

Message from

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WHO EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN REGION

on the occasion of

**INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2019: THINK EQUAL, BUILD SMART,
INNOVATE FOR CHANGE**

Cairo, Egypt, 8 March 2019

The theme for this year's International Women's Day is "Think equal, build smart, innovate for change". It focuses on novel approaches to advance gender equality and women's empowerment in social protection systems, access to public services and sustainable infrastructure.

As part of its mandate, the World Health Organization works to ensure that women and girls enjoy unrestricted access to health services of good quality with full respect for their dignity and rights.

We have strongly reflected these principles in our new vision for public health in the Eastern Mediterranean Region, Vision 2023, which calls for solidarity and action towards "Health for All by All". We can only achieve Health for All by embracing inclusiveness diversity, equity and equality.

In our Region, WHO has been working together with our Member States, sister UN agencies and other partners to promote women's health and reduce their exposure to the risks of violence and discrimination, both in everyday life and in emergency situations.

We must always remember that our noble health causes and the Sustainable Development Goals cannot be achieved without the full involvement, representation and engagement of women and men at all levels of society.

International Women's Day represents a momentous opportunity to renew our collective commitment to ensure that women and girls have access to the health care they need in an equitable world where their rights are protected, promoted and fully realized.