

## The Regional Consultation on the Plan of Action to Integrate Volunteering into the 2030 Agenda in ESCWA Region

Wednesday 10 April 2019 | 11:15 – 13:00 | MZ Meeting Room | UN House, Beirut

### Background:

Around the world, people everywhere volunteer for the good of their communities and societies. Research has shown that their efforts are equal to that of 109 million full-time equivalent workers - a workforce that exceeds many major global industries. Such volunteerism not only constitutes a major resource for the 2030 Agenda, it can give people a sense of ownership and belonging, transforming citizens from beneficiaries to agents of change.

The Plan of Action to Integrate Volunteering into the 2030 Agenda is a framework developed by member states through UN General Assembly Resolutions to help governments, UN agencies, civil society organizations, academia and the private sector enhance the recognition and integration of volunteerism in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Through the collective efforts of all stakeholders, the Plan of Action seeks to strengthen people's ownership of the 2030 Agenda, integrate volunteering into national and international strategies, and improve measurement of the impact of volunteering.

### Session Objective:

The Regional Consultation on the Plan of Action to Integrate Volunteering into the 2030 Agenda in the ESCWA region is organized in the context of the Arab Forum on Sustainable Development (AFSD) as mandated by UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/73/140.

The Consultation will provide a space for Plan of Action Stakeholders from the ESCWA region to identify opportunities to support volunteers to accelerate SDG progress and maximise the potential of volunteering to tackle the region's most pressing issues.

Participants in the event will be invited to share innovations and best practices, discuss opportunities for new partnerships and approaches, and analyse ways to overcome common challenges. Findings from a regional synthesis report that draws on information submitted by ESCWA Member States on the scale, scope and impact of volunteerism across the region, will also be shared. Together the discussions and recommendations of the Regional Consultation will feed into further dialogues on the Plan of Action and inform a global synthesis report for a Global Technical Meeting to be held at the 2020 High Level Political Forum and co-chaired by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the United Nations Volunteers programme.



**Plan of Action**  
to integrate volunteering  
into the 2030 Agenda

### Opening Remarks:

- **Mr. Frederico Neto**, Director, Social Development Division, ESCWA
- **Mr. Jason Pronyk**, Regional Manager for Arab States, Europe and CIS, UNV

### Chair:

- **H.E. Mr. Sabri Saidam**, Minister of Education and Higher Education, State of Palestine

### Moderator:

- **Mr. Mr. Ziad Abdel Samad**, Executive Director, Arab NGO Network for Development

### Panelists:

- **H.E. Sheikha Hissa Al-Thani**, Special Envoy for Humanitarian Affairs, League of Arab States
- **Ms. Emma Morley**, Chief of Volunteer Advisory Services, UNV
- **Ms. Nadia Benali**, Secretary General, Inspector of Finances – Chief of Mission, Ministry of Youth and Sports, Morocco
- **Mr. Nader Keyrouz**, Regional Labour Statistician, Regional Office for Arab States, ILO

**This Special Session will be live-streamed.**