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## ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR WESTERN ASIA (ESCWA)

## ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE (ECE)

UNDA Project Closing Workshop: “Renewable Energy UNDA project conclusions and way forward”

Beirut, Lebanon | 13-14 December 2017

### Information Note

The UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN ESCWA), in partnership with the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), is organizing a regional workshop to present the “**Renewable Energy UNDA project conclusions and way forward**”, to be held on 13-14 December 2017, in Beirut, Lebanon. The workshop is organized as a final event to conclude the activities included in a United Nations Development Account (UNDA) capacity-building project, led by UN ESCWA in partnership with UNECE, aiming at enhancing renewable energy (RE) investments in Member countries in the context of sustainable development and climate change mitigation.

#### I. Background Information

The development of sustainable energy systems is essential in implementing sustainable development strategies. The development of RE is one of the main targets of the Sustainable Development Goals as stated in SDG 7 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that was adopted by the General Assembly in September 2015 (Resolution A/RES/70/1). It is also one of the three pillars of the UN SE4All decade. The two frameworks call for a stronger deployment of RE projects, and a higher contribution of RE sources to the countries’ energy mix. Furthermore, economically viable RE solutions are increasingly becoming available, and countries, worldwide, have expressed their interest in adopting RE in power production and other sectors with high carbon dioxide emission levels.

Many developing countries, and countries with economies in transition, have set ambitious goals to increase the contribution of renewable energy in their energy mix to improve their energy security and to move towards more sustainable sources of energy, thus converging with the goals set by SDG7 and SE4All. However, most of these countries face serious challenges in setting up the appropriate implementation environment and attracting and mobilizing the adequate investments for their renewable energy projects. This is largely due to the lack of awareness and expertise about appropriate financing instruments for developing RE projects. This situation inhibits the formulation and development of renewable energy investment proposals that can meet the requirements of relevant financing institutions. Therefore, there is a need to develop skills at the national level, both in public and private sectors, that would improve the capacity of relevant RE project investors in identifying, formulating, and setting up appropriate financing arrangements for their RE projects to present them to relevant financial institutions as bankable projects and subsequently implement them.

#### II. Scope

The present UNDA project, on “Promoting Renewable Energy Investments for Climate Change Mitigation and Sustainable Development”, was designed to work closely with RE policy makers, project developers, and other RE stakeholders in the UNECE and ESCWA Member Countries, to carry out several capacity building activities related to promoting RE investments (<https://www.unescwa.org/node/94046>). These activities aimed at:

- (a) Developing the skills of the public and private sectors at the national level to identify, develop and implement RE investment projects.
- (b) Providing assistance to authorities to introduce regulatory and institutional reforms needed to support these investment projects.
- (c) Enhancing the financing of renewable energy projects in selected countries.

The UNDA project activities addressed the following RE related topics:

- ✓ **Policy advice** through the development of case study reports on the experience of policy reforms in four UN ESCWA Member states and four UN ECE Member states, as well as the organisation of meetings addressing RE policies and institutional frameworks, and their role in promoting RE investments. One policy seminar in Baku, Azerbaijan, within the framework of the 7th International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development (IFESD-7) ([www.unescwa.org/events/enabling-policies-promote-financing-renewable-energy](http://www.unescwa.org/events/enabling-policies-promote-financing-renewable-energy)), and the regional workshop, organized in Astana, Kazakhstan, within the framework of the Ministerial Conference and 8th International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development ([www.unescwa.org/events/regional-workshop-renewable-energy-investment-pipeline](http://www.unescwa.org/events/regional-workshop-renewable-energy-investment-pipeline)).
- ✓ **Capacity building in RE project business planning** through the development of a guidebook for project developers for preparing RE investments business plans and the organization of two regional trainings on the same topic. The first one organized by UN ECE in Yerevan, Armenia in the context of the 6th International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development (IFESD-6) (<https://www.unecce.org/energy/welcome/areas-of-work/energy-efficiency/meetings-and-events/energy-efficiency/energy-efficiency/2015/sixth-international-forum-on-energy-for-sustainable-development/docs.html#/BPREIP>), and the second training organized by UN ESCWA in Rabat, Morocco ([www.unescwa.org/events/renewable-energy-project-development-finance-and-business-planning](http://www.unescwa.org/events/renewable-energy-project-development-finance-and-business-planning)).
- ✓ **Technical assistance to selected RE project developers** to accompany them in preparing prefeasibility studies and draft business plans for their RE projects. In addition to their participation in the related training workshops, a close individualized technical assistance was provided to selected project developers from both UN ESCWA and UN ECE Member countries, to produce a RE project portfolio in each region. The technical assistance helped the selected project developers to prepare prefeasibility studies for their RE projects and draft bankable proposals / business plans for these projects. The produced documents would be used to prospect domestic and international investors, banks, investment funds or other financial institutions, to instigate the realization of these RE projects.
- ✓ **Providing a sustainable knowledge base on promoting investments in renewable energy projects**, through contributing to the development of the IRENA Marketplace (<http://marketplace.irena.org/>), one of the major easily accessible instruments for promoting RE projects in developing countries and identifying potential financing resources for these projects. The platform will be used to share the documents and information produced in the context of the UNDA project, and allow stakeholders from Member countries of both RCs access to a compilation of best practices and lessons learned from other regions. The Marketplace platform will also provide a knowledge base on developing RE projects, available international financing sources and mechanisms, and best practices, as well as proposed and approved institutional and policy reforms, as well as web links to other relevant web sites and resources.

This final workshop is organized as a concluding event for the UNDA project to present a wrap up about the project's activities by bringing together project developers, experts and officials from the two RCs' regions along with major domestic and foreign investors/stakeholders. The closing workshop will present business plans from investment project pipelines from the two regions that would be considered for financing by interested financial institutions.

### III. Objective and topics of the regional workshop

The objective of this regional workshop is to conclude the UNDA project on "Promoting Renewable Energy Investments for Climate Change Mitigation and Sustainable Development" by providing closing remarks about the implemented activities, an update on the RE projects portfolios from selected UN ESCWA and UNECE Member countries, and indications about the way forward to continue promoting RE investments

in the two regions, using available instruments, and particularly, the IRENA Sustainable Energy Marketplace platform.

Indeed, the new version of the IRENA Sustainable Energy Marketplace platform, currently under development, includes the integration of specific features that were agreed with IRENA under this UNDA project. This will allow the UNDA project's objectives to be hosted by a comprehensive and long-lasting platform, supported by IRENA and dedicated to promoting renewable energy investments and markets in both UN ESCWA and UNECE Member countries. The presentation of the Sustainable Energy Marketplace platform will include a discussion of this collaborative work between UN ESCWA and IRENA.

Participants in this workshop will also discuss the lessons learned from the RE policy case studies conducted in four UN ESCWA member countries and four UNECE member countries. These lessons learned are part of a Synthesis report on RE policies case studies prepared in the context of the DA project based on the eight case studies.

Project developers from both UN ESCWA and UNECE member countries will present their RE project business development plans, and will have the opportunity to explore potential financing avenues for their projects, and establish initial contacts with potential investors. The workshop will consider over fifteen RE projects from both UN ESCWA and UNECE Member Countries that would be the focus of the technical discussions.

#### **IV. Focus Areas**

The regional workshop will focus on the following topics:

- a- Presentation of UN ESCWA and UNECE Project Development Portfolios, and panel discussions about the required next steps to meet the challenges and identify additional requirements to reach full bankability for the RE Projects, and start exploring their potential financing based on the prepared business plans documents.
- b- Discussion of the various opportunities for international financing of RE Projects in UN ESCWA and UN ECE Member countries. What are the possible challenges and expected requirements of the financing parties.
- c- Extensive presentation of the IRENA Sustainable energy Marketplace platform as an instrument for promoting investments in RE projects in UN ESCWA & UN ECE Member countries. The Marketplace being the A Group activity will be conducted to explore, hands on, the various features of the Marketplace platform
- d- Presentation of recent policy support mechanisms and instruments from different UN ESCWA and UN ECE member countries to promote investments in RE projects. This will include the presentation of the synthesis report on RE policies case studies prepared in the context of the UN DA project in eight UN ESCWA and UN ECE member countries. A panel discussion about the role of policy support in stimulating investments of RE projects in UN ESCWA and UN ECE Member countries will further explore this topic.

#### **V. Participants**

In order to engage a dialogue between RE project developers and relevant national & international RE stakeholders and experts, invited participants will include project developers having benefited from the technical assistance activities of the UNDA project, selected public institutions in charge of overseeing RE projects and activities in their respective countries, from both UN Regional Commissions. Other relevant stakeholders, including representatives of financial institutions and members of the UN DA project Advisory Board, will also be invited.

#### **VI. Organization of the meeting**

The workshop will be held on 13 and 14 December 2017, in Beirut, Lebanon. The event will take place in Beirut – Lebanon.

Workshop materials will be presented in English language. Simultaneous translation from and to each of the following languages is available: Arabic, English, French and Russian.

## VII. Logistical information

Each participant shall undertake the following preparation related to her/his participation: securing hotel reservation, visa, and any other requirements for travelling to Lebanon.

Additional logistical information about how to obtain entry visa to Lebanon, as well as any special arrangements made for hotel reservations, or other additional information will be provided to participants in due course.

## VIII. Correspondence

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

### UN ESCWA

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