



Shared Prosperity Dignified Life



Distr.
LIMITED
E/ESCWA/CL4.SIT/2022/WG.2/INF.1
9 March 2022
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

Consultative Experts Group Meeting On Arab Digital Inclusion Platform (ADIP)
Future Perspectives

Online, 12 April 2022

Preliminary information note

Background

To assure the continuous provision of existing and emerging public services, governments have been urged to implement innovative quick-to-market solutions in the development and deployment of new technologies. However, the pandemic also demonstrates how digital services exclude those who need them the most.

Persons with disabilities, for example, have more difficulty engaging in vital activities or receiving preventative measures, and as a result, vital support services are disrupted. In the Arab region, persons with disabilities are still among the most marginalized population groups, facing multiple barriers hindering their ability to participate on an equal basis in the society, in terms of literacy, education and employment, where they remain disadvantaged.

It's essential to know the importance of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in empowering people, improving access for all, and creating more inclusive societies. In the Arab region, the ICT sector has made some great advancements in recent years and has the potential to enhance digital inclusion across the region.

In this context, ESCWA has launched the Arab Digital Inclusion Platform (ADIP) project in 2020 to support policy makers in the Arab countries to develop/improve their national policies and guidelines for enhanced e-Accessibility. This would help bridge the digital divide and enable all society members to access and use ICT.

Under the framework of the ADIP project, ESCWA has developed two templates namely:

- National e-Accessibility Policy Template for the Arab Region.
- National Technical Guidelines on e-Accessibility for the Arab Region.

Moreover, ESCWA developed the ADIP online platform to assist Arab policy makers in using those templates in an interactive way. The platform includes the developed templates, best practices, and other related material, and an online community of practice dedicated space for disability focal points.



In this meeting, ADIP team aims to consult with experts from the region about the best options to adopt to better serve regional needs in digital accessibility topic. Moreover, the knowledge material (resources and templates) and the interactive tools developed by ESCWA to support policy makers in the Arab region will be overviewed, in addition to the capacity building activities, training and national rollouts through the ADIP , in view of exploring future perspectives for sustainability of the project. This strategic consultative meeting is considered to be of critical importance for identifying the steps and proposing a future roadmap that contribute to the sustainability of ADIP and to increasing its impact.

Objectives

The main objectives of this consultative meeting will be to discuss:

- The best options to adopt, adapt and implement ESCWA e-accessibility templates towards their roll out at national level.
- The improvement of the ADIP online platform, its components and features.
- The capacity building activities, regional / national training plans, as well as cooperation opportunities with governments, stakeholders and partners at national level for better implementation in the future.

Format

This Consultative meeting on ADIP – Future Perspectives will run online over 3 hours on 12 April 2022 and will be conducted in English and Arabic.

Expected Accomplishments

The main outcomes of the meeting will be to provide expert opinions and recommendations on the planning of the upcoming phase of ADIP, towards increasing its impact in the region. This is through exploring and analyzing ADIP future perspectives and proposing a future roadmap for sustainability.

Discussion Topics

- Opening session
- Session 1: Presentation and discussion of the main findings of the consultative survey with stakeholders on ADIP's Future perspectives
- Session 2: Proposed future plan of activities
- Session 3: National rollouts, cooperation with national stakeholders and future steps
- Closing remarks

Partners and Beneficiaries

Ministries of information and communication technology, administrative reform, e-government bodies, ministries of social affairs and organizations of persons with disabilities.



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