Promoting Emerging Technological Trends in Government Services in the Arab region

The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) is launching a project in 2016 entitled **"Fostering Institutional Development for Participatory Approaches towards the Achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in Western Asia"**. This project aims to build the capacity of ESCWA Member States to utilize technology to increase transparency and accountability and to adopt more effective and efficient participatory approaches in order to address root causes of conflict and prevent its potential relapse. The Technology for Development Division (TDD) is participating in this new ESCWA initiative and will focus on the use and the adaptation of modern technological trends in the context of the Arab region.

Technology is an essential tool for modernizing the public sector, delivering modern services to all citizens, even in remote areas, enabling solicit input from citizens for improved decision-making and policy making. Unfortunately, and notwithstanding the advances made in the e-government in the region, many Arab countries still lag behind the rest of the world in the deployment and use of these emerging technologies and technological trends to strengthen public sector institutions and enhance accountability and transparency of governments.

As part of the project, TDD will therefore focus on the use of new technologies and technological trends, such as open data, citizen-centric e-services, and e-participation to facilitate the implementation of open government thus allowing the provision of innovative and inclusive services to citizens and stakeholders. The project will also promote the integration of government services, interoperability and the use of standards at national and regional levels.

The purpose of the planned activities is to create awareness, promote the use of new technologies, and build the capacity of governments.

Planned activities include:
- Studies, policy guidelines and training materials on open government, citizen engagement and innovation in public sector;
- Expert group meetings;
- Regional and national capacity building workshops on concepts and technologies;
- Advisory services for ESCWA member countries on the use of emerging technological trends in government services.

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