

ESCWA NEWS 28 JANUARY -1 FEBRUARY 2019



29-30 JANUARY 2019

Modernizing Official Statistics in the ESCWA Region

The **ESCWA Statistical Committee** held its 13th session in Beirut, focusing on the use of official statistics to serve the Sustainable Development Agenda. Discussions centered on advanced technologies and the ethics of privacy and data protection. Participants also exchanged views on new data sources (registrations, big data, satellite imagery); the role of the private sector in data gathering, and the gap between data production and policy making around the 2030 Agenda.

Recommendations included improving statistics on refugees and displaced persons; fully implementing the System of National accounts; and reaffirming the importance of new technology in data collection and analysis. Delegates further recommended that a High-Level Forum on Data for Policy Making take place this year.

During the Committee, ESCWA also formally launched its **Data Portal**, the culmination of 4 years developing an underlying Data Management System allowing data warehousing, analysis, transformation, reporting and publishing. The Data Portal is available in Arabic and English, and features dashboards such as country profiles and specialised data sets in economic, environmental, social, demographic and gender statistics. Users can create profiles to create their own customized dashboards, and all data can be downloaded and used externally. Over 100,000 data series with around 1,000,000 data points are currently available and their number is set to rise in the coming months. ESCWA recently completed a review of data on SDG indicators for the Arab region: the resulting SDG data will be made available on the Data Portal once validation is complete. data.unescwa.org

24-25 JANUARY 2019

Fiscal Policy and Economic Diversification in Iraq

The Iraqi Ministry of Planning hosted an ESCWA delegation to help assess fiscal policy options for economic diversification and employment generation, notably through private sector development. ESCWA's economists met with Minister Al Dulaimy and presented recent fiscal policy analyses with an emphasis on job creation and diversification. These presentations were followed by discussions with representatives from the ministries of planning, labour and finance as well as the Prime Minister's Advisory Council.

ESCWA's continued support to Iraq in implementing its National Development Plan 2018-2022 will include capacity building and policy development in a strategic macro-fiscal framework, addressing the diversification of revenues, taxation, employment generation for youth and women, and enhancing productivity for sustained economic growth. ESCWA was accompanied by a colleague from UNAMI to ensure coordination with the country team; DSRSG/RC/HC Marta Ruedas was also briefed on the outcomes of the mission.

