

**Expert Group Meeting on “Towards a Regional Monitoring Framework for
Enhancing Institutional Effectiveness, Advancing Inclusiveness
Ending Violence, and Strengthening Anti-Corruption”**

Kempinski Hotel, Amman - Jordan
12-13 December 2019

Work Programme

Day 1 –Thursday: 12 December

8:30 - 9:00 **Arrival and registration**

9:00 - 9:15 **Opening Session, Introduction and Objectives**

- Mr. Tarik Alami, UN-ESCWA
- Ms. Susanne Dam Hansen, OIC Amman Regional Hub, UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States

9:15 -10:45 **Session 1: Latest updates on the indicators of SDG 16 and the Governance Indicators working group**

Improving public sector performance and governance is a key pillar of the 2030 Agenda. To ensure that the relationship between the State and its peoples is inclusive, transparent and accountable, strengthening governance statistical capacity is fundamental. This session will entail an overview of existing processes and data that focus on supporting the attainment of SDG 16. The session will also discuss the latest challenges and updates regarding SDG 16 indicators and the UN working group on governance indicators. Panelists and participants are invited to discuss the following issues:

- Current state of play and the technical and non-technical challenges of measuring the indicators of SDG 16 to address data gaps given that the IAEG meeting in October 2019 reclassified all indicators out of Tier 3. What is missing from the SDG 16 framework and how the work on governance statistics or initiatives such as SDG 16+ can fill those gaps?
- Which mechanisms for collecting data are recommended and which options are feasible to make sure that indicators reflect the particularities and challenges of different country groups?
- Within the framework of SDGs 16, what role can civil society organizations play in data collection and monitoring performance of governments?

Moderator: Youssef Chaitani, ESCWA

Presentations:

- Maisaa Youssef, ESCWA
- Ulrika Jonsson, UNDP Oslo Governance Center
- Celso Borges, Praia City Group Secretariat

Open discussion

10:45 - 11:00 **Coffee Break**

11:00 - 12:00 **Session 2: A Snapshot of Trends in the Arab Region**

The session will present governance trends and identify main features that characterize Arab countries pertaining to institutional effectiveness, rule of law, corruption and violence. Discussions during this session will be on the challenges associated with the existing indicators, the context of the region, reform efforts and the suitability of the indicators of SDG 16. The session will also introduce regional and global efforts attempting to quantify different dimensions of governance to explore with the participants the relevance and usability of such efforts. The panel will present and discuss issues such as:

- Current trends of governance, including institutional effectiveness, rule of law, corruption and

conflict, in the Arab region

- The current state of play of current data and challenges
- Indicators on the context of governance in the Arab region

Moderator: Rawhi Afghani, UNDP

Presentations:

- Joaquin Salido, Youssef Chaitani, ESCWA
- Farah Choucair, Arkan El Seblani, UNDP

Open discussion

12:00 - 13:30 Session 3: Open discussion on efforts to develop country-specific governance indicators (15 min for each country representative)

The session will be dedicated to knowledge sharing and exchange of ideas and on-going efforts at the country-level to develop a relevant and operational indicator's framework on governance. Country representatives will be given a 15-min slot to brief the audience on their initiatives. An open discussion among country representatives on the current initiatives and the challenges associated with the existing indicators of the SDG 16 and country-specific indicators identified in the national 2030 strategy plans.

The open discussion will consider the set of questions circulated to country representatives.

Moderators: Hassan Krayem, UNDP and Karam Karam, ESCWA

Presentations:

- Nadia Touhri (INS, connecting through Skype) and Ines Kharrat (Presidency of the Government, Tunisia)
- Ministry of Planning, Jordan
- Ministry of Planning and Commission of Integrity, Iraq
- CAPMAS, Egypt
- Ministry of Justice and PCBS, Palestine

Open discussion

13:30 - 14:30 Lunch

14:30 - 15:45 Session 4: Enhancing Institutional Effectiveness

Enhancing government effectiveness through institutional development, transparency and accountability in order to deliver on commitments to the 2030 Agenda is vital for the Arab region. Improving Institutional effectiveness requires adopting an engaging culture of systematic collection, analysis, organization, and dissemination of quantitative and qualitative information concerning the characteristics and performance of the institutions, policies and programmes implemented. The overarching goal of institutional effectiveness is to provide quality and timely information such that informed decisions and effective planning can be implemented by government authorities. In turn, social cohesion at the vertical level, i.e. state-society relations, will be strengthened by the cumulative impact of inclusive and effective policies at all levels. The focus group will discuss issues such as:

- Why measuring institutional effectiveness is key?
- What are the principles for implementing programmes that establish planning and monitoring practices to support evidence-based and results-oriented public policies?
- What are the reforms required in the current institutional settings to make such policy making framework possible? What are the key points at the national level that must be strengthened to provide public institutions with such capacities?
- Example: What data is necessary for measuring SDG16.7, 'Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels'?
- What are the possibilities to harmonize of country level plans with regional and global plans,

to contribute to the 2030 Agenda?

- How can effectiveness be measured and enhanced? Are there innovative tools to achieve it?
- What are the challenges in collecting and analyzing official data or statistical capacity available at the national level (and sub-national) to properly measure institutional effectiveness as identified by SDG16?
- Can methodological issues, political challenges, capacity deficit, and implementation issues around data threaten the achievement of SDG 16?

Moderators: Reem Abou Hassan, former Minister of Social Development, Jordan

Presentations:

- Ada Fishta, UNDP Tunisia and Ines Kharrat (Presidency of the Government, Tunisia)
- Reem Abou Hassan, former Minister of Social Development, Jordan
- Azmi Shuaibi, Board Member of Arab Parliamentarians against Corruption and Anti-Corruption Adviser to the Board of Directors of AMAN – Coalition for Accountability and Integrity, Palestine

Open discussion

15:45 – 17:00 Session5: Preventing and Combatting Corruption

Corruption is major challenge for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. By establishing the explicit link with peace and just and inclusive societies, the Agenda sets anti-corruption as a global imperative to achieve the SDGs. To this end, the 2030 Agenda is supported by the commitments adopted in the UN Convention Against Corruption. The focus group will address issues such:

- How does the progress achieved and the challenges remaining with regards to the anti-corruption agenda in the Arab states region be articulated in relation to the 2030 Agenda?
- Methodological challenges in the area of anti-corruption; some targets are multidimensional and cannot be measured solely by one or two indicators. How can this challenge be overcome?
- Which are the different methods, tools and good practices to mainstream anti-corruption initiatives in sustainable development plans and programmes in the region?
- What are the possibilities to implement practical tools and good practices to harmonize the monitoring of sustainable development and anti-corruption initiatives in the region?
- The use of non-official or secondary data sources; can this resolve the issue? Do these sources have broader data coverage for SDG 16 indicators? What political issues may this raise?
- Anti-corruption efforts seem to focus mostly on public institutions and public sector. Shouldn't these efforts include the private sector also?
- Public access to information laws and its importance in fighting corruption.

Moderator: Akran El Seblani, UNDP

Presentations:

- Somod Bargouthi, Coalition for Accountability and Integrity AMAN
- Ahmad Sakr Ashour, Alexandria University and Nile University, Egypt
- Nizar Barkouti, Director General for Human Rights at the Presidency of Government, Tunisia. Researcher in the fight against corruption
- Representative of Rasheed Coalition in Jordan (TBC)

Open discussion

Day 2 – Date: Friday, 13th December

09:30 – 11:00 Session 6: Ending Violence

Ending violence in the Arab region is an important factor in advancing development. The 2030 agenda attributes great importance to the promotion of non-violent and inclusive societies. Even a brief period of violent conflict can literally undo decades of development work. Reducing violence in the region requires determined action by the Arab states and the whole of the United Nations system and its partners, in terms of peacebuilding, reducing the impact of conflict on development outcomes and in terms of working more effectively towards prevention. The session will examine the following topics:

- Violence has many dimensions and affects differently different population groups, which monitoring framework or data resources can be drawn upon to provide the necessary inputs for policy making and evaluation?
- How can the 2030 agenda serve as a roadmap for peacebuilding and reconstruction in the Arab region? While the Agenda offers guiding principles and activities that conflict-ridden countries could undertake to achieve sustainable peace, the internal and external structural challenges must be tackled with the relevant national and regional resources in terms of data and assistance, what are the options?
- How does violent conflict hinder monitoring and the proper assessment of SDG 16? Countries undergoing conflict have degraded statistical capacity. What are the alternatives in terms of data and methodologies?

Moderator: Youssef Chaitani, ESCWA and Rawhi Afghani, UNDP

Presentations:

- Joaquin Salido, ESCWA
- Lauren Blaxter, ACLED
- Lea Perekrests, Institute for Economics and Peace
- Tilman Brück, International Security and Development Center (via Skype)
- Pieter D. Wezeman, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (via Skype)

Open discussion

11:00 - 11:30 Coffee break

11:30 - 13:30 Session 7: The way forward: recommendations and next steps

Open discussion on how to come up with proposals pertaining to the following:

- What is required to move towards better governance indicators in terms of data production and analysis?
- What new data is needed outside the existing SDGs indicators' monitoring framework?
- What are some of the reforms that should be adopted to facilitate the entry of new actors and new data sources?
- Future venues for research and policy support.

Moderator: Karam Karam, ESCWA and Farah Choucair, UNDP

- Roundtable with all the participants

13:30 - 14:30 Lunch

14:30 - 15:30 Session 7: Continued

15:30 – 16:00 Closing session and wrap up