidance for the Implementation of Propensity Score Matching, *Journal of Economic Surveys*, Wiley Blackwell, vol. 22(1), pages 31–72.
- ²² Bootstrapping is a statistical procedure where repeated samples are drawn from the original sample with replacement. This results in a statistical distribution of parameter estimates (the sampling distribution). The bootstrapped standard error is the standard deviation of this sampling distribution and it can be shown that as the number of repeated samples becomes large, provided certain technical conditions are met, this is a good estimate for the standard error of the estimate.

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