

**Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)**

Coordination meeting for statisticians on tracking and monitoring food security in the Arab Region
Beirut, Lebanon 26 June 2019

INFORMATION NOTE**I. BACKGROUND**

The concept of food security has evolved over the past decades, and its scope has widened. In 1996, the World Food Summit provided a definition of food security that has become widely accepted and used today and that conceptualizes food security according to four main dimensions, namely: availability, access, utilization and stability over time. Furthermore, in 2015, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development articulated the centrality of food security in its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted SDG2 that aims at ending hunger, achieving food security, improving nutrition, and promoting sustainable agriculture.

In the Arab region, emphasis has been placed on the food availability dimension with efforts concentrated on increasing agricultural production and achieving self-sufficiency. The “Strategy for Sustainable Arab Agricultural Development for the Next Two Decades (2005-2025)” by the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development (AOAD), focuses on the availability of safe food and stability to Arab Rural Communities. Other initiatives include the Riyadh Declaration aiming to Enhance Arab Cooperation to Face World Food Crisis (2003) and the Emergency Arab Food Security Programme (2009).

Within the context of the project on “Promoting Food and Water Security through Cooperation and Capacity Development in the Arab Region”, particularly component four on “Enhancing the assessment capacity of the status of food security in the Arab countries”, ESCWA, in collaboration with partners, has developed a framework for the purpose of monitoring food security in the Arab region. This framework was adopted by the Arab Ministers responsible for Agriculture during the 35th meeting of the Executive Committee of the Arab Organization for Agriculture Development (AOAD) on 28 March 2019. The adopted framework is the result of a long consultative process that included extensive desk research and a thorough analysis of both national and regional policies that relate to food security through any of its four dimensions, and a series of consultative meetings that brought together experts from regional and international organizations, the project national focal points, and UN organizations.

In this respect, ESCWA, in cooperation with FAO, AOAD and the Arab Institute for Training and Research in Statistics (AITR), is organizing the “Coordination meeting for statisticians on tracking and monitoring food security in the Arab Region” on 26 June 2019 at the UN-House, in Beirut, Lebanon, to present to the National Statistics offices in the Arab Region the adopted framework, including its dashboard and indicators, in preparation for its dissemination through training workshops and preparation of the First report on the status of Food security in the Arab region.

II. OBJECTIVES

The objective of this Coordination Meeting is to review the adopted monitoring framework and introduce the related indicators for monitoring food security at the national levels as endorsed by Arab Countries. During the meeting, participating national statistical offices and experts are expected to deliberate on those indicators and related data and discuss the expected role of the statistical offices in implementing this framework.

The specific objectives of the coordination meeting are to:

- Review the current food monitoring systems in the Arab Region
- Present the Food Security Monitoring framework and its relevance for the region
- Introduce the selected indicators for monitoring Food Security and related dashboards
- Discuss the role of the statistical offices for Monitoring Food Security

III. PARTICIPANTS

The meeting will bring together the representatives of Arab National Statistical Offices to coordinate with ESCWA, FAO, AOAD and AITR experts on the implementation of the food monitoring Framework in each Arab Country..

IV. ORGANIZATION OF THE MEETING

The meeting will be held at the UN House in downtown Beirut, Lebanon, on 26 June 2019. Participants are kindly requested to arrive at 9:00 am to register for the meeting, which will promptly start at 9:30 am.

V. LOGISTICAL INFORMATION

Participants are kindly requested to return completed registration form to ESCWA no later than 12 June 2019 together with a scanned passport photograph so an access ID could be issued well ahead of time. Participants are responsible for securing their own visa for travel to Lebanon.

VI. CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence and inquiries concerning the meeting should be addressed to:

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