

## SPECIAL SESSION 6

# Catalyzing Private Sector Engagement in the Decade of Action

Tuesday 30 March 2021, 11:45 – 13:15 Beirut time, Online

### Background and objective

The COVID-19 pandemic altered the journey to achieving the 2030 Agenda revealing fragile interconnected systems and deep-seated inequalities within all corners of the globe. What has been illuminated however is the power of the private sector to mobilize its resources for the betterment of its stakeholders and communities in which it is embedded, thus emerging as a critical partner to sustainable development.

As we look to recovery and rebuild, in this session we will explore a suite of powerful and practical examples within the Arab world from youth skilling to ensure employability to the empowerment of women in the workplace, and to supporting business resilience among SMEs. This session, comprised of two panels, will present perspectives and remedies on how we can recover better, and most importantly, together, through enhanced accountability, trust and cooperation to set a new course for the Arab world where the SDGs are at the core of business strategy and practices.

### Panel 1: From Youth Skilling to Women's Empowerment in the Workplace – Questions

- How have business practices and strategy been redirected to support youth skilling with a focus on girls? How can we recover better and resurge stronger from COVID-19 through cooperation, partnership and collective action where youth are at the center?
- What measures did your business introduce in response to Covid-19 to address the unique challenges that women face? What have been the (positive) impacts on your business as a result of greater participation of women?
- How have you contributed to building coalitions or collective actions for change to reverberate throughout your networks? How has this had an impact on policy and what changes still need to be made?

This Special Session will be organized over Zoom at [this link](#).

### Panel 1:

#### Facilitator

**Nadia Al Saeed**, CEO, Al Etihad Bank

#### Panelists

**Shatha Alkhasawneh**, Head of Unconventional Learning Department, Luminus Technical University College (LTUC)

**Nagla Kinawi**, HR Director, Vodafone Egypt

### Panel 2:

#### Facilitator

**Dr. Sami Mahroum**, Professor, Solvay Brussels School of Economics and Management and Senior Fellow, Issam Fares Institute, AUB

#### Panelists

**Dr. Ahmed Riad**, ARISE, UAE Co-Chair and Founder, Estmrarya Consulting

**Maissa Abou Adal**, Board Member, HOLDAL SAL

### Panel 2: SME Resilience - Questions

- What is the single most pressing challenge facing SMEs today in the region? What conducive business practices have emerged as a result of COVID-19 in support of SMEs?
- What are the critical components to developing a business resilience framework?
- How can we leverage public-private partnerships to support business continuity and resilience?
- What impact do these alliances have on public policy?