

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY WEBINAR

5 March 2021 at 11:00 CET

Women in Leadership: towards an equal region in a COVID-19 world



Union for the Mediterranean
Union pour la Méditerranée
الاتحاد من أجل المتوسط



The UfM Secretariat
is co-funded by the
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About the Webinar

Evidence shows that the **impacts of crises are never gender neutral**, and COVID-19 is no exception. As entrepreneurs, health care and agricultural workers, women around the world have worked relentlessly not only to fight COVID-19, but also to shape a more equal and inclusive future. While **women have been in the frontline** of the fight against the pandemic, **their voices remain left out of the decision-making table**.

When women are represented and engaged in leadership bodies, their outcomes are more likely to be inclusive: deaths of COVID-19 were 6 times lower in countries where female leaders took early action, countries with a greater proportion of women as top decision-makers in legislatures have lower levels of income inequality, and when women hold more executive leadership positions, companies are more profitable.

Objectives

This webinar will analyse the **challenges that women and girls face to access leadership positions**. It will bring together a variety of stakeholders to analyse the gendered barriers to leadership and share best practices on how to foster women and girls' leadership in the region.

The event will welcome DG NEAR to present the recently published **gender action plan GAP III** and share insights on how it will empower women and girls to participate and lead equally in social, economic, and political life. The webinar will also present the **UfM's labelled projects with UNIDO and CEED** and launch the 2021 UfM Women Business Forum.

Themes

- **Women in Business, entrepreneurship and digital economy**
- **Women in Agriculture**
- **Women and the Health Care Sector**

AGENDA - 5 MARCH 2021

- 11:00-11:05** **Opening Remarks**
- Ambassador Marisa Farrugia, Deputy Secretary General, Social and Civil Affairs Division of the Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)
- 11:05-11:20** **Presenting GAP III: Towards a gender-equal world - DG Near**
- Olga Martin Gonzalez, Gender Equality Coordinator in the European Commission, DG NEAR
- 11:20–11:55** **Session 1: Women in Business, Entrepreneurship and Digital Economy**
- Speakers:
- Carlos Conde, Head of the Middle East and Africa Division, OECD's Global Relations Secretariat
 - María Helena de Felipe Lehtonen, Corporate Labour Lawyer, President of Afaemme
 - Amel Saidane, Digital Arab Network, President of TunisianStartUps and CEO and Co-founder of BetaCube
 - Moderator: Jihen Boutiba, Secretary General of BUSINESSMED
- 11:55-12:10** **Launch 2021 UfM Women Business Forum and short presentation of UNIDO and CEED labelled projects**
- Anna Dorangricchia, Project Manager, Social and Civil Affairs, UfM
 - Fatima Zahra Oukacha, CEED MENA Director
 - Dr. Neila Amara, International Program Management Specialist, UNIDO
- 12:10-12:40** **Session 2: Women in Agriculture**
- Speakers:
- Ndaya Beltchika, Lead Technical Specialist for Gender and Social Inclusion, IFAD
 - Myriam Fournier Kacimi, CEO, Sungy Sas, Entrepreneur, Investor for Africa and for solar energy
 - Dr. Margarita Rico, Dr. in Economic and Business Sciences from the University of Valladolid and Professor at the Higher Technical School of Agricultural Engineering
 - Moderator: Yasmine Seghirate, Policy and Communications Manager, CIHEAM
- 12:40-13:10** **Session 3: Women and the Health Care Sector**
- Speakers:
- Dr. Agnès Buzyn, Director General's Envoy for Multilateral Affairs, WHO
 - Dr. Roopa Dhatt, Executive Director, Women in Global Health
 - Maryam Bigdeli, WHO representative for Morocco
 - Moderator: Anna Rita Ronzoni, WHO
- 13:10-13:15** **Closing Remarks**
- María Helena de Felipe Lehtonen, Afaemme

SPEAKERS



Dr. Marisa Farrugia
DSG, UfM

Dr. Marisa Farrugia is the Deputy Secretary General of the Union for the Mediterranean in charge of Social and Civil Affairs since September 2019. Marisa Farrugia is a Maltese diplomat who has held over the years senior positions both at the Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs and abroad. Prior to her secondment as Special Envoy and Ambassador to the Union for the Mediterranean at the Union's Secretariat in August 2017, she was Deputy Director responsible for External Relations, Mediterranean Affairs, and the MENA Region. Marisa Farrugia holds a PhD in Arabic and Near Eastern Studies from the University of Leeds and a Master's Degree from the University of Toronto, Canada, majoring in international relations and the socio-political aspects of the Arab world.

SESSION 1: Women in business, entrepreneurship and digital economy



Jihen Boutiba
BusinessMed

Jihen Boutiba General Secretary of BUSINESSMED since 2014. Besides leading the International Relations of the Organisations for almost 15 years, she worked at the U.S Department of States in Tunisia within the Political and Economic section for foreign grants assistance on the Economic Support funds. She has an extensive experience in managing large programs at international levels, responsible for partnership and networking relations with diplomatic Institutions in the Euromed/ MENA Regions. Mrs Boutiba holds several Expert Positions: she is currently the Executive Director of the EU-project "Enhancing Business Support Organizations-EBSOMED" in the EuroMed region, Director of the ENI-CBC Investmed project, Consultant in Euro-Mediterranean diplomatic trainings with ENA "Ecole Nationale d'Administration & Deputy Director of the South Mediterranean Social Dialogue Project "SOLID II" and liason manager with ILO project component, member of the MENA-OECD Business Advisory Board, board member of HOMERe project, Policy for development and Instituto Eurispes. She is member of the Italian B20 coalition under the chairmanship of Confindustria on Trade and Investment and Digitalisation issues. She has two children and is holder of a family business in the mining sector.



Dr. Carlos Conde
OECD

Dr. Carlos Conde is Head of the Middle East and Africa Division in the Global Relations Secretariat of the OECD. On this capacity, he leads the implementation of MENA-OECD Initiative on Governance and Competitiveness for Development. Since 2005, the Initiative promotes policy dialogue on governance, investment and private sector development between MENA and OECD countries. During this period, the MENA Initiative has introduced the process of OECD peer review in the MENA region, supported processes of reform at the national level and conducted capacity building activities. He holds a PhD in Political Science and Public Administration from the Complutense University, Madrid, Spain.



María Helena de Felipe
AFAEMME

María Helena de Felipe Lethonen is the co-founder of FES BUSINESS INTERNATIONAL CONSULTING SL, International Business Consultancy, providing corporate legal services for SMEs companies and consultancy specialized in project management in Business Gender Equality and Opportunities addressed to SMEs, organizations and public institutions at regional, national and Euro Mediterranean level. She is Co-Chair of Women Commission in ASCAME (Federation of Mediterranean Chambers of Commerce) and Member of the Advisory Board of ASCAME and EMEA (Euro Mediterranean Economists Association). She is also an active member of the EUROPEAN ECONOMIC SOCIAL COMMITTEE, member of the SOC, REX and the EUROMED follow up Committee (E.E.S.C), and the vice-president of a number of institutions such as SMEunited, CEPYME or FOMENT DEL TREBALL. She has been the president of FEPIME-CATALUNYA since 2014, and a member of the board of C.E.O.E..



Amel Saidane
BetaCube

Amel Saidane is an entrepreneur, ecosystem builder and digital transformation expert. She is president of TunisianStartups, the association giving a voice to Tunisian startups and co-founder of BetaCube a venture builder in Fintech and mobility solutions. She is also the co-founder of Digital2Value an SME digital transformation platform. She acts as management consultant specialising in digital transformation and business strategy. She is an innovation and digital transformation activist acting as a board member for the Digital Center of Excellence of the UN Economic Commission for Africa and as Tunisia steering committee member for Digital Arabia Network, a platform supporting the digital transformation in the Arab world. She is a member of the StartupAct “College of Startups”. She also a member of the BMW Responsible Leaders Network, and a fellow of the BMW Ready-Go program. Amel is an engineer in electro-technics, qualified from the Leibniz University of Hannover, Germany, and has a M.Sc. in Business in Digital Economy from the University of Maryland.

SESSION 2: Women in Agriculture



Yasmine Seghirate
CIHEAM

Yasmine Seghirate is the Policy and Communications Manager and Gender Policy and Women Empowerment focal point at CIHEAM’s Headquarters. Graduated of Sciences Politiques in Aix-en-Provence, with a specialty in political sociology of the Arab and Muslim world, Yasmine was responsible for the ORSE (French Observatory of Corporate Social Responsibility) projects on sustainable development and CSR in the Maghreb. She was previously project officer in the office of the UN Under-Secretary-General for Innovative Financing for Development (UNITAID) and a consultant for the French Development Agency (AFD). Her associative involvement led her to be a founding member of ATLAS (Algerian Talents and Leaders Association) and head of the CSR and Territories Committee of the CACIF (Algerian Chamber of Commerce and Industry in France).



Ndaya Beltchika
IFAD

Ndaya Beltchika is IFAD's Lead Technical Specialist - Gender, Targeting and Social Inclusion. Her team is within the Environment, Climate, Gender and Social Inclusion Division (ECG) and provides strategic and operational advice to IFAD's funded projects across all regions. She joined IFAD in that capacity on 16 April 2018. Prior to that, Ms Beltchika was Country Director in the West and Central Africa Division where she led the development of country strategies and provided oversight and coordinated programmes of loans and grants of Benin, Liberia and Sierra Leone. Prior to joining IFAD in 2010, Ms Beltchika held various positions in the public and private sector. Ms Beltchika holds a "Bachelor's +1" in Agronomy from La Faculté des Sciences Agronomique de l'Etat à Gembloux, Belgium, a Master's degree in Agricultural Economics from the University of California at Davis, California, USA and a Master's degree in Business Administration from Babson College F. W. Olin Graduate School of Business in Massachusetts, USA.



Myriam Fournier Kacimi
Sungy Sas

Myriam Fournier Kacimi, CEO, Sungy Sas, is an executive woman in investment banking. She was born in Algiers and grew up in France. She is concerned with pollution issues and wanted to fully engage herself to reduce CO2 emissions. She was convinced by solar energy while working in Japan and in Germany as she had the chance to see how far those countries were in developing solar energy. She then decided to found SunGy to make solar energy a reality in Africa. SunGy develops projects for solar farms and global solutions for farmers and corporates. Its added value is both in financial and energy engineering. International speaker, she is fully engaged to empower women for a much better world. She received many international awards and distinctions for those two commitments and successful achievements.



Dr. Margarita Rico
University of Valladolid

Dr. Margarita Rico (PhD, 2006) is full professor of Agricultural Economics at Higher Technical School of Agrarian Engineering, Palencia (Valladolid University, Spain). Her R&D work has been focused on socio-economic analysis in rural areas and rural development strategies. Specifically she has focused on issues such as rural women work and their contribution to rural development, evaluation of policies for rural development, rural depopulation, rural tourism and the food industry. Professor Rico is currently working on issues related to green agriculture and sustainable forest management from an economic, social and gender perspective. The results of all these lines of research have been published in several books chapters and in specialized journals papers, also participated in numerous national and international conferences.

Presenting GAP III: Towards a gender-equal world



Olga Martin Gonzalez
DG NEAR

Olga Martin Gonzalez holds a Master's degree in Gender and Development and a B.A in Political Science. Currently, she is the Gender Equality Coordinator in the European Commission, Directorate-General European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR). She has more than 15 years of experience working on gender and development and humanitarian issues in several countries, such as Senegal, Namibia, India, Mauritania and South Africa.

SESSION 3: Women in the Health Care Sector



Anna Rita Ronzoni
WHO

Anna Rita Ronzoni is Technical Officer for Gender-Based Violence in the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean. As a gender expert, she has been working on women's health, protection and empowerment for the last 18 years, particularly in the Middle East. Before joining WHO, she worked as GBV expert for the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Palestine and as Coordinator of the Women's Protection and Empowerment Program at the International Rescue Committee in Jordan. She completed her master on Studies of the Sexual Difference from the University of Barcelona (Spain), and she is working on her Master on Public Health and Sexual and Reproductive Health at the James Lindt Institute in Switzerland. Anna Rita is the author of different articles on GBV, including on policies to empower women in the Arab region, GBV impact on women's protection and health, and cash-based Interventions for GBV survivors.



Dr. Roopa Dhaat
Women in Global Health

Dr Roopa Dhaat is a passionate advocate for gender equality in global health and a leading voice in the movement to correct the gender imbalance in global health leadership. She is also a practicing Internal Medicine physician at Georgetown University MedStar Hospital in Washington, D.C. Dr Dhaat is particularly committed to addressing issues of power, privilege, and intersectionality that keep many women from global health leadership roles and to opening up spaces for the voices of these women to be heard. Determined to build a movement to transform women's leadership opportunities in health, Dr Dhaat co-founded Women in Global Health in 2015. She holds numerous advisory, board, and ambassador roles. She advises the WHO on matters of the health workforce, gender equity, and universal health coverage. She has published in the Lancet, BMJ, Devex, Forbes, and been interviewed in National Geographic, Nature, NPR, EuroNews, and numerous other channels. Dr Dhaat was recognized in the Gender Equality Top 100 , the most influential people in global policy 2019.



Dr. Agnès Buzyn
WHO

Professor Agnès Buzyn is the WHO Director General's Envoy for Multilateral Affairs. She leads WHO's engagement with multilateral partners, including overseeing relations with the Union for the Mediterranean. Prior to joining WHO, Professor Buzyn served as the French Minister of Solidarity and Health from 2017 to 2020. In 2016, she was appointed Chairman of the French Authority for Health (HAS) in charge of Health Technology Assessment. Between 2011 and 2016, Professor Buzyn served as the Executive President of the French National Cancer Institute (INCa), and represented the French government at the governing council of the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC). From 2008 to 2013, Professor Buzyn chaired the Executive Board of the French Radioprotection and Nuclear Safety Institute (IRSN). Throughout her career, she has also served as Professor of Hematology at the University Pierre-and-Marie-Curie in Paris, and as an academic hematologist and clinician at the University Paris Descartes Necker Hospital, and carried out research at the National Institute of Health and Medical Research (INSERM). Professor Buzyn received an M.D. from University Pierre-and-Marie-Curie in Paris and a Ph.D. in immunology from the University Paris Descartes.



Maryam Bigdeli
WHO Morocco

Maryam Bigdeli is a pharmacist and holds a PhD in public health from the Université libre de Bruxelles. She started her career with Doctors without borders in Guinea in 1993. Prior to her appointment as WHO Representative in Morocco, Ms Bigdeli worked at WHO headquarters in Geneva in the Department of Health Systems Governance and Financing. Before that, she worked for WHO in Laos and Cambodia. She started her career with Médecins Sans Frontières and has also experience in health economics and pharmaco-economics with the European Organisation for Research and Treatment of Cancer and in the Department of Health Economics at the School of Public Health of the Free University of Brussels. She has particular interest in equity in access to health services for vulnerable and disadvantaged population.

UfM Labelled projects



Fatima Zahra Oukacha
CEED

Fatima Zahra is CEED Mena director. Prior to joining CEED as the Director of CEED Morocco, Fatima Zahra was a serial entrepreneur. She founded companies offering services in Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia. Fatima Zahra has always been passionate about entrepreneurship and working with other entrepreneurs as seen by her work with many entrepreneurship ecosystem actors the Mena region.



Dr. Neila Amara
UNIDO

Dr. Neila Amara holds a Ph.D. in economics from Paris Dauphine University (France). She first embraced an academic career before devoting herself full-time to her work as a Program Development Specialist with a focus on women and youth's economic empowerment and private sector development. She currently works as an International Program Management Specialist at the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), coordinating inter alia the implementation of phase II of the project "Promoting women's empowerment for Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development in the Middle-East and North-Africa region" labelled by the UfM and implemented by UNIDO jointly with FAO and UN Women.

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The event will provide simultaneous interpretation in English, French and Arabic.
For further details please [visit the website](http://ufmsecretariat.org) or contact social.affairs@ufmsecretariat.org.