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## **Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)**

Workshop on Tracking and Monitoring Food Security for Palestine  
Sheraton Amman Al Nabil Hotel, 5<sup>th</sup> Circle, Amman, Jordan, 19-21 July 2022

### **Summary**

The workshop on “Tracking and Monitoring Food Security for Palestine” was held in Amman, Jordan, 19-21 July 2022. Workshop attendees were Palestinian officials from various governmental institutions who work on food security-related issues. Among others, these included the Ministry of Agriculture, which initiated the process that led to the organization of the workshop, the Prime Minister’s Office, the Ministry of Health and the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics.

The overall aim of the workshop was to enhance the capacity of participants to monitor food security using the ESCWA-developed Arab Food Security Monitoring framework and to report results through a process like the VNR report preparation to ease the integration of food security monitoring results into future VNR reports. The food security monitoring framework consists of 24 indicators distributed along a core dimension containing outcome indicators and the 4 food security dimensions containing causal indicators with results presented through a dashboard to ease visualization and interpretation. The framework was developed in collaboration with the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development (AOAD), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations and various experts with funding from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

Participants were able to interact and exchange views on indicator selection and data sourcing and analyses and collaborated to interpret the results of the monitoring process for enhanced decision-making. They also learned from the recent experience of Jordan in the preparation of its VNR report and the guiding principles for preparing VNR reports from ESCWA. In addition, they reviewed the last Palestinian VNR report and 2 food security SDG indicators under the custodianship of FAO as well as the AOAD’s methodology for preparing comprehensive regional food security reports.

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## INTRODUCTION

1. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) organized the workshop on “Tracking and Monitoring Food Security for Palestine” from 19 to 21 July 2022 at the Sheraton Amman Al Nabil Hotel, Amman, Jordan. The workshop aimed at introducing the Arab Food Security Monitoring Framework developed by ESCWA in collaboration with the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development (AOAD), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations and various experts through a project funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).
2. The workshop was organized following a request from the Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture to enhance the capacity of its staff to track, monitor and report on food security outcome. They also requested to enhance their capacity to report food security assessment results so they could be more easily integrated into future VNR reports.
3. The workshop provided an opportunity to discuss and assess the current food security situation in Palestine. It allowed a better understanding of the political, environmental and economic challenges affecting the achievement of food security and the capacity and capabilities of Palestine to improve the situation. Discussions revolved as well around the role of governments and other institutions in collecting data and sharing information among institutions.
4. The workshop was attended by officials from the Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture and various other national institutions involved in aspects of the country’s food security with 14 participants attending in-person and one attending virtually. The workshop benefited from the expertise of officials and experts from Jordan, AOAD and FAO in addition to ESCWA experts and a consultant. It was organized around 7 main sessions in addition to introductory and concluding sessions.

## I. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5. The workshop provided an opportunity to discuss and assess the current food security situation in Palestine and the political, environmental and economic challenges affecting its improvement. Discussions revolved also around the role of governments and other institutions in collecting data and sharing information among the various institutions working on issues contributing to enhancing food security.
6. Among the key suggestions that emanated from the workshop are the need to:
  - Conduct regular and comprehensive food security monitoring building on the Arab Food Security Monitoring Framework indicators, as it is wide-ranging and cover the multi-faceted aspect of food security;
  - Widen the scope of the food security monitoring to include multiple governmental institutions and other actors while also localizing it to ensure no-one is left behind;
  - Report food security monitoring results building on the VNR report preparation process to ease their integration into future VNR reports to avoid a multiplication of efforts.

## II. SUMMARY OF PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

### A. OPENING AND INTRODUCING THE PARTICIPANTS AND THEIR EXPECTATIONS

7. Mr. **Fidele Byiringiro**, ESCWA, explained the importance of the workshop and welcomed the participants from Palestine as well as the various contributors to the workshop including officials from Jordan, FAO and AOAD.
8. Ms. **Reem Nejdawi**, ESCWA, welcomed the participants and proceeded to note that the Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture requested assistance to ESCWA through its Technical Cooperation Programme to enhance its capacity to assess and monitor food security to which ESCWA agreed upon. She also pointed

to the latest challenges paused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the Ukrainian War which have led to a deteriorating situation worldwide and in the Arab region particularly in poorer countries and those in conflict or in other stressful situations. She then highlighted the importance of the workshop and its added value to the participants to support the future of food security in Palestine.

9. Mr. **Hasan H.H. Hasan**, Ministry of Agriculture, Palestine, welcomed all present and appreciated ESCWA's organization of the workshop. He noted that they are in an urgent need of an intersectoral strategy concerning food security. He also noted the country's commitment to achieve the SDGs in 2030 and its continuous struggle as related to the lack of data and the restrictions imposed by the Occupation and later impact on the food security situation of Palestine.

10. Following a Tour de Table, Professor **Rami Zreik**, ESCWA consultant, led a discussion whereby participants were encouraged to highlight their expectations from the workshop, as well as identify key indicators that could assist in monitoring food security.

11. Mr. **Fidele Byiringiro**, ESCWA, proceeded with a presentation on the food security situation and the challenges facing the Arab region. He highlighted the dwindling natural resources and impact of climate change, the growing food gap and the poor overall economic performance of countries of the region, as well as the impact of the on-going pandemic and the war in Ukraine, which further pressure food security.

#### B. SESSION I: ARAB FOOD SECURITY MONITORING FRAMEWORK: CONCEPT

12. Professor **Rami Zreik**, ESCWA consultant, provided an update on the food security concept while linking it to food systems. He provided a historic on food security including its measurement and evolution over time and emphasized on the need to look at it through a food systems lens. He also overviewed the four dimensions of food security noting that they were recently expanded to include Agency and Sustainability dimensions which further link food security to food systems.

13. Throughout, participants interacted with the presenter and exchanged views on appropriate indicators for monitoring food security particularly in Palestine. The country is under occupation and face many restrictions on food production, food trade and food supply among others meaning that monitoring food security could provide incomplete and inaccurate results.

#### C. SESSION II: ARAB FOOD SECURITY MONITORING FRAMEWORK: INDICATORS

14. Mr. **Fidele Byiringiro** and Ms. **Layale Gedeon**, ESCWA, presented the indicators comprising the Arab Food Security Monitoring Framework and how to access related data. They overviewed the 24 indicators which are distributed along a core dimension comprising 3 outcome indicators and 21 causal food security indicators distributed along the 4 food security dimensions of availability, access, utilization and stability. They also showed how to access the data to be used to generate the food security dashboard.

15. Professor **Rami Zreik**, ESCWA consultant, presented the 2016 dashboard for Palestine and explained how it should be viewed and interpreted with specific examples from each food security dimensions.

16. Participants were able to highlight the challenges facing Palestine under each food security dimensions and selected indicators to which it was highlighted that more emphasis could be put on selected aspects rather than others to better described the prevailing food situation under occupation.

#### D. SESSIONS III AND IV: PRACTICAL APPLICATION AND ANALYSIS OF COUNTRY DASHBOARD:

17. Professor **Rami Zreik**, ESCWA consultant, provided a recap of the previous day presentations and discussions and followed it up with specific examples from the Palestinian dashboard. He put the results in context based on the specific circumstances of the country so participants could better understand its scope and the consequences of alternate decisions, especially in the case when they lack control over their resources due to the occupation. He explained the measurement of the core indicators in details and provided a few examples for further clarifications emphasizing on how the report should be analytical.

18. In the ensuing discussions, participants highlighted the challenges faced in data collection as these are often inconsistent across institutions and distorted by the politics of the Occupation.

19. Ms. **Layale Gedeon**, ESCWA, provided an overview of the excel file accompanying the Monitoring Framework and showed how to use it. She noted that the excel allows for automatic calculations and generation of results and their presentation in the form of a dashboard consisting of a table and 2 superimposed doughnut charts. She also noted that a normalization of indicators using minimum and maximum values takes place in the background with some being reversed to allow for a scoring of all indicators from 1 to 10.

20. Participants were distributed into 4 groups with each group working on one dimension to identify data sources and integrate these into the provided excel file to generate an updated dashboard for Palestine. Subsequently, each group displayed and presented their results and interpreted them.

#### E. SESSION V: FOLLOW-UP AND REVIEW OF THE 2030 AGENDA: VNR PREPARATION:

21. The session was moderated by Ms. **Reem Nejdawi**, ESCWA, who highlighted that the session would focus on the Voluntary National Reviews (VNR) report preparation process notably in the aftermath of the 2022 global VNR process which recently concluded in New York.

22. Ms. **Jana El Baba** and Ms. **Mona Fattah**, ESCWA, provided an overview of the VNR process, its objectives and challenges notably as related to monitoring the more than 230 indicators comprising the SDGs. They also noted the challenge of producing a VNR report for countries in conflict. They proceeded to display how food security was integrated into VNR reports noting that SDG 2 on zero hunger is the main SDG concerned with food security although other SDGs and indicators link to it as well. They also highlighted how food security was integrated into the VNR of Jordan.

23. Ms. **Lamia Al Zou'bi**, MoPIC-Jordan, provided an overview of the Jordanian VNR preparatory process during the 2022 VNR cycle. She presented the composition of the VNR national committee, the teams involved in the preparatory process, the methodology adopted to collect data and the coordination with the UN country team in drafting the report, as well as the major topics covered. She also emphasized upon the importance of the structure of the team working on the VNR and its coordination and how organizing regular workshops is an added value to the overall preparation as they allow for discussions of outcomes and challenges. Among others, she noted that the report highlighted that close to two-thirds of the indicators have a positive trend while the remaining are almost equally split between no-trend and negative trend. She ended the presentation by highlighting their future vision and how they will move forward to achieve the SDGs.

24. Ms. **Nada Al Frahat**, MoA-Jordan, started by showing the process of work, the organization of the team and the distribution of tasks and targets between institutions which was the most important step into starting the process of the VNR. She explained the challenges faced throughout the process and the measures adopted for mitigating those challenges. She, then, explained the food security component within the VNR of Jordan including the indicators chosen to assess food security. She highlighted the timeline since the adoption of the SDGs to the previous VNR report and up to recent 2022 VNR report. She then showed step-by-step the timeline and actions and stages followed to prepare the VNR, which allowed them

to have a more efficient and organized process of work. Finally, she mentioned that 50% of the food security indicators were achieved so far.

#### F. SESSION VI: REGIONAL SUPPORT FOR ENHANCED FOOD SECURITY

25. Mr. **Firas Yassin**, FAO, provided an overview of 2 SDGs indicator on food security under the custodianship of FAO and their status in Palestine. These are the prevalence of undernourishment (PoU) and the food insecurity experience scale (FIES). He explained how the indicators were chosen and the intricacies underlying their measurement, as well as the sources of data. He then provided an overview on PoU. He explained the difference between nutrient deficiency and undernourishment among others before providing the latest updates on PoU based on FAO estimations. He then overviewed the FIES indicator and he explained its importance and how it should be used to measure food security. He highlighted its advantages including being easy to use, straight to the point, low cost, statistically solid, and its ability to distinguish between intensity with the possibility of detailing results. He then provided the estimates of FIES based on the latest FAO studies.

26. Participants highlighted that they need FAO's support in collecting data and that FAO needs to work closely with the authorities in Palestine to update a number of indicators.

27. Ms. **Fida'a Rawabdeh**, AOAD, provided a descriptive of the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development, its scope of work and targets and latest studies on food security. She then presented the regional approach for collecting data and other food security related information including an overview of its most recent food security and agriculture report. She noted that the 2005-2025 agriculture and food security strategy provided a good umbrella for collecting these indicators and that the strategy is being revamped with a look towards 2030. She then presented the most recent AOAD's state of agriculture noting for example that the wheat yield gap is at 25 percent. She proceeded to showcase the form used for data collection, which needs to be filled at national level.

#### G. SESSION 7: PALESTINE FOLLOW UP AND REVIEW OF THE 2030 AGENDA

28. Mr. **Hasan H.H. Hasan**, MoA-Palestine, provided an update on the prevailing situation in Palestine and the current state of the crisis, the national Policy Agenda and the monitoring of SDGs showing among others the institutional arrangements adopted for following-up on the SDGs including the support received from United Nations agencies. He introduced the previous VNR report of Palestine, as well as the latest food security monitoring and assessment, which could be integrated into the next VNR report.

29. Mr. **Fidele Byiringiro**, ESCWA, provided an overview on global best practices, timeline, process and report arrangement.

30. The workshop concluded at around 16:00 Amman-time with an overall evaluation of the meeting by participants and the distribution of certificates.

### III. ORGANIZATION OF WORK

#### A. VENUE AND DATE

30 The Workshop on Tracking and Monitoring Food Security for Palestine was held from 19 to 21 July 2022 at the Sheraton Amman Al Nabil Hotel, Amman, Jordan.

## B. OPENING

31. The workshop was formally opened on Tuesday 19 July 2022, at 10:00 a.m. with remarks from Ms. **Reem Nejdawi**, ESCWA, Beirut, Lebanon, and by Mr. **Hasan H.H. Hasan**, Ministry of Agriculture, Ramallah, Palestine.

## C. PARTICIPANTS

32. The workshop was attended by 15 participants, of which 1 attended virtually, from various governmental institutions of Palestine, as well as experts from Jordan, Arab Organization for Agricultural Development, the Food and Agriculture Organization, the American University of Beirut and ESCWA staff members. Women participation stood at more than two-thirds (19 out of 28 participants) while about 20 percent attended virtually (6 out of 28 attendees).

33. The list of participants to the workshop and attending experts is attached as Annex I.

## D. AGENDA

34. Remarks, presentations and discussions were made and held over the following sessions:

- A. Opening and Introductory,
- B. Session I: Arab Food Security Monitoring Framework: Concept,
- C. Session II: Arab Food Security Monitoring Framework: Indicators,
- D. Session III: Practical Application,
- E. Session IV: Analysis of Country Dashboards,
- F. Session V: Follow-up and Review of the 2030 Agenda: VNR preparation,
- G. Session VI: Regional Support for Enhanced Food Security,
- H. Session VII: Palestine Follow-up and Review of the 2030 Agenda,
- I. Closing remarks.

35. The agenda of the workshop is attached as Annex II.

## E. EVALUATION

36. The link to an evaluation questionnaire was provided to the participants to assess the quality, relevance, effectiveness and impact of the workshop. The feedback received (14 responses) was positive overall with all participants agreeing that the topics, content and outcome met their expectations and the workshop achieved its main purpose. All indicated that follow-up actions are needed.

## F. DOCUMENTATION

37. The workshop background information, presentations and selected pictures are provided at the following link: <https://www.unescwa.org/events/tracking-food-security-palestine>

## ANNEXES

### ANNEX I: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

#### A. Experts – Palestine

##### Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)

**Mr. Hasan Helmi Hasan**

Team Leader  
Director-General of Planning and Policies  
Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)  
Ramallah, State of Palestine

**Ms. Lama Salameh**

Head  
Division of Planning and Preparing Project and Program  
Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)  
Ramallah, State of Palestine

**Ms. Rana Alkafri**

Director of Agricultural Statistics Department  
Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)  
Ramallah, State of Palestine

**Mr. Mohammed Saiqali**

Head of the Follow-up Department  
Directorates of Agriculture & Veterinary Departments in the Governorates  
Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)  
Ramallah, State of Palestine

**Mr. Ibrahim Mansour**

Agronomist  
Section of Agricultural Census  
Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)  
Ramallah, State of Palestine

**Ms. Khitam Hamayel (online)**

Director of Gender Development & Mainstreaming Department  
Gender Unit  
Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)  
Ramallah, State of Palestine

**Ms. Israa Abdallah**

Head of Budgeting Section  
Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)  
Ramallah, State of Palestine

##### Prime Minister's Office (PMO)

**Ms. Manal Alzetawi**

Prime Minister's Office (PMO)  
Ramallah, State of Palestine

##### Ministry of Health (MoH)

**Mr. Mousa Alhalaigah**

Director of the Nutrition Department  
Ministry of Health (MoH)  
Ramallah, State of Palestine

**Ms. Lina Ibrahim Ahmed Gaith**

Head of Nutrition Surveillance and Studies Division  
Nutrition Department  
Ministry of Health (MoH)  
Ramallah, State of Palestine

##### Ministry of National Economy (MoNE)

**Mr. Mohammad Tarawa**

Director of the Supervision and Inspection Department  
General Directorate of Consumer Protection  
Ministry of National Economy  
Ramallah, State of Palestine

##### Ministry of Social Development (MoSD)

**Ms. Asmaa Jaser**

Manager of Aid & Health Incurrence Department  
Ministry of Sustainable Development (MoSD)  
Ramallah, State of Palestine

##### Palestinian Water Authority (PWA)

**Ms. Rehab Yasin**

Director of Planning Department  
Palestinian Water Authority (PWA)  
Ramallah, State of Palestine

##### Environmental Quality Authority (EQA)

**Mr. Imadeddin Albaba**



Deputy-Director-General  
Head of Scientific Research Department  
Environmental Quality Authority (EQA)  
Ramallah, State of Palestine

**Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS)**

**Ms. Abeer Sheikhhasan**  
Statistician  
Living Standards Statistics  
Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS)  
Ramallah, State of Palestine

**B. Experts – Jordan**

**Ministry of Agriculture**

**Ms. Nada Al Frahat**  
Head of Organizations Division  
Ministry of Agriculture  
Amman, Jordan

**Ministry of Planning and International  
Cooperation (MoPIC)**

**Ms. Lamia Al-Zou'bi**  
Director of Development Plans and Programs  
Department (DPP)  
Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation  
(MoPIC)  
Amman, Jordan

**Ms. Maisa Abunouar**  
Head of Information and Monitoring Division  
Development Plans and Programs Department (DPP)  
Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation  
(MoPIC)  
Amman, Jordan

**C. Regional, International & UN Organizations**

**Arab Organization for Agricultural Development  
(AOAD)**

**Ms. Fida'a Rawabdeh**  
Head of Regional Office of Arab Mashreq  
Arab Organization for Agricultural Organization  
(AOAD)  
Amman, Jordan

**Food and Agriculture Organization of the United  
Nations (FAO)**

**Mr. Firas Yassin**  
Food Security Statistics Officer  
Statistics Division (ESS)  
UN-FAO  
Rome, Italy

**D. Organizers**

**United Nations Economic and Social Commission  
for Western ESCWA  
(UN ESCWA)**

**Ms. Reem Nejdawi (online)**  
Chief, Food & Environment Policies (FEP)  
Climate Change & Natural Resources Sustainability  
Cluster

**Mr. Fidele Byiringiro**  
Economic Affairs Officer (EAO)  
FEP/CCNRSC

**Ms. Jana El Baba (online)**  
Sustainable Development Officer (SDO)  
2030 Agenda & SDGs Coordination Cluster

**Ms. Mona Fattah**  
Economic Affairs Officer  
2030 Agenda & SDGs Coordination Section/Cluster

**Mr. Rami Zreik**  
ESCWA Consultant  
Professor  
Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences (FAFS)  
American University of Beirut  
Beirut, Lebanon

**Ms. Layale Gedeon**  
Research Assistant  
FEPS/CCNRSC

**Mr. Moneem Murrah (online)**  
Administrative Assistant  
FEPS/CCNRSC

**Ms. Lina Fleifel (online)**  
Research Assistant  
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**Ms. Estelle Aljammal (online)**

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## ANNEX II: AGENDA

*Day 1: Tuesday, 19 July 2022*

**09:30 – 10:00 Registration**

*Participant registration (if applicable kindly bring your passport, receipt of bridge crossing fee, PCR test receipt, visa stamp and ticket stub).*

**10:00 – 11:00 Opening and Introductory Session:**

*Moderator: Fidele Byiringiro, ESCWA*

- Welcoming remarks,  
*Reem Nejdawi, Chief, Food and Environment Policies, CCNRS/ESCWA*  
*Hasan H.H. Ashqar, Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), Palestine*
- Tour de table
- Expectations of participants
- Food security in the Arab region: Overview  
*Fidele Byiringiro, ESCWA*

**11:00 – 11:30 Coffee Break**

**11:30 – 13:30 Session I: Arab Food Security Monitoring Framework: Concept**

*Moderator: Fidele Byiringiro, ESCWA*

- Update on food security and food systems  
*Rami Zreik, Professor, ESCWA consultant*
- Food Security in The Arab Region: Towards a Common Monitoring Framework,  
*Rami Zreik, Professor, ESCWA consultant*  
Group discussions: Identification of food security indicators

**13:30 – 14:30 Lunch Break**

**14:30 – 15:30 Session II: Arab Food Security Monitoring Framework: Indicators**

*Moderator: Rami Zreik, Professor, ESCWA consultant*

- Outcome of group discussions
- Monitoring framework indicators and sources of data: Core & Availability  
*Fidele Byiringiro, ESCWA and Layale Gedeon, ESCWA*

**15:30 – 16:00 Coffee break**

**16:00 – 17:30 Session II: Arab Food Security Monitoring Framework: Indicators (Continued)**

- Monitoring framework indicators and sources of data (continued): Access, Utilization & Stability  
*Fidele Byiringiro, ESCWA and Layale Gedeon, ESCWA*
- 2016 Palestinian dashboard  
*Rami Zreik, Professor, ESCWA consultant*  
General discussions

## *End of Day 1*

Day 2: Wednesday, 20 July 2022

- 9:30 – 11:00**      **Session III: Practical Application**  
*Lead: Rami Zreik, Professor, ESCWA consultant and ESCWA Team*
- Recap and follow-up discussions from Day 1
  - Building the Country Dashboard  
*Layale Gedeon, ESCWA*  
Group discussions: Updating the Palestinian framework
- 11:00 – 11:30**      **Coffee Break**
- 11:30 – 13:00**      **Session III: Practical Application (Continued)**  
Group discussions: Updating the Palestinian framework (continued)
- 13:00 – 14:00**      **Lunch Break**
- 14:00 – 17:00**      **Session IV: Analysis of Country Dashboards**
- Interactive presentation of the Palestinian doughnut and dashboard by groups
  - Analysis of the dashboard results  
*Rami Zreik, Professor, ESCWA consultant*  
General discussions
- Coffee served (during afternoon session)**

## *End of Day 2*

Day 3: Thursday, 21 July 2022

- 09:30 – 11:00**      **Session V: Follow-up and Review of the 2030 Agenda: VNR preparation**  
*Moderator: Reem Nejdawi*
- Guiding principles and review process to report on the 2030 Agenda,  
*Jana El-Baba, ESCWA and Mona Fattah, ESCWA*
  - Overview on the Preparation of the Jordan 2022 VNR  
*Lamia Al-Zou'bi, Director, MoPIC, Jordan*
  - Overview on the Preparation of the Jordan 2022 VNR – food security  
*Nada Al Frahat, MoA, Jordan*  
General discussions
- 11:00 – 11:30**      **Coffee Break**
- 11:30– 13:00**      **Session VI: Regional Support for Enhanced Food Security**
- Overview of SDGs on Food Security and status in Palestine  
*Firas Yassin, FAO-ESS, Rome*
  - Regional data collection and analysis  
*Fida'a Rawabdeh, Head of the regional office of the AOAD in the Mashreq region*  
General discussions

**13:00 – 14:00 Lunch Break**

**14:00 – 16:30 Session VII: Palestine Follow-up and Review of the 2030 Agenda**

- Overview on First VNR report of Palestine  
*Hasan H.H. Ashqar, Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), Palestine*
- Reporting best practices  
*Fidele Byiringiro, ESCWA*
- General discussions

**Coffee served (during afternoon session)**

**16:30 – 17:00 Session VIII: Closing Session**

- Evaluation
- Certificate distribution
- Wrap-up and way forward

***End of workshop***

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