



UN-ESCWA

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
ESCWA Technology Centre



RSS

Royal Scientific Society - Jordan

Expert Group Meeting on Promotion of South-South Cooperation in Technology Transfer

20-21 April 2011, El Hassan Science City, Amman, Jordan

Preliminary Information Note

1. Background

South-South cooperation is at the core mandate of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), to promote regional and interregional cooperation and collaboration by providing member countries with capacity-building and sharing experiences as a means for strengthening ties between countries and networking capabilities. The work of ESCWA takes into consideration the Nairobi outcome document of the High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation, adopted by the General Assembly resolution 64/222 of 21 December 2009. Specifically: *“Call upon the United Nations funds and programmes and invite the specialized agencies to continue to enhance the capacities of developing countries to develop and formulate development cooperation programmes, strengthen the capacities of regional and subregional organizations and conduct research to identify areas where support for South-South cooperation will have the greatest impact;”*¹

South-South cooperation has existed in many formats over the past decades. Among the main forums: Group of 77 developing countries, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), the Non-Aligned Movement, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), League of Arab States, the regional UN Economic Commissions (Asia-Pacific, Western Asia, Africa, and South America). In order to harness productive and sustained outcomes, the collaboration platforms are usually driven by clear mutual benefits and guided by the principles of respect for national sovereignty and independence. South-South cooperation complements North-South cooperation and cannot substitute proven economic relations and networks. However, developing countries face similar development challenges and tend to share common development strategies and priorities.

It is important to recognize that South-South cooperation is based on a multi-stakeholder approach, including civil society, the private sector, academia and other actors. Among the areas that pose a challenge and opportunity is the technology transfer and deployment for reaching the development goals of the countries. Hence, regional forums for transferring and rooting technology for development: Consortium on Science, Technology and Innovation for the South; Technology Exchange Forum by the Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation of the 57-member Organization of the Islamic Conference; Egyptian Fund for Technical Cooperation with Africa; India's Pan-African e-Network Project; United Arab Emirates in the field of renewable and alternative energy and clean technology; UN ESCAP technology transfer centre in India; and others.

The fifth meeting of the ESCWA Consultative Committee on Scientific and Technological Development and Technological Innovation (Beirut, 29-30 March 2010)² recommended that the ESCWA Technology Centre activities connect with "global and regional initiatives to support country-based technology transfer by supporting needs assessment, facilitating information exchange and providing capacity-building services". The Committee meeting also recommended that the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) activities of ESCWA consider technology transfer to support climate change mitigation and adaptation measures. Furthermore, the 2009 Arab Plan of Action for Science and Technology³ that identified the region's priorities in science and technology, promoted intra-regional cooperation on technology transfer projects towards the implementation of the Arab Plan of Action. In addition, technology transfer has been considered to be among the priority areas for sustainable development in the region,⁴ as iterated in a number of Arab declarations, including the Arab Declaration to the World Summit on Sustainable Development (2002).

¹ Nairobi Outcome Document, <http://southsouthconference.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/GA-resolution-endorsed-Nairobi-Outcome-21-Dec-09.pdf>

² Fifth Meeting of the ESCWA Consultative Committee on Scientific and Technological Development and Technological Innovation (Beirut, 29-30 March 2010), <http://www.escwa.un.org/information/meetingdetails.asp?referenceNum=1248E>

³ UNESCO and ALECSO, 2009, *Arab Plan of Action for Science and Technology* (in Arabic), accessible through <http://www.unesco.org/science/psd/focus/focus09/astpa.pdf>

⁴ ESCWA, 2003, *Governance for Sustainable Development in the Arab Region: Institutions and Instruments for Moving beyond an Environmental Management Culture*, E/ESCWA/SDPD/2003/8, Table 4, page 8.

Consequently, the ESCWA Technology Centre is organizing the expert group meeting on the Promotion of South-South Cooperation in Technology Transfer, and has chosen to address in this meeting technology transfer in the areas of water, energy, agriculture, and information and communication.

2. Objectives

The main objective of the meeting is to discuss *priority areas* of cooperation in technology transfer with the biggest impact for collaboration, share *best practices* for cooperation with successful technology transfer case studies in (water, energy, agriculture, and information and communication), and produce a *collaboration framework* with multi owners for critical technology development, management, maintenance, and services.

3. Topics

The meeting will cover the following topics:

- (a) ESCWA Technology Centre (ETC) Establishment and Operation Strategy.
- (b) ETC Priority Areas and Collaboration Framework.
- (c) Thematic areas of priority for technology transfer in selected sectors *water, energy, agriculture, and information and communication*.
- (d) Case-studies of technology transfer that convey successful practices and cooperation mechanisms.

4. Expected outcome

The main outcome of the meeting will be a *collaboration framework on technology transfer* covering the identified areas of priority. The collaboration framework will be illustrated with best practices and lessons learnt.

5. Participants

Participants in the meeting include the members of the board of governors of the ESCWA Technology Centre, experts in the technology transfer business modelling and mechanisms and in the thematic focus areas of the meeting. Stakeholders from the financial institutions that work closely with businesses may also participate, as well as public officials who are responsible for formulating or implementing sectoral policies and strategies.

Invited participants should register for the meeting before Thursday 31 March 2011. The title of substantive contributions to the meeting, if any, should be proposed as part of the registration process, within which participants send an abstract with the registration form and, upon approval, submit the full contribution one week before the meeting date.

6. Organisation, Venue and Dates

The meeting is organized by the ESCWA Technology Centre in collaboration with the Royal Scientific Society of in Jordan, and will be held during 20-21 April 2011 at El Hassan Science City, Amman, Jordan.

7. Working language

The working languages of the meeting will be English and/or Arabic. However, participants are expected to be proficient in English as there will not be simultaneous translation.

8. Additional information

Latest information would be available through the meeting Web page:

<http://www.escwa.un.org/information/meetingdetails.asp?referenceNum=1441E>

Submissions, inquiries and requests for additional information should be addressed to:

Dr. Fouad Mrad (mrad@un.org), Executive Director a.i. of ESCWA Technology Centre, El Hassan Science City, PO Box 1438 Al-Jubaiha 11941, Amman, Jordan, T +962-6-5344701, F +962-6-5347399.

and/or

Ms. Zahr Bou-Ghanem (bou-ghanem@un.org), Research Assistant, ICT Policies, ICT Division, ESCWA, PO Box 11-8575, Beirut, Lebanon, T +961-1-978510, F +961-1-981510.