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Expert Group Meeting on:

Index Simulator for Policymakers in the Arab Region (ISPAR)

(Virtual Meeting)

Date: 10 December 2020

10:00 -15:30 (Beirut Time)

Background

In the aim of supporting member states in enhancing economic planning to achieve stated goals, and based on a number of requests received from member states which demonstrate a strong interest for ESCWA's technical assistance on policymaking issues in various areas from macroeconomics to the achievement of the SDGs and economic integration, and for its ability to develop user friendly tools, ESCWA started this project entitled "Index Simulator for Policymaking in the Arab Region (ISPAR).

The project aims to develop a software simulator covering selected widely adopted, international indicators, that are related to economic integration, business environment, gender, innovation and digital technology themes.

This simulator allows policymakers to compare the outcome of their planned and envisioned reforms and policies. Policymakers could therefore simulate the impact of changing selected development aspects on their national performance in these indicators in an integrated view.

In addition, Member states will have access to large libraries of experiences developed by other countries allowing to link policies to outcomes and enabling member states to identify suitable avenues towards greater policy effectiveness for the achievement of their stated several agendas.

Objectives

The main objective of the meeting is to inform delegates from ESCWA member states about the ISPAR platform, its current functions and its support to policy making process in the Arab region. The meeting aims also to discuss the future planned activities of the project to update them to member states' needs.

Format

The Expert Group meeting on ISPAR will be organized over 2 sessions: one session is dedicated to gender, competitiveness, and business indicators, and another one for digital technology and innovation indicators. Both sessions will be held online using Kudo platform and will be conducted in English and Arabic. A panel of experts from the Arab region, working



Shared Prosperity Dignified Life



in the areas mentioned above, will contribute to the meeting by providing their views and comments on the ISPAR platform.

The recordings and the presentations will be posted on the website after the conclusion of the meeting. The follow-up actions, including key recommendations and knowledge products, will be disseminated through ESCWA website.

Targeted Audience

The target audience of the meeting includes government officials who are involved in policymaking on national level from line ministries (such as Ministries of Economy, Trade, Social Affairs, Administrative reforms, ICT,...). The meeting also intends to involve experts from academia and NGOs working in the above-mentioned areas in the Arab region.

Expected Results

The meeting outcomes will be used directly by the ISPAR to update the platform to better serve member states' needs. These changes will be reflected in the project planned activities for the next year.

Discussion topics

The meeting will raise several topics for discussion with experts and participants. Among these topics:

- ISPAR platform functions;
- ISPAR platform usage in policy making process;
- List of international indicators covered or to be covered;
- Platform sustainability;
- Perceived challenges;
- Future ISPAR project activities.



Tentative Agenda

Time (Beirut)	Part 1: Business, Gender and Competitiveness
10:00-10:10	Opening Remarks - Ms. Mehrinaz Elawady, Cluster Leader, Gender Justice, Population, Inclusive Development.
10:10-10:30	Session 1: ISPAR - A tool for policy makers in Gender, Economy, and Business - Ms. Nathalie Grand, Project coordinator: Project overview
10:40 – 10:50	- Mr. Nawar Al-Awa, Regional Adviser on Tech: Platform Features
10:50-12:15	- Discussion: All participants
12:15 - 12:30	Concluding remarks of Day 1 - Nathalie Grand & Nawar Al-Awa

Time (Beirut)	Part 2: Technology and Innovation
13:00-13:10	Opening Remarks - Mr. Juraj Riecan, Cluster Leader, SIST
13:10-13:30	Session 2: ISPAR - A tool for policy makers in Technology and Innovation - Ms. Nathalie Grand, Project coordinator: Project overview
13:30-13:50	- Mr. Nawar Al-Awa, Regional Adviser on Tech: Platform Features
13:50-15:20	- Discussion: All participants
15:20 - 15:30	Wrap-Up & Closing - Nathalie Grand & Nawar Al-Awa

ESCWA Focal Points

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