

Regional Coordination Mechanism

TOR – Thematic Working Group (TWG) on supporting the transitional phase to a Post-2015 development agenda and the SDGs (Transitional MDGs/SDGs TWG)

Timeline: Until the post-2015 development agenda and the SDGs come into effect

Background:

As the secretariat to the Regional Coordination Mechanism (RCM), the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) convened the nineteenth meeting of the RCM on 26-27 November 2013, for the first time at the Headquarters of the League of Arab States in Cairo. RCM members agreed that the Inter-agency MDG Thematic Working Group for Arab States will revise its terms of reference to reflect the importance of inter-agency coordination during the transition to the Post-2015 Agenda and the SDGs in 2014 and 2015. In this context, these summary terms of reference propose a revised scope and activities to support the transitional phase to post-2015 development agenda and the SDGs, while maintaining the membership and functions of the TWG on MDGs ([See MDGs TWG TOR](#)). In addition, RCM members may propose additional interested focal points for the Post-2015 Development Agenda and SDGs.

Since the 2013 RCM Meeting in Cairo, ESCWA has coordinated a number of activities and initiatives that have included the participation and input of RCM members. These activities include: the Arab High-Level Forum on Sustainable Development held in Amman in April 2014 and which served as the regional preparatory meeting for the next sessions of the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) and the Annual Ministerial Review (AMR); The Arab Consultative Meeting on an Accountability Framework for the Post-2015 Development Agenda held in Tunis in September 2014 resulting in a Chair's Summary that was submitted to the SG; and the initiation of work on the Arab Sustainable Development Report, expected to be launched in 2015.

Parameters of the Transitional TWG:

- ❖ ESCWA will act as the convener and chair of the Transitional Thematic Working Group;
- ❖ The timeline envisaged for this Transitional TWG is until Q4 of 2015, at which time the current ToRs will be superseded by more detailed ToRs developed based on the adoption of the Post-2015 Development Agenda and the SDGs in September 2015.

Objectives of the transitional TWG and Roles as per recommendations of the RCM:

- ❖ **To act as a Repository of Information and Documentation relating to the Post-2015 and SDGs:** As the convener of the TWG, ESCWA will create and administer an electronic platform for knowledge sharing and for dissemination of global and regional information on the Post 2015 Development Agenda and the SDGs. The platform will function as a central repository, allowing TWG members to upload and access relevant documents. In particular, the platform will allow the exchange of draft documents relevant to the regional processes that are not available in the public domain.

- ❖ **To collect inputs and feedback into key documents and reports on the transition to the post-2015 development agenda and the SDGs, by inviting RCM members to contribute issues briefs and to act as peer reviewers for key outputs, where needed.** For example, as the Convener of the Arab Sustainable Development Report, due to be published in 2015, ESCWA has been, and will continue to, consult with and solicit inputs by RCM members into the preparation of the final report. ESCWA may also invite RCM members to contribute to the update of the regional MDGs database by 2015, based on an agreed action plan and timeline developed by the TWG. Other RCM members are also encouraged to use the TWG as a platform to seek technical input and peer review for their planned outputs.
- ❖ **To coordinate participation in key events leading up to the launch of the Post-2015 Development Agenda.** For example, ESCWA will be organizing the 2nd Meeting of the Arab Forum on Sustainable Development in April/May 2015, and will invite RCM members to contribute to it. Other agencies should use the TWG to ensure that members of the RCM are aware of events being organized and have the opportunity to participate. As the convener of the TWG, ESCWA in particular should be kept informed of relevant activities planned by other agencies and be invited to attend meetings and consultations, when appropriate.
- ❖ **To liaise in the coordination and technical backstopping and support to the League of Arab States on issues related to the MDGs and Post-2015 development agenda.** ESCWA will coordinate among the members of the TWG for technical backstopping support to LAS on MDGs and post-2015 agenda and the SDGs, which includes coordinated action by members to provide inputs as well as sharing and communicating about on-going activities and outcomes.

In addition, the Transitional TWG will continue to undertake the following activities:

- ❖ **To share among members reports, research and policy notes, analytical studies and guiding tools** conducted and/or developed by the respective agencies with specific attention to the MDGs in the Arab region and sub-regions and the transition from MDGs to SDGs.
- ❖ **To update on a regular basis the MDG dataset using national and international sources** (mainly UNSD) in a manner that is consistent with the guidelines (meta data) for calculating MDGs (ESCWA) including the impact of conflict and political instability on MDG attainment.

Dissemination:

- ❖ Reports of the TWG will be submitted to all agencies that are members of the TWG;
- ❖ ESCWA will exert additional efforts to achieve wider dissemination of the reports to relevant stakeholders at the national, regional and international levels.

Reporting:

- ❖ As the convener of the Transitional MDG/SDG TWG, ESCWA will prepare a progress report to the 21st meeting of the RCM in Quarter 4 of 2015, and propose a new set of ToRs and working arrangement for coordinating inter-agency work on the SDGs and the new development agenda beyond 2015.