

Background and objectives

Gender inequality remains a significant barrier to transforming food systems in the Arab region. Women are disproportionately affected by food insecurity and malnutrition, especially in times of crisis, yet they are often excluded from decision-making processes. Despite their central role in food production and household nutrition, they face limited access to essential resources such as land, credit, agricultural inputs, and capacity-building opportunities, further deepening these challenges.

This special session will explore these issues and present inclusive, science- and technology-driven solutions to empower women in agrifood systems. By fostering partnerships and multi-stakeholder collaboration, the session aims to address structural inequalities and promote sustainable, inclusive, and equitable agrifood systems.

Questions to be addressed

- **Identify challenges:** Explore both persistent and emerging challenges specific to the Arab region that hinder women's equal participation and leadership in agrifood systems, including barriers to digital access, science, and technology.
- **Showcase solutions:** Highlight successful initiatives that leverage science, inclusive technology, and gender-disaggregated data to break barriers and empower women in agrifood systems.
- **Strengthen SDG linkages:** Examine the interconnections between SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and other SDGs under review, particularly SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals). Demonstrate how these goals can work together to drive sustainable and inclusive agrifood systems.
- **Facilitate dialogue:** Encourage multi-stakeholder discussions on actionable strategies and partnerships to address structural inequalities and advance gender equality in agrifood systems.

Moderator:

- **Mr. Khaled Eltaweel**, Senior Programme Coordinator, UN Food Systems Coordination Hub

Welcoming notes:

- AOAD, ESCWA, FAO

Setting the scene:

- **Ms. Dina Najjar**, Gender Scientist and Research Coordinator, ICARDA, Morocco

Panelists:

- **H.E. Ms. Inaya Ezzeddine**, Member of the Lebanese Parliament; Chairperson of Women & Children & SDG 2030, Agenda Parliamentary Committees, Lebanese Parliament; Food Systems Convener, Lebanon
- **Ms. Dounia Baroud El-Khoury**, Founder and President, Women's Association of Deir El Ahmar (WADA), Lebanon
- **Ms. Naema Abu Yahya**, Permaculture Trainer, Greening the Desert Project, Jordan
- **Ms. Samar Ahmed Abu Safia**, Expert on Women's Participation and Empowerment in Agriculture, Gaza (*online*)
- **Mr. Dani Ibrahim**, Financial Inclusion, Financial Wellbeing and Entrepreneurship Senior Expert; Founder and General Manager of EA Advisory, United Arab Emirates.

This Special Session will be organized as a hybrid event. To participate over Zoom, please [register here](#). Those physically present at the UN House can attend the session in Mezzanine Meeting Room (MZ floor).