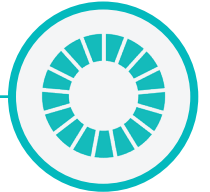


OPPORTUNITIES



Civil society participation in local and regional groups has expanded in the past decade with women playing an influential and critical role in public life through their involvement in women's organizations, feminist movements, media, labour unions, academia and in the WPS agenda.

The **Sustainable Development Goals** agenda is an opportunity to strengthen partnerships, both between governments and civil society organizations as well as amongst UN agencies to gather momentum towards more gender equal societies.



Institutional progress which protects and **mitigates risk of violence against women and children** including legislative progress, policies, national discussions, commitments and accountability mechanisms.

Regional commitment to gender-centered approach and integration of LSCE into national education system. Given the relative high school attendance across the region, **education reform** focusing on developing quality education systems, update curriculum, develop research and critical and independent thinking is an opportunity.



Emergencies can **challenge traditional gender norms** and bring women and girls into greater participation and leadership positions through frontline women-lead NGO's, the National Action Plans and engagement in transitional justice.

COVID19- pandemic has highlighted multiple weaknesses and need for system changes, especially as increased levels of intimate partner violence was reported during isolation. These realities brings momentum to the intensified discussion on how to build back better.



Countries have undertaken efforts to **scale up sexuality education**; within or outside the school context, which can mitigate prevalence of incorrect information, lack of access to SRHR and spread of STD's.

Implementation of quotas has been a significant way that Arab States have been able to ensure women's participation in the electoral process. %33 of countries in the region have legally mandated candidate quotas and %58 have reserved seats in the legislative body.



Women's entrepreneurship has grown substantially over the past decade with women-focused non-profit groups, private businesses, and government agencies becoming increasingly common.