

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

Mainstreaming Circular Economy in the Arab Region

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Shared Prosperity **Dignified Life**



OUTLINE

Introduction

Mainstreaming CE: stepwise process

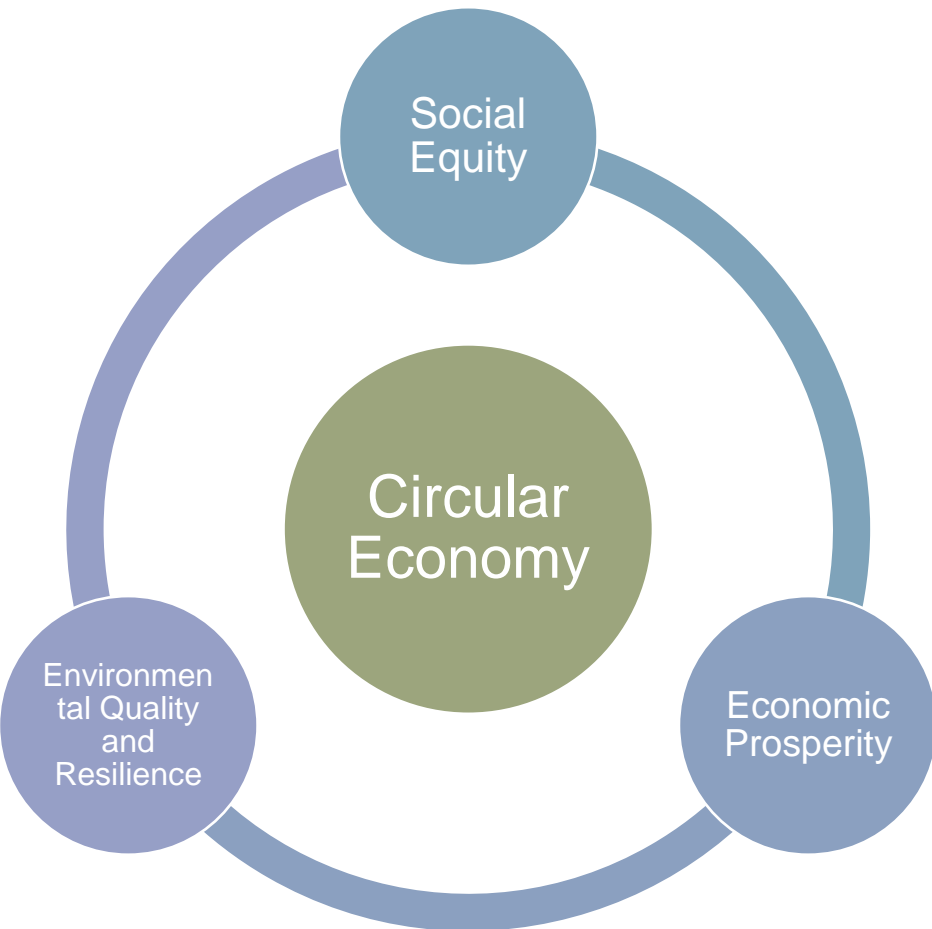
Concluding remarks



Mainstreaming a Circular Economy
in the Arab Region:
Guidelines for a Cross-sectoral Transition

- ✓ 30 pages
- ✓ 2 sections: Why and How
- ✓ Selected best practices from countries

Two Guiding principles, Restorative and regenerative



Myriad of actions

- **rethink, redesign, reduce, refuse, reuse, repurpose, recycle, and recover**

RIGHT ASSESSMENT

○ COSTS

○ BENEFITS



THE MOST CRITICAL DECISION

DESIGNING A CIRCULAR SYSTEM

A circular system shifts the attention from the linearity of extract, use and dispose to a holistic system where resources are used again and again in a closed loop. A holistic circular system needs to put the main focus on design changes; designing for durability, reuse and disassembly, a shift from ownership of products to sharing of services, and a sufficiency approach

Design changes

- **Rethink** business models to include used resources or a sharing of resources.
- **Redesign** products to last longer and be recyclable, and systems to be regenerative.
- **Reduce** natural resources used in design, production, manufacturing, and during any circular loops through efficiency measures.

Short Loops (Most Resource Efficient)

- **Refuse** products or services that are above sufficiency levels and environmentally harmful.
- **Reuse** products until they no longer fulfill their original purpose.
- **Repurpose** products, components, and materials for uses outside their original purpose.

Long Loops (Last Resort)

- **Recycle** through physical or chemical processes.
- **Recover** energy through incineration or nutrients through biological recovery.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHANGE

Harnessing a Favorable Alignment of Factors

Economic & Social Inequality

- The Arab region is the most unequal in the world.
- Increasing gap between wealthy and poor, exacerbated by contemporary challenges

Contemporary Challenges

- War in Ukraine affecting food and energy prices.
- Floods and droughts - COVID-19 pandemic disproportionately affecting the poor.

Slow Progress Towards SDGs:

- Slow progress towards the fulfillment of SDGs.
- None of the goals are currently on track to be reached by 2030.
- Vulnerable populations facing increased insecurities.

Need for Resilience

- Mitigating risks and increasing adaptive capacity to create resilient socio-ecological systems.
- Circular economy facilitates climate change mitigation, biodiversity restoration, and ecosystem services.

Resource Management

- Reducing pollution in soil, air, and water.
- Decreasing dependence on fossil fuels and imported food.
- Lowering risk of price volatility and supply shortages.
- Ensuring future economic activities.

Favorable Conditions for Transition

- Many Arab states can leapfrog their transition due to lack of heavy industries and advanced infrastructure.
- Existing best practices can be copied and adopted for fast transition.

Technological & Urbanization Factors

- Recent technological advancements enabling sharing business models & material tracking.
- Rapid urbanization facilitating sharing models & making circular solutions economically viable.
- Opportunity for green, smart, & sustainable cities

GUIDELINES FOR A CROSS SECTORAL TRANSITION

Map the current inclusion (2.1)

Create a vision (2.2)

Prioritize sectors (2.3)

Involve stakeholders (2.4)

Plan the actions (2.5)

Align policies (2.6)

Go from strategy to action (2.7)

Monitor results and adjust (2.8)

Target Audience

- Targeted at policymakers for national cross-sectoral integration.
- Can be adapted by ambitious municipalities for faster implementation.
- Provide guidelines for countries to follow and create well-grounded policy advice.

Focus

- Focus on areas of high priority based on evidence-based policymaking.
- Scale up pilot projects to mainstream circular economy across all sectors.
- Align new and current policies to transition from strategy to action.
- Adjust the road based on tracking results with circular indicators.

Purpose

- Promote shared knowledge and understanding of the importance of cooperation.
- Address wider economic implications and push towards breaking down silos.
- Foster policy interventions for SDG interlinkages.
- Guidance on mapping the current inclusion of circularity in the country.
- Prioritizing Sectors and Stakeholder Involvement:
- Process for prioritizing sectors for circular economy transition.
- Involve stakeholders and identify appropriate measurements.
- Address the complex work of policy alignment for effective implementation.
- Include needed flexibility in the strategy to remain relevant.

GUIDELINES FOR A CROSS SECTORAL TRANSITION

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Monitor results
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GUIDELINES FOR A CROSS SECTORAL TRANSITION

Map the
current
inclusion (2.1)

Map the current inclusion

Identify Circularity Initiatives

Assess Current Circularity Levels

Government and Policy Mapping

Benchmark and Measure Circularity

Identify Strengths and Weaknesses

Enable Fast Transition

GUIDELINES FOR A CROSS SECTORAL TRANSITION

Create a vision
(2.2)

Create a Vision

Create a vision

Vision for the Future

Set Clear Goals

Mainstream Circular Economy

Use Existing Visions and Recommended Cross-Sectoral Goals

GUIDELINES FOR A CROSS SECTORAL TRANSITION

Prioritize
sectors (2.3)

Prioritizing Efforts

Start with High-Impact Sectors

Systemic Assessment

Dimensions for Prioritization

Implementing Circular Solutions

Economic and Environmental Benefits

GUIDELINES FOR A CROSS SECTORAL TRANSITION

Involve
stakeholders
(2.4)

Involving Stakeholders

Engage a Range of Stakeholders

Key Stakeholder Considerations

Create a Shared Mindset

Mapping Stakeholders

Consumer Role

Value Chain Actors

NGOs and IGOs

Collaborative Approach

GUIDELINES FOR A CROSS SECTORAL TRANSITION

Plan the
actions (2.5)

Planning the actions

Planning the Actions

Transition from Linear to Circular

Assessment and Prioritization

Use of Frameworks

Policy Creation and Barrier Identification

Systemic Perspective

Criteria for Planning Actions

Stakeholder Involvement

GUIDELINES FOR A CROSS SECTORAL TRANSITION

Align policies
(2.6)

Align Policies

Develop Enabling Strategies

Reinforce Circular Incentives

Create Strong Linkages

Harmonize Agendas

Mainstream Circular Economy

Sector-Specific Development

Foster Cooperation and Shared Vision

GUIDELINES FOR A CROSS SECTORAL TRANSITION

Go From Strategy to Action

Go from
strategy to
action (2.7)

Materialize Strategies

Implementation Strategy

Key Enablers

Capacity Building

Awareness Raising

De-risking Investments

Focus Areas

Policy Instruments

GUIDELINES FOR A CROSS SECTORAL TRANSITION

Monitor Results and Adjust

Monitor results and adjust (2.8)

Develop Indicators

Evidence-Based Policy Making

Stakeholder Involvement

Regular Reassessments

Data Collection

Benchmarking and Communication

Existing Frameworks

Concluding remarks

- Start with the existing and grow
- Be aware of Power Interests and be inclusive
- Act now and plan for the long term
- Build a culture of circularity where economies and nature are equally important and every stakeholder is equally important



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Thank you