

## SPECIAL SESSION 10

# Accelerating Gender Justice in the Arab States region: a pathway to achieving the 2030 Agenda post-COVID

Wednesday 31 March 2021, 11:45 – 13:15 Beirut time (Virtual)

### Background and objective

There has been a global consensus on the fact that COVID-19 has disproportionately impacted women, pushing back fragile progress on gender equality, including slowing progress in reversing discriminatory laws, the enactment of new laws, the implementation of existing legislation and broader progress needed to achieving justice for all. The special session will be an opportunity to present initiatives that contribute to safeguarding women's right to access justice during this crisis.

The objectives of the special session would be to:

- Engage policy makers in the Arab region with the updates to the [Gender Justice & the Law](#) tool and its usage to advance legal frameworks in the Arab region
- Discuss strategies and interventions in the short, mid and long term as contribution to "building back better" in the context of COVID-19 response and recovery
- Introduce the preliminary results of the study on access to justice for refugee women in Lebanon

### Questions to be addressed

- The discussion will focus on gender-based discrimination in legal and regulatory frameworks, in the following areas: overarching legal frameworks and public life, violence against women, employment and economic benefits, marriage and family, sexual and reproductive health and rights.
- The discussion will examine good practices from across the region that may be shared to address gender inequalities in laws in the Arab States region and how to remove obstacles to women empowerment and accelerate gender justice, particularly in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Facilitator

- **Ms. Mehrinaz El Awady**, Director-Cluster Leader of Gender Justice, Population and Inclusive Development, UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

### Panelists

- **Ms. Susanne Mikhail**, Regional Director, UN Women Regional Office for Arab States
- **H.E. Ms. Shamsa Saleh**, Secretary-General, UAE Gender Balance Council, United Arab Emirates
- **Mrs. Fatima Barkan**, Director of Women's Affairs, Ministry for Solidarity, Social Development, Equality and Family, Morocco
- **Dr. Fadia Kiwan**, Director General, Arab Women Organization
- **Ms. Frances Guy**, Gender Team Leader – UNDP Regional Office for Arab States
- **Dr. Luay Shabaneh**, Regional Director – UNFPA Arab States Regional Office

The session will be organized over Zoom. To join, please register via [this link](#).

Languages: Arabic, English, French and Arabic sign language



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