



A Group of New Judges Visits the UN House



In a yearly tradition, the UN House opened its doors on Wednesday 6 February to a group of young new judges who came on a tour of its premises, and were introduced to the recovery work of the UN in Lebanon and of UN-ESCWA activities in the region.

The judges, who will be the newest graduates of the Lebanese Institute of Legal Studies, met with UN-ESCWA Chiefs of Divisions, or their representatives, as well as with the Recovery and Coordination Advisor to the UN Resident Coordinator (UNRCO) in Lebanon, Mr. Fernando Hiraldo.

Introducing UN and UN-ESCWA Work

Hiraldo briefed the judges on UN recovery activities following the July 2006 war in Lebanon, which were twofold: recovery projects that address urgent post-war needs, and in a later phase, projects to restore lives and livelihood of citizens. Mr. Hiraldo also addressed the continuous work of the UN in Lebanon, and its efforts towards the establishment of sustainable development.

Visitors also got an overview of UN-ESCWA activities, both regionally, and locally. Mr. Mohammed Osman, Senior Economic Affairs Officer and Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development, spoke about the work of the Sustainable Development and Productivity Division (SDPD), namely on issues regarding policy and the use of resources for environmental and developmental sustainability.

Mr. Walid Hilal, Team Leader of the Social Policy and Participatory Development, focused on the correlation between society and social policy on one hand, and the independence of the legal system on the other.

Mr. Nabil Safwat, Chief of the Globalization and Regional

Integration Division, introduced the visitors to the work of the Division, namely the projects on Integrated Transport System, in the Arab Mashreq (ITSAM), including the Agreement on International Railway in the Arab Mashreq, and the Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq.

Mr. Ayman El-Sherbiny, First Officer of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Policies in the ICT Division, shed light on the developmental aspect of ICT, which is usually dealt with as a technical issue.

Next, the judges met with UN-ESCWA Executive Secretary, Mr. Bader Omar Al Dafa, who enquired about their studies and urged them to take on their duties as responsible citizens, whose combined work serves their country in the best of ways. ■

The Institute for Legal Studies is a part of the General Directorate of the Lebanese Ministry of Justice. It was established in 1961, and currently comprises three sections: Judicial, Financial and Administrative.



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The Smart Community Family to Expand

As a confirmation of the success that the Smart Community Project in Iraq (SCP) achieved in capacity-building, and employment creation in host rural communities, Karbala University showed interest in joining the SCP family and benefiting of the opportunities it offers. The University sent a delegation of its representatives, along with members of the Karbala Municipal Council to visit UN-ESCWA in Beirut and meet with the SCP team to discuss cooperation, and transmit successful experiences to other locations within Karbala.

Delegation members focused on the great need within Karbala University and province to form trainers in the International Computer Driving License, use modern technologies



The Smart Community Family to Expand (Cont.)

in e-commerce, agro-food processing, water treatment, and information and communication, to hone the skills of people within the province, encourage the establishment of small and micro-enterprises, and create more job opportunities.

The delegation met with the chief of the Emerging and Conflict Related Issues division (ECRI), the unit that has set up the project framework, and pledged to present a comprehensive study on available resources in the province and the best methods for local development within the province. In consolidation of cooperation with UN-ESCWA, Karbala University will establish a local development unit that deals with different capacity-building and competence honing activities in rural communities inside the province. ■

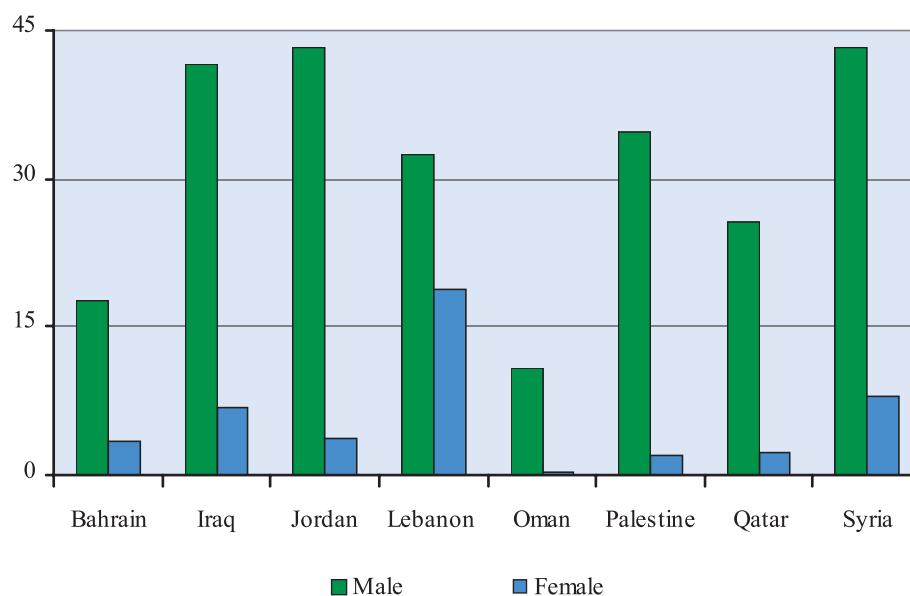


Prevalence of Tobacco Use

Prevalence of tobacco use measures the spread of smoking among the population, which is a major risk factor for diseases of the heart and blood vessels, lung cancer and other diseases. Available data shows that the rates of smoking have been slightly decreasing during the period 1990-2005 among both men and women. The rate of smoking was highest in Lebanon, at 25.7 per cent in 2004. It was lowest in Qatar, at 13.6 per cent in 2006. In all countries, smoking prevalence was higher among men. Rates of smoking among women varied between 2.1 per cent in Palestine and 6.9 per cent in Iraq in 2006, with Lebanon the only country scoring outside the range with 18.9 per cent of women smoking in 2004. Tobacco control policies, smoking cessation programmes and school education are essential factors that will contribute towards lowering those rates, thus encouraging healthy lifestyles. ■

Lebanon registered the highest smoking rates in 2004, 18.9% of which are women, while Qatar marked the lowest smoking rates of 2006 with 13.6% only.

Figure 16. Smoking rates, by sex, for selected ESCWA member countries, 2005



Sources : National data sets, namely, family health surveys; demographic health survey.

Note : 2005 series data for Bahrain pertain to 2001, Iraq to 2006, Jordan to 2003 and Oman to 2000.

Source: Compendium of Social Statistics and Indicators: Social Indicators of the Commission for Sustainable Development, UN-ESCWA, 2007.

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