



Youth-centered Development



Government officials from UN-ESCWA member countries, including heads of national youth councils entrusted with national youth strategies and programmes, met in Abu-Dhabi to discuss better integrating youth in the development agenda. Discussions were held under the umbrella of the expert group meeting on “Reinforcing Social Equity: Integrating Youth into the Development Process” co-organized by UN-ESCWA and the Family Development Foundation in the United Arab Emirates on 29-31 March 2009. The

meeting also brought together noted experts in the fields of social sciences and economics, researchers from national and regional centres specializing in population and development, and experts from non-governmental organizations working on youth policies and issues.

Although member countries have committed themselves to international resolutions related to formulating youth policies and to supporting youth to reach their full potentials, they still lag behind compared [▶](#)



This meeting was held in line with: 1-the execution of the Resolution 60/2 adopted by the General Assembly, in which the United Nations urges Member States to develop holistic and integrated policies for the empowerment of youth and the strengthening of their role in society and in the development process (A/RES/60/2), and 2- the execution of UN-ESCWA recommendations which urge member countries to accord due importance to demographic changes and the resulting increase in the youth population (now labeled as the “youth bulge”) in the formulation of development plans and programmes.

IN THIS ISSUE:

- Youth-centered Development
- Water Matters

Water Matters

UN-ESCWA participated in the World Water Forum 5, the world's biggest ever water-related event, held this year from 18 to 23 March 2009 in Istanbul. The Forum gathered more than 25,000 participants, and issued a large number of recommendations, proposals, commitments and initiatives.

The mission was part of the activities planned to represent the experience of UN-ESCWA in building capacity in regional water accounts and showcase the experience of a selected member country as well. Thus, the Lebanese Central Administration of Statistics and the Department of Statistics of [▶](#)



Youth-centered Development (Cont.)



to the East Asian and Southeast Asian countries. This can be attributed to certain political, economic and technical factors, including the absence of a favourable national and regional context for identifying the needs and priorities of youth at all levels (rural, urban and local); and the absence of a contemporary vision, in which the role of youth in the society could be specified.

Transport and Money

The meeting aimed at achieving long-term as well as timely objectives, considering youth as a distinct socio-demographic group that has specific needs and that sometimes faces unique challenges.

“Youth population in the age group of 15-24 years in the Arab World is set to rise to 79 million by 2015”, UN-ESCWA Executive Secretary Bader Omar AlDafa said in the meeting. This will pose a big challenge to Arab governments, which will have to re-examine their development strategies.

The meeting recommended that these governments adopt a new approach to youth issues and a national youth strategy based on citizenship, rights and obligations and centered around the human element in development. ■

Water Matters (Cont.)

Jordan were funded by UN-ESCWA and the statistical cooperation program MEDSTAT to represent their experience in water accounts as part of the development account project “Strengthening National Capacities in Environment Statistics, Indicators and Accounts in support of progress toward achieving the internationally agreed development goals in the ESCWA and ECLAC Region”.

UN-ESCWA was a member of the Panel “Frameworks and approaches: International, regional and national” in the session titled “Data for All”, convened by the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), the National Water Commission – Mexico, (CONAGUA), the World Meteorology Association (WMO) and the International Association of Hydrological Sciences (IAHS). ESCWA presented the regional experience with the development of water accounts, the progress made and the difficulties encountered in the process.

Catering Reliable Information

The presentations and discussions focused on the need to collect and integrate many data sources and make available high quality data to provide the information necessary to a variety of audiences for effective water management. Users and producers of water data were encouraged to work closely together to improve the basic data sources and to develop integrated information systems that support information at subnational, national, regional and global scales along with methods and standards to implement the systems and frameworks necessary to provide on-going sources of information for management and decision making. Data quality assessment and the role of indicators were also among the topics addressed.

The main recommendations of the session included, among others, the potential use of the system of environmental-economic accounting for water (SEEA-Water); based on the existing, well established system of national accounts and linked to hydrological systems; it is a way forward. Countries were invited to develop strong legal and institutional arrangements to support and fund data collection, integration and dissemination including sharing of data and the development of metadata and quality assurance frameworks. ■



Address

P.O. Box 11-8575, Riad El-Solh, Beirut-Lebanon
Tel.: 961-1-981301; Fax: 961-1-981510

e-mail: webmaster-escwa@un.org
website: www.escwa.un.org