



SOUTH MED SOCIAL DIALOGUE

Women's Charter

Social Dialogue Project in
Southern Mediterranean
Countries



Project funded by the
EUROPEAN UNION





**Co-funded by
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This publication has been produced with the financial assistance of the European Union. The contents of this document are the sole responsibility of the SOLID secretariat and can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the position of the European Union or the Programme management structure.

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Introduction

- The world in general, and the world of work in particular, are still facing and suffering from the impacts of a health epidemic caused by a pandemic that swept the entire world, affecting people's livelihoods, as the health crisis left major social and economic crises, which revealed many imbalances in the Arab labor market and resulted in an unprecedented loss of jobs. An estimated 8.8% of total working hours were lost for the full year 2020. This is equivalent to the number of hours worked in one year by 255 million full-time workers. This is nearly four times the number lost during the 2009 global financial crisis. While this crisis affects us all, not everyone is affected in the same way. The effects of COVID-19 are not equal between the sexes. The epidemic has revealed the unequal impact of the crisis in terms of woman's rights and distribution of care work.
- The social partners in the southern Mediterranean: the impacts of COVID-19 are not gender neutral. The crisis in terms of the position of women in the labor market and the distribution of care work is witnessed. We know that the world has entered the current crisis with an equality deficit, particularly with regard to women in the labor market: the global gender gap in labor force participation remains estimated at 27% in 2019. The gender pay gap continues to be around 20% nationwide; and 60% of the world's population cannot count on ensuring social protection.
- The rate of participation of Arab women in the labor market reached 18.4%, which is the lowest rate in the world compared to the global average of 48%. However, men's labor force participation rates exceed 77%, against the global average of 75%. The presence of women in managerial positions is also low in Arab countries, as only 11 percent of them hold managerial positions, compared to the global average of 27.1%¹. Women lost nearly \$800 billion in income during the pandemic – the gross domestic product of about 98 countries, young women and women who are exposed to racism, women migrant workers, and indigenous women.
- Women in the informal economy - including domestic workers - as well as women with disabilities, who were extremely vulnerable even before the current crisis, have been particularly hard hit by the pandemic due to inadequate levels of worker protections. Women already perform three times more unpaid care work than men with the crisis, the uneven distribution of increased care demands continued to disproportionately affect women². In addition to the care dimension, in the Southern Mediterranean region, there is also a rise in domestic violence, particularly due to the lockdown measures, as well as a rise in incidents of gender-based violence and harassment against workers in frontline sectors, such as food and retail, health, care services, education and hygiene; and the increase in remote work carries with it the risk of a corresponding increase in "cyberbullying."
- In addition, although women were most affected by the repercussions of the economic crisis, many opinion polls and studies indicated that the rate of economic violence against women has worsened in all its manifestations, such as inheritance, financial management, and economic empowerment to confront the pandemic and maintain the jobs they occupy.
- Globally, women have been disproportionately affected in terms of job losses between 2019 and 2020. Employment of women decreased by 4.2%, representing a decline of 54 million jobs, while employment of men decreased by 3%, or 60 million jobs. According to the latest ILO estimates, there were 13 million fewer women in employment in 2021 than in 2019 (while men's

employment recovered to 2019 levels). If the observed data in 2022 confirm these estimates, only 43.2 % of women of working age in the world were employed in 2021 compared to 68.6% of men of the age of work which means that in general women were 25.4% less likely to work than men. This scenario indicates that the working life of women from likely to decrease moreover a long period unless appropriate measures are taken.

- The Arab region suffered from the lowest rate in the world for women's participation in the labor market before the pandemic, as the regional average reached 27%, according to World Bank data. However, the situation subsequently worsened, according to a report issued by ILO. According to the report, Arab countries suffer from the second largest decline in the number of working women after the continents of North and South America, as the percentage among women in Arab countries reached 4.1%, compared to 1.8 % among men between 2019 and 2020. "The disproportionate job losses incurred by women during COVID-19 will continue in the near future," the report states. Estimates of ILO for this year also indicate that the employment-to-population ratio for women will remain at only 14.3%, compared to 70.8% for men.³

Urgent and long-term gender-responsive policies are needed. These policies include pro-employment and gender-sensitive macroeconomic frameworks, including financial, monetary, industrial, sectoral and inclusive labor market policies. The social partners have a pivotal role in addressing these economic challenges through comprehensive social dialogue, strengthening collective negotiations and participating in the development of public policies.

1 According to data released by the International Labour Organization in its 2020 report on gender equality and non-discrimination.

2 According to the International Labor Organization 2020 report, Unpaid childcare work causes women to spend about five times more hours than men on unpaid care work.

3 World Bank 2020 report data.

4 Unpaid work is an everyday feature of everyone's life, in all families and societies. Its role in supporting the well-being of individuals, families and communities is indisputable. It can take the form of goods and services provided within households and households, or provided to others through volunteer work or other unpaid activities. Unpaid work remains invisible, both in politics and in statistics. However, their importance and the need to understand their nature and role are increasingly recognized. One reflection of this was the SDGs' inclusion of a target to value and value unpaid care and domestic work (Target 5.4) under Goal 5 on gender equality. In setting this goal, the 2030 Agenda aims to address persistent gender inequalities in paid and unpaid work, as a necessary foundation for inclusive growth and development.





Claiming a new social contract that takes into account the perspective of social type

- It seems evident that the current social contract is no longer working effectively for the benefit of all parties as a charter for cooperative and beneficial living. This revealed the effects of COVID-19, as well as severe economic disparities as a result of uneven market-based development. There was an urgent need to establish a new social contract centered on promoting and protecting the health and human rights of workers and their families and securing a sustainable future for the planet, as well as providing decent working conditions for all groups the quality of services, the freedom to make their own fateful decisions, the promotion of transparency, the provision of more inclusive and improved economic opportunities for all, and the promotion of political participation in the decision-making process, while ensuring that these changes are achieved with the cooperation of stakeholders and the parties involved in achieving reforms that must be quick and effective to meet the needs and aspirations of all parties.

- ***Claiming social partners in the southern Mediterranean: The need to adopt a new social contract, rooted in the gender equality agenda, for recovery and resilience:***

1. Jobs: Climate-friendly jobs with a fair transition. Investments in the care economy are critical, providing millions of new jobs, decent jobs and the opportunity to formalize existing informal care jobs.

2. As stated in the ILO Centenary Declaration on the rights and protection of all workers without discrimination, including occupational health and safety.

3. Wages: Adopt a minimum living wage, set through statutory processes or collective bargaining, as set out in the ILO Centenary Declaration.

4. Universal Social Protection: Social protection for all, with a global fund for social protection for the poorest countries.

5. Equality: income equality - with a minimum income for those not working - and gender and race equality. Eliminating gender-based violence and harassment is a non-negotiable matter in the context of achieving gender equality in the labor market

6. Inclusiveness: a peaceful world and a just and rights-based development model achieved through sustainable development goals and multilateral reform.

7. The economist: It is a human right and one of the main pillars of UN Women to expand economic opportunities.

8. Equity and providing equal opportunities for all individuals in many different fields to enhance capacity building of all segments of society and reduce inequality and lack.



- ***Based on it, he invites the social partners in the SOLiD Project 2:***

1. A new social contract, rooted in a comprehensive gender transformation agenda for recovery and resilience, aligned with SDG 8 and SDG 5 and based on strong labor market institutions alongside social dialogue and collective bargaining

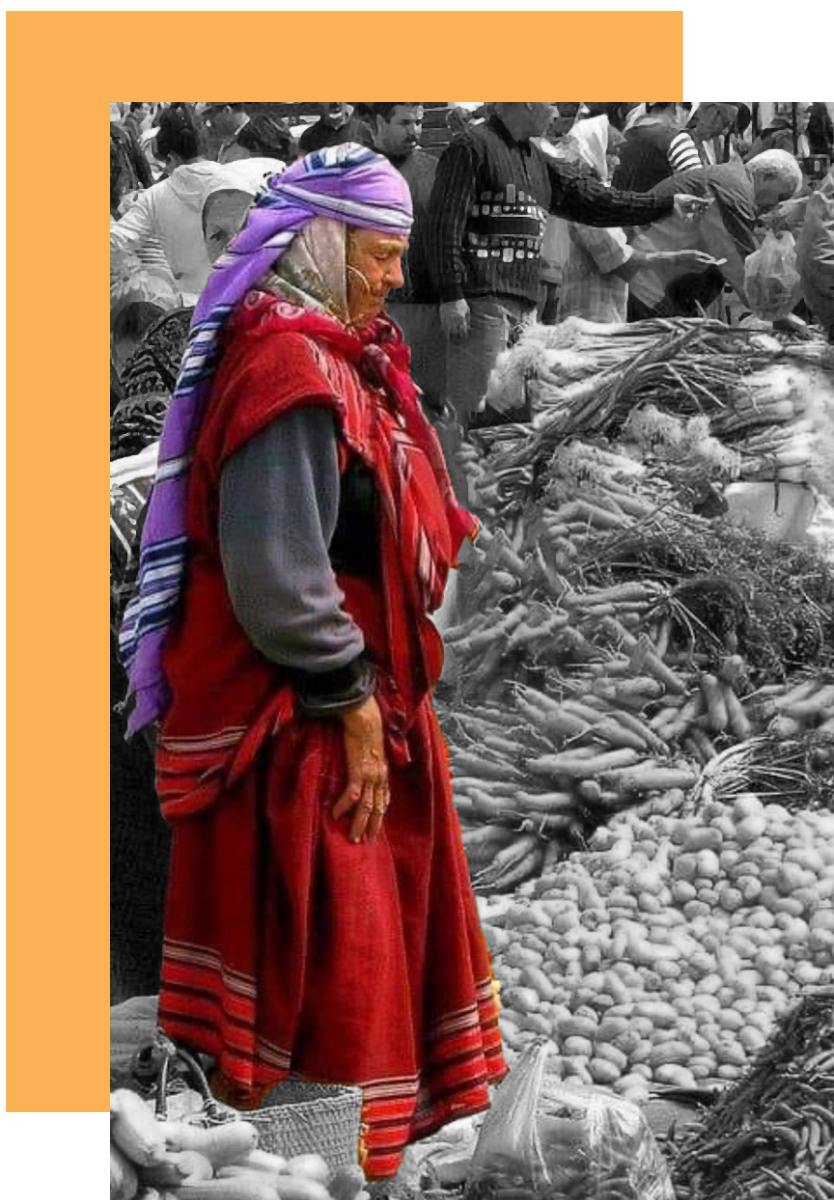
2. In this regard, the social partners in the SOLiD project 2 That the ratification of Convention No. 190 on the elimination of violence against women is at the core of the demands and followed by the necessary legislative change, in addition to combating domestic violence as a priority. In addition, the position of women in leadership is more important than ever. Women in all their diversity represent a powerful force for change on all levels and in promoting collective negotiations with a comprehensive view to meet the challenges and offer alternatives to achieve the goals of sustainable development.

3. Adopt pro-employment and gender-sensitive macroeconomic frameworks, including financial, monetary, industrial, sectoral and inclusive labor market policies. Strengthen solidarity between all parties, with debt relief and the development of financing channels and tax systems, is essential to enable countries to put these things into practice.

4. A multi-pronged approach to dismantle traditional and persistent structural barriers at the intersections of gender, ethnicity, gender, immigrants, indigenous peoples, and people with disabilities in order to meet the needs of those already left behind.

5. Expand universal social protection systems. While options are possible for many countries, where political will alone appears to be the real determinant, this is not the case for the poorest countries. The proposal of the UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights to establish a global social protection fund is critical to support the implementation of social protection floors in this regard.

6. Support equality and combat vulnerability, so that investments remain in quality public welfare services and infrastructure, and promote equal pay for equal work the value, and the introduction of a minimum living wage with stronger collective bargaining, are the preconditions for gender equality, as well as education, skills training and lifelong learning as measures to integrate youth into the labor market.







Building a care economy

- One of the most important demands of the representatives of the social partners within the framework of the SOL-ID 2 project to promote social dialogue in the six targeted countries in the southern Mediterranean is to work on a the new social contract: a target to globally create 575 million new jobs by 2030 and formalize at least 1 billion informal workers, representing half of the total global informal economy. The value of family care and unpaid domestic work is estimated at about 10% to 39% of the gross domestic product in most countries, which deprives economic sectors such as manufacturing, trade, or transportation from the contribution of a large part of the workforce as a result of her unpaid work. Investing in the care economy is at the heart of these demands for job creation⁴, including the formalization of care workers in the informal economy. As noted by the United Nations Secretary-General, about 269 million new jobs could be created by 2030 if investments in education, health and social work double as demographics shift, with many countries and a strong care economy is built through adequate public investment in care services and the adoption of friendly policies. The family can enable women to participate effectively in the workforce while promoting a more equitable sharing of unpaid care responsibilities.

- By way of illustration, unpaid care work is very unevenly distributed. Women in the region spend an average of 17 to 34 hours per week in unpaid care work, while men spend more than 1-5 hours, depending on each country. The ratio of time spent by women compared to men in Jordan is the most uneven, recording 1:19, followed by Egypt with a ratio of 1:12, then Palestine with a ratio of 1:7 and Tun-

sia with a ratio of 1:6. Women spend two-thirds to three-quarters of the time they spend in unpaid care work in indirect care work (domestic work), which confirms the importance of access to services, technology and home markets in reducing the burden of this type of work.

- Generally in the countries of the Arab region, married women spend about twice as much time in unpaid direct care work as single women, and they spend at least seven times more time in direct care work. There were, however, differences across countries, with the lowest number of hours spent in unpaid care for women in Tunisia, which may partly be due to higher rates of enrollment in early childhood care and education, compared to Jordan and Egypt. It may also reflect the greater part of the time that Palestinian women spend in unpaid care, specifically direct care.

- Investing in care, health, education, child and elderly care and other social welfare services, can create millions of new decent jobs for women and enable women to participate effectively in the national economy. But to achieve this, education services must be available and accessible if we are to build societies based on justice, inclusiveness and dignity. It also calls for defining care responsibilities and adopting flexible work arrangements on a gender-neutral basis. She calls for this to be supported through strong and inclusive collective bargaining in which women participate at the national, sectoral and workplace levels, where women should have a role more prominent. Too many care workers - two-thirds of the global care workforce are women - remain trapped in low-paying, precarious and informal jobs. Jobs must be decent, with working conditions that are safe and adequately remunerated - including equal pay for work of equal value and covered by social protection.



- The epidemic has led to the deterioration of the welfare economy and the deprivation of life coverage and social protection. Social partners in the SOLiD project 2 seek to guarantee workers' rights in care who, in the case of domestic work, for example, are often immigrant women and minorities; ensuring that informal care work is formalized. Re-evaluating care work to ensure it is paid for and promoting professionalism is a necessity.
- Economic care is of utmost importance to ensure decent jobs. Everyone needs social partners to prioritize it the course of social negotiation and its operational plans. Although countries in the region have public policies and services - of varying coverage - that implicitly address the recognition and redistribution of unpaid care work, these policies and services are largely uncoordinated and fall under the jurisdiction of different ministries, leading to serious gaps in their legal and effective coverage. Therefore, adopting a coordinated national care economy strategy is the first step. Past policy analyzes conducted by UN Women have highlighted that such national strategies must be based on the guiding principle of equality, which entails equality in the provision of care - by sharing responsibility between women and men and focusing on the interrelated issues of quality-of-care services and quality of work in the sector care⁵.
- ***Social partners in the Solid project 2 include topics and issues for trade union agendas: Employers and civil society in the southern Mediterranean include:***
 - Providing tools to measure unpaid care work: Tools and research are essential to help implement public policies that improve women's lives and to measure unpaid care work. However, measurements must be context-specific to capture the multiple circumstances behind women's unpaid care work, and comparability of data across countries is essential.
 - Recognition of unpaid care work at the national policy level: States have a role to play in encouraging a more equitable distribution of unpaid care work at the household level. Common flexible work schedules are necessary to encourage more equal distribution of unpaid care work at the household level and to help women find a better balance between work and life, while breaking ingrained perceptions and initiating a paradigm shift in the organizational structure.
 - Strategies and policies addressing unpaid care work at the community level to promote effective change in attitudes towards unpaid care work, including visual and audio strategies that emphasize the role of media and programs as possible avenues for change.
- Unpaid care as a global issue affecting women regardless of their levels of education, income or level of development worldwide. Although some countries have made great strides in recognizing, reducing and redistributing unpaid care work, the bulk of the burden still falls on women.

⁵ Policy Brief: Women's Progress Report in the Arab Countries 2020.

⁶ Regional Action Plan to Address Violence Against Women in the Middle East and North Africa Region, World Bank, 2020.



- ***Demands social partners in the Solid project 2 in Southern Mediterranean countries:***

1. the need to reduce care economy frameworks based on recognition and redistribution of unpaid care work; working towards bonuses for care work and more decent jobs for them; and ensuring representation of care workers through collective bargaining and social dialogue.

2. Increase public investments at appropriate levels of national GDP in the care economy, creating millions of new decent jobs for women, enabling women to participate effectively in the broader economy, and ensuring universal access to quality public health, care and education services.

3. Adopt strong gender-sensitive public policies and active labor market policies, as well as family-friendly workplace policies, which incentivize more equitable sharing of family and other caring responsibilities and promote flexible working arrangements on a gender-neutral basis. To this end, awareness campaigns are essential to combat patriarchy and address gender norms and stereotypes.

4. Adopting a structured care economy to combat systemic discrimination and occupa-

tional segregation, as care jobs must be formal and decent, with safe working conditions, and free from violence and harassment with adequate remuneration, including equal pay for work of equal value, and covered by social protection.

5. Measures need to be taken to re-evaluate care work and recognize its social and economic contribution by promoting professionalization and avoiding skills loss.

6. A stronger role for women in collective bargaining, reflected in women's participation in teams for negotiations for collective inclusion of gender equality provisions

7. Organizing care workers as a priority within the political agendas and union executive plans.

8. Involving the state and the private sector in providing affordable care and in making flexible working arrangements to ensure that the provision of care services is in line with the needs of employers.

9. Facilitate social dialogue, by supporting the establishment of organizations that represent the interests of workers and employers to guarantee policies and programs to meet with emerging needs and conditions.







Eliminate gender-based violence and harassment in the world of work

- With the historic adoption of International Labor Organization Convention No. 190 and Recommendation 206 in June 2019. Considering that these tools enshrine the right of every individual to a world of work free from violence and harassment, including gender-based violence and harassment. The adoption of these ILO tools is the result of many years of lobbying, advocacy and campaigning by women in unions and organizations of civil society.
 - The pandemic and associated emergency measures have caused an increase in gender-based violence and harassment, including domestic violence, in the form of physical, psychological and economic abuse. This has devastating effects on women's lives and leads to negative economic consequences for women's livelihoods (impeding their ability to access, maintain and develop paid work). So, failing to address violence and harassment in the world of work also carries economic costs, so ratifying the Convention is becoming increasingly important. C190, its effective implementation and accompanying Recommendation R206 are more urgent than ever.
 - Women and girls in the Middle East and North Africa region have been shown to be particularly vulnerable to various forms of risk of violence against women. At least 40% of women in the region have experienced physical or sexual violence during their lifetime. COVID-19 has exacerbated the risks of violence against women, and affected survivors' access to services. The challenges are exacerbated in environments of fragility and conflict, which leads to higher levels of violence against women – including sexual violence and forced marriage – and disruptions to service delivery. In addition to the political and economic violence that was exacerbated by the Corona pandemic and reduced job opportunities. Thus, the percentage of women in leadership positions in the executive councils of private and public institutions declined, despite their pioneering role in confronting the epidemic and the economic and social challenges. At the end of the year 2021, the number of countries headed by a woman has not exceeded the limit of the government.
 - Although some improvements have been achieved on the political and legal fronts, there are still major obstacles hindering effective prevention and response to violence against women, such as: existing gaps in laws and policies, weak institutional capacities in countries of the region, and insufficient protection and services available to victims. While most governments have signed international human rights treaties and agreements, and announced steps to translate commitments into national legislation, strategies and action plans, progress in practice has been slow and inconsistent. Discriminatory social norms and behaviors remain a major obstacle for survivors of, and those at risk of, violence against women.⁶
 - On this basis, with many activities to raise awareness, pressure and advocacy campaigns, and strategic alliances with civil society organizations, women's rights organizations and women's movements to make progress in ratification.
- ***The recommendations to the social partners in the Solid project 2***
 1. Treating the workers in that institution with dignity and respect, and ensuring that the worker is safe from harassment at work. Ensuring that harassment in all its forms is contrary to the high standards of conduct imposed by the law and the applicable regulations that are in line with international labor rights standards,
 2. Waiver of penalties and disciplinary measures in the event of breach of obligations and responsibilities prescribed by law.
 3. Impose an obligation on the parties to the contractual relationship to observe the basic rules and to adopt respectful behavior towards each other and to comply with all workers to the highest possible standards of behavior and to respect their dignity and personal safety,



4. Everyone is aware of the obligation to take responsibility for their actions and that it is the responsibility of managers and persons exercising an administrative function to create and maintain a work environment free of harassment. and take effective and timely protection measures.

5. Supporting the presence of qualified women in decision-making positions in both the public and private sectors, in addition to trade union movements, employers' organizations and civil society components.

6. Fostering the entrepreneurial spirit of women, easing barriers and contributing to an enabling environment to work in an atmosphere against all methods of violence against women.

7. Taking into account the recommendations for establishing a support line by representatives of the union employers and civil society. Those who have training and experience in dealing with victims of sexual harassment and assault, and also have a comprehensive knowledge of internal procedures.

Social partners in the Solid project2 aim to

- Verify the union's policies regarding combating sexual harassment in the workplace and its directives in this regard.
- Adoption of the application "Tawq" developed by ATUC as a tool to combat harassment in the workplace
- Ensure that all union representatives are trained to deal with sexual harassment cases.

- Negotiating effective policies with employers.
- Ensure that policies are regularly reviewed and monitored.
- Work with other unions and organizations

Social partners in the Solid project 2 are invited to

1. The need to ratify the agreement C190 recommendation R206 and implementing them effectively and adopting a multi-pronged approach in implementation at the national level. Wide ratification of Convention No. 190, reforms in national laws and policies, adoption of workplace policies and inclusion of related measures in collective bargaining agreements, in line with provisions in Convention No. 190 and recommendation 206.

2. Adopting and adopting the "Tawq" application in all workplaces, and adopting promotional campaigns to facilitate its dissemination in the workplace.

3. Successfully addressing violence against women in Southern Mediterranean countries requires action on five axes:

- Legal reforms:
- Clear institutional capabilities and responsibilities
- Safe and confidential access to justice
- Survivor-centered service delivery
- Leverage social norms and change behavior





Upholding gender equality and inclusion for peace and democracy

- Equality and inclusion are at the heart of peace, democracy and advocacy. The new social project is inclusive of all human rights. Violations of rights and freedoms in the field of human rights and work in the Arab region were classified among the areas according to the annual report of ITUC. Since we cannot talk about the implementation of international conventions calling for combating violence or equality and non-discrimination, women still face threats against their lives just because they are women. The need to contribute to a truly multilateral and inclusive system where women have a crucial role to play in maintaining and promoting peace and security and trying to narrow the gender gap that is intrinsically linked to sustainable development is urgent.

- The Arab States have the second largest gender gap in the world after South Asia, according to the Gender Development Index (GDI) where women lag behind in income and work participation. Only one in five women participate in the labor force, which is the lowest ratio globally. As a direct result of gender inequality, women and girls in Arab countries have achieved a lower rate of human development at 14.4% than men over the past 20 years.

- ***Social partners in the Solid project² focus on:***

1. All social partners in the southern Mediterranean towards shaping a world free from all forms of discrimination on the basis of sex, class, ideology, and religion

2. Demand the need to ratify governments in southern Mediterranean countries in the effective implementation of ILO Convention No. 111;

3. It reaffirms the pivotal importance for national and regional social dialogue engaging in a rights-based development model with a renewed multilateral system;

4. The social partners insist on the need to ensure the equal participation of women, their full participation in all efforts to maintain and

enhance peace and security, including peace negotiations and peace processes.

5. Advocates for legal reforms, in accordance with legislation and international treaties dealing with gender equality (such as: the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)⁷.

6. Improving the capacity of social services - to prevent and respond to gender-based violence and other gender-related issues.

7. Provides training courses for social services and law enforcement personnel on gender awareness.

8. Raise awareness of gender equality through campaigns and in educational curricula and support to address gender-based discrimination.

9. Promoting work environments that meet the needs of both genders and the family, by involving and networking all stakeholders, including the media, the private sector, religious leaders, and others.

10. Activating laws that guarantee gender equality at the economic, social and political levels, and working to establish them in some southern countries that lack such legislation.





❖ The lack of equal pay for work of equal value is one of the major factors holding back fair and inclusive labor markets, with the gender pay gap remaining at around 20 percent globally. At the level of the Arab region, gender inequality in wages still exists, as 50 percent of women work today for paid wages or salary, which is higher than 40 percent in the nineties of the last century, but women earn from 10 to 30 from the man for the same work. The gender pay gap reveals the different realities facing women and men in their professional lives. Women, on average, earn less than men. The gender wage gap, expressed in the ratio of female wages to male wages, results from wage discrimination, occupational segregation, and bias against female workers. The gender wage gap occurs in almost all occupations and industries. Professions that are almost entirely male-dominated guarantee wages such as industry and construction, which are often higher than wages for professions that consist mostly of female workers, such as agriculture. Out of 22 Arab countries, five of them have a law stipulating equal pay for females and males for work of equal value. These countries are Algeria, the Comoros, Djibouti, Libya and Morocco, and by studying the behavior of the Arab countries, it becomes clear that the gaps exist almost and large in favor of men in all professions.⁸

❖ SDG 8 enshrines equal pay among its targets, and affirms that a fair and inclusive world of work is a precondition for achieving gender equality and overall societal progress (SDG 5). Lower pay for women – coupled with their greater focus in part-time, informal and casual work Sedentary work as well as job interruptions or job loss due to their disproportionate share of unpaid care work – lead to an increased risk of women's vulnerability to poverty, especially now in crises Insufficient or even non-existent social security, which makes them particularly vulnerable in old age. Gender

wage gaps depend on many causes and factors.

❖ At the level of the legal framework in countries in terms of promoting, implementing and monitoring gender equality in employment and economic benefits through the degree of achievement that ranges between 0 and 100, the available data indicated that the degree of achievement in Iraq was 60, which is the highest achievement rate among the Arab countries, followed by Lebanon 50, the State of Palestine 40, Jordan 20, and the United Arab Emirates has the lowest achievement score of 10. Deficiencies in work-life balance with



gender differences in the division of family responsibilities (which affect career progression) are also considered for woman, her chances of obtaining paid employment, and her salary prospects). It is also the reason for the lack of representation of women in administrative positions⁹.

❖ In terms of representation of Arab women in the political decision-making process, it is still increasing, but it is far from equal. The proportion of women in parliament has more than quadrupled since 2000; However, it is still less than 20 percent in the region, and the share of women in Cabinet is still below 20 percent.¹⁰. Across the Arab region, men outnumber women in decision-making positions. This applies to all sectors, both public and private, and in-

⁷ Twenty Arab countries, except for Sudan and Somalia, have ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

⁸ Arab Report on the Gender Gap 2020, Gender Equality and the Sustainable Development Goals, ESCWA.

⁹ The proportion of women in managerial positions worldwide has increased only slightly over the past two decades, from 25.3 percent in 2000 to 28.3 percent in 2019. It remained unchanged from 2019 to 2020, the first year without an increase since 2013. According to the International Labor Organization, it will take more than 140 years to achieve gender parity in managerial positions at the current rate of progress. wage gap

cludes elected officials at all levels, the judiciary, the executive branch of government, the private sector, chief executives, board members, senior officials and directors.¹¹

❖ Intersectional discrimination exacerbates the pay gap among women belonging to disadvantaged groups, such as immigrant women, ethnic minority women, women with disabilities, and older women. The commitment to gender equality at work has never been more stringent. There is a set of possible measures depending on the wage gaps, which are comprehensive labor market policies, measures aimed at formalizing informal work and measures that address occupational segregation and discrimination as valid in reducing gender wage gaps, as well as adopting a minimum wage. In this regard, legal minimum living wages, together with collective bargaining, are essential to combating poverty along with comprehensive social protection systems and floors in line with international labor standards, minimum income and living wages are essential to lifting women out of the informal economy.

❖ ***Social partners in the Solid project² are invited to:***

1. The need to keep pace with the global target of creating 575 million new decent jobs by 2030 and formalizing 1 billion informal workers the majority of whom are women.

2. Emphasis on equal pay and anti-discrimination legislation, with effective implementation and accessibility remedy, in line with international labor standards such as ILO Conventions No. 100 and 111, to ensure equal treatment of excluded groups of workers, such as immigrant women, indigenous women, women of color and women with disabilities - groups for which wage gaps increase.

3. Demand transparent legislation as well as accessible measures and data on wage levels

for all categories of employment disaggregated by sex.

4. Training, recruitment and placement of women in underrepresented sectors and jobs (e.g. STEM) in order to address gender-based horizontal and vertical occupational segregation across sectors and job categories.

5. Eliminate sexual violence and harassment at work and effectively ratify and implement ILO Conventions Nos. 190 and 206

6. Increase public investment in the care sector and adopt family-friendly policies to support the reconciliation of work and family responsibilities

7. Defining the minimum wage which has been determined through legal procedures or collective bargaining, as set forth in the ILO Centenary Declaration.

8. Strengthen appropriate comprehensive social protection systems and floors in line with ILO Convention No. 102 and Recommendation 202.²¹

9. Emphasize the centrality of collective bargaining and social dialogue to end the gender pay gap in the southern Mediterranean.



¹⁰ Arab Gender Gap Report 2020, *ibid*.

¹¹ Eight Arab countries worked to appoint women a year after actually obtaining the right to vote, that is, without a time difference between directly granting the right to run for elections and being appointed to the position, and they are: the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Tunisia, Algeria, Sudan, Iraq, and Oman and the State of Palestine. However, in other countries, the time lag between granting women the right to run for office and their appointment exceeded 20 years. In high government positions, women's representation in political decision-making continues to rise slowly, but the percentage of women ministers reached its highest level at 7.20 percent (812 women ministers out of 3,922 ministers in 2019), a difference of 4.2 percentage points more than in 2017. See: Report Arab, *ibid*.



Towards comprehensive social protection systems that are sensitive to the gender perspective

❖ Social protection policies play a fundamental role in realizing the right to social security for all, alleviating poverty and inequality, and supporting inclusive growth. Well-designed social protection policies and programs can mitigate social impacts, reduce poverty and inequality, build inclusive societies and contribute to leaving no one behind. Also, these programs and systems adapted to the status of women would meet the needs of Arab women and address the vulnerabilities that they may face, especially since these programs are of great importance in social inclusion.

❖ In the Southern Mediterranean region, social protection systems are distinguished by the fact that two out of three people, the poorest five of the population, receive transfers to support income. Contribution-based systems face greater challenges in coverage, as social insurance covers only a third of the workforce in the region. High income earners and public sector workers are often covered. Subsidies on energy and food, whether comprehensive or partial, are also the focus of the social contract, taking into account reforms related to subsidies to alleviate segments of society. The Arab countries have varied in their programs in this regard, under different names, and it is believed that these protection systems are fragmented and lack a holistic approach, which sometimes suffers from a lack of coordination within institutions and actors, as well as weaknesses related to administrative and information systems.¹²

❖ And in Southern Mediterranean countries, about 40 percent of the population benefits from at least one cash social protection benefit. Although from other aspects of social protection, pension coverage is more developed, the scope of benefiting from it is limited and estimated at 24 percent, and is expected to remain so due to the low percentage of active contributors (39 percent) of the total workforce in pension systems. Projects with positive impacts include establishing unemployment insurance systems in Bahrain, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia and improving access to maternity protection in Iraq and Jordan. The numerous social assistance programs in the region cover more than 32 percent of the vulnerable population; However, it is necessary to extend coverage to non-nationals.¹³

❖ Without ignoring the effects of the pandemic and the responses related to the pandemic, and what they present as an opportunity to confront the challenges that social protection systems in the Arab region suffer from, which suffer from weakness, fragmentation, and their lack of inclusiveness and transparency, and what this response can contribute to transforming and reforming these systems in a sustainable manner. It is well known that before the outbreak of the pandemic, social protection programs were funded mostly from government budgets or foreign aid rather than contributions from beneficiaries or employers. In addition, these programs suffered from costly and unsustainable financing methods, as they faced multiple barriers such as lack of investment in addition to the lack of inclusion of vulnerable population groups.¹⁴

¹² Social Protection in Arab Countries in Conflict and Affected by Conflict, Beirut, 2020.

¹³ According to the International Labor Organization, only 46.9 percent of the world's population is actually covered by at least one social protection benefit, while the remaining 53.1 percent - up to 4.1 billion people - are left completely unprotected. Only 30.6 percent of the working-age population is legally covered by comprehensive social security systems that include the full range of benefits, from child and family benefits to old-age pensions.

See: Global and regional developments in expanding social protection coverage.

¹⁴ The sources of spending differed from one country to another, as the majority of Arab countries re-prioritized their national spending or established special funds, while conflict-affected countries relied on humanitarian aid and donor financing. In Tunisia and Morocco, the private sector played a key role in responding to the pandemic. Despite the difficult circumstances, the report concluded that Arab countries excelled in the use of innovative technology, particularly cash transfers that were sent to beneficiaries within a few days through newly established outlets for this purpose, in addition to electronic wallets and digital registration.

See: The report titled "COVID19- Pandemic in the Arab Region: An Opportunity to Reform Social Protection Systems," United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia(ESCWA) in partnership with Regional Office for Education in the Arab States of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization(UNESCO)





❖ Bridging gender gaps in social protection: The gender gap in social protection coverage is associated with both inequality in the labor market where women make less contributions because they are underrepresented in the labor market and in higher-paying jobs, and because they are overrepresented in precarious and informal (lower-paid) jobs. Moreover, women continue to bear full responsibility for unpaid care tasks within the household, which directly limits their employment opportunities, and thus their access to social protection benefits.

❖ Social partners in the Solid project₂: The need to invest in the welfare economy, through policies that support the transition to the formal economy. Public investments in public care services and the adoption of family-friendly policies can enable women to participate effectively in the workforce while promoting a more equitable sharing of unpaid care responsibilities. In this sense, the implementation of the United Nations Global Declaration for Jobs and Social Protection is key, given its ambitious goals on creating decent jobs in the care economy and creating social protection floors for all by 2030. Moreover, paid maternity leave, parental and family leave and flexible working arrangements are legal means in line with ILO Convention No. 156 concerning Workers with Family Responsibilities and ILO Convention No. 183 concerning Maternity Protection whose adoption and implementation will help bridge the gender pay gap. It also aims to ensure decent livelihoods for working women and to address part of it in the imbalance in social security contributions for women and men.

❖ The social partners of the Solid₂ believe that in order to expand women's access to social protection, non-contributory general social protection schemes should be ensured, such as basic pensions and guaranteed minimum unemployment benefits, in line with ILO Recommendation 202 on social protection floors. Building durable, universal and gen-

der-responsive social protection systems is a must for progress towards the SDGs, especially Goal 8, with its targets related to employment and decent work, providing impetus to achievement of Goal 5 (gender equality) and Goal 10 (combating inequality), as well as for the eradication of poverty and hunger (Goals 1 and 2). The planning and implementation of comprehensive social protection systems must be based on strengthening social dialogue between all partners.

❖ ***Social partners in the Solid project₂ they claim to:***

1. The need to adopt sustainable and gender-sensitive social protection systems to achieve adequate social protection for all, including social protection floors, in line with ILO standards and the ILO Centenary Declaration.

2. The need to adopt specific policies to bridge the gender gap in social protection, eg:

- Public investments in the care economy and the promotion of decent jobs.
- Recognition of care periods in contributory social protection systems in order to maintain levels of women's contributions to social security funds.
- providing paid maternity and paternity leave, the latter allowing caring responsibilities to be divided more equally between parents;
- Develop national social protection floors, including basic pensions and minimum unemployment benefits, with universal coverage, including for women in precarious and informal work;
- Specific policies to support and facilitate the transition to the formal economy in line with ILO Recommendation No204;
- A range of policies to close the gender pay gap, including wage transparency, a minimum living wage and strong anti-discrimination legislation, as well as the promotion of collective bargaining

3. Establish a global social protection fund for the least affluent countries,²⁸ in line with the conclusions of the 2021 ILO International Labor Conference on Social Security and the Our Common Agenda Report of the United Nations.

4. Social dialogue in developing and implementing gender transformative social protection plans.

5. Adequate financing of gender-responsive social protection reforms through progressive national tax systems, tax reform measures (including global minimum corporate tax rate, financial transaction taxes, wealth taxes, and suppression of corporate and wealthy tax evasion) and debt relief.



¹⁵ Launched by the Director-General, the Green Initiative has developed a strategy for increasing ILO engagement in climate change responses from a decent work and just transition perspective, through new research, improved policy advice, capacity building of ILO constituents and strategic partnerships. Action to combat climate change is a focal point of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development under SDG 13, and is linked to most other SDGs, including Goal 8 on decent work and economic growth. The ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work recognizes climate and environmental change as drivers of transformative change in the world of work. It highlights the just transition towards a future of work that contributes to sustainable development in its economic, social and environmental dimensions as the focus of the ILO's work.

¹⁶ ILO, the ILO Guidelines for a Just Transition Towards Environmentally Sustainable Economies and Societies for All - referred to as the ILO Guidelines for a Just Transition -



Ensuring a just transition from a gender perspective

❖ The impact of the main risks from climate change extends from economic and job losses to negative impacts on human health and well-being, reduced labor productivity and forced migration of labour. The close interrelationship between these risks and other risks poses great challenges to achieving decent work and social justice. The Paris Agreement answered questions about how to deal with the consequences of climate change on jobs and the world of work when it emphasized the imperatives of a just transition of the labor force and the creation of decent work and quality jobs in line with the development priorities identified at the national level. From maximum opportunities to provide decent work and create quality jobs and ensure social protection for all.

❖ According to the International Labor Organization¹⁵ the global transition towards a sustainable, low-carbon economy involves four types of changes: 1. Creating new jobs; 2. Substituting some jobs for others; 3. the abolition of some functions; 4. Too many jobs¹⁶. The concept of a just transition has become an essential element in the political, economic, environmental and social worlds in the post-Paris climate agreement phase, and its importance is increasing for the Arab region with the convening of the next two meetings of the Conference of the Parties - the United Nations Conference on Climate Change - in the Middle East and North Africa region - COP 27(COP27) in Egypt and Conference of the Parties 28 (COP28) in the United Arab Emirates.

❖ With a commitment to maintain the goal of keeping global warming below 1.5°C, however, as each country has a responsibility to protect and uphold the agreement in the coming years through the implementation of its outputs, countries across the Middle East and North Africa made significant climate commitments to the 26th Climate Action Summit. The United Arab Emirates has pledged to reach zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, and Bahrain and Saudi Arabia by 2060. Egypt and Morocco have agreed to phase out de-

pendence on coal for power generation, and to end subsidies for the construction of new coal-fired power plants. Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Libya and Tunisia have committed to reducing methane emissions by 30% by 2030. Lebanon has pledged to stop deforestation by 2030. Algeria and Oman have signed up to the Green Grids Initiative - an initiative that facilitates cross-border trade in renewable energy. Not forgetting Qatar, of course, which will host the first carbon-neutral World Cup, supported by the One Million Trees initiative. As a culmination of these commitments, the Middle East Green Initiative - the first regional collaborative platform of its kind - aims to secure more than \$10 billion for an investment fund and clean energy project as part of efforts to reduce carbon emissions in the region.

❖ Within the framework of a unified Arab position in international forums, and agreement at the regional level, and in light of the double development threat resulting from the vulnerability of the Arab region to climate change, countries agreed on the importance of working to mitigate the negative effects on women and girls of climate change and man-made and natural disasters by strengthening the capacity of women and economic response to climate change.

¹⁷ This Climate Action for Jobs initiative complements existing ILO partnerships and joint programs in the areas of green jobs, green economy and economicsring.

¹⁸ According to ILO guidelines, 2.1 billion jobs - or 40 percent of the world's workforce - are at risk. The 4 most workers due to environmental degradation. The impacts are particularly severe for the most vulnerable workers affected by climate change, biodiversity loss and environmental degradation: workers from low-income countries and small island developing states, rural workers, people living in poverty, indigenous and tribal peoples and other disadvantaged groups.

See: International Labor Organization, The Guidelines for a Just Transition Towards Environmentally Sustainable Economies and Societies for All, op. cit.

¹⁹ In rural Egypt, a joint ILO initiative with local government and the university implemented a pilot project in which poor farmers were taught how to make biogas from their livestock dung, providing an affordable source of energy and fertilizer, and leading to increased income and crop production. The program has also created jobs for recent graduates who conduct training in villages on how to make biogas while promoting environmentally sustainable technologies.



❖ Roadmap for climate action in the Middle East and North Africa region in providing support to the countries of the region, which aims to help reduce emissions and adapt in the face of the accelerating pace of climate change. The roadmap includes increased investment: using up to \$10 billion in World Bank Group financing for climate-smart projects and policy reform, while mobilizing an additional \$2 billion in private sector financing. As part of its efforts to keep pace with regional and country-specific needs to balance climate change adaptation and mitigation measures, the Bank will invest approximately 50% of this climate finance in interventions that help build resilience¹⁷.

❖ ***Social Partners in the Southern Mediterranean Primary responsibility for climate and sustainabilityEnvironmental:***

- The climate emergency will further exacerbate gender inequality and inequality in the world of work due to job and income losses¹⁸; Scarcity in basic resources such as food energy; and inaccessibility of social protection and health care services, safe transportation, which risks escalating gender-based violence in the world of work. Women, in particular, will bear the brunt of the climate emergency and risk facing a further deepening of the already persistent inequalities in the labor market.
- Demand investments to create climate-friendly jobs along with just transition

measures to support industrial transitions. While economic transformations to a clean economy

- Inevitably, this cannot happen at the expense of the workers' future. Sustainable strategies should be formulated by linking industrial policies with employment, labor market policies and decent work.
- Enterprises supported by EOs can take advantage of innovative business continuity measures to scale green innovation and entrepreneurship and enhance resilience to future shocks by integrating environmental risks and technology into enterprise risk management practices, climate-related financial information and investment chains. Sustainable sourcing and sourcing.
- Through social dialogue, it is made available to governments, workers' organizations and employers' organizations and relevant civil society organizations. A key opportunity to build strong consensus and broad-based support for a sustainable recovery that promotes decent work, sustainable and resilient facilities and workplaces, and environmental sustainability.
- Workers' and employers' organizations can establish environmental committees at the sectoral or facility level and engage in dialogue on the environmental dimensions of recovery as well as on associated economic and social aspects, such as occupational safety and health, wages, working time, productivity, business resilience, and skills.

❖ ***social partners in the Solid project² invites to:***

1. job creation¹⁹
2. Adopt and implement gender-sensitive transition plans in line with ILO guidelines
3. for a just transition; Increasing public investments in the care economy, green infrastructure, sustainable agriculture and renewable energy sources; and ensuring that young women have access to STEM-related education and jobs.
4. Ensuring fair participation and representation of women workers, of all kinds, in decision-making at all levels and in social dialogue, and supporting (young) pioneering women workers in the field of climate.
5. Ensuring due diligence on the environment and human rights in business operations and where trade unions believe that fair transitional plans must take place with equal participation and representation of women workers, in their diversity, in decision-making at all levels along global supply chains.

6. Gender-sensitive climate finance, including a commitment of \$100 billion annually to decarbonize the global south, and expanding fiscal space through tax policies upward, and an end to tax evasion in wealthier companies and countries are the biggest contributors

7. Carbon-related revenue mobilization through the collection of carbon taxes in a phased manner can also serve carbon abatement ambitions.











Equitable access to skills development, training and lifelong learning

❖ Technical and vocational education and training includes education, training and skills development related to a wide range of occupational fields, production, services and livelihoods. In many countries, TVET is an integral part of the national education architecture and supports economic development by facilitating the development of a skilled workforce linked to labor market needs. Technical and vocational education and training, as part of lifelong learning, can occur at the secondary, post-secondary and higher education levels and includes work-based learning. Research on this subject requires consideration of integration requirements, market trends, support services, accreditation, training for cadres, use of technology and building bridges to the labor market. .



❖ Accordingly invites representatives of social partners within the framework of the Solid 2 project charter to focus on the pivotal role of education and training in sustainable development represented in ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education for all and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all, in particular with regard to access to quality and affordable education and training in technical and vocational fields as well as to acquiring the necessary skills for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship; Eliminate gender disparity and ensure equal access to technical and vocational education and training for vulnerable groups. and where you cross. It expresses concern as a result of exacerbating gender inequalities and stereotypes, and demands.



20 Sustainable Development Goal 4 Quality education Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all This background paper is from the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and the United Nations Fund population, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the World Food Programme.

21 Inadequate support from parents that interfered with learning, unprepared teachers, and unavailability of courses for specific classes. As a result, some 37 million students in the region have not been reached through distance learning initiatives. It turns out that students in rural areas, students from poor socio-economic backgrounds, or people with disabilities are most at risk of exclusion, as 15 million students were deprived of access to schools due to the pandemic. The pandemic has deepened the deficit in educational attainment in the region. Due to the trauma caused by the COVID19- pandemic in the region, an estimated 59 per cent of -10year-olds were unable to read and understand simple texts, with boys being the most. The percentage of students under the age of 15 who are at risk of being deprived of learning, whose reading proficiency level does not meet international standards, is 60 percent of students in the region.

22 The crisis has had profound effects on families, teachers, and students, with interrelated social and economic consequences affecting development goals. Many families have had to adopt negative coping strategies, such as reducing food consumption and dietary diversification, and reducing spending on education. School closures have prevented many children in the region from accessing school meal programmes, resulting in losses in nutrition and pressure on progress in achieving SDGs 2, 1 and 8. The crisis has had negative psychological effects on teachers, families and students.

❖ the urgent need to support the countries of the southern Mediterranean which face difficulties in integrating disadvantaged groups into their educational systems and training. Preparing guidelines based on a strategy to collect and exchange measures and advice on solutions and policies, both by investing in information and communication technologies as innovative tools to increase the rates of utilization and participation in technical and vocational education and training. Lifelong learning requires investment at all levels, from pre-school through higher education. Equal access for girls and women at all

culties in finding decent and safe work. In this regard, it is necessary to concert efforts of all parties to bridge the knowledge gaps that impede understanding of this issue across economic and cultural contexts, as well as the promotion of policy learning, policy support, and provision of capacity building services. Develop strategies to promote women's entry into professional fields that will improve their employability and enhancing their entrepreneurial abilities; As well as supporting the mainstreaming of gender equality and equal opportunities when reviewing and developing policies, strategies and activities for techni-



of these levels is vital, as is the development and recognition of qualification pathways to enable workers to increase their knowledge and move between jobs.

❖ Inequality in access to education and training is one of the many factors that impede the effective participation of women in the labor market. As a result, women do not enter the labor market on an equal footing compared to men, as women face more diffi-

cal and vocational education and training so that considerations related to gender equality have a positive impact on policy priorities and spending patterns.

❖ For women at work, even before the current crisis, occupational segregation and gender stereotypes confine women to low-paying and low-paid jobs - with little or no social protection, and with a lack of access to education and training. These include jobs

in the care sector, such as education, health and care services; in hospitality, , department store and sales; and in lean manufacturing in global supply chains. Women also face hurdles in accessing essential digital skills, particularly in sectors that have shifted to remote work during the pandemic, such as the education and service sectors. However, women's access to skills development does not always increase women's labor force participation rates or increase opportunities for professional development; This is due to the persistence of structural, economic, social and cultural barriers. In this regard, trade unions are calling on countries to harness digital technologies in order to ensure that the skills shortage problem does not impede the progress of these countries on a large scale. It is also necessary to support the modernization of qualifications and curricula; training of teaching staff; and promoting the acquisition and recognition of these skills in the workplace.

❖ Despite increased investment in and enrollment in education, progress in access to schools and reduction of gender gaps, education is not living up to its transformative potential in the region. Challenges, including the persistence of outdated teaching methods, disparity in levels of education quality, and unequal access and use of teaching and learning infrastructures, continue to impede progress in Arab countries.²⁰.

❖ The COVID-19 crisis has hampered the efforts made by the Arab region to achieve Goal 4 of the Sustainable Development Goals. The crisis has also exacerbated challenges such as poverty, unequal quality of education, unequal access to education, and the high

number of children and youth who do not go to school. Many students faced difficulties in continuing their studies in light of the closure of schools. About 40 percent of the students were unable to participate in distance education programs in 2020²¹. The COVID-19 pandemic also revealed weaknesses in technical and vocational education and training institutions in the Arab region, like others in some regions of the world. Prior to the crisis, TVET providers in most countries had little experience with distance education and in light of the cessation of face-to-face education, many institutions faced difficulties in finding solutions to facilitate the shift to distance education, and in providing support to students and teachers. As a result, training for many students has been interrupted, and practical learning opportunities are often no longer available during lockdown periods²².

❖ Even before the COVID-19 crisis, the Southern Mediterranean region was not on track to achieve the targets of SDG 4 by 2030 for a number of groups whose vulnerabilities have increased due to the pandemic. The poorest children in the region are the most likely to be out of school. In addition, girls and women are less likely to access the digital space compared to men, as half of the female population lacks access to the Internet, and illiteracy rates among women average 34 percent, compared to the global average of about 17 percent. In addition, groups of rural communities, refugees and internally displaced persons suffer from difficulties in obtaining education resulting from poverty, discrimination and difficulties in adapting to curricula, languages and others.

❖ ***social partners in the Solid project² are invited to:***

- 1.** Ensure comprehensive and gender sensitive strategies on skills and lifelong learning in line with the Sustainable Development Goals.
- 2.** Ensure equitable access to skills development, training and lifelong learning for all, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, immigration or disability.
- 3.** access to free, high-quality education as a prerequisite for lifelong learning; Increasing public investment in public education and training.
- 4.** More equitable and effective access for all to skills and lifelong learning, including through apprenticeships, technical and vocational education and training, which reduces skills mismatches, such as skills gaps and shortages, and facilitates the transition to the labor market for all.

ship or training programs and measures taken to ensure equal recognition of qualifications across occupations.

- 8.** Participate in social dialogue and collective bargaining to formulate and implement mechanisms of lifelong learning and skills development policies.
- 9.** Encouraging the ratification and applica-



- 5.** Targeted measures to bridge the gender digital divide as part of gender-sensitive lifelong learning initiatives.
- 6.** Targeted initiatives to train, hire and retain women in underrepresented sectors and jobs (such as science, technology, engineering and mathematics)).
- 7.** Adoption of gender quotas in apprentice-

tion of international labor standards related to skills development and lifelong learning through targeted measures, including launching a campaign to ratify the Human Resources Development Convention, 1975 (No. 142)%

- 10.** Supporting employers' organizations and workers' organisations, professional organizations and civil society to play an active role as providers of training, vocational guidance and

career advice services that directly meet the needs of workers and employers.

11. Review its TVET policies by analyzing key policy areas and their appropriateness. It also supports the development of sustainable mechanisms for funding technical and vocational education and training, with a view to mobilizing resources to implement the technical and vocational education and training strategy.

12. Integrate relevant skills development and lifelong learning systems into employment policies, in order to support the creation of full, productive and freely chosen employment, decent work for all, and fair and inclusive labor markets.

13. Demand the development of comprehensive digitization strategies that support and enhance the development of national skills and systems learning; investing in sustainable infrastructure; Continuing access through innovative technologies to improved Internet connectivity, equipment, devices and tools, including through public-private partnerships.

14. Skills development and meaningful life-long learning strategies for the informal economy, including assessment of skills and abilities acquired through structured, unstructured and informal learning, that improve learning options and pathways for parties that are verified and recognized.









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