



Shared Prosperity Dignified Life



**Regional meeting to strengthen the capacity of the Sub-Committee on Gender Equality
in developing national reports on international frameworks and commitments, in particular the Beijing
Declaration and Platform for Action + 30 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
21-22 June 2023**

United Nations House - Beirut, Lebanon

Concept Note

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), is organizing, in partnership with the League of Arab States and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), a regional meeting for the members of the Subcommittee on Gender Equality on National Reviews of the progress in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action +30, expected to begin in 2024, aiming at maximizing on the process in support of the monitoring of the Sustainable Development Agenda and Goals 2030 and mainstreaming the gender perspective in the voluntary national reviews. The meeting will take place on the 21st & 22nd June 2023, in Beirut.

1- Background

As a global framework for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls since 1995, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action is one of the most important mechanisms supporting women's economic and social advancement and gender equality in all areas in the Arab region. The Sustainable Development Plan and Goals for 2030 intersect with the critical areas of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BDPfA), under SDG5 on gender equality, as well as the other related goals in accordance with international, regional, and national commitments towards gender equality. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development considers gender equality not only a fundamental human right goal but as a foundation for a peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable world.

National women machineries (NWM), which were established according to the BDPfA, are the mandated institutions by States to support and monitor the implementation of the 12 areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action. National women machineries, in collaboration with national statistical offices, also play a leading role in monitoring and implementing sustainable development goals on gender equality issues and mainstreaming gender equality in voluntary national reviews for the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, along with other national institutions.

Since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in 1995, ESCWA has regional reports for the Arab Region and provided support to the Arab States in their national reviews, in partnership with the regional office of UN-Women and the League of Arab States. ESCWA, in partnership with the Department of Social Affairs – Women's Section in the League of Arab States, has also been organizing periodic workshops on capacity-building of members of the sub-committee on gender equality in the Arab region, to share experiences and enhance peer-learning in several areas relating to the preparation of VNRs, including mainstreaming within the Arab States' voluntary national reviews.

The Sub-committee for Gender Equality was established based on the recommendations of the Committee on Women in its 7th session, held in Muscat on 20 and 21 January 2016; to support the implementation of the sustainable goal 5 on gender equality composed of representatives of national women machineries in Member States. Its membership was subsequently expanded to include representatives of national statistical offices. In 2018, two regional workshops were organized to build the capacity of the Subcommittee on gender equality on mainstreaming gender equality in voluntary national reviews.

The Guidance note for the national reviews on the implementation of BDPfA +25, included information on the intersectionality between SDG20230 and critical areas of the BDPfA. It also included questions about national plans for the implementation of the sustainable development agenda, the availability of relevant indicators, and the role of national women's mechanisms in planning and following up on the implementation of the sustainable development agenda and goals. While the Arab States have taken important strides towards the implementation of SDG2030 and the empowerment of women and girls, many challenges still face achieving gender equality as well as the process of the preparation national reports on international commitments and mainstreaming gender in VNRs.

At the regional level and in implementation of the decision of the Council of the League at the summit level No.701 (28)-29/3/2017 which mandated the General Secretariat to follow up on the implementation of the Cairo Declaration of Arab Women (Women's Development Agenda in the Arab Region 2030), and to submit a periodic report to the Council every 5 years on the progress made in this regard; the General Secretariat (Department of Social Affairs - Women's Section) has worked with Arab States to prepare the first regional review of the Women's Development Agenda in the Arab Region 2030 in cooperation with UN-Women. The results of the first regional review were launched on the margins of the work of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (d. 67) in March 2023.

2- Workshop Objectives

- Review and assess Member States' experience in the process of national reviews of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in 25 years including challenges and lessons learnt.
- Member States consultation on planning for the upcoming comprehensive national-level reviews and the regional review process on the implementation of BDPfA+30, which is expected to commence in 2024.
- Promote participatory approaches and coordination between members of the Sub-Committee on Gender Equality and Sustainable Development and the official entities responsible for preparing national reviews of the implementation of the BDPfA+30 and the 2030 VNRs.
- Maximize on utilizing the process of national reviews on the implementation of the BDPfA+30 to support the follow-up to the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and Goals and mainstream gender in VNRs.
- Introduce participants to data platforms to support the preparation of national reviews.

3- Partners

The meeting is organized by ESCWA in partnership with the League of Arab States and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women).

4- Participants

Participants are members of the Subcommittee on Gender Equality representing national mechanisms for the advancement of women, national statistical offices, and representatives of official entities involved in the preparation of voluntary national reviews of the 2030 Agenda.

5- Language

The workshop offers Arabic and English during the meeting with interpretation into both languages, as well as sign language when registering for this service.

6- Time and place

The meeting will be held at the United Nations House in Beirut on 21 and 22 June 2023 in accordance with the annexed agenda.

Day 1: Wednesday, 21 st , June, 2023	
Time	Session
9:00 – 9:20	<p>Opening Remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) League of Arab States UN-Women
9:20 - 9:30	<p>Preliminary session</p> <p>Presentation of the objectives and agenda of the workshop</p> <p><i>Salma Al-Nims, Chief Gender Equality Section, Gender Justice, Population and Inclusive Development Cluster, ESCWA</i></p>
9:30 – 10:30	<p>Session I: Memory Refreshments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National review mechanism for the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action <i>Manar Zaiter, Consultant, ESCWA, Center for Women</i> The interconnectedness between the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the goals, targets, and indicators of the Agenda for Sustainable Development 2030 <i>Manar Zaiter, Consultant, ESCWA, Center for Women</i> Preparation of the national voluntary review reports on the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030 <i>Jana El-Baba, 2030 Agenda and SDG Coordination Cluster</i> Presentation on the first regional review of the Women's Development Agenda in the Arab Region 2030 <i>Shaza Abdel lateef, Officer in Charge of Regional and International Cooperation, Social Affairs Sector, Women Department, League of Arab States</i>
10:30 – 11:15	<p>Session II: Lessons Learnt and Challenges to national reviews of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action + 25 and the 2030 Plan for voluntary national reviews.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interventions by national women machineries Interventions by national statistical offices
11:15 – 11:30	Coffee Break
11:30 – 12:30	<p>Session II (continued): Lessons Learnt and Challenges to national reviews of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action + 25 and the 2030 Plan for voluntary national reviews.</p>
12:30 – 13:30	<p>Session III: Presentation of available statistical platforms and tools to facilitate the preparation of national reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arab SDG Monitor & the Arab Gender Indicator Framework Data Gaps <p><i>Neda Jafar, Head of the Statistical Policies and Coordination Unit, ESCWA Statistics Division</i></p>
13:30 – 14:30	Lunch Break
14:30 – 15:00	<p>Session IV: Assessment of the alignment of national reviews of the implementation of the BDPfA+25 with SDG2030</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation of the assessment of coherence and interdependence of national reviews of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action + 25 with the SDGs Success stories <p><i>Salma Al-Nims, Chief Gender Equality Section, Gender Justice, Population, and Inclusive Development Cluster, ESCWA</i></p>
15:00 - 16:00	<p>Session V: Assessment of gender mainstreaming in VNRs on SDG2030</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation on: Assessment of gender mainstreaming in Voluntary National Reviews to the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development <p><i>Sylvia Hordosch, Policy Adviser/Intergovernmental Support, UNWomen</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jordan Experience Tunisia Experience (TBC)

Day 2: Thursday, 22 nd June, 2023	
Time	Session
9:00 – 10:00	<p>Session VI: Related Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations on the vulnerability dimensions affecting follow-up on progress (women and girls with disabilities, older women, refugees, and migrants) – Leaving no one behind • Presentation on local voluntary reviews and their interconnectedness with critical areas of BDPfA <p><i>Facilitator: Nadya Khalife, Regional Gender Advisor, ESCWA Center for Women</i></p>
10:00 – 11:30	<p>Session VII: Review of the guidelines for national reviews of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action + 25</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of guidelines for national reviews on the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action + 25 • Working groups and presentations <p><i>Facilitator: Manar Zaiter, Consultant, ESCWA, Center for Women</i></p>
11:30 – 11:45	Coffee Break
11:45 – 12:30	<p>Session VIII: Support to national reviews and the Regional Review process on the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action +30</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of the proposed process to support national reviews and conducting the regional review. <p><i>Facilitator: Salma Al-Nims, Chief Gender Equality Section, Gender Justice, Population, and Inclusive Development Cluster, ESCWA</i></p>
12:30 – 14:15	<p>Session IX: NWM and NSOs Preparation for national reviews on the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action +30</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed steps to begin preparation for national reviews of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action + 30 (working groups and presentations) <p><i>Facilitator: Manar Zaiter, Consultant, ESCWA, Center for Women</i></p>
14:15 – 14:30	Wrapping up and workshop evaluation
14:30	Lunch Break