



## Of Social Exclusion

Is the concept of social exclusion a European concept and what are the possibilities of its adaptation or reformulation for the region? Is poverty eradication adequate enough to tackle the problems faced by excluded groups in the region or are these problems multi-dimensional and relational, intersecting with issues of discrimination?

Such questions represent one of the angles of discussions that took place in the UN House, Beirut, during an expert group meeting on "Social Exclusion in the ESCWA Region: Determinants and Indicators", on 1-2 August 2008. UN-ESCWA gathered a quorum of experts, academics and activists in the social field to discuss social exclusion, in addition to the findings of its inquiries into the issue.



UN-ESCWA had carried out a field research on the subject in 3 of its member countries, Lebanon, Yemen and Egypt, conducting 36 interviews with marginalized men and women who are unable to benefit of opportunities and services. Participants highlighted the importance of this field work, which could play a role in making visible problems and processes not usually discussed in the Arab region. It can therefore be used as an advocacy tool for social exclusion that could place such problems on the agenda of governments and development partners. ■

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## Water Negotiations



It is essential to strengthen member countries' capacity to develop a comprehensive vision and strategy for international negotiations on shared water resources. In this field, in partnership with the Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources of Germany (BGR), and in collaboration with the Ministry of Water Resources in Iraq, UN-ESCWA organized a high-level seminar on "Negotiations and Dispute Resolution over International Shared Water Resources in Iraq", from 29 to 31 July 2008 at the UN-House.

Participants were decision makers and water professionals from the ministries of Water Resources, Foreign Affairs, and Planning and Development Cooperation. They were exposed to the negotiation process, based on several real life case studies catered to the actual situation in Iraq and to the skills and mechanisms for establishing multi-disciplinary national teams for water negotiations. ■

## Concluding the Smart Community Project in Iraq



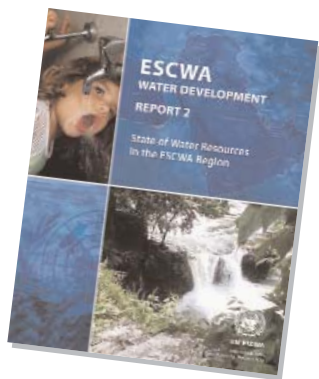
UN-ESCWA held a coordination meeting to conclude the smart community project (SCP) in Iraq, on 22-24 July 2008 at the Crown Plaza Hotel, Beirut. The meeting aimed at discussing the work plan to continue the activities that remain in the project, and establish a mechanism

to deliver the SCP to the local community, in coordination with the Ministry of Municipalities and Public Works.

Participants in the meeting included the General Director of Municipalities, representing the Iraqi Ministry of Municipali-



## UN-ESCWA Publications



### ESCWA Water Development Report, Issue No 2

#### *State of Water Resources in the ESCWA Region*

The ESCWA region has an arid to semi-arid climate and the livelihood of its population is significantly affected by the scarcity of water. This series aims to enhance the application of integrated water resources management (IWRM) concepts in Western Asia and this second issue provides an overview of the state of water resources in the ESCWA region, based on the most recent data obtained from member countries, analyzed and assessed in the context of IWRM. It offers a comprehensive picture of the current situation of water resources in each member country in terms of availability, accessibility and sustainability. ■

Source: UN-ESCWA Publications Catalogue (2006/2007).

## Concluding the Smart Community Project in Iraq (Cont.)

ties and Public Works, representatives of Thi Qar and Salaheddine Universities, as well the project's coordinators. Participants agreed to hand the project's facilities to the host sites, provided they declare any investment in them by private sector companies or civil organizations that should respect the development goals in the spirit of which they were established.

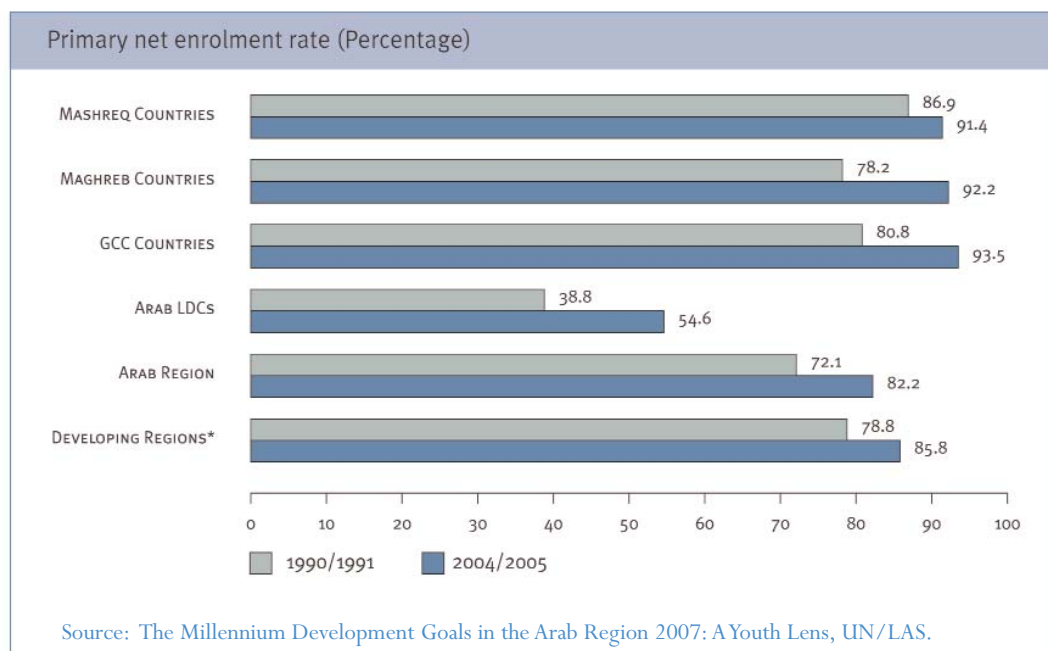
The meeting concluded with a field visit to the Agricultural Research and Education Center (AREC) of the American University of Beirut (AUB). The purpose of the visit was to show participants the methods of local development used at the center, in addition to visiting the dairy unit that the center uses for guidance and development goals. ■

## Facts and Figures: The Millennium Development Goals in the Arab Region 2007

### Goal 2: Achieve Universal Primary Education

#### Primary Net Enrolment Rate

Education is a critical requirement for sustainable development and the key to knowledge and the future of young people, as it may be a means to breaking the cycle of poverty by providing them with choices and opportunities. Against this backdrop, at The Millennium Summit, the international community made the commitment to achieve universal primary education by 2015. The principal indicators to measure progress towards MDG 2 are the primary net enrolment rate (NER), the gross intake rate at the last grade of primary school, the survival rate to the last grade of primary school and the youth literacy rate. According to date by the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), primary NER for the Arab region progressed by 10 points since 1990 to reach 82.2 per cent, with the respective literacy gender parity index increasing from 0.81 in 1991 to 0.92 in 2005. ■



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