

# Regional Initiative for Promoting Small-Scale Renewable Energy Applications in rural areas of the Arab Region (REGEND)

**Focus Group meeting  
Beirut – 13 March 2019**

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia



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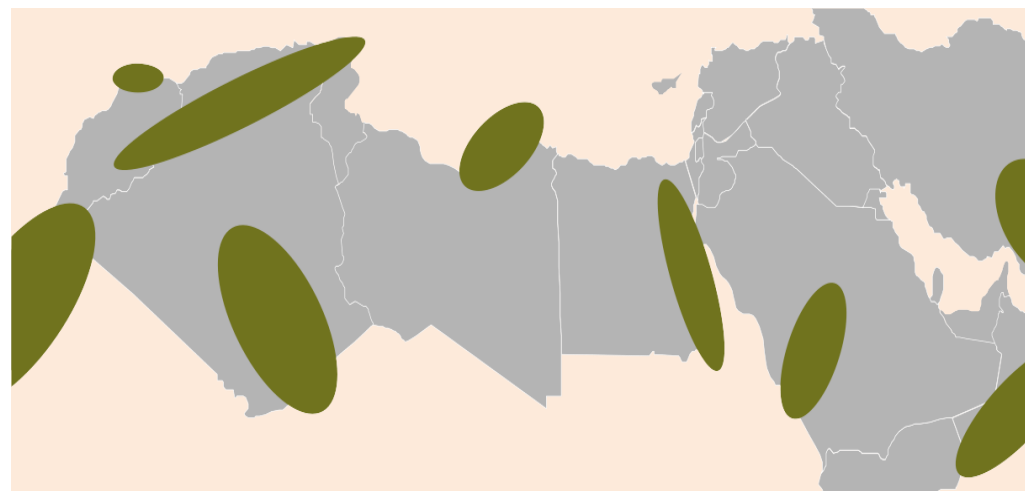
## Background

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- The Arab region is rich in natural resources (abundant fossil fuels and renewables) and is very arid with most of its land covered by desert;
- Rising urbanization and unequal access to energy service and basic services (education, healthcare, water resources, and decent jobs) for a significant portion of the rural population;
- Water, energy and food security, growing manifestation of Climate Change represent major challenges for its sustainable development;
- Rising economic expectations by the region's young, and increasingly educated populations necessitate better governance and sustainable management of the natural assets;
- Volatile political environment, conflict potential and influx of refugees to the rural areas resulted in additional demographic pressures causing a sharp rise in demand for energy, thus impeding the already poor living conditions of the rural populations and increasing competition over scarce resources.
- Rural communities continue to depend on traditional energy resources which are inadequate to support the expansion of agricultural value chains, the extension of basic services and improvements in the quality of life of women, children and vulnerable groups who dominate the Arab rural population;
- Arab governments inability to invest in maintaining and expanding energy national physical infrastructure and to engage in efficient systematic economic and social reforms.

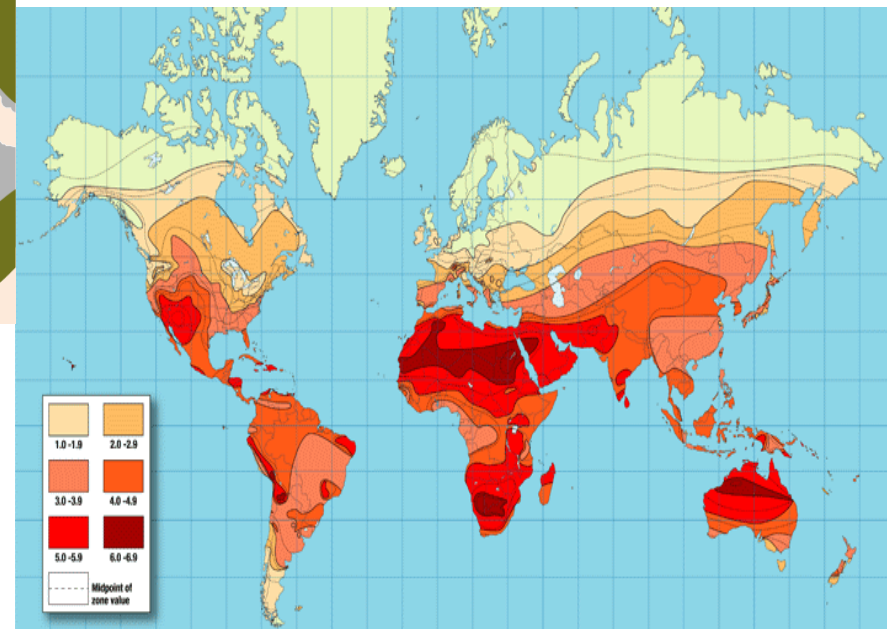
The Arab countries are well endowed with potential for developing renewable energy resources, if adequately used

The share of renewable energy in the energy mix in the Arab region is one of the lowest in the world



source: MAKE, MENA Wind Power Outlook, 2 April 2015, Joffery Dupuy, P. 8

- Wind speed suitable for the production of electricity in various locations of many countries
- High Solar Irradiance



- Vast desert lands, semi-flat, and mostly uninhabited.
- Pilot and commercial projects, industrial potential, Technical staff and available labor.
- Official interest in RE/ Plans and Policies to diversify the energy mix.
- Contribution to Energy Security.
- A tool to reduce emissions.

## Justification

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- Limited knowledge and awareness of Policy makers on policy tools to incentivize the dissemination and use of appropriate small scale RE technologies in rural communities;
- Focus of many governments in the Arab countries on the development of large scale RE power generation systems;
- Centralized systems are driven more by the demands of big industries and urban population;
- Less importance is given to develop, install, assemble and undertake maintenance work for small scale RE systems;
- Lack the enabling environment for the private sector to invest in small scale RE technologies, especially in rural areas;
- Lack of accessible financial support for small scale projects able to facilitate private consumers to install RE technologies;

RE applications if adequately used to meet the needs of rural communities, will open up more **entrepreneurial** opportunities in **productive** sectors, beyond agriculture, will ease the pressure of **migration** to urban areas, and contribute to **reducing the social strife, gender disparity, potential rise of conflict** and build resilience to climate change.

## Project Objectives

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### Long Term Objective



Improve the livelihood, economic benefits, social inclusion and gender equality of Arab rural communities particularly marginalized groups by addressing energy poverty, water scarcity and vulnerability to climate change and other natural resources challenges



Using appropriate **small-scale renewable energy** technologies for **productive activities** to stimulate **entrepreneurial development**, **women empowerment** with emphasis on job creation and developing robust value chains in a **nexus approach** to encourage a **sustainable economy**.



**Support the needs to move away from a model based on “handouts” to a model based on “knowhow” in order to ensure a promising way forward.**

# INCLUSIVE , SUSTAINABLE, ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECONOMIC REVIVAL & DEVELOPMENT OF THE ARAB RURAL COMMUNITIES

## RE Technologies

- Effective/innovative RE-Small scale decentralized and modular, energy systems.
- Water-Energy-Food nexus
- Access to productive resources, appropriate and reliable services.

## Human Capacity

- Model based on knowhow
- Trainings, Knowledge skills/Advisory Services.
- Brining change among rural community from resource poor living standards to reliable, affordable and modern sources of energy.

## Women's Empowerment & Social inclusion

- Economic power in rural women's hands
- Female mentor
- Participative and bottom-up approach

## Entrepreneurial development

- Economic transformation, Environmental and socio-economic development priorities
- Entrepreneurial jobs in productive sectors
- Spawn energy-based enterprises around RE based service providers

## Policy and institutional Framework

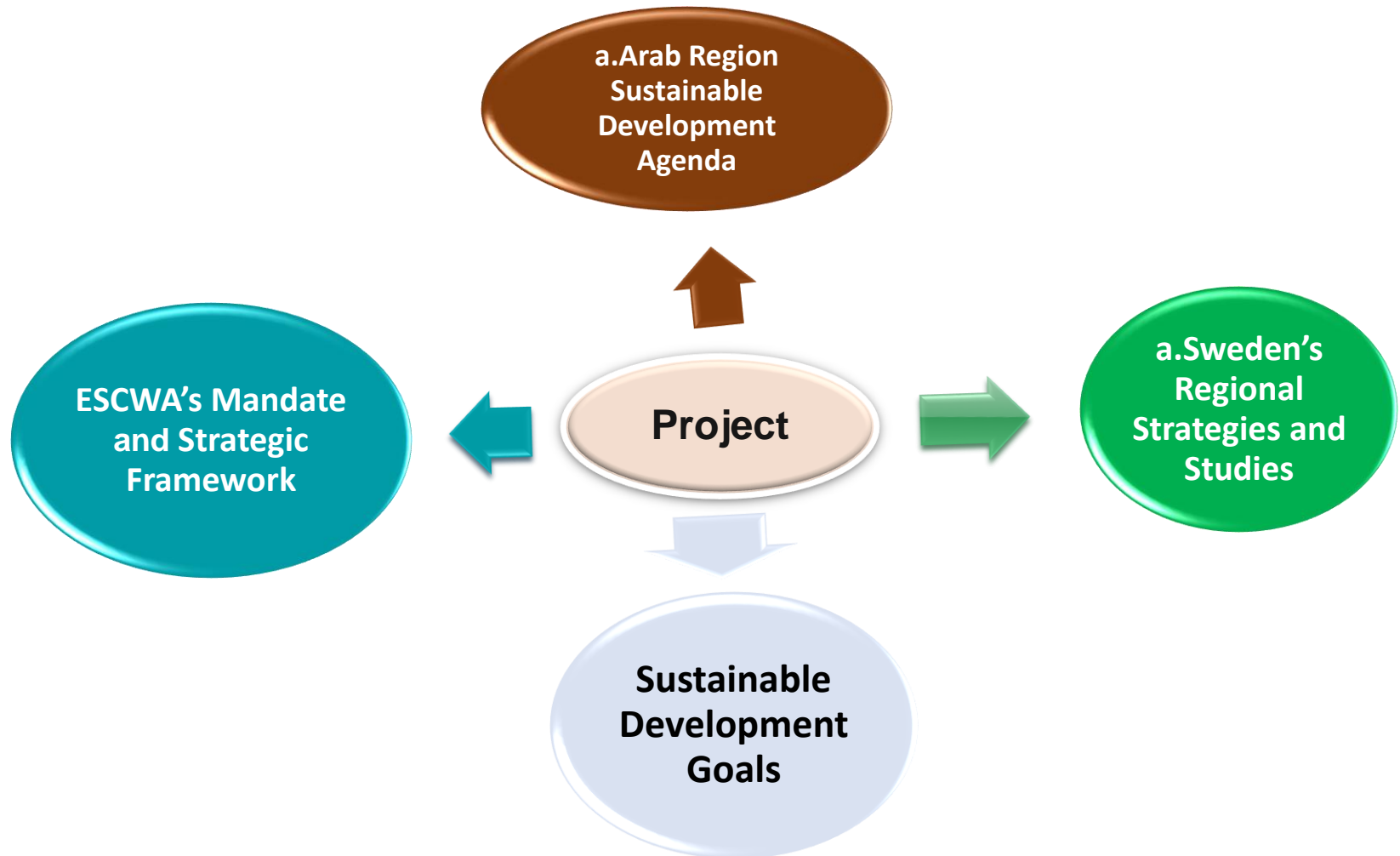
- Pro-poor investments and private sector involvement
- Synergies among national/regional stakeholders.
- Innovative incentive mechanisms.

**Human Rights, Gender equality, resilience to Climate Change**

**Untapped RE Resource, high Unemployment, chronic poverty, water scarcity, food insecurity, energy poverty and vulnerability to climate change of the rural communities of the Arab countries**

## Link to ESCWA Mandate, AGENDA 2030 & SIDA Strategies

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## Target Beneficiaries

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- Focus will be made on Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia, noting that all other ESCWA Member Countries will also benefit from the outcomes of the present Project;
- Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia represent a net energy importing countries, highly dependent on fossil fuel, however, these countries are well endowed with natural energy sources to benefit from alternative such RE;
- **Primary beneficiaries:** Rural population with emphasis on marginalized and vulnerable groups
- **The second category of beneficiaries:** Governmental relevant ministries and Agencies (*Energy, Economic Development, Industry, Agriculture, Planning, Social Affairs, ..*), local government bodies, civil societies, relevant NGOs and women associations, SME, Financial institutions, Academic Research institutions, Universities;
- Project results and recommendations will be shared in national and regional workshops with other Arab countries.



## PROJECT EXPECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND INDICATORS OF ACHIEVEMENT

**Increased knowledge on the socio economic, political dynamics, environmental consideration of Arab rural communities and understanding of appropriate SC RE technologies**

**Enhanced capacity of public, private, financial institutions to apply business models for implementation of appropriate SC RE technologies in the productive sectors of rural areas.**

**Improved opportunities for rural economic development through creating the enabling environment for the private sector and women entrepreneurs to invest in IGA by increasing use of SC RE technologies**

**Sustainability of the Regional Initiative beyond Project Timeframe**

- Knowledge of local context of the rural communities and understanding of SC-RE technologies have been improved;
- Gender based Advisory Network on energy and entrepreneurial skills in rural development is established;
- Steering Committee (SC) and Local Facilitating Teams (LFT) are put in place.
- At least two participating countries have considered the implementation scheme of business model in Income Generating Activities (IGA);
- At least two women initiatives are presented as bankable projects for funding in each of the four targeted communities;
- Pilot projects are effectively implemented & lessons learned successfully shared.
- Reforms, resolutions, decrees, measures adopted or prepared for adoption to mainstream the use of SC-RE technologies for rural development has increased;
- Developed Strategic Agenda for RE and rural development;
- Strategies, plans and policies adopted by line ministries to support women empowerment and enhance their roles as "Actors of Change" for the sustainable development of rural areas, have augmented.
- Advisory services requests received to support in the implementation of Project outcomes;
- Number of SC-RE-based investment project proposals prepared by local entrepreneurs and submitted to national, international investors, financial institutions, investment funds;
- Projects outputs are used by Partners and Capacity Building programs organized for mainstreaming RE technologies in rural national development plans;
- Network of Arab-Rural Practitioners established;
- Functional Regional online platform for policy dialogue, dissemination of knowledge and information of best practices.

## Project Sustainability

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- **Environmental Sustainability:** promoting pro-poor investments in energy solutions focusing on environmentally adequate, affordable, and region specific SC- RE technologies,
- **Gender Equality: integral part of the Project activities & outputs and as a cross-cutting priority along the various phase of its implementation:** through the SC and each LFT, the Gender based advisory network, Pilot Projects, involvement of Women’s associations as an implementing partner, mentors and Agent of Change, Gender Mainstreaming Strategy and Plan.
- **Human Right Based Approach:** Project contribute to improving living standards of rural communities and ease the pressure of migration to urban areas and thus contribute to reducing the social strife. Rights Based Strategy and Action Plans, combine pro-poor investments by encouraging small businesses and new job opportunities, where women and men will have equal opportunities for “decent work’.
- **Capacity Development: Local Facilitating Teams LFTs,** key institutions, private sector, civil society, will take part at different capacity buildings,: **Training of the Trainers ToT,** targeted program trainings on issues related to energy and RE technologies, water, food security, policy tools, gender mainstreaming and entrepreneurial development, technical and advisory services to be provided to ESCWA member countries, upon their requests.

## PROJECT APPROACH and OWNERSHIP

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- **Bottom up** and **multi-stakeholder participatory** approaches are being anticipated as an effective method for **rural development** initiatives;
- Strong involvement of the **Local Facilitating Teams (LFTs)**, the **Gender Network** and the **Arab-Rural Practitioners Network**;
- **Multi-Stakeholder Forum (MSF)**: to bridge the communication gap between the various **stakeholders**, build effective and sustainable **partnerships** for coordination, wide **dissemination** of Project results and lesson learned;
- **Communication plan** to ensure stakeholders' **engagement** and provide accurate access to **relevant information** and ownership.

## Risk Management

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- The strategy to manage the possible and different type of risks that might occur during the implementation of the Project is synthesized **in the ‘Risk Log Matrix’**
- Commitment level to be reflected by stakeholder’s, involvement and insufficient project ownership by national and local institutions, decision-making process by countries allowing active cooperation by stakeholders and an environment favorable for implementing different activities,
- Conflict and political instability and security, social risks, Budget, Foreign currency exchange risk.
- Will help finetune the initial risk assessment: “Baseline study on socio economic and political dynamics and environmental consideration” and the **“Country gender Assessment report”** .

## Expected outcomes from the Focus Group meeting in Lebanon

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- Evaluation of the Rural context of Lebanon
- Determining the Opportunities and Potential Rural areas for implementation of the REGEND Project
- Role and support of the different entities in the framework of the Project

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Thank YOU