



Shared Prosperity Dignified Life



**Second Workshop on the Use of the
"Indices Simulator Tool for Policymakers in the Arab Region"
June 23-25, 2024
Amman, Jordan**

Concept Note

I. Background

The Index Simulator for Policymakers in the Arab Region (ISPAR) project aims to develop a comprehensive simulator that encompasses key indices used to assess country performance. These indices focus on economic integration, business environment, gender equality, innovation, and digital technologies. This simulator enables policymakers to evaluate the impact of planned and potential policies on their respective rankings.

As part of the Development Account Project titled “Dynamic Simulators to Address Ranking Deficiencies of International Indices Platforms in the Arab Region,” Jordan was selected as a target country. This selection was due to the active interest expressed by Jordan’s Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, which sought ESCWA's assistance in achieving development goals outlined in their Economic Modernization Vision, heavily informed by their performance on international indices.

ESCWA provided support in identifying optimal strategies and policy packages through the ISPAR tool. Jordan expressed keen interest in training to utilize the tool effectively, leading to a national workshop held on October 1-5, 2023. This workshop was attended by representatives from various ministries, including the Jordanian National Commission for Women, the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, the Ministry of Digital Economy and Entrepreneurship, the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, the Ministry of Local Administration, and the Jordan Food & Drug Administration. An interministerial committee was also established to coordinate efforts to enhance performance across ministries and achieve their development goals.

The initial workshop facilitated a critical analysis of relevant international indices included in Jordan’s Economic Modernization Vision, guiding informed policy planning to achieve national targets. Following ESCWA's guidance and internal discussions, Jordan revised its indices selection to better address weaknesses and align with development objectives. Consequently, the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation endorsed ISPAR as a policymaking tool for Jordan.



This meeting serves as a follow-up to the first workshop held in October 2023. A dedicated country page, the Jordan ISPAR Observatory, was created prior to the meeting, featuring the selected indices from the Economic Modernization Vision for policy guidance. Efforts have been made to customize ISPAR, enhancing its user-friendliness and utility for monitoring, assessment, and data-driven policymaking specific to Jordan's circumstances.

New features have been added, allowing Jordan to set short-, medium-, and long-term targets for the selected international indices. Based on these targets, progress is assessed dynamically. The tool identifies indices where progress is on track and highlights those needing further attention. It also evaluates the required improvements at the KPI level and provides information on the feasibility of achieving the set targets.

Additionally, Jordan now has access to a repository of experiences from other countries, building on existing knowledge to connect policies with results. This feature enhances ISPAR's contribution to advancing and disseminating knowledge on performance measurement, monitoring, and evaluation. It also facilitates obstacle analysis and the formulation of effective policy packages, thereby improving the overall effectiveness and efficiency of policies.

II. Objectives

The workshop aims to:

1. Discuss Frameworks and Methodologies:
 - Review progress made on the DA Project,
 - Understand the objectives and utility of ISPAR in facilitating evidence-based policymaking.
2. Introduce ISPAR new Features:
 - Provide further insights to participants on the functioning of the Correlation, Thematic and Optimization tools,
 - Provide a comprehensive introduction to the features and functioning of the ISPAR Jordan – Diagnosis Report tool.
3. Facilitate Policy Planning and Strategy Development:
 - Assist participants in identifying optimal strategies and policy packages using ISPAR.
 - Guide participants in setting short-, medium-, and long-term targets for selected international indices.
4. Enhance Knowledge Sharing:



- Build on existing knowledge by providing access to a repository of experiences from other countries.
 - Promote the dissemination of best practices in performance measurement, monitoring, and evaluation.
5. Support Data-Driven Decision Making:
- Encourage the use of ISPAR for data-driven policymaking specific to Jordan's circumstances.
 - Facilitate dynamic assessment of progress and identification of areas needing further attention.

Upon completing of the training, participants will have acquired the following skills and knowledge:

1. Data Evaluation:
 - Evaluate data-related issues, including availability, accuracy, timeliness, and the impact of missing data on rankings.
 - Explore solutions to address data challenges and improve data quality.
2. Benchmarking and Profiling:
 - Generate performance profiles using International Composite Indicators.
 - Conduct initial benchmarking analysis to understand current standings.
3. Methodological Understanding:
 - Engage in discussions on key methodological concerns related to the indices.
 - Gain a comprehensive grasp of the approach developed to generate the Jordan – Diagnosis Report
4. Policy Impact Assessment:
 - Assess the repercussions of implementing different policy changes on rankings.
 - Analyze potential interconnections among chosen indices to optimize policy impact.
5. Strategic Planning and Implementation:
 - Propose short- and medium-term courses of action to improve performance.
 - Identify complementary policies needed to maximize the impact of key policy changes.
6. Simulation and Analysis:



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- Use ISPAR to conduct simulations and analyze potential policy outcomes.
 - Evaluate the feasibility and doability of required improvements at the KPI level.
7. Knowledge Application:
- Apply knowledge from the repository of experiences to connect policies with results.
 - Enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of policies through policy options analysis and the formulation of comprehensive policy packages.
8. Technical Proficiency:
- Develop technical skills to utilize ISPAR effectively for monitoring, assessment, and policymaking.
 - Gain proficiency in using ISPAR's new features for target setting and dynamic progress assessment.

III. Participants

This workshop is meant for participants from various Ministries.

IV. Date & Place

The workshop will be held in person for five days from June 23 to June 25, 2024, in Amman, Jordan.

V. Proposed Agenda



Day 1: 23 June 2024	
09:00 – 09:15	<p>Opening session and presentation of work programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TBD, Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation • Mr. Ahmed Al-Awah, Chief Technology Officer, ESCWA
09:15 – 09:35	<p>Session I: Development Account Project: Progress Made This session reviews the goals and the range of activities planned and achieved within the Development Account Project, as well as the technical assistance provided to Jordan as a chosen participant.</p> <p>Presenter: Mr. Ahmed Al-Awah, Chief Technology Officer, ESCWA</p>
09:35 – 10:00	<p>Session II: The Indices Simulator Tool for Policymakers in the Arab Region (ISPAR): Catching up This session offers the opportunity for participants to engage with ESCWA and reflect on the discussions held during first national workshop regarding the Indices Simulator Tool for Policymakers in the Arab Region (ISPAR) project and its utility in facilitating evidence-based policymaking through the utilization of International Composite Indicators.</p> <p>Presenter: Mr. Ahmed Al-Awah, Chief Technology Officer, ESCWA</p>
10:00 – 10:30	Coffee Break
10:30 – 11:15	<p>Session III: Introduction to ISPAR Diagnosis Tool This session will familiarize participants with the features of the Diagnosis Tool. Methodological aspects will be discussed. By the session's conclusion, attendees will have a deep understanding of the data and methodology that underpins the diagnosis, enabling them to conduct their own assessment of achievable performance using the Diagnosis Tool.</p> <p>Presenter: Ms. Nathalie Grand, Data scientist, ESCWA</p>
11:15 – 12:00	<p>Session IV: ISPAR Diagnosis Tool: First Hands-on In this session, attendees will work in groups based on their areas of expertise/responsibility. Attendees will prepare and generate reporting reports at various time horizons including policy recommendations using simulations and ISPAR Diagnosis Tool.</p> <p>Presenter: Ms. Nathalie Grand, Data scientist, ESCWA</p>
12:00 – 12:30	Lunch Break



12:30 – 13:45	<p>Session V: ISPAR Diagnosis Tool: Practice and Relevant Issues The objective of this session is to help participants finalize a national strategic plan using ISPAR Diagnosis Tool, discuss findings and tailoring.</p> <p>Presenter: Mr. Ahmed Al-Awah, Chief Technology Officer, ESCWA</p>
13:45 – 14:00	End of the day discussion

Day 2: 24 June, 2024	
9:15 – 9:30	<p>Review of the work done on the first day and lessons learnt.</p> <p>Moderator: Mr. Ahmed Al-Awah, Chief Technology Officer, ESCWA</p>
9:30 – 10:30	<p>Session VI: Introduction to ISPAR Optimization Tool In this session, attendees will be introduced to ISPAR Optimization Tool methodology and Simulator. By the session's conclusion, participants will gain an understanding of the features of the tool, enabling them to conduct simulations using the dedicated Simulator.</p> <p>Presenter: Ms. Nathalie Grand, Data scientist, ESCWA</p>
10:30 – 11:00	Coffee Break
11:00 – 12:00	<p>Session VII: ISPAR Optimization Tool: First Hands-on In this session, attendees will work in groups based on their areas of expertise/responsibility. Attendees will be asked to design policy packages at various time horizons, evaluate their doability, identify policy priorities. Byt the end of this session, attendees will develop a deep understanding of the functioning of the Optimization Tool on ISPAR.</p> <p>Presenter: Ms. Nathalie Grand, Data scientist, ESCWA</p>
12:00 – 12:30	Lunch
12:30 – 13:30	<p>Session VIII: ISPAR Optimization Tool: Practice In this session, attendees will work in groups based on their areas of expertise/responsibility to identify the most suitable policy packages to achieve stated goals in various areas, in the short-, medium- and long-term. Participants will also discuss data-related issues, including availability, accuracy, timeliness, and the impact of missing data</p>



	<p>on rankings and economic achievements and explore solutions to address data challenges.</p> <p>Presenter: Ms. Nathalie Grand, Data scientist, ESCWA</p>
13:30 – 14:00	End of the day discussion

Day 3: 25 June, 2024	
9:15 – 9:30	<p>Review of the work done so far and lessons learnt.</p> <p>Moderator: Mr. Ahmed Al-Awah, Chief Technology Officer, ESCWA</p>
9:30 – 10:00	<p>Session IX: Introduction to ISPAR Thematic Simulator</p> <p>The objective of this session is to acquaint participants with ISPAR's Thematic Simulators. By the conclusion of this session, attendees will have acquired the skills needed to 1) assess the repercussions of implementing different policy changes on rankings, 2) analyze potential interconnections among chosen indices to optimize policy impact, 3) identify complementary policies needed to maximize the impact of key policy changes. Participants will work in groups based on their areas of expertise/responsibility.</p> <p>Presenter: Ms. Nathalie Grand, Data scientist, ESCWA</p>
10:00 – 10:30	<p>Session X: ISPAR Thematic Simulator: Practice</p> <p>During this session, participants will work in groups to develop a policy package relevant to their area of responsibility. This session will review and reflect with participants the strategies and policy packages selected by each team and potential synergies and obstacles.</p> <p>At the end of this session, participants will have an in-depth understanding of the data and methodology used to develop the Thematic Simulators and will be able to carry simulations using the dedicated Simulators. Participants will present their experience around the use of ISPAR to analyze their rankings and scores.</p> <p>Presenter: Ms. Nathalie Grand, Data scientist, ESCWA</p>
10:30 – 11:00	Coffee Break
11:00 – 11:30	<p>Session XI: Introduction to ISPAR Correlation Tool</p> <p>The objective of this session is to introduce participants to ISPAR's Correlation Analysis. By the conclusion of this session,</p>



	<p>attendees will be able to identify the impact of performance improvement on international indices and economic achievements over time. Participants will also discuss data-related issues, including availability, accuracy, timeliness, and the impact of missing data on rankings and economic achievements and explore solutions to address data challenges.</p> <p>Presenter: Ms. Nathalie Grand, Data scientist, ESCWA</p>
11:30 – 12:30	Lunch
12:30 – 13:45	<p>Session XII: ISPAR Correlation Tool: Practice</p> <p>During this session, participants will work in groups based on their areas of expertise/responsibility. By the end of this session, attendees will be able to complete an assessment of synergies across indices and build on interconnections to identify the best suited policy packages.</p> <p>Presenter: Mr. Ahmed Al-Awah, Chief Technology Officer, ESCWA</p>
13:45 – 14:00	Discussions