

For Immediate Release



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Workshops at AUB to reduce vulnerability of women migrants in Lebanon's domestic care sector

The American University of Beirut (AUB), together with the International Food Policy Research Institute, held two workshops to help identify key actors and actions to reduce the vulnerability of women migrants in Lebanon's domestic care sector.

Sustainable Development Goal 8.7 specifically aims to eradicate forced labor, modern slavery and human trafficking by 2030, but monitoring and support systems aimed at eradication remain poorly developed. To identify actor networks and pathways for reducing vulnerabilities and strengthening women's empowerment, the workshops used innovative facilitated process methods, including the Net-Map and the Risks and Options Assessment for Decision-Making (ROAD) tools.

"COVID-19 has increased the visibility of migrants and has opened the eyes of the public to some of the challenges they face. Many lost their jobs and could not access health services during several waves of the pandemic, and tens of thousands returned to their home countries. But we have not seen the changes needed, across the entire migration process, to reduce vulnerabilities experienced by migrants working in the Middle East," said AUB Professor Sawsan Abdulrahim.

Whilst women in this sector can be relatively successful and empowered compared to the alternative employment options in their home countries, many women in the South-to-West Asia short-term migration corridor are vulnerable to abuse and exploitation.

A recent review suggests a broad range of interventions to tackle the vulnerability of women migrants, ranging from virtual safe spaces to changing employer attitudes and improving redress mechanisms. With COVID-19, additional measures focused on access to health services, stronger embassy support, and the importance of reintegration programs.

“To identify the most appropriate measures to mitigate vulnerabilities, it is important to understand the unique local context and challenges. Bringing together stakeholders from various sectors with differential but often complementary perspectives and intervention options can help co-develop entry points and solutions to reduce vulnerability and strengthen agency of migrants for better outcomes in countries of work and origin,” said AUB Professor Sawsan Abdulrahim. The workshops were undertaken as part of research funded by the Centre of Excellence for Development Impact and Learning, supported by UK aid from the UK Government.

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For more information please contact:

Simon Kachar, PhD
Interim Director of the Office of Communications
Director of News and Media Relations
Mobile: (+961) 3-427-024
Office: (+961) 1-374-374 ext: 2676
Email: sk158@aub.edu.lb

Note to Editors

About AUB

Founded in 1866, the American University of Beirut bases its educational philosophy, standards, and practices on the American liberal arts model of higher education. A teaching-centered research university, AUB has more than 900 full-time faculty members and a student body of about 9,500 students. AUB currently offers more than 140 programs leading to bachelor's, master's, MD, and PhD degrees. It provides medical education and training to students from throughout the region at its Medical Center that includes a full-service 365-bed hospital.

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