

ESCWA NEWS SPECIAL EDITION

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ESCWA wraps up 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence

The 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence (25 November-10 December) is a global campaign to raise awareness of, and increase momentum toward, ending violence against women and girls. During the 16 Days, ESCWA carried out a range of regional advocacy activities to raise public awareness and engage Arab youth in efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls.

The highlight of this year’s campaign was the regional arts competition held in partnership with the Institute for Women’s Studies in the Arab World (IWSAW) at the Lebanese American University (LAU). Now in its third year, the competition attracted a record number of nearly 200 submissions. Youth from 10 Arab States submitted paintings, photos, videos, songs and poems on the theme ‘#HearMeToo’: Speak up against violence against women and girls”. A special category for children under 10 drew interest from schools across the region. Ali Awada, from Lebanon, won the first prize in the competition with his rap song “[Haqqik](#)”. The winner of the children’s category was a [drawing](#) by Inass Amer, from Syria. All winning submissions are available [here](#).



The winners were announced at a [ceremony](#) on the LAU Beirut campus. The best submissions were showcased at the event, alongside original creations by LAU fashion design students. The event also featured a roundtable discussion with actress and artist Natasha Choufani; Assistant Professor and Coordinator of LAU’s Fashion Design Programme Jason Steel; artists and activists Michelle and Noel Keserwany, with moderation by Reem Maghribi, Managing Director of Sharq, an NGO focused on citizenship and pluralism.

Students enrolled in the Fashion Design Programme at the LAU School of Architecture and Design created designs for a tote-bag to commemorate the 16 Days of Activism campaign. This activity engaged students and solicited their artistic abilities to produce a bag with a powerful message (see image). As part of the partnership, ESCWA staff also led a discussion on gender-based violence with fashion design students to inspire their work.



In order to engage youth on social media, ESCWA created 16 cards presenting key facts about gender-based violence in the Arab region, as well as concrete steps that can be taken by youth and the general public to eliminate it. The cards were shared on social media in English and Arabic on each of the 16 Days, as part of a broader social media campaign that also featured videos, polls and multimedia content. The full set of cards is available [here](#).

ESCWA published op-eds and articles in [Al-Ahram](#), [As-Safir](#) and the [Daily Star](#), while leading journalist Narjess Neji Bdira authored articles with ESCWA in [Tunis Afrique Presse](#).



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