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

### National Policy Workshop on “Regulatory, Institutional and Financial Frameworks Needed to Promote Small-Scale Renewable Energy Technologies and Applications for Rural Development”

Hotel Laico, Tunis, Tunisia, 25-26 February 2020

## INFORMATION NOTE

Within the framework of the “Regional Initiative for Promoting Small-Scale Renewable Energy Applications in Rural Areas of the Arab Region (REGEND)” Project, the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), in partnership with the National Agency for Energy Conservation (ANME) and the General Commission for Regional Development (CGDR), is organizing a National Policy Workshop on “Regulatory, Institutional and Financial Frameworks Needed to Promote Small-Scale Renewable Energy Technologies and Applications for Rural Development”. The National Policy Workshop will be held at the Laico Hotel, Tunis, Tunisia, on 25-26 February 2020.

### 1. Background Information

The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) are implementing the “Regional Initiative for Promoting Small-Scale Renewable Energy Applications in Rural Areas of the Arab Region (REGEND)”. This regional initiative includes several partners in implementation such as the League of Arab States (LAS), line ministries, local authorities, various regional organizations, UN organizations, local and regional NGOs, research institutions and academia.

By using appropriate Small-Scale Renewable Energy (RE) technologies for productive activities and entrepreneurial development, REGEND aims to improve the livelihood, economic benefits, social inclusion and gender equality of Arab rural communities, particularly marginalized groups, through a bottom-up and integrated approach by addressing energy poverty, water scarcity, vulnerability to climate change and other natural resources challenges in three targeted countries, namely: Jordan, Lebanon and Tunisia.

REGEND also intends to support national efforts to create an enabling policy environment, design policies and set up institutional frameworks favorable to the use of Small-Scale RE technologies in rural areas and creating suitable financing opportunities by showcasing case studies and sharing best practices through Policy Toolkits.

In this context and as part of REGEND project activities, national policy case studies were initiated in each of the targeted countries by involving key stakeholders and national organizations/government institutions and experts on policy, regulatory, financial and legal frameworks applicable in the rural development context by integrating the energy, water, agricultural sectors and gender equity and entrepreneurial development through a holistic approach.

Since the creation of a clear and credible policy and regulatory system is important for attracting private sector investment, each policy case study will focus on assessing the ground-level policies and regulations for rural productive activities that could promote both Small-Scale RE technologies and entrepreneurial

development and would leverage effects in terms of readiness and capacity to develop bankable projects for funding. A gender-specific line to promote women's economic empowerment by access to market through specific initiatives to engage women, as Actors of Change in income-generating activities and increase their income, will also be considered and assessed.

The National Case Study is also intended to analyze the strategies and policies for rural development, provide value added in which national policy makers at different levels can be shown what direct social, environmental, and financial benefits will be forthcoming from the use of Small-Scale RE technologies within the rural communities, specifically in the productive sectors, given that policy reforms are made. These may be economic, financial, institutional or comparatively legal or simple administrative reforms.

In this context, ESCWA, in partnership with ANME and CGDR, is organizing this National Policy Workshop to support the development of the Case Study and provide guidelines to conceptualize REGEND's Policy Toolkit as Regional Strategic Guidelines to improve the enabling environment for the private sector and women entrepreneurs to invest in income-generating activities by increasing the use of Small-Scale RE technologies and applications in productive activities in the rural areas.

The meeting will involve national government institutions, UN and international organizations, experts, financial institutions and representatives from local communities, NGOs, private sector and key partner organizations.

The workshop will feature presentations, discussion panels and working groups that will cover rural development, renewable energy and natural resources, gender empowerment, financial mechanism and entrepreneurial development in the rural context.

## **2. Objectives of the Workshop**

Through a holistic approach, the main objectives of the National Policy Workshop include, but are not limited to the following:

- Discuss and review national strategies, regulations and policies linked directly or indirectly to the rural context to create synergies between policies in key sectors (energy, water, agricultural, tourism, services, industries, etc.).
- Review and discuss the assessment of the ground-level regulations for rural productive activities that could promote both Small-Scale RE technologies and entrepreneurial development and would leverage effects in terms of readiness and enhanced capacity to develop bankable projects.
- Present current or under-development strategies plans and policies to support women empowerment and enhance their roles as "Actors of Change" for the sustainable development of rural areas.
- Provide recommendations on reforms and measures (normative and institutional framework mechanisms and incentives) to introduce the efficient use of available resources to enhance the resilience of rural communities and integrate gender considerations in income-generating activities through the increased use of Small-Scale RE technologies and applications in the productive sectors.
- Provide a value added in which national policy makers at different levels can be shown what direct social, environmental, and financial benefits will be forthcoming from the use of Small-Scale RE technologies within rural communities, specifically in the productive sectors, given that necessary policy reforms are made.

The key messages and recommendations of the National Policy Workshop will serve as the basis for producing Tunisia's case study and Policy Toolkit to support policymakers, government and local institutions in operationalizing a holistic approach for policy regulatory reforms, financial and legal framework needed to promote Small-Scale RE technologies and applications in rural areas.

### 3. Participants

The National Policy Workshop on “Regulatory, Institutional and Financial Frameworks Needed to Promote Small-Scale RE Technologies and Applications for Rural Development” will bring together various local key partner organizations, government and financial institutions and relevant governmental regional organizations, national experts, representatives from private sector, NGOs, academia and local communities.

### 4. Date and Venue

The National Policy Workshop on “Regulatory, Institutional and Financial Frameworks Needed to Promote Small-Scale Renewable Energy Technologies and Applications for Rural Development” will be held at the Laico Hotel, Tunis, Tunisia, on 25 and 26 February 2020.

Registration is scheduled for 08:30 A.M. on Tuesday, 25 February 2020. The National Policy Workshop will conclude by 02:00 P.M. on Wednesday, 26 February 2020.

### 5. Language

The National Policy Workshop will be conducted in the Arabic and French languages.

### 6. Correspondence

All correspondence related to the workshop is to be sent to either one of the below addresses:

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