

ReBUILD

FOR RESILIENCE

Research for resilient health systems
in fragile and shock-prone settings

Recommendations for supervisors of female health workers

Improving well-being and productivity

American University of Beirut
October 2021



About these recommendations

This paper is derived from American University of Beirut (AUB) research into the gendered experience of close-to-community providers in Lebanon during and post COVID-19.

Background to this work

The number of women employed in the health workforce in Lebanon is growing year on year. Our research revealed that men and women experience this work differently for the following reasons:

1. Women carry most of the responsibility for domestic chores, rearing and teaching children, and caring for sick and older family members.
2. Unlike men, women are subject to social pressures regarding their use of public transport, especially at night and in remote areas. These strictures inconvenience women and restrict the time available for paid work.
3. The triple burden of family duties, job responsibilities and societal pressures that restrict their activities impacts on women. They become stressed and less able to concentrate on their work, which has repercussions for their mental health and on their productivity in work.

Our recommendations

In-depth research and discussions with health professionals and key informants led to researchers from AUB producing these recommendations for directors, coordinators and supervisors of female employees. It is intended that the recommendations will help managers to improve female employees' experiences of work and consequently boost their well-being, motivation and productivity.

- A secure transportation system would improve women's mobility and give them greater flexibility in their work schedules.

Depending on available resources you might either provide safe home-to-work transportation or coordinate carpooling among employees. This would require coordinating the shifts of co-travellers.

- Employers should accommodate shifts to best fit women's many responsibilities at home.
With safe transportation, some women might consider working night shifts when their children are asleep, so that they can be with them during the day. Women's schedules might also be organised around their children's school day, allowing them to be in work when their children are in class.

- An afterschool and /or childcare service for women might be suggested.
For example, a group of women might share the cost of hiring a teacher or babysitter to look after and help their children with homework while they work. This might be in a safe place in the facility or in the vicinity.

- Employers could encourage collective meal preparation to relieve women from the burden of cooking for their families after a long day at work.
For example, two to three women might team up to cook in rotation or might jointly hire a home cook at a very reasonable price. This would create new employment for home cooks and provide hot meals for women tired by the pressure of work and domestic duties.

We would strongly encourage you to embrace this approach, to promote collective initiatives among your staff, to demonstrate social solidarity, and demonstrate to your community that everyone can make a positive impact.

About this research

This paper was produced by the American University of Beirut as part of ReBUILD for Resilience; a research consortium which examines health system resilience in fragile settings experiencing violence, conflict, pandemics and other shocks.

More on ReBUILD for Resilience and this research can be found [on our website](#).

If you are interested in learning more about AUB and our work contact:

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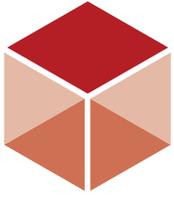


Images:

Above - The IRC provides emergency cash relief to vulnerable people in Lebanon, and has launched an emergency response in Beirut © IRC

Front cover left - Lebanon: Helping some of the frailest Syrian refugees in times of need
© UNHCR Sara Hoibak [via Flickr](#)

Front cover right - Two Syrian women wait to collect a prescription at a health clinic in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley
Russell Watkins/Department for International Development [via Flickr](#)



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ReBUILD for Resilience examines health systems in fragile settings experiencing violence, conflict, pandemics and other shocks. Our aim is to produce high-quality, practical, multidisciplinary and scalable health systems research which can be used to improve the health and lives of many millions of people.



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