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Empowering Women for Economic Growth

12 September 2024

The banner features a blue background with a world map. At the top left is a yellow headset icon and the word 'WEBINAR' in yellow. To the right is the IMF logo and the METAC logo with the text 'MIDDLE EAST REGIONAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER'. The main title 'EMPOWERING WOMEN FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH' is centered in white. Below it, the date and time 'September 12, 2024, 3:00 p.m. – 3:45 p.m., Beirut Time' are listed. Two circular portraits of speakers are shown: Lisa Kolovich on the left and Jiajia Gu on the right. Below each portrait is their name and title: 'LISA KOLOVICH, Senior Economist, Strategy, Policy and Review Department, IMF' and 'JIAJIA GU, Economist, Strategy, Policy and Review Department, IMF'. At the bottom, logos for the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, the Netherlands, the Swiss Confederation, the European Union, and France are displayed.

Gender equality is a powerful engine for economic growth and resilience. This webinar introduced METAC’s event series on Gender Economics and provided a regional overview of key gender gaps and trends among METAC’s member countries. Drawing upon recent IMF research, it reviewed evidence highlighting the impact of gender inequality on the macroeconomy and the potential economic gains from closing gender gaps. Recognizing policymakers’ critical role in promoting women’s economic empowerment, the seminar also illustrated policies that can foster more inclusive and stable growth in the region.

The introductory webinar was attended by 91 participants who expressed interest in a diverse range of gender issues during the Q&A session. The presenters, Jiajia Gu and Lisa Kolovich from the IMF’s Inclusion and Gender Unit, explained how the IMF incorporates gender issues in its economic surveillance, capacity development, and lending programs. Participants were particularly interested in fiscal issues, such as gender-responsive budgeting and the impact of fiscal policies on women. Others asked for recommendations to overcome legal barriers and about opportunities for Central banks and banking regulators to reduce gender inequalities. The METAC team gives special thanks to Ms. Kolovich and Gu for extending the Q&A session beyond the scheduled time to respond to all questions.