



6-7 June 2023 - Beirut, Lebanon | بيروت، لبنان - 7-6 حزيران 2023



Shared Prosperity Dignified Life



PATHFINDERS

FOR PEACEFUL, JUST AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES

NYU | CENTER ON INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION



مركز التضامن الإسلامي للتنمية

REDUCING POVERTY

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صندوق التضامن الإسلامي للتنمية

Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development



Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations



World Food Programme



OXFAM
أوكسفام

E/ESCWA/AFE/2023/L.1

Second Arab Forum for Equality

Beirut, 6–7 June 2023

Concept note



Background information

The Arab region is currently facing several crises, including an uneven recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, ongoing security and political instability in some Arab countries, the war in Ukraine, the unprecedented high cost of living and inflation, increasing debt, and a sharp decline in the value of local currencies. All these issues exacerbate existing inequalities and create new inequalities. These factors combined have increased inequality within and between countries, and perpetuated the classification of the Arab region as one of the most unequal regions worldwide.

In this context, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies hosted by the Center on International Cooperation at New York University, the Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development, Oxfam, the World Food Programme (WFP), and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) are organizing the second Arab Forum for Equality. The theme of the 2023 Forum is "One voice... Equality in food security", and it will be held in Beirut on 6 and 7 June 2023.



Objectives

The second Arab Forum for Equality continues discussions that began at the first Forum (Amman, 30–31 May 2022) among various decision makers to propose practical solutions for tackling inequality. In 2023, the Forum will address the issues raised in a regional report prepared by ESCWA and its partners. Decision makers and experts will discuss inequality in the field of food security in the Arab region and the policies that hinder it.

- Continuing the dialogue between various stakeholders, leaders and experts from the Arab region and other regions worldwide on inequality in the Arab region.
- Discussing the trends and effects of inequality resulting from current global and regional developments.
- Discussing inequality in food security.
- Presenting innovative and practical policies to address inequality, with a focus on food security as a pertinent form of inequality.
- Showcasing and discussing best practices in the field of social protection given their importance in reducing inequality.





Organizational and logistical issues

A. Date and venue

The second Arab Forum for Equality will be held at the United Nations House in Beirut on 6 and 7 June 2023. Logistical details are available on the Forum's website at <https://afe-2023.unescwa.org/>.

B. Organization of work

ESCWA is overseeing the preparation of the Forum's agenda, in consultation with the Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development, Pathfinders, Oxfam, WFP and FAO. The provisional agenda is available on the Forum's webpage and is regularly updated.

C. Working languages

The working languages of the Forum are Arabic and English. The Forum will be held in Arabic, and simultaneous interpretation will be available from and into Arabic, English and French. Sign language interpretation will also be provided.

D. Participants and registration

The Forum will bring together expertise from the Arab region and the world on issues of equality and food security. High-level representatives of Arab Governments will participate, including ministers and senior officials in planning, social development, agriculture, economy, trade and youth issues. Representatives of regional organizations, civil society networks, academic institutions, international think tanks, and United Nations agencies operating in the Arab region will also attend the Forum.

In-person participation in the Forum will be at the United Nations House in Beirut. Those who cannot attend in person can follow the various sessions online on the Forum's website.

Participants invited to the Forum under ESCWA sponsorship are requested to register their attendance via the link provided in the invitation sent to them by Thursday, 20 April 2023. Other participants can register their attendance by Monday, 22 May 2023 via the following link: <https://indico.un.org/event/1004062/>.

E. Correspondence

Please direct all correspondence related to the second Arab Forum for Equality to the Forum secretariat using the following email address: escwa-afe@un.org

