



Report

Eleventh session of the Committee on Women Beirut, 10–11 October 2023

Summary

The Committee on Women of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) held its eleventh session in Beirut on 10 and 11 October 2023. Participants were also given the opportunity to attend the session virtually. The Committee on Women reviewed the measures taken by Arab countries and the ESCWA secretariat to implement the recommendations made by the Committee at its tenth session, and assessed progress made in implementing activities on women's issues under the ESCWA programme plan. The Committee was also briefed on ESCWA efforts to promote gender equality, and to support member States in fulfilling their national and international commitments. Moreover, the Committee reviewed ESCWA support to the Subcommittee on Gender Equality and the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Committee focused on the topic of "women's economic empowerment as a catalyst for prosperous national economies". The representative of the ESCWA secretariat presented six documents on factors that enhanced women's economic empowerment from various perspectives, including promoting legislative reform, social welfare and protection policies supporting women's economic empowerment, addressing sexual harassment in the workplace, stressing the importance of providing safe and effective transport systems, and highlighting the role of property in women's entrepreneurship.

At the close of its eleventh session, the Committee adopted recommendations addressed to member States and to the ESCWA secretariat, for implementation in the coming year when a special session of the Committee on Women will be held complementing the High-level Meeting on Progress Made in Implementing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action 30 years After their Adoption.

Contents

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
Introduction	1–2	3
<i>Chapter</i>		
I. Recommendations by the Committee on Women at its eleventh session	3–5	3
A. Recommendations to ESCWA member States	4	3
B. Recommendations to the ESCWA secretariat.....	5	4
II. Topics of discussion.....	6–64	4
A. Follow-up issues	6–35	4
B. Women’s economic empowerment as a catalyst for prosperous national economies.....	36–61	11
C. Date and venue of the twelfth session of the Committee on Women	62	16
D. Other matters.....	63	16
E. Adoption of the recommendations made by the Committee on Women at its eleventh session.....	64	16
III. Organization of work.....	65–71	17
A. Date and venue.....	65	17
B. Opening.....	66–67	17
C. Attendance	68	17
D. Election of officers.....	69	17
E. Adoption of the agenda and proposed organization of work	70	18
F. Documents	71	18

Annexes

Annex I. List of participants.....	19
Annex II. List of documents.....	22

Introduction

1. The Committee on Women of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) held its eleventh session in Beirut on 10 and 11 October 2023, pursuant to ESCWA resolution 240 (XXII) of 17 April 2003 adopted by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 2003/9 of 18 July 2004 on the establishment within the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia of a committee on women, and pursuant to recommendations made by the Committee at its tenth session, held in Beirut on 16 and 17 November 2021. Given the current regional circumstances, participants were also given the opportunity to attend the session virtually.

2. The Committee on Women follows up on global and regional conferences related to women and on members States' participation therein, and coordinates the efforts of member States and regional organizations in implementing the resolutions and recommendations issued by those conferences. The present report sets out the recommendations made by the Committee at the close of its eleventh session, addressed to ESCWA member States and to the ESCWA secretariat. The report also includes a summary of the discussions under each agenda item.

I. Recommendations by the Committee on Women at its eleventh session

3. At the close of its eleventh session, the Committee on Women adopted recommendations addressed to member States and to the ESCWA secretariat.

A. Recommendations to ESCWA member States

4. The Committee on Women made the following recommendations to member States:

(a) Welcome progress in implementing the recommendations made by the Committee on Women at its tenth session, the activities of the ESCWA programme plan, and technical cooperation activities related to women's issues; and provide the ESCWA secretariat with national reports on the implementation of the recommendations by 10 December 2023;

(b) Take note of the activities of the Subcommittee on Gender Equality and the Sustainable Development Goals, and its work aimed at transferring related knowledge to countries in a way that serves the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and of national priorities;

(c) Participate actively in the periodic review of progress made in implementing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action 30 years after their adoption, and benefit from the support provided by the ESCWA secretariat in preparing periodic national reports and participating in consultations on the regional report;

(d) Continue working with legislative bodies, parliaments and institutions to review and update legal systems, including rules and regulations, in an integrated manner to ensure the economic empowerment of women, in a way that aligns with national contexts;

(e) Provide the ESCWA secretariat periodically with legislative and policy reforms for inclusion on relevant ESCWA platforms;

(f) Incorporate issues related to the safety and efficiency of transport services and infrastructure into strategies and frameworks for women's advancement, as a key factor in women's economic empowerment;

(g) Cooperate with the private and public sectors to develop internal policies and training for personnel in enterprises on sexual harassment in the workplace, which clarify legislation and provide a clear response to confronting sexual harassment;

(h) Work with legislative and service bodies to develop the care sector and care policies for children, older people, women and persons with disabilities in a way that takes into account the social roles of both women and men, and that promotes the economic empowerment of women;

(i) Continue awareness-raising and advocacy efforts to protect women's financial and property rights;

(j) Work with institutions concerned with social protection issues to ensure that social protection systems are coherent and gender-sensitive.

B. Recommendations to the ESCWA secretariat

5. The Committee on Women made the following recommendations to the ESCWA secretariat:

(a) Continue preparing studies and reports that contribute to developing the work of national women's machineries as part of the ESCWA areas of competence; and provide technical support at the request of countries, and in accordance with available resources, to translate the studies into policies and programmes that contribute to combating violence against women, estimating the economic costs of various forms of violence, implementing the women, peace and security agenda, promoting gender justice, protecting older women and women with disabilities, and strengthening women's economic participation;

(b) Continue to support member States in the field of protecting girls and women who are living under occupation or in conditions of war, conflict or terrorism, or their repercussions, by adopting appropriate policies and programmes that have become urgent in view of the security conditions that the Arab region is experiencing, especially the State of Palestine;

(c) Continue supporting Arab countries in preparing the periodic review of progress in implementing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action 30 years after their adoption, draft the regional report, and organize a high-level meeting before the twelfth session of the Committee on Women, which will be held exceptionally in 2024, to coordinate the regional position;

(d) Organize a training programme for members of the Subcommittee on Gender Equality and the Sustainable Development Goals on how to translate the concepts of women's economic empowerment presented by the ESCWA secretariat at the current session into programmes related to the implementation of relevant SDGs and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action;

(e) Monitor the legislative developments and achievements of member States, and update the electronic platform periodically to strengthen the transfer of experiences and provide learning opportunities;

(f) Support the exchange of experiences among member States on mechanisms for the prevention of and protection against sexual harassment, so as to translate existing legislation into clear procedures that contribute to women's ability to confront violence;

(g) Provide national women's machineries with information on the working method of the ESCWA technical cooperation programme, and on ways to submit requests for support through official channels approved by countries.

II. Topics of discussion

A. Follow-up issues

1. *Implementation of activities on women's issues under the ESCWA programme plan and of recommendations made by the Committee at its tenth session*
(Agenda item 4)

6. With reference to document [E/ESCWA/C.7/2023/3](#), the representative of the ESCWA secretariat made a presentation in which she addressed progress in implementing the activities of the ESCWA programme plan

and the recommendations issued at the tenth session of the Committee on Women. She reviewed the pillars for women's advancement so as to reduce gender disparity, in line with resolutions and outcomes of international conferences. Those pillars included combating violence against women; the women, peace and security agenda; gender justice; promoting women's economic participation; and mainstreaming gender equality concepts in national institutions.

7. With regard to the first pillar on progress in supporting countries in fulfilling their international obligations, she said that the ESCWA Centre for Women had begun preparing national reviews of progress in implementing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action 30 years after their adoption. An action plan was being drawn up that included a series of regional events to support Arab Governments in preparing their national reports and the regional report on progress in implementing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, all of which would inform a high-level meeting to be held at the end of 2024. She noted that a workshop had been held on a regional interactive dialogue on policies and policy tools supporting the achievement of regional priorities in implementing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Beirut, 1–2 March 2023). In that regard, ESCWA had issued a technical paper entitled “[SDG vulnerability frameworks to leave no one behind](#)”, and four issues of the e-newsletter [Ensaf](#). It had also published, in collaboration with statistical offices in Iraq, Jordan, the State of Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the Sudan, the [National Gender Lens Pocketbook 2022](#). Moreover, she said that ESCWA had organized a side event, in collaboration with the National Commission for Lebanese Women, on women's economic participation, on the sidelines of the sixty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women (New York, 6–17 March 2023). ESCWA, in collaboration with the Ministry of Solidarity, Social Inclusion and Family of Morocco, held another side event that addressed the care economy in view of technological changes. In addition, ESCWA, in partnership with Jordan and the State of Palestine, held a side event on the economic cost of violence against women in both countries.

8. With regard to the second pillar on progress achieved in the field of gender justice, she said that in continuation of ongoing work since 2018 on the [Gender Justice and the Law Initiative](#), completed country reports on gender justice and the law had been launched at a [webinar](#) held on 13 February 2023. Concerning the third pillar on progress in the field of gender equality and combating violence against women, she said that the Centre for Women had begun work on estimating the cost of domestic violence in several countries, and the cost of girls' early marriage and its effects on education and health. She added that ESCWA had published a set of studies and research, including a publication entitled [An Essential Pathway: Service Provider Coordination and Referral Systems in the Arab Region to Address Violence against Women and Girls](#); a technical paper entitled “[The cost of child marriage over the life cycle of girls and women: Evidence from Egypt, Iraq, Jordan and Tunisia](#)”, in partnership with the United Nations Population Fund, UNICEF and UN-Women; two policy briefs, the first entitled “[Key policy directions in the Arab region for ensuring the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#)” and the second entitled “[Mainstreaming gender in climate action in the Arab region](#)”; and a fact sheet entitled “[Her land. Her rights. Equal land rights: a pathway to combating desertification in the Arab region](#)”.

9. With regard to the fourth pillar on progress in implementing the women, peace and security agenda, she reviewed an international conference on the theme “Palestinian women in the aftermath of the May 2021 offensive”, organized by ESCWA in collaboration with the Ministry of Women's Affairs of the State of Palestine (Beirut, 26 November 2021). She also noted a periodic report entitled “[Social and economic situation of Palestinian women and girls](#)”, which was the eleventh report in a series prepared by ESCWA since 2003; and a technical paper entitled “[The status of Syrian refugee women in Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon and their priorities for voluntary repatriation](#)”.

10. Regarding the fifth pillar on progress in the field of women's economic participation, she said that ESCWA had published several research papers and studies, including a report entitled “[Women economic empowerment in the Arab region: Guidelines to advance care policies](#)”, a study entitled “[Leaving women and girls further behind or a potential opportunity for strengthening gender equality? Lessons from the COVID-19 crisis in the Arab region](#)”, and a study entitled “[Women's entrepreneurship in the Arab region: assessing the](#)

impacts of land and property ownership”. She also highlighted a working paper entitled “[Investigating the gender gap: loan provision and property ownership in Jordan](#)”, which had been prepared by ESCWA in collaboration with the Association of Banks in Jordan, indicating that ESCWA had developed the first analytical frame of reference for the relationship between women’s ability to access property and its impact on entrepreneurship in the Arab region.

11. As for the sixth pillar on progress in supporting national women’s machineries and mainstreaming the concept of equality at the national level, she said that ESCWA had developed [an electronic platform for national women’s machineries in the Arab region](#), which provided a one-stop shop for information and comparison of policies and strategies between countries. She noted that the platform was linked to the Index Simulator for Policymakers in the Arab Region (ISPAR), which provided access to global evidence of gender equality, compared rankings with those of other countries inside and outside the region, and analysed the potential impact of specific policies on national rankings in selected international indicators, including the Global Gender Gap Index. In line with the ESCWA commitment to mainstream the concepts of gender equality and disability into its programmes, procedures and internal policies, ESCWA prepared a document entitled “[White paper on inclusive research: gender mainstreaming and disability inclusion](#)”.

12. In the ensuing discussion, the representative of Mauritania asked about the possibility of generalizing the experience of the cost of early marriage for girls to other Arab countries so as to benefit from it. The representative of Yemen called for special attention to be paid in terms of studies to conflict countries like hers, which faced many challenges such as weak economic empowerment and early marriage, and was undergoing the first stages of economic recovery. Studies and indicators could encourage donor countries to provide financial support for economic empowerment. The representative of Oman asked how to update the Gender Justice and the Law Initiative, given some amendments and developments to laws and regulations that would affect the initiative, so as to support Oman in that regard on the platform designated for national women’s machineries. The representative of Djibouti said that gender inequality was due to the absence of laws to combat violence against women, and the failure of abused women to report to authorities because of customs and traditions.

13. In response, the representative of the ESCWA secretariat said that ESCWA would send requests to all countries to update their data on the gender justice website. In response to the representative of Yemen, she explained that ESCWA published regional studies that defined the cumbersome methodology for calculating the cost of violence and early marriage, for example, and that showcased the required data. Those studies were then translated into technical support based on requests submitted by member States. She added that the process entailed preparing a study to develop a regional strategy that would be provided to each country to work on in a way that suited its circumstances.

2. Technical cooperation activities (Agenda item 5)

14. With reference to document [E/ESCWA/C.7/2023/4](#), the representative of the ESCWA secretariat made a presentation on the technical cooperation activities undertaken by the ESCWA secretariat since the tenth session of the Committee on Women. She said that the ESCWA approach to requests for technical support relied on consistency, continuity and cumulative construction. After preparing a reference framework for measuring the economic cost of violence against women, ESCWA provided technical support to countries and assisted them in preparing and analysing the necessary statistical surveys to calculate an estimated value of the cost of violence against women. She praised the technical support provided to the State of Palestine, which had gradually progressed, resulting in a report entitled “[Economic costs of marital violence against women in the State of Palestine](#)”, which was issued in March 2023. She also commended the technical support related to preparing national strategies and plans for combating violence against women, noting the support received by Lebanon in preparing a national strategy to combat violence against women and its accompanying plan, which was followed by work with the National Commission for Lebanese Women to evaluate achievements in implementing the plan.

15. She added that the ESCWA secretariat had also provided member States with technical support in the field of women, peace and security by producing knowledge and training materials based on requests for technical support submitted by member States. In that context, ESCWA had published a report entitled “[Gendered needs during the May 2021 conflict in the Gaza Strip](#)”, and an analysis of the laws and regulations related to women’s economic participation in Lebanon, in line with national plans to implement Security Council resolution No. [1325](#) in Lebanon and the State of Palestine. Those activities were in line with the ESCWA secretariat’s approach to providing technical support to member States, so as to prepare national plans aimed at implementing Security Council resolution 1325. ESCWA had also previously contributed to providing technical support to Lebanon and the State of Palestine in preparing their implementation plans. In the current session, ESCWA had provided support to Jordan in reviewing its national plan to implement Security Council resolution 1325, and in preparing its current national plan approved by the Council of Ministers. Moreover, ESCWA had provided technical support to the Sudan in reviewing its national plan and submitting proposals to improve it, and provided Yemen with training on involving women in the peacebuilding process as a means of implementing its national plan.

16. She said that in the field of building the capacity of national women’s machineries and their interaction with international machineries concerned with women’s rights, ESCWA had prepared a training programme to support the cadres of national women’s machineries. The aim of the training programme was to prepare cadres and familiarize them with the role of national women’s machineries in accordance with international resolutions, including the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which dedicated one of its strategic objectives to strengthening national women’s machineries. The training programme also included introducing participants to international machineries for women’s advancement, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the women and peace and security agenda, and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The programme also included a page on the ESCWA website that set out those introductory materials. Moreover, the programme enabled the training of cadres working in Mauritania, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen.

17. She added that the ESCWA secretariat had provided technical support to countries on internal procedures of national women’s machineries. It had also supported Jordan in preparing the necessary matrices for the work of the Jordanian National Commission for Women, to link its internal work programme to other national development plans, and international recommendations in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and the closing recommendations for Jordan made by the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. ESCWA had also supported Somalia and the Sudan in developing national gender equality policies.

18. She said that in the field of technical support provided to countries on enhancing women’s economic and political participation, ESCWA had collaborated under its programme of work with Lebanon, Morocco and Saudi Arabia to analyse care economy policies related to the care of children and older persons, and to identify the necessary tools and policies to support the caring role of women along with her economic role. Collaboration with the Lebanese Parliament had resulted in a legal study on the possibility of launching and implementing flexible work arrangements in Lebanon, and two proposals for amendments to the labour law on enshrining the commitment to flexible work in national legislation.

19. In the same context, ESCWA, in collaboration with UN-Women, had contributed to the preparation of a report on women’s political participation in Lebanon entitled “[Women at the table: insights from Lebanese women in politics](#)”, which had contributed to enhancing knowledge about the experiences of politically active women and the challenges they faced in their political work.

20. Within the framework of mainstreaming the concept of gender equality, over the past years, ESCWA had supported the Jordanian National Commission for Women and the Mauritanian Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity in preparing plans to mainstream the concept of gender equality in national institutions. To complement that support, ESCWA had assisted institutions in organizing a participatory audit of both the National Aid Fund in Jordan and the Ministry of Justice of Mauritania, and

urged those institutions to adopt action plans to mainstream gender equality in all aspects of their work and the services provided to citizens, male and female, in both countries.

21. In the ensuing discussion, representatives of member States thanked ESCWA for its tireless efforts in providing technical support, building the capacity of national women's machineries and relevant public institutions, and promoting the sharing of countries' experiences. The representative of Yemen indicated the importance of the women and peace and security agenda, as it was an issue that deserved exceptional attention in the Yemeni context, since the Yemeni State was still in the process of reshaping its priorities. Despite the importance of talking about enacting new legislation, Yemen might face a delay in that area as it was in the stage before the formation of the House of Representatives. She also stressed her country's great need for ESCWA support on a national plan for women and the women and peace and security agenda to implement Security Council resolution No. 1325. A detailed evaluation plan would be submitted to ESCWA outlining current needs, to be considered immediately upon completion of the Committee's work. The representative of Oman stressed the importance of referring in the technical cooperation activities document to technical cooperation in preparing a study to empower Omani women with regard to the care economy and persons with disabilities, which was carried out in partnership with the Ministry of Social Development of Oman, in addition to a workshop that was being organized to implement the study's recommendations.

22. The representative of Jordan reviewed the successes achieved in collaborating with ESCWA, including a second national plan to implement resolution 1325, and a study assessing the economic cost of violence against women, which had contributed to setting national priorities at the policy level with regard to social protection and women's advancement. She also stressed her country's aspiration to strengthen collaboration with ESCWA in the field of sex disaggregated data, and to benefit from ESCWA experience in creating comprehensive databases to help determine priorities and amend national policies. The representative of Mauritania indicated the importance of coordination between ESCWA and the various sectors of the Ministry of Justice to integrate gender equality issues, and of collaboration between ESCWA and the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development in formulating social protection policies. She said that a request had been submitted to the ESCWA team, which had recently visited Mauritania to work on reviewing a national strategy on women. The representative of Iraq said that she had contacted the ESCWA secretariat regarding the tools developed by ESCWA to request building the capacity of Iraqi cadres. She also enquired about the possibility of fulfilling these requests in the coming period.

23. In response, the representative of the ESCWA secretariat thanked the representatives of member States for their cooperation. With regard to Mauritania, she noted ESCWA work with various government agencies, including collaboration with the Ministry of Justice and the Department of Social Affairs to mainstream a gender equality perspective. She said that ESCWA was keen to respond to all requests for cooperation. Regarding Oman, she stressed the importance of including the country's study in the Committee's documents owing to its importance, and that it was the only study that looked at issues of persons with disabilities and care policies. She also emphasized ESCWA readiness to work with Jordan on sex disaggregated data in more detail, and to update data from Jordan on various ESCWA platforms.

24. She also outlined the procedures for submitting requests for technical support through specific official channels, stressing the need for requests to reach ESCWA through the relevant ministry that each country has designated as a focal point in line with its national vision, as ESCWA could only receive requests through national focal points. She said that requests were handled based on available resources and the timing of their receipt during the ESCWA fiscal year.

3. Supporting the Subcommittee on Gender Equality and the Sustainable Development Goals (Agenda item 6)

25. With reference to document [E/ESCWA/C.7/2023/5](#), the representative of the ESCWA secretariat made a presentation on supporting the Subcommittee on Gender Equality and the Sustainable Development Goals, which had been established in 2016 on the recommendation of the Committee on Women to follow up on the

implementation of gender equality aspects of the 2030 Agenda, and to meet the needs of member States in fulfilling their commitments to implement the SDGs, especially Goal 5 on gender equality and the empowerment of women. She said that the Subcommittee specialized in capacity-building, providing tools and skills, exchanging knowledge, and coordinating efforts at the national and regional levels, and that ESCWA fulfilled the role of secretariat to the Subcommittee and collaborated with both UN-Women and the League of Arab States in implementing activities.

26. She presented the activities organized during the period 2022–2023, which included a [regional workshop](#) on integrating gender equality issues into voluntary national reviews (online, 22–23 February 2022), in collaboration with the League of Arab States, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, and a network of practitioners on voluntary national reviews. The workshop provided a platform for dialogue and peer learning among Arab countries on issues related to voluntary national reviews, and on integrating a gender equality perspective in them. In June 2022, the ESCWA secretariat, in collaboration with UN-Women and the League of Arab States, implemented a programme to build national capacity on women’s economic participation and on care economies, which was supported by representatives of relevant ministries and national institutions concerned with social protection, along with members of the Subcommittee. In preparation for the national and regional reviews of progress made in implementing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action 30 years after their adoption, the ESCWA secretariat, in collaboration with UN-Women and the League of Arab States, held a workshop in June 2023 on preparing national reviews on international frameworks and commitments (Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action +30 and the 2030 Agenda), aimed at assessing the experiences of member States in preparing national reviews on the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action +25, reviewing lessons learned and challenges, and enhancing access to necessary data and optimizing their use to support follow-up of the 2030 Agenda and its Goals. Representatives of national statistical offices participated in the workshop, alongside Subcommittee members.

*4. National action to implement the recommendations made by the Committee
on Women at its tenth session
(Agenda item 7)*

27. With reference to document E/ESCWA/C.7/2023/6, the representatives of Lebanon, Iraq, the Sudan, Oman, State of Palestine, Jordan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Djibouti and Kuwait (in order of presentations) made presentations on the measures taken by their countries to implement the recommendations made by the Committee on Women at its tenth session.

28. The representative of Lebanon said that her country had taken several important national measures to implement the recommendations made by the Committee at its tenth session. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, inclusive national plans were adopted that paid attention to the specific needs of women. Efforts also focused on protecting vulnerable women, with a strong emphasis on implementing the National Action Plan for Security Council Resolution 1325. She added that the National Commission for Lebanese Women was striving to develop a comprehensive national action plan aimed at preventing early marriage for the period 2023–2030. In addition, a series of awareness-raising initiatives had been launched, including dialogue sessions and media campaigns. At the level of legal reforms, she highlighted the success of Lebanon in passing several crucial reforms, including matters related to personal status issues and women’s quotas in parliamentary and municipal elections. Moreover, important steps had been taken to guarantee the right of Lebanese mothers to confer their nationality to their children, and reforms had been made to the Penal Code and the Social Security Law. In parallel, Lebanon has invested in developing strong statistical systems and national observatories. The establishment of a national observatory for gender equality aimed to collect and analyse data to inform evidence-based policy making.

29. The representative of Iraq noted the progress achieved by the Iraqi Government with regard to the women’s file, namely enhancing the participation of Iraqi women in the legislative authority, as the percentage of women now exceeded the 25 per cent quota allocated to them in the Iraqi Parliament, reaching 29 per cent.

She also indicated the Iraqi Government's approval of a national strategy for Iraqi women for the period 2023–2030. She praised the role of ESCWA in supporting women's affairs at the regional and national levels, stressing the importance of direct coordination with national women's machineries and government agencies concerned with women's affairs, so as to ensure maximum benefit and prevent any unnecessary duplication of efforts.

30. The representative of the Sudan presented information to the Committee on the current status of women in the country amid the ongoing conflict, noting that women in particular faced increasing challenges owing to internal displacement, making them more vulnerable to gender-based violence. She highlighted challenges to accessing urgent reproductive health services as a result of the destruction of hospitals and health facilities, and the alarming rate of sexual violence. In addition, she expressed widespread concern about difficulties in investigating cases of enforced disappearance of women and girls, which had taken a serious turn with reports of girls being kidnapped and sold. This was often because families chose to remain silent about such incidents. She said that the Violence Against Women Unit was able to provide basic health services through its partnerships with United Nations organizations and humanitarian associations.

31. The representative of Oman stressed the importance of technical cooperation, thanking ESCWA for its efforts in that regard. She suggested that the Committee make a recommendation at the current session on building the capacity of the Subcommittee and on technical support. She presented key national efforts by Oman within the framework of implementing the recommendations made by the Committee at its tenth session. With regard to responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Omani Government had provided a package of social protection initiatives for the small and medium enterprises sector that targeted male and female entrepreneurs. It had also provided various facilities and incentives to the private sector to reduce the financial burdens on companies. Small and medium enterprises had benefited from lower interest rates on borrowing in 2021. Affected individuals were also given the opportunity to defer repayment of bank loans and various financing obligations without interest or additional fees. Those efforts had been accompanied by many awareness campaigns, hotlines for health and psychological support, and the continued maternal and child health services, non-stop vaccination, and prenatal care services. She also expressed the Ministry of Social Development's keenness to review ESCWA knowledge products, benefit from its publications, and circulate them to those working in the context of women's issues.

32. The representative of the State of Palestine highlighted the unfortunate reality of women in the State of Palestine, who faced complex violence rooted in internal societal issues and the effects of the occupation, noting that worrying statistics and facts have shown that women and girls in the State of Palestine needed greater protection. He noted the policies and legislation that had been adopted between the tenth and the current sessions, notably the National Strategy to Combat Violence against Women and Girls 2023–2030, the National Strategy to Enhance the Political Participation of Palestinian Women 2023–2030, and many international resolutions published in the Official Gazette, stating that a recently adopted executive plan would allow for the dissemination of CEDAW and the consolidation of its principles. In addition, he noted the tireless efforts to address discrimination by criminalizing the behaviour and introducing amendments to criminal legislation, specifically the Penal Code. Initiatives had also been taken to facilitate women's access to natural resources and property ownership. A committee had been established that comprised representatives of the Ministry of Women's Affairs, the Palestinian Land Commission, and the Land and Water Settlement Commission to address obstacles to women's ownership of real estate assets. Necessary measures had been taken to ensure the best protection for women in real estate transactions, including the equality of women's and men's testimony and the protection of women's rights to inheritance through a decision ensuring that inheritance was divided equally.

33. The representative of Jordan noted the Jordanian constitutional amendment of 2022, which entailed the addition of a paragraph stipulating that the State would ensure women's empowerment, would support them in playing an active role in building society in a way that guaranteed equal opportunities on the basis of justice and fairness, and would protect them from all forms of violence and discrimination. She reviewed the policies and strategies that had been formulated in her country, with a particular focus on the National Strategy for

Women in Jordan 2020–2025, and the executive plan for a strategy that was issued at the beginning of 2023. Other strategies included the Women’s Economic Empowerment Strategy and a second national plan to operationalize Security Council resolution No. 1325, which was being prepared for launch. At the legislative level, Jordan had introduced various amendments, especially to the parties law and the electoral law, to enhance women’s participation in the political process. The text of the Parties Law stipulated that the percentage of women among a party’s founders should not be less than 20 per cent, and the electoral law increased the number of seats allocated to women from 15 to 18. In addition to those efforts, recent amendments were made to the social work law that focused on various areas, such as childcare services, parental leave, defining sexual harassment in the workplace, and removing restrictions on women working in certain industries and jobs. She noted a positive development in the recent ministerial reshuffle, as the number of female ministers in the Council of Ministers had increased to seven.

34. The representative of the Syrian Arab Republic said that developments in the State of Palestine were similar to what was happening in her country. Regarding women’s issues, she highlighted the *Forsa* programme, which aimed to support and empower women in entrepreneurial projects and handicrafts by marketing their products. As for legislation and plans, she noted amendments to the personal status law, the enactment of the children’s rights law, and work to update the labour law, which was in its final stages. She added that work was underway on a gender justice plan, which would be adopted by ministries along with a set of strategies, such as strategies to protect older persons and children, and tackle domestic violence. Work had also recently begun on a strategy to combat domestic violence in all its forms.

35. The representative of Kuwait noted a set of decisive national measures taken by her country during the COVID-19 pandemic to address economic and social challenges. A joint economic team had been established to coordinate between government agencies to address the effects of the pandemic, while maintaining necessary support for food and medical commodities in local markets. The Supreme Family Council had been formed to create a team for rapid intervention in cases of violence, and a law had been adopted to combat domestic violence during the pandemic. Moreover, a minimum income had been provided, supporting the salaries of those registered under chapter 5 of social security, and retirement pensions had been disbursed. In addition, government exemptions had been provided to economic institutions, a grace period was given to residency violators to leave without paying fines, and the “Fazaa for Kuwait” campaign was launched to support affected families and workers. In addition, a platform had been created to support those affected by the pandemic, and residents in social protection homes had received the necessary support. The Government had also published awareness-raising videos and simplified procedures for child visitation in separated families.

B. Women’s economic empowerment as a catalyst for prosperous national economies (Agenda item 8)

36. With reference to document [E/ESCWA/C.7/2023/7](#), the representative of the ESCWA secretariat said that the topic of the current session and the focus of its discussion was women’s economic empowerment, given that the rate of women’s economic participation in the Arab region was the lowest worldwide, which could affect the economy, in general, and families, children’s education and spending, in particular. She added that ESCWA had prepared six papers, each of which discussed the issue of women’s economic empowerment from a specific perspective, and that all those papers should be read to understand the full picture.

1. Legislative reforms for women’s economic empowerment in the Arab region (Agenda item 8(a))

37. With reference to document [E/ESCWA/C.7/2023/7\(Part I\)](#), the representative of the ESCWA secretariat made a presentation in which she addressed legislative reforms supporting women’s economic empowerment in the Arab region, stressing the importance of the legislative system in such efforts. She reviewed legislation supporting women’s economic empowerment through examples of good practices and procedures necessary to bring about positive change in the field. She said that legislation was divided into the following categories:

legislation supporting economic empowerment or directly affecting the achievement of equality in the world of work and the creation of a decent and safe work environment; legislation related to family burdens, which required taking into account women's reproductive role, reducing and distributing the burdens of child care as shared burdens, recognizing other unpaid family burdens, and investing in the care economy; and legislation to promote women's entrepreneurship. She recommended adopting a holistic and comprehensive approach and giving consideration to measures to enforce legislation, especially those related to working with the judiciary and law enforcement agencies.

38. In the ensuing discussion, the representative of Oman noted the recent reform to extend maternity leave and to the law on paternity leave in her country. The representative of Mauritania stressed the importance of working on laws related to real estate ownership and women's access to loans, which contributed to their economic empowerment. She also indicated the importance of financing electoral campaigns, which presented an obstacle to women's political participation. The representative of the State of Palestine presented current national efforts to adopt executive regulations aimed at activating the labour law to protect women working in the informal sector, especially those exposed to sexual harassment, in addition to efforts aimed at ensuring women's access to inheritance, assets, and financial rights. He reviewed some of the amendments made to the retirement law in the public sector and the civil service sector, the human trafficking law, the personal status law, the cybercrime law, and other laws to protect women and girls, and guarantee their economic and social rights. The representative of Djibouti referred to his Government's efforts to amend the length of paternity leave.

39. In response, the representative of the ESCWA secretariat said that the document on legislative reforms had been prepared earlier and was based on the outcomes of the gender justice reports published at the beginning of 2023. Therefore, she called on countries to provide ESCWA with all their reforms, whether to laws, directives or regulations, which would help develop the website of the gender justice reports. She encouraged countries to enact laws on children, since all Arab countries had acceded to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. She highlighted the following three important considerations that should be taken into account when developing legislation related to women's economic empowerment: the trend towards a decent work environment by adopting International Labour Organization (ILO) standards, the need to protect women in the workplace, and the importance of taking into account their reproductive role in view of the challenges they faced in that context.

*2. Safe, accessible, efficient and affordable transport systems as enablers
of women's economic empowerment
(Agenda item 8(b))*

40. With reference to document [E/ESCWA/C.7/2023/7\(Part II\)](#), the representative of the ESCWA secretariat made a presentation on safe, accessible, efficient and affordable transport systems as enablers of women's economic empowerment. She said that international resolutions and plans addressed the pivotal role of improving women's access to safe and effective public transport, including, for example, CEDAW, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, [SDG 11](#), and the New Urban Agenda. She noted that transport systems were a cornerstone of a healthy experience of living in cities, as they facilitated population mobility and access to social, professional and personal opportunities. She added that if transport systems were multimodal, smart and sustainable, and also time effective and safe, they could contribute to empowering individuals and accelerating progress toward achieving the SDGs.

41. She said that improving women's access to public transport, thus increasing their professional potential, required a multidimensional approach, including infrastructure and the economic, social, psychological and digital dynamics associated with the transport sector. She addressed barriers to mobility, gender disparities, economic, social and psychological dimensions, and data gaps related to gender issues. She also highlighted the role of technology in reshaping the transport sector, smart mobility, and international and regional good practices. She stressed the need to consider women's access to sustainable public transport as a key factor in

their economic empowerment. Necessary measures must therefore be taken to ensure their access to safe, affordable and reliable means of transport.

42. The ensuing discussion centred on a lack of reliable transport as a major obstacle to working outside the home, as it could result in missed shifts, lost wages, and decreased productivity. Such difficulties were exacerbated by a prevalence of violence against women, especially harassment, in public vehicles and transport stations. Therefore, to improve women's access to public transport in the region, it was necessary to implement policies to promote gender equality, create an enabling environment for women's participation in all areas of society, and encourage member States to take action to improve planning for public transport systems, promote universal access to public transport systems by making them more affordable, and increase women's employment in the transport sector.

3. *Addressing sexual harassment in the public sphere* (Agenda item 8(c))

43. With reference to document [E/ESCWA/C.7/2023/7\(Part III\)](#), the representative of the ESCWA secretariat made a presentation in which she addressed the issue of sexual harassment, stressing that sexual harassment, including sexual harassment in the workplace, had a significant economic cost for both enterprises and individuals, in addition to being a violation of human rights. She said that it affected the social and political participation of women and girls, including their access to the world of work and economic opportunities. She stressed the need to address sexual harassment to ensure the participation of women and girls in all aspects of public life and guarantee their economic empowerment. She said that an inclusive and comprehensive approach to addressing sexual harassment was based on the following four elements: developing legislation and policies that took into account gender differences; creating an inclusive environment that took into account the safety and needs of women and girls; providing survivor-centred services; and raising awareness through public education, working with men and boys, and challenging discriminatory norms and practices.

44. In the ensuing discussion, the representative of Yemen stressed the importance of the issue, recalling an incident of harassment that occurred only one month prior in a public transport vehicle in Yemen, where the girl had been forced to jump from a bus, leading to her death. She also said that it was impossible to determine the number of harassment cases owing to reporting failure or fear of employers. The representative of Saudi Arabia shared her country's experience in combating harassment by adopting an anti-harassment system in 2018.

45. The representative of the State of Palestine said that the current penal code in the State of Palestine criminalized acts that affected the sanctity of women, but it focused primarily on public modesty rather than the reality of sexual harassment. He added that there was limited awareness of available hotlines and no one national number for reporting. He suggested developing codes of ethics for workplaces. The representative of Jordan said that her country was at the forefront of addressing the issue of harassment. She agreed with the representative of the State of Palestine about a lack of statistics, referring to the two additional questions included in the recent employment survey regarding sexual harassment, which was conducted in collaboration with ILO and the Central Bureau of Statistics. She explained that all countries could benefit from her country's experience in including the two questions in the survey, noting that it could be a solution to the problem of weak statistics.

46. The representative of Oman said that the penal code criminalized any attack on women's rights, noting the awareness-raising campaigns carried out by her country in that regard. The representative of Mauritania enquired about potential ESCWA contribution to a study on discriminatory violence against women in her country, and requested guidance on organizing advocacy campaigns aimed at supporting the ratification of a law to combat violence against women and girls. The representative of the Sudan said that discussion of the issue received limited public acceptance, and that there was a complete refusal to acknowledge the existence of sexual harassment. Therefore, diligent efforts were being made to draft a law in that field, which had reached the final stages of adoption. The representative of Djibouti stressed that sexual harassment was extremely

dangerous when the harasser was an employer, and stressed the need to protect women from repercussions when reporting such cases. The representative of the Arab Women Organization indicated the need for coordination between the Arab Women Organization and ESCWA, so as to avoid duplication of efforts and resources.

47. In response, the representative of the ESCWA secretariat acknowledged the lack of statistics in the Arab region in that particular field. She stressed the importance of mutually benefiting from experiences between countries and exploring potential partnerships that could be established at the national level. She highlighted the ILO Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190) as an important text that should be reviewed.

4. *Access to land, property and immovable assets and women's entrepreneurship*
(Agenda item 8(d))

48. With reference to document [E/ESCWA/C.7/2023/7\(Part IV\)](#), the representative of the ESCWA secretariat made a presentation on the contributions of women's entrepreneurship to economic growth and social development, and reviewed the main challenges related to women's ownership rights in the Arab region, including women's access to their inheritance rights, laws related to marital property, and the challenges of land registration.

49. In the ensuing discussion, the representative of Yemen noted that there was a lack of accurate data regarding women's ownership of land or other assets. In that context, she proposed working to reflect the reality of businesswomen in Arab countries, so as to provide services based on various successful experiences in the region. The representative of Lebanon stressed the necessity of working on a civil law that covered all segments of society, provided the same rights for women and men, and prevented any discrimination between them. She also emphasized the importance of enhancing social awareness regarding inheritance, land and women's entrepreneurship. The representative of the State of Palestine highlighted the tireless efforts made by his country and the great achievements it has accomplished in settlement work, which had provided legal aid to women and ensured their access to necessary assets and resources. He also noted the establishment of a national observatory, with indicators of violations based on gender discrimination.

50. The representative of Jordan stressed the importance of women's access to finance and the financing programmes for new companies and projects founded and headed by women, so as to strengthen women's entrepreneurship. Accordingly, she proposed that a recommendation on the topic be made. The representative of Oman reviewed her country's efforts to amend legislation related to women's right, so as to allow them to freely manage their property and money just like men and without the interference of their husband, in addition to empowering Omani women in entrepreneurship by providing them with access to loans and training and qualifying them to prepare and follow up on projects.

51. In response, the representative of the ESCWA secretariat reiterated the importance of providing ESCWA with all reforms, whether laws, directives or regulations, so as to include them in its studies and to update the gender justice website. She clarified some of the main points addressed in the document, such as ensuring that women obtained their share of inheritance, whatever it may be. She reviewed examples of marital ownership models in some Arab countries that could be implemented without any change in the law. She also noted the possibility of holding a workshop within the framework of the work of the Subcommittee, which would allow participants from countries to discuss issues of women's economic empowerment, present papers, and provide member States with the opportunity to engage in detailed discussions and exchange experiences.

5. *Advancing care policies in Arab countries*
(Agenda item 8(e))

52. With reference to document [E/ESCWA/C.7/2023/7\(Part V\)](#), the representative of the ESCWA secretariat made a presentation on advancing care policies in Arab countries within the framework of the care economy and women's economic empowerment. She highlighted the inequality between women and men,

especially with regard to performing unpaid care work in the Arab region. She also reviewed the challenges that Arab women faced in joining the workforce and maintaining their paid work while juggling increasing care responsibilities, most of which fell on their shoulders. She noted the care policies that should be developed or updated, and the positive impact of investing in the care economy. She presented studies conducted in a number of Arab countries that showed the development of care issues, noting the success that had resulted from those studies in Lebanon, especially the two draft laws that had been submitted as a result of those studies. She recommended adopting a holistic and inclusive approach that took into account many types of care policies, and required joint efforts from various sectors and stakeholders to achieve the desired reforms.

53. In the ensuing discussion, the representative of Jordan said that the greatest focus was on caring for children up to the age of five, and stressed the importance of also considering care policies for older persons and children after the age of six because of their impact on women's participation in the labour market. The representative of Oman discussed her country's successful experience in collaborating with the ESCWA secretariat, and expressed her hope that a national workshop would be held to discuss the results of the national study. The representative of Lebanon suggested considering sports as a field to empower women physically, intellectually and economically by creating job opportunities for them in that sector.

54. An expert from the Lebanese American University in Beirut noted the partnership with the National Commission for Lebanese Women and a draft law on parental leave. She indicated the model application of parental leave at the Lebanese American University, and the awareness campaign and research papers prepared in that context. She confirmed the continuation of the partnership with ESCWA regarding the care economy.

55. In response, the ESCWA secretariat acknowledged that there was often a greater focus on childcare than on care for older people, and stressed the importance of adopting a sector-specific approach to focus on all types of care and achieve the desired results. She said that available studies usually addressed care recipients while caregivers did not receive the necessary attention. She also noted the lack of research and knowledge on the later years of children's lives, and expressed her hope to continue research and efforts in that field. She stressed the keenness of ESCWA to focus on older people in its work in the field of social development, also from the perspective of gender equality, while taking care into account.

6. Gender-inclusive social protection for fostering women's economic empowerment
(Agenda item 8(f))

56. With reference to document [E/ESCWA/C.7/2023/7 \(Part VI\)](#), the representative of the ESCWA secretariat made a presentation on fostering women's economic empowerment through gender-inclusive social protection. She said that inclusive social protection was an effective tool to reduce poverty and address gender disparities. She noted that a large portion of the Arab population, especially women, still lacked any type of social protection, despite the slight progress in improving social protection systems. The COVID-19 pandemic had demonstrated a fundamental weakness in current social protection systems in terms of meeting women's needs, and had also highlighted deficiencies in measures related to gender disparities in roles and responsibilities.

57. She noted the challenges faced by women in the Arab region in accessing social protection systems that depended on contributions and retirement programmes, given that women relied more on social assistance owing to their exclusion from regular work. She said that maternity legislation was largely based on employer's responsibilities rather than being part of social insurance systems. Moreover, most retirement pensions were based on contributions, despite their importance in ensuring security in old age. She emphasized the importance of social protection in enhancing the economic capacity of women, and presented several recommendations for implementing an inclusive approach that took into account the various social protection needs of women and men.

58. In the ensuing discussion, the representative of the State of Palestine stressed that the reform process must begin at the level of community institutions and networks concerned with implementing social protection, given that the portfolio on women's economic empowerment in the State of Palestine was limited to the

Ministry of National Economy, which had identified a number of marginalized groups. An independent institution had been established by a presidential decision to handle the portfolio, namely the Palestinian National Economic Empowerment Institution, which was concerned with implementing specific programmes, including financial programmes allocated to marginalized groups and providing the necessary grants to support small and medium enterprises. He noted the legal reforms that had led to improving women's access to various financial resources, adding that the social security law was currently being reviewed to guarantee their rights. He stressed the need to develop a clear standardized guide on social protection systems in Arab countries, so to unify the Arab system of social protection in accordance with specific values and principles. He stressed the importance of a tool provided by the Committee on Women that identified gaps and ensured that the work of national women's machineries was in line with the principles of social justice. He stressed the necessity of disseminating the tool to all national women's machineries.

59. The representative of Oman said that there were national policies and laws for social protection that guaranteed a number of benefits for women, in addition to the social security law currently in effect, which focused on empowering women. She reviewed some programmes to empower women, such as the *Tamkeen* programme, which was launched to support women and families with limited income so as to empower them economically, and disburse social security for a period of three years to support the continuity of projects in line with the conditions under which support to families was provided.

60. The representative of Kuwait said that mechanisms had been developed under the social safety net in her country that included many programmes, such as a development programme to care for socially vulnerable groups and integrate them into society. She also noted the projects of the Ministry of Social Affairs aimed at creating channels for Kuwaiti women and supporting women's projects, the 2020 domestic violence law, and centres for protecting children and groups exposed to domestic violence of all kinds.

61. In response, the representative of the ESCWA secretariat said that the working papers set out the greatest possible number of successful practices and experiences, but it was impossible to mention them all. She added that women's economic empowerment was broader than women's participation in the labour market, and that the selected documents and titles under discussion addressed the six main trends that could hinder or enhance women's economic participation. She added that reforms must be comprehensive, so it was not enough to focus reforms on only some of those trends and neglect the rest, given that they complemented each other.

C. Date and venue of the twelfth session of the Committee on Women (Agenda item 9)

62. Participants agreed to hold the twelfth session of the Committee on Women at the United Nations House in Beirut in the last quarter of 2024, to coincide with a high-level conference that would be held on the sidelines of regional preparations to review the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action 30 years after their adoption, provided that no other member State requested to host the session, in accordance with United Nations established procedures and regulations.

D. Other matters (Agenda item 10)

63. No matters were discussed under this item.

E. Adoption of the recommendations made by the Committee on Women at its eleventh session (Agenda item 11)

64. The recommendations made at the eleventh session of the Committee on Women were presented to representatives of member States, and were reviewed and adopted as amended. The present report contains the recommendations in their final adopted form.

III. Organization of work

A. Date and venue

65. The Committee on Women held its eleventh session at the United Nations House in Beirut, on 10 and 11 October 2023. The ESCWA secretariat also offered participants the opportunity to attend virtually. The session was divided into four meetings, at which participants discussed the agenda items in their final adopted form.

B. Opening

66. The eleventh session of the Committee on Women opened at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, 10 October 2023. Ms. Maryam al-Azmi, Secretary-General of the Supreme Council for Family Affairs of Kuwait, delivered the opening speech in her capacity as the representative of the country who chaired the tenth session of the Committee on Women. She noted the collaboration between Kuwait with ESCWA over the past two years to implement the ESCWA programme plan for the advancement of women. She stressed the importance of improving the status of women in Kuwait, The Supreme Council for Family Affairs cooperated with national and local authorities to improve women's access to services and opportunities necessary to enhance their presence in the public sphere. She also stressed her country's interest in enhancing women's entrepreneurship, sharing responsibilities with men, supporting their involvement in society, and developing plans and programmes to ensure that they obtained all their national, civil, political, social and economic rights. She said that Kuwait was keeping pace with ESCWA achievements over the past two years in response to the recommendations made by the Committee on Women at its tenth session. She noted the collaboration with ESCWA on all social development files, which constituted a qualitative addition to existing work. She expressed her hope for a successful session, and for greater coordination with ESCWA in the coming period, especially on the subject of reviewing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action 30 years after their adoption.

67. Ms. Mehrinaz Elawady, Leader of the ESCWA Gender Justice, Population and Inclusive Development Cluster, delivered a statement on behalf of the ESCWA secretariat, in which she welcomed participants. She said that the eleventh session of the Committee on Women was being held at a time when the region was still struggling to restore stability and recover from successive crises that had increased the depth of inequality. She noted the ongoing conflicts that affected not only the countries concerned but also neighbouring countries, and delayed the entire region from achieving the desired prosperity. She added that the Arab region recorded the highest rates of inequality worldwide, so it was natural that gender inequality rates were also among the highest globally. She reviewed ESCWA efforts over the past two years to understand inequalities from multiple angles, with the aim of providing practical suggestions to countries to reduce them. She said that the eleventh session of the Committee would focus on the issue of women's economic empowerment as a catalyst for the prosperity of national economies, which could contribute to enhancing gender equality and addressing inequalities at all levels. She stressed the importance of creating conditions for women and girls to play their part in building societies and strengthening the Arab region.

C. Attendance

68. The session was attended by representatives of national women's machineries, ministries, and women's councils and committees from 19 ESCWA member States. Representatives of United Nations specialized agencies and programmes and of regional, international and Arab organizations participated as observers. Annex I to the present report sets out the list of participants.

D. Election of officers

69. Pursuant to article 18 of the Rules of Procedure of ESCWA, which provides that member States shall chair the subsidiary bodies of the Commission on a rotating basis, in Arabic alphabetical order as established

by the United Nations, Lebanon chaired the eleventh session. Participants elected the representative of Kuwait and of Libya as vice-chairs. The representative of Egypt was elected as Rapporteur.

E. Adoption of the agenda and proposed organization of work

70. At its first meeting, the Committee on Women adopted the provisional agenda and the proposed organization of work, as set out in documents [E/ESCWA/C.7/2023/L.1](#) and [E/ESCWA/C.7/2023/L.2](#), respectively.

F. Documents

71. Annex II to the present report sets out the documents presented to the Committee on Women at its eleventh session.

Annex I

List of participants

A. ESCWA member States

Algeria

Mr. Mohammed bin Sheikh
Minister Delegate
Deputy Ambassador of Algeria to Lebanon

Bahrain (online)

Ms. Maria Ibrahim Abdullah
Senior Specialist on Local and International
Cooperation at the Secretariat of the Supreme
Council for Women

Djibouti

Mr. Hassan Ali Rabahi
Technical Advisor to the Minister of Women and
Family Affairs
Ministry of Women and Family Affairs

Egypt (online)

Ms. Maya Morsi
President of the National Council for Women

Ms. Sherwit Ibrahim Mustafa Attia
Director of the Department of Cooperation with
Foreign Organizations as a focal point for the
Council
National Council for Women

Iraq

Ms. Yousra Karim Mohsen
Director-General of the Iraqi Women's
Empowerment Department
Secretariat of the Council of Ministers

Ms. Maha Muayad Najib al-Abri
Third secretary
Embassy of Iraq to Lebanon

Jordan

Mr. Hamdi al-Hayasat
Administrative Attaché at the Embassy of Jordan
to Lebanon

Online

Ms. Maha Ali
Secretary-General of the Jordanian National
Commission for Women's Affairs

Ms. Amal Haddadin
Legal Consultant
Jordanian National Commission for Women's
Affairs

Ms. Hoda Ayesheh
National Coordinator of the Women's Economic
Empowerment Plan in Jordan
Jordanian National Commission for Women's
Affairs

Ms. Nisreen Saad
Jordanian National Commission for Women's
Affairs

Kuwait

Mrs. Maryam Saud al-Azmi
Secretary-General of the Supreme Council for
Family Affairs

Ms. Taliyah Abdullah al-Shatti
Head of the International Affairs Department
External Relations Management

Mr. Habib Rashid al-Duwailah
Second Secretary
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Lebanon

Ms. Claudine Aoun
President of the National Commission for
Lebanese Women

Ms. Randa Abboud, Notary Public
Secretary
National Commission for Lebanese Women

Ms. Micheline Elias Massad
Executive Director
National Commission for Lebanese Women

Lebanon (continued)

Ms. Joanna Sfeir
Media and Communication Officer
National Commission for Lebanese Women

Ms. Rita al-Qazzi
Information Management Officer
National Commission for Lebanese Women

Mauritania

Ms. Umm Kulthum Hamidino
Technical Advisor in Charge of Gender
Ministry of Social Work, Childhood and Family

Morocco

Mr. Lahcen Badri
Deputy Ambassador of Morocco to Lebanon

Mr. Zakaria Fasal
Multilateral Cooperation Advisor
Embassy of Morocco to Lebanon

Online

Ms. Aisha Ishbihar
Head of the Women's Initiatives Support
Department
Ministry of Solidarity, Social Inclusion and Family

Oman (online)

Ms. Jamila bint Salem bin Mabkhout Jadad
Assistant Director-General of the General
Directorate of Family Development
Ministry of Social Development

Ms. Sheikha bint Saeed bin Nasser al-Taiwaniya
Director of the Department of Social Development
Ministry of Social Development

State of Palestine (online)

Ms. Amal Hamad
Minister of Women's Affairs
Ministry of Women's Affairs

Mr. Ismail Muhammad Ismail Hammad
Expert in International Human Rights Law and
International Humanitarian Law
Ministry of Women's Affairs

Ms. Nisreen Ali Muhammad Abu Kishk
Director of the Gender Equality Policy Department
Ministry of Women's Affairs

State of Qatar (online)

Ms. Sheikha bint Jassim al-Thani
Assistant Undersecretary for Family Affairs
Ministry of Social Development and Family

Ms. Fatima Mohammed al-Nuaimi
Director of the Family Empowerment Department
Ministry of Social Development and Family

Saudi Arabia (online)

Ms. Maymouna Al Khalil
Secretary-General of the Family Affairs Council
Ministry of Human Resources and Social
Development

Ms. Lana bint Saeed
Director of the Women's Department at the Family
Affairs Council
Ministry of Human Resources and Social
Development

Ms. Alanoud al-Hanawi
Family Affairs Council
Ministry of Human Resources and Social
Development

Somalia

Ms. Fatima Muhammad Ali
Director of the Family and Children's Rights
Department
Ministry of Women and Human Rights
Development

Sudan

Ms. Sarah Idris
Chargé d'affaires
Embassy of the Sudan to Lebanon

Syrian Arab Republic (online)

Ms. Samar al-Sibai
Head of the Syrian Commission for Family and
Population Affairs

Syrian Arab Republic (online) (continued)

Ms. Ruba Mirza
Member of the Commission's Board of Directors

Ms. Nazira Daoud
Member of the Commission's Board of Directors

Yemen

Ms. Shafiq Saeed Abdo
Head of the Women National Committee

B. United Nations organizations

World Food Programme (online)

Ms. Amina Tarraf

Ms. Maryam Atallah

UN-Women (online)

Ms. Simone Oluoch-Olunya

C. International and regional organizations

Arab Women Organization

Ms. Noura Osama
Director of Planning and Programmes

Westminster Foundation for Democracy

Ms. Hasnaa Mansour
Regional representative in Lebanon

Equality Now

Ms. Dima Dabbous
Regional Representative

Lebanese American University

Ms. Myriam Sfeir
Director of the Arab Institute for Women

Online

Ms. Early Taylor
Programme Director for the Middle East and North
Africa

Annex II

List of documents

Title	Item	Symbol
Information note		E/ESCWA/C.7/2023/INF.1
Provisional agenda and annotations	3	E/ESCWA/C.7/2023/L.1
Organization of work	3	E/ESCWA/C.7/2023/L.2
Implementation of activities on women's issues under the ESCWA programme plan and of recommendations made by the Committee at its tenth session	4	E/ESCWA/C.7/2023/3
Technical cooperation activities	5	E/ESCWA/C.7/2023/4
Supporting the Subcommittee on Gender Equality and the Sustainable Development Goals	6	E/ESCWA/C.7/2023/5
National action to implement the recommendations made by the Committee on Women at its tenth session	7	E/ESCWA/C.7/2023/6
Women's economic empowerment as a catalyst for prosperous national economies	8	E/ESCWA/C.7/2023/7
Legislative reforms for women's economic empowerment in the Arab region	8 (a)	E/ESCWA/C.7/2023/7(Part I)
Safe, accessible, efficient and affordable transport systems as enablers of women's economic empowerment	8 (b)	E/ESCWA/C.7/2023/7(Part II)
Addressing sexual harassment in the public sphere	8 (c)	E/ESCWA/C.7/2023/7(Part III)
Access to land, property and immovable assets and women's entrepreneurship	8 (d)	E/ESCWA/C.7/2023/7(Part IV)
Advancing care policies in Arab countries	8 (e)	E/ESCWA/C.7/2023/7(Part V)
Gender-inclusive social protection for fostering women's economic empowerment	8 (f)	E/ESCWA/C.7/2023/7(Part VI)
List of documents		E/ESCWA/C.7/2023/INF.2