



Shared Prosperity Dignified Life



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Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

Webinar on “Case study on Lebanon’s policy regulatory reforms and financial and legal frameworks needed to promote small-scale renewable energy technologies and applications in rural areas”

15 April 2021 at 10:00 AM – 11:45 AM Beirut Time (EET)

INFORMATION NOTE

Within the framework of the “Regional Initiative for Promoting Small-Scale Renewable Energy Applications in Rural Areas of the Arab Region (REGEND)” Project, the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) is organizing a webinar on “Case study on Lebanon’s policy regulatory reforms and financial and legal frameworks needed to promote small-scale renewable energy technologies and applications in rural areas”.

The webinar will be held online on 15 April 2021 at 10:00 AM – 11:45 AM Beirut Time (EET).

Background Information

The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) are implementing the “Regional Initiative for Promoting Small-Scale Renewable Energy Applications in Rural Areas of the Arab Region (REGEND)”. This regional initiative includes several partners in implementation such as the League of Arab States (LAS), line ministries, local authorities, various regional organizations, UN organizations, local and regional NGOs, research institutions, and academia.

By using appropriate small-scale renewable energy (RE) technologies for productive activities and entrepreneurial development, REGEND aims to improve the livelihood, economic benefits, social inclusion and gender equality of Arab rural communities, particularly marginalized groups, through a bottom-up and integrated approach by addressing energy poverty, water scarcity, vulnerability to climate change and other natural resources challenges in three targeted countries, namely: Jordan, Lebanon and Tunisia.

REGEND also intends to support national efforts to create an enabling policy environment, design policies and set up institutional frameworks favorable to the use of small-scale RE technologies in rural areas and creating suitable financing opportunities by showcasing case studies and sharing best practices through policy toolkits.

In this context and as part of REGEND project activities, national policy case studies were initiated in each of the targeted countries by involving key stakeholders and national organizations/government institutions and experts on policy, regulatory, financial and legal frameworks applicable in the rural development context by integrating the energy, water, agricultural sectors and gender equity and entrepreneurial development through a holistic approach.

Since the creation of a clear and credible policy and regulatory system is important for attracting private sector investment, the case study tackles Lebanon's policy regulatory reforms and financial and legal frameworks needed to promote small-scale renewable energy (RE) technologies and applications in rural areas through an integrated approach. The study therefore analyzes the national strategies and policies for rural development, focuses on assessing the ground-level regulations for rural productive activities that could promote both small-scale RE technologies and entrepreneurial development and would attract private investments. It also assesses a gender-specific line to promote women's economic empowerment access to market, and finally provides guidelines towards the design and implementation of policies, regulatory, financial and legal frameworks to support rural development programmes, which are economically, environmentally, socially and institutionally sustainable. Finally, the study issues recommendations.

The case study builds on REGEND's baseline study of Lebanon and the study on gender mainstreaming, social inclusion and human rights processes and outcomes of access to energy in targeted local communities in Lebanon.

In this context, ESCWA, is organizing this webinar to present and discuss Lebanon's case study and provide guidelines to conceptualize REGEND's policy toolkit as regional strategic guidelines to improve the enabling environment for the private sector and women entrepreneurs to invest in income-generating activities by increasing the use of small-scale RE technologies and applications in productive activities in the rural areas.

The webinar will involve national government institutions, UN and international organizations, experts, financial institutions and representatives from local communities, NGOs, private sector and key partner organizations.

The webinar will feature presentations and discussion panels that will cover rural development, renewable energy and natural resources, gender empowerment, financing mechanisms and entrepreneurial development in the rural context.

Objectives of the Webinar

Through a holistic approach, the main objectives of the webinar are:

- Present Lebanon's case study including its main findings and recommendations.
- Discuss the case study vis-à-vis the national strategies, regulations, and policies linked to the rural context and the current economic crisis which incentivizes local production where rural productive activities can significantly contribute.
- Collect feedback from the attending stakeholders given their experience working in the energy and rural development sectors and discuss additional recommendations on reforms the case study should consider.
- Explore supplementary gender mainstreaming and women empowerment opportunities the recommendations of the case study can benefit from.
- Brainstorm and discuss ways for national policy makers to understand and act on the social, environmental, and financial benefits that will result from promoting and legislating the use of small-scale RE technologies in rural areas, specifically in the productive sectors.

Agenda

Setting the Scene and Moderator: (5 mins)

- Ms. Radia Sedaoui, Chief of the Energy Section (ES), Climate Change and Natural Resource Sustainability Cluster (CCNRSC), ESCWA.

Case Study Presentation: (15 mins)

- Ms. Jessica Obeid, National Consultant, ESCWA.

Panel Discussion: (60 mins) *covering the water-energy-food nexus, rural development, gender empowerment, and access to finance*

- Ms. Hania Chahal, Gender and Economic Expert
- Mr. Nadim Farajallah, AUB
- Ms. Marie-Louise Hayek, FAO
- Mr. Hassan Harajli, UNDP
- Ms. Ilda Nahas, Microfinance Expert
- Ms. Nadine Saba, Akkar Network for Development
- Ms. Sabine Saba, University of Balamand
- Ms. Rima Younes Khatib, BDL

Q&A (20 mins)

Closing Remarks and Way Forward (5 mins)