

Moderator



Ms. Mirna El Hajj Barbar | Programme Management Officer, UNESCWA

Programme Management Officer in Information and Communication Technology Policies at ESCWA, and currently project leader of the Arab Digital Inclusion Platform (ADIP). Her work focuses on leading, supervising and coordinating regional and national initiatives in the area of ICT for Development, including among others, digital development, digital transformation, e-accessibility, Internet Governance and Digital Economy. During her tenure at the UN, she led and carried out several analytical studies, conducted regional analysis, authored several publications, and co-founded regional initiatives, including the Arab High-Level Forum on WSIS and 2030 Agenda and the Arab Digital Development Process. As executive coordinator of the ESCWA Arab IGF team, she contributed to the establishment and development of the Arab IGF process since 2012 and served as the Vice-chair of the annual AIGF organizing committee. As the project manager of the "Academy of ICT Essentials for Government Leaders in the ESCWA region" (AIGLE), Dr. Barbar led the Academy and supervised the implementation of the related activities from 2013 to 2016.

Before joining ESCWA, Dr. Barbar was an assistant professor in Computer Science at the Lebanese University, and ICT Advisor at the Lebanese Ministry of Social Affairs leading the ministry's Digital Transformation Program. She has more than 15 years of experience, and several scientific publications and papers published in international journals on e-learning and system engineering. She holds a Ph.D in Computer Science with distinction from Paris 8 University and a master's degree in business administration from Bordeaux IV University, France.

Speakers



Mr. Abraham Abdallah | Consultant on Disability, UNESCWA

Abraham Abdallah has extensive experience working in the fields of disability rights, humanitarian actions, inclusive education and employment, accessibility, and assistive technology. Furthermore, as a human rights activist, he has a particular interest in advocating for the rights of persons with disabilities.

Mr. Abdallah has a Bachelor of Arts in Business Finance and Political Science and a master's degree in international Law.

Mr. Abdallah is the former President of the Arab Organization of Persons with Disabilities and an IDA board member, and currently he is an executive board Member of the National Council on Disability in Lebanon.

Mr. Abdallah is currently a disability consultant for ESCWA, and he was a local expert on social protection and employment for PWDs with ILO and he was teaching for few years a course on human rights and disability at AKU and USAL. Recently, he finished working as the disability advisor for the Foundation for Social promotion (FPS), and coordinating many projects related to disability with OHCHR and IFRC.

Previously Mr. Abdallah served as the Dean of Inclusive Education and the director of the Center for Students with disability (CSD) at Al-kafaat University, and he was a member of the Lebanese official delegation for negotiations on the CRPD at the United Nations, from 2002 to 2006. He participated in the discussions and promoted the rights of persons with disabilities.

Mr. Abdallah is an experienced trainer on topics such as human rights, social protection, social inclusion, capacity building, inclusive education and employment, and data collection, and he has been delivering training sessions tackling these topics in Beirut, Damascus, Amman and Cairo.

Mr. Abdallah has contributed to various publications related to disability rights and also has been quite active in the disability field in Lebanon, the Arab region and on the international arena.



Ms. Itab Shuayb | Inclusive Design Specialist at the Disability Hub-Centre for Lebanese Studies,
Lebanese American University

Itab Shuayb is a specialist in inclusive design. She is a researcher and academic in the field of Architecture, human-centered approach, inclusive design accessibility, and disability studies. She is currently leading the Disability Hub- Centre for Lebanese Studies at the Lebanese American University and she is one out of the 5 Disability Hub steering committee members. At the Disability Hub, she conducts research and studies about disability in Lebanon and the Region to learn more about the Disability rights movement, the barriers, and gaps that limit the full inclusion of people with disabilities. She adopts the social and human rights models of disability, and she advocates for full inclusion by producing short videos and awareness campaigns that consider the needs of diverse users, with and without disabilities, family, children, the elderly, and people from diverse cultural backgrounds.



Mr. Mustafa Attia | Researcher and Consultant on Disability, UK

Mostafa Attia has more than 17 years of experience in advocacy, research, and policymaking in the field of disability and inclusion in education, health, and business. He obtained his M.A and PhD from the University of Leeds in Sociology and Social Policy, specializing in disability politics. Since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, Dr. Attia has been working on ensuring the inclusion of the rights of disabled people in response to international health crises. He is a board member at Disability rights' UK.

Dr. Attia strongly believes that assistive technology is the way forward to support reasonable accommodations as stated in the UNCRPD to ensure that disabled people receive the required training to facilitate their day-to-day life. Through his advocacy and consultancy work, Dr. Attia has elevated this to the policy level. Among several consultancies that he conducted; assistive technology was always one of the key focuses. Including but not limited to his work with the Kuwaiti government to prepare an Inclusive Employment Strategy and assistive technology management systems. This model has provided a group of mechanisms to establish an inclusive employment environment for disabled people, with a reliance on equipment and computer programs to facilitate mainstreaming of different impairments, and recommendations on how to improve disabled people's capacities.



Ms. Sumaya Almajthoob | Associate Social Affairs Officer, UNESCWA

Sumaya Almajthoob as an Associate Social Affairs Officer at the Gender Justice, Population and Inclusive Development Cluster at the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN-ESCWA). Sumaya works on the disability inclusion portfolio in the Arab region where ESCWA supports Member States implement the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). She is a member of different initiatives and projects that promote social inclusion including the Arab Digital Inclusion Platform, ESCWA's project to support the Labor Market Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities among others. She holds a Masters in Middle East Studies from the George Washington University, and a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Ryerson University.