



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations

FAO Reg

INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON
**INNOVATION
IN AGRI-FOOD
SYSTEMS**
TO ACHIEVE SDGs

THURSDAY INNOVATION ZOOMINAR SERIES



Role of Private Sector In the Use of Innovation & Technology to Support Smallholders Face COVID-19 Disruptive Impact

18 June 2020

Background

As the world is still struggling to fight the COVID-19 pandemic and its disruptive impact on agricultural value chain, the private sector and farmers in the Arab region are facing burdens on how to continue delivering along the agricultural value chain and ensure the continuity of supplies to consumers, for sustaining their livelihoods, from farm to fork. The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) leads on this Zoominar session to highlight the role of the private sector in the use of innovation and technology and the potential role of the public-private partnership and regional cooperation in reaching out to smallholders and building their resilience to crises, disasters and COVID-19 pandemic.

The Zoominar will address the following questions:

1. What are the elements of success of technology, innovation and digitization initiatives under COVID-19?
2. What policies and strategies are needed to strengthen private-public partnership and supporting innovation and technology adoption?
3. What framework is needed to strengthen regional cross border collaboration in agri-food system innovation and technology?

Opening Remarks

- **Abdessalam OuldAhmed**, Assistant Director General and Regional Representative for the Near East and North Africa, FAO.
- **Roula Majdalani**, *Cluster Leader, Climate Change and Natural Resources Sustainability Cluster – UN ESCWA.*
- **Beth Bechdol**, *Deputy Director General – FAO.*

Facilitation: **Reem Nejdawi**, *Project Coordinator, Climate change and Natural Resources Sustainability Cluster –UN-ESCWA.*

Speakers

- **Nadine El Khoury**, *Chief Operating Officer – Robinson Agri.*
- **Raphael Debbane**, *President of the Agricultural Committee – Federation of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture in Lebanon.*
- **Rafiq El Alami**, *Head of Digital Learning & Digital 4 Research Labs – Mohammed VI Polytechnic University, Morocco and CEO - Co-Founder CityMall.ma.*
- **Gregory Arzumanian** - *Founder and CEO of FCE Group AG and co-founder of 1000Ecofarms, LLC (MD, USA).*
- **Kareem Hassan**, *Executive Director – ESCWA Technology Center.*
- **Islam Mamoun**, *Chief Business Officer – E-Finance, Egypt.*

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