



**UN-ESCWA**

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

## **Workshop on Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) Observatories in ESCWA Member Countries**

### ***Phase II: Capacity Building on STI Indicators and Observatories***

***Beirut, 18-20 January 2010***

#### ***Preliminary Information Note***

### **1. Background**

Science, technology and innovation (STI) are recognized as important strategic factors that shape and drive the socio-economic future of nations. They are essential ingredients of sustainable development that can play a major role in poverty reduction. With globalization, trade liberalization and the emergence of knowledge-based industries, the importance of STI for economic growth and competitiveness has become more evident. The growing economic and societal importance of STI has spurred the need for the collection and analysis of data that would be related to inputs, processes, outputs and impacts. Reliable facts and figures would require interrelated indicators.

STI statistics and performance indicators have become necessary tools in the evaluation of the various stages of STI performance. They are crucial for monitoring scientific and technological development, determining current global technological trends, conducting foresight exercises and determining specific areas of investment. Indicators are also essential for the formulation, adjustment and implementation of STI policies and strategies. The establishment of STI observatories (STIO) that would be responsible for the collection of data as well as for the creation and analysis of indicators would be vital for the work of policymakers and strategic analysts. Data in ESCWA member countries (EMCs) is collected in a multitude of ways by a variety of institutions.

To improve the situation on the ground, ESCWA has been actively promoting the establishment of STIOs in the region. It has already worked closely with several EMCs to formulate concrete plans aiming at the establishment of national STIOs. To date, Lebanon has initiated plans for an STIO that would be hosted by the National Council for Scientific Research. Syria and Jordan have closely followed pace. Several other EMCs have expressed interest in pursuing similar plans.

In this context, capacity building will have a major role to play. During a recent workshop on the establishment of the Syrian STIO, this fact was confirmed and adopted as a recommendation. In response to this recommendation, ESCWA organized a "Workshop on Science, Technology and Innovation Observatories in ESCWA Member Countries" to promote the establishment of national and regional STIOs in the ESCWA region.

The workshop was subdivided into two phases. The first phase entitled "Towards the Establishment of National and Regional Science, Technology and Innovation Observatories" was held on 11 and 12 November 2009. The second phase of the workshop entitled "Capacity Building on Science, Technology and Innovation Indicators and Observatories" will be held during 18-20 January 2010. The first phase of the workshop included fifteen directors of existing national STI institutions while the second phase will include senior public sector specialists and technology experts who are involved in the creation and implementation of STIOs and the development of STI indicators.

## **2. Objectives**

The objectives of the second phase of the workshop are as follows:

- Assisting the participants in gaining knowledge and skills on STI indicators and observatories;
- Strengthening local capacities for the production of STI indicators in ESCWA member countries;
- Increasing the number of ESCWA countries that produce STI indicators;
- Promoting the use of STI indicators to support evidence-based STI policy making.
- Assisting ESCWA member countries in establishing national STI observatories;
- Fostering regional co-operation among ESCWA member countries in relation to STI indicators and observatories.

## **3. Topics**

Below are the major topics that will be discussed during the second phase of the workshop:

- Indicators used to measure the globalization of research and development;
- Traditional and broadly defined STI indicators;
- Recent developments in the production of STI statistics and indicators;
- Status of STI indicators in the Arab region;
- Production of STI indicators;
- Basic concepts behind STIOs;
- General objectives of STIOs;
- The socio-economic impacts of STIOs;
- Organization and structure of STI observatories;
- Models of STI Observatories;
- Design conditions of STIOs;
- Guidelines for setting up a STIOs;
- Regional and international cooperation in the field of STI indicators and observatories;
- Conclusions and follow-up.

## **4. Participation**

Fourteen participants from ESCWA member countries will be invited to the second phase of the workshop. They include public sector specialists and technology experts who are involved in the creation and implementation of STIOs and the development of STI indicators. The main speakers will be regional and international experts in STI indicators and observatories.

## **5. Organization, venue and dates**

The workshop is organized by UN-ESCWA and will be held during 18-20 January 2010 at UN House, Riad El Solh Square, Beirut, Lebanon.

## **6. Working language**

English and Arabic are the working languages of the workshop. There will be no simultaneous translation between languages.

## **7. Additional information**

Inquiries and requests for additional information should be addressed to:

Mr. Yousef Nusseir, Director, ICT Division, UN-ESCWA, Beirut, Lebanon, Phone: +961 1 978549, Fax: +961 1 981510, Email: [nusseir@un.org](mailto:nusseir@un.org)

Mr. Mansour Farah, Chief, ICT Policies Section, ICT Division, UN-ESCWA, Beirut, Lebanon, Phone: +961 1 978538, Fax: +961 1 981510, Email: [farah14@un.org](mailto:farah14@un.org)