Regional workshop on the Social Expenditure Monitor for Arab States

Beirut, 24-25 June 2019

Summary of discussions and key messages
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I. Introduction

1. Public social expenditure is an important means of implementation for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Its effectiveness depends on how informed and efficient public expenditure choices are, given fiscal space and macroeconomic policy coherence. To date, member States of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) do not have a comprehensive mechanism for monitoring public social expenditure and for linking it to macroeconomic policy coherence. As a result, budget allocations sometimes support multiple and overlapping social programmes, and policies are often mismatched or inadequate for achieving social development priorities and realizing the SDGs. Given the pressure on public budgets across Arab countries, such expenditure management is unsustainable.

2. ESCWA has embarked on a project entitled “Social Expenditure Monitor (SEM): An Integrated Framework for Supporting Macrofiscal Policies and the SDGs” to respond to this challenge. A pioneering tool for Arab States, SEM will provide comprehensive mapping of public social expenditure to inform budgeting and social policy reforms. The establishment of SEM in a national context would require collection and analysis of data according to an agreed and adapted SEM framework.

3. In this context, ESCWA organized a regional workshop entitled “Social Expenditure Monitor for Arab States”, which was held in Beirut on 24 and 25 June 2019. The aim was to discuss the draft regional framework of SEM developed by ESCWA, in order to improve its scope and usefulness for policy and budgeting reforms in national contexts. The workshop was attended by representatives of several government entities from five member States (Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, State of Palestine and Tunisia); the Arab Institute for Training and Research in Statistics; the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD); national women’s machineries, regional civil society organizations; United Nations Country Team from Jordan and Tunisia; the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC); and other United Nations entities.

II. KEY MESSAGES

4. Participants deliberated on means to improve the scope of SEM and its usefulness for policymakers. Key messages stemming from the discussions can be summarized as follows:

(a) The proposed ESCWA framework for SEM is an adequate policy tool to support budgeting and social policy reforms;

(b) SEM covers a broad scope and is innovative: the proposed indicators are comprehensive enough to monitor related SDG implementation, and the mapping of expenditures is aligned with social development programmes across different ministries of pilot countries. This aspect was highlighted by OECD and ECLAC representatives with long experience of measuring social expenditure in their member States;

(c) Data reporting for SEM is a challenge but the Monitor is adequately built, as it maps expenditure by programme rather than just along the lines of Government Finance Statistics: identifying the relevant programmes across government entities is thus crucial to develop questionnaires for data collection;

(d) Assessment of social expenditure effectiveness is an important issue: SEM must map such effectiveness in key social policy areas encompassing gender equality, human capital and inclusive growth, productivity and economic diversification, multidimensional poverty, food security, social justice and inequality, among others;

(e) SEM indicators should be coherent with performance indicators of programmes and policies in each country, and embedded in national strategies;

(f) A clear definition of SEM indicators must be developed to better determine what falls under social expenditure and what is outside its scope in a specific national context;
Relevant transportation indicators (such as improving commuting and connectivity of urban and rural areas) and indicators of social expenditure by defence ministries may be added and could help in the process of setting public expenditure priorities;

Improving quality of public services, including access to health care, and water and sanitation services, are important issues to be considered when revising SEM indicators;

The ESCWA secretariat will coordinate with representatives of member States and of relevant United Nations country teams to develop implementation strategies (pilot implementation countries are Jordan and Tunisia, and discussions are undergoing with Kuwait, Morocco and the State of Palestine).

III. TOPICS OF DISCUSSION

A. OVERVIEW OF THE SOCIAL EXPENDITURE MONITOR FRAMEWORK

5. The opening remarks of the moderator of the session, Mr. Diego Zorrilla, UN Resident Coordinator, Tunisia, highlighted the usefulness and importance of Social expenditure Monitor (SEM) for Tunisia. He added that the SEM is a huge opportunity for Tunisia to complement the reforms that are ongoing toward improving equality and reducing poverty.

6. Participants found that SEM provided a comprehensive mapping of social expenditure and was an adequate tool to inform Governments on rebalancing public expenditure priorities, improving effectiveness of social protection reforms, improving youth capabilities, and enhancing productivity and growth.

7. The representative of Jordan showcased the important role that SEM would play amid the economic and social challenges that the country was facing. Albeit the country was witnessing steady economic growth at 2 per cent for the past years: high unemployment rates; high poverty rates; continuous fiscal deficit leading to higher debt levels; increasing expenditures on debt services; and increasing pressure on public services due to the influx of Syrian refugees to the country.

8. The representative of Tunisia emphasized the importance of SEM as a tool to face the challenges that the social security system was facing in the country: financial difficulties; low social coverage; high employment in the informal sector; unemployed persons not benefiting from adequate social protection; and poor targeting of social assistance programmes.

9. The representative of Kuwait highlighted the fact that the country was transforming from a resource-based economy to an innovation-driven knowledge economy with high value-added social investments. The SEM framework was expected to help the Government map expenditure on the development goals and priorities of the country, providing essential information in the transitional phase of economic diversification.

10. The representative of the State of Palestine explained that the Palestinian public budget relies on three key sources: clearance revenues which are the taxes on goods imports and they constitute about 60 percent of revenues, foreign aid that account for about 25 percent of revenues, and local taxes of various kinds. Israel transfers the clearance revenues monthly to the Palestinian government, but these were not received since last 6 months. The budget also suffers from decline in foreign grants and aid, which affects the performance of ministries related to the development sector such as health, social development and education. Ensuring the realization of the rights of the Palestinian people in the process of achieving the SDGs was of paramount importance. The country had specificities that the SEM framework needed to take into account, including the significant disparities between Gaza and the West Bank.

11. The representative of Morocco said that the new Constitution had provided for the adoption of reformed policies to solidify the notions of equality and social justice, and combat poverty, marginalization and vulnerability. The country had also adopted a national strategy to reinforce gender equality, enabling
both sexes to participate economically, politically and culturally. SEM was thus a great opportunity to monitor the new social changes in the country.

12. Representatives from the civil society saw that SEM was a key tool to help Governments in tackling the challenges facing Arab countries, especially budget cuts in social expenditure, usually the first target of cuts in times of austerity. They also stressed that the tool provided an opportunity to enhance transparency and accountability.

13. Participants from the floor highlighted the importance of adequately leveraging the tax system, including exemptions, in providing social benefits. Some participants suggested adding transportation as one of the dimensions of the framework. It was also suggested that a proper national statistical system was needed to ensure the quality of expenditure data.

14. It was noted that one of the unique benefits of the SEM framework was linking the country’s programmes to statistics, and finding common definitions of concepts tailored to national contexts and coherent with international definitions at the same time.

B. LESSONS LEARNED FROM ECLAC AND OECD

15. ECLAC showcased the Social Investment Portal in Latin America and the Caribbean, which it had established in 2016, and presented its strategy for improving measurement of social expenditure. They relied on consultation with member States through regional workshops for agreeing on a regional definition of social spending, given that there was no common definition at the international level, and on the methodology and institutional coverage.

16. The representative of ECLAC showed that the Portal covered six dimensions, based on the Classification by Functions of Government (COFOG): environmental protection; community housing and services; health; recreation, culture and religion; education and social protection. Data spanned from 2000 to 2016 and covered central government for all countries.

17. The representative of ECLAC highlighted that the Commission was continuously working on improving the database on social expenditure, including by incorporating new countries, improving statistical information and using the social expenditure measure to enhance policy reforms. ECLAC was also working on different projects that required improved national systems of information. For example, a study was developed to measure public spending on labour market policies in six countries.

18. The representative of OECD presented its Social Expenditure database (SOCX), highlighting that it recorded public and private data on social expenditures at program level since the 1980s. OECD had established two main criteria for an expenditure to be classified as social: benefits must have a social purpose and programmes incurring the expenditure must involve either interpersonal redistribution of resources among participants or compulsory participation.

19. The representative of OECD showed that SOCX covered nine areas of expenditure: old age; survivors; incapacity-related benefits; health; family; active labour market programmes; unemployment; housing; and other social policy areas. Unlike COFOG, SOCX did not include research and development, administrative and education expenditure; education was recorded separately in the OECD Education Database. Since only benefits provided by institutions were included in the adopted social expenditure definition, transfers between households, albeit of a social nature, were not included in SOCX.

20. Participants highlighted the particularities of the region in the SEM framework context: the changing role of Governments as many countries were moving towards increasing privatization; and the different agendas and national strategies, which required extensive exchange of experiences throughout work on a common framework for the Arab region.
21. Several participants raised the point on whether to include defense expenditure in the SEM framework or not; and civil society representatives asked whether the monitor would differentiate between spending on citizens versus non-citizens (mainly refugees).

C. MEASURING SOCIAL EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

22. The representative of Tunisia said that the country’s social policy included four programs: the employment and vocational relations programme aimed at improving employment relations and ensuring proper work conditions; the social security programme aimed at revisiting social coverage mechanisms and ensuring proper governance of social security funds; the social advancement programme aimed at empowering vulnerable groups through transfers and inclusion measures; and the migration programme aimed at supporting Tunisians living abroad. In addition to the various social expenditures that have been captured in the SEM, the SEM framework needs to consider support to Tunisians living abroad, not just residents, as means of ensuring their rights and promoting social justice as well as supporting social and cultural events.

23. The representative of Jordan showcased the national social protection strategy for the period 2019-2025. Expenditure on social protection programmes had not been effective given the adoption of many separate programmes with similar goals over the years, which led to a duplication of efforts. The social protection strategy reaffirmed the Government’s commitment towards breaking the poverty cycle and guaranteeing the availability of a social protection floor through work on three pillars: “opportunity”, geared towards ensuring a fair and equitable job market; “empowerment”, geared towards providing basic services in education, health and social care; and “dignity”, geared towards providing social benefits.

24. The representative of Jordan also presented the National Aid Fund (NAF), aimed at providing funds to poor households in partnership with the Government and international organizations. Several programmes operated under the National Aid Fund, including: (a) recurrent cash aid targeting families of the elderly and disabled persons; (b) temporary cash aid targeting families of prisoners, employment aid and training for children of families receiving aid; (c) physical rehabilitation aid whose benefits included prosthetics; and (d) emergency cash aids targeting families having incurred death of a member. A new programme entitled “Integration” had been devised in Jordan to provide support for the unemployed along with the working poor, two categories which were not within the scope of the National Aid Fund. The programme was expected to cover a period of three years.

25. Representatives from the civil society highlighted that quantitative and qualitative measures of education outcomes based on new skills needed by the market should be taken into account in the SEM framework. It was also noted that governance and transparency should be monitored and tracked, and specific focus should be placed on the disappearing middle class.

D. COUNTRY SPECIFIC DISCUSSIONS ON SEM INDICATORS AND REVIEW OF A DRAFT QUESTIONNAIRE (JORDAN, KUWAIT, MOROCCO, STATE OF PALESTINE AND TUNISIA)

1. Focus group on Jordan

26. Discussion among representatives of Jordanian entities, including the ministries of finance, health, education, planning and international cooperation, the Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW), the National Aid Fund and the Royal Hashemite Court was moderated by Mr. Omar Hakouz of ESCWA. Participants agreed that the indicators included in the SEM framework adapted to the Jordanian context was in principle comprehensive and reflected the major policy areas.

27. The JNCW representative suggested to add an explicit definition for “family planning” to indicator 3 in the “health and nutrition” dimension.
28. The representative of the Ministry of Finance highlighted the fact that some programmes in the Jordanian budget were identified by their numbers (codes) rather than the programme’s title and that the nomenclature should be reflected in the questionnaire.

29. In the “education” dimension, it was agreed to have a separate sheet in the questionnaire to be filled by universities in Jordan.

30. Data on the education and health services provided by the Defense entities could be obtained. These services covered citizens other than families of military personnel and could be considered as social services. It was agreed that further investigation was needed to agree on the matter.

31. It was agreed that the administrative costs of programmes should be shown separately in the mapping as they could not be attributed to a specific indicator.

32. It was highlighted that the Ministry of Awkaf, Islamic Affairs and Holy Places was overseeing many programmes that could be mapped into several dimensions including education, health and social protection. Representatives agreed that the source of financing for these programmes was complex and there was a need for further investigation to distinguish public expenditure from total expenditure.

33. It was noted that many public entities depended on extrabudgetary funds to provide social services and benefits. There was thus a need to include such extrabudgetary sources in the questionnaire.

34. A national workshop would be held in Jordan to further discuss national priorities and balance between international recommendations and national laws.

35. Representatives agreed on providing further feedback on mapping of the programmes to SEM indicators in each dimension.

2. Focus group on Tunisia

36. Discussions among representatives of Tunisian entities, including ministries of finance, higher education and scientific research, social affairs, health, women, family, childhood and survivors, were moderated by Mr. Hedi Saidi, Director of the Arab Institute for Training and Research in Statistics. Participants discussed SEM dimensions and indicators and suggested some improvements.

37. Programme mapping for the “education” dimension was discussed. The Ministry of Religious Affairs programme on kindergarten education was to be added to the “early childhood education” indicators. Some participants suggested adding early childhood services provided by municipalities, but it was agreed that these services were market outputs and would not be considered. It was also agreed that the Ministry of Education’s preparatory and secondary education programme should be mapped on to the “secondary education” indicator only.

38. Participants noted that the ministries of tourism, defence and agriculture oversee programmes that should be mapped on to the “post-secondary skills training” indicator. The employment programme of the Ministry of Vocational Training and Employment should be removed from under the “education” dimension and mapped on to the “labour dimension”.

39. The scientific research programme of the Ministry of Higher Education is to be mapped on to the “scientific research” indicator only, and programmes in collaboration between the Ministry of Higher Education and other ministries (of health, agriculture, tourism, social affairs and women) are to be mapped on to the “tertiary education” indicator.

40. The programme aimed at advancing the education of adults under the Ministry of Vocational Training and Employment should be mapped on to the “education for adults” indicator.

3. Focus group discussion on Kuwait, Morocco and State of Palestine
41. Representatives from the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR), the Ministry of Social Development of the State of Palestine and the Ministry of Family, Solidarity, Equality and Social Development of Morocco, reiterated the importance of SEM in their national contexts and discussed role attribution in its implementation. The discussion was moderated by Mr. Niranjan Sarangi, Ms. Souraya Zein and Mr. Moctar Mohammed El Hacene of ESCWA.

42. Kuwaiti representatives suggested that they would continue coordinating between ESCWA, the Central Statistical Bureau and other relevant government entities in Kuwait and would prepare a draft note on the role of KISR in implementing SEM, taking into consideration the timeline, and the human and financial resources needed.

43. Representatives from Morocco and the State of Palestine suggested that they would consult with their ministries to appoint focal entities to coordinate with ESCWA in the context of SEM implementation. They underscored the importance of SEM and of cooperation across government entities for its success. ESCWA was requested to share a brief description of the project with those representatives.

E. MEASURING SOCIAL EXPENDITURE ON HOUSING AND AMENITIES, CULTURE, ARTS, SPORTS, AND ENVIRONMENT

44. Participants noted that Tunisia and Jordan were pioneers in environmental initiatives, a progress to be captured under the “environmental protection” dimension of SEM. Jordan had adopted the National Green Growth Plan comprising six sectors: energy, water, waste management, sustainability, tourism and transport. In Tunisia, the concept of sustainable cities was mainstreamed by the Ministry of Equipment, Housing and Territorial Development.

45. The issue of considering “environmental protection” expenditure as social expenditure was raised. It was argued that social expenditure on environmental protection decreased the burden of energy costs, leaving space for essential social spending. In Jordan, for example, low-income households were supported by a policy under which the Ministry of Energy bore 50 per cent of the cost of renewable energy devices for poor households.

46. The environmental dimension was deemed vital, given its impact on health. However, not all environmental expenditure could be considered social. Participants agreed that only expenditure that contributed to societal development would be included in the SEM framework. Adding an indicator on “support to enable a healthy environment (market building, preparing specifications)” was also suggested.

47. The Jordanian representatives noted that the Ministry of Municipal Affairs did not provide services but managed municipalities, which had separate budgets. Therefore, the questionnaire should consider addressing municipalities individually rather than the Ministry itself.

48. It was also noted that some ministries used private companies to supply specific services, such as water and electricity services under ministries of water and energy. Although SEM would enable monitoring public spending through private companies, consideration should be given to increasing transparency to ensure data accuracy.

49. Including indicators on nutrition was highlighted as a unique feature of the SEM framework: in the Social Investment Portal in Latin America and the Caribbean, only nutritional programmes in schools were included. However, food security issues should be better reflected in SEM and overlapping indicators avoided.

50. Participants noted that in agriculture indicators, disaggregation by gender and age groups was a big challenge. In the dimension on “labour market interventions and employment generation programmes”, a clearer distinction should be made between employment and self-employment; and in the dimension on “housing and community amenities”, it was recommended to change the indicator entitled “community development” into “rural and urban planning”.
Questions were raised regarding the treatment of fuel subsidies in the framework. It was agreed that the issue should become clearer with further development of the definition of social expenditure.

F. GENDER-SENSITIVE BUDGETING

Participants noted that gender budgeting was a strategy to support the achievement of equality between women and men through focus on how public resources were collected and spent. It was not about creating separate budgets for women or increasing spending on women’s programmes, but rather about readjusting expenditure towards greater equality. Counting the numbers of female and male beneficiaries of social spending was not enough either; beneficiaries of programmes aimed at promoting equality could be men in certain cases. Education for all played a crucial role in the process, for example.

A representative of the Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW) considered that disaggregating data by gender in SEM enabled the identification of gaps in resource distribution and helped in informing policies aimed at increasing gender equality. Social expenditure must consider improving access to childcare facilities, which would reduce women’s burden of unpaid work and enhance their access to the labour market. Policies related to flexible work need to focus not only on women but equally on men with care responsibilities. Improving gender-sensitive taxation of goods and services, by considering different needs of men and women, is another area that can produce positive gender redistributive outcomes.

The representative of Morocco said that the country had adopted gender-sensitive budgeting, and that the principle of gender equality was enshrined in the Moroccan Constitution. In Tunisia, several strategies and plans had been adopted to empower women. However, if those strategies and plans were not reflected in the budget, they would not be implemented. Monitoring social expenditure and matching it with relevant policies through SEM was an opportunity to validate the implementation of strategies and identify gaps. For the first time in Tunisia, the Prime Minister’s circular of 29 March 2019 urges that every ministry must embed gender disaggregated expenditure in 2020 budget proposal.

G. SEM AND ITS LINKAGES TO INCLUSIVE BUDGETING FOR THE SDGS

The representative of ECLAC highlighted that some Latin American countries had ensured financing of social policies at the level of constitutions, fiscal rules and general law. Examples included Columbia’s prioritization of social dimensions for resource allocation in its Constitution, and Costa Rica’s enforcement of the rule that education expenditure could not amount to less than 7 per cent of the gross domestic product.

ECLAC highlighted the importance of the SEM framework in mapping expenditure at the level of programmes and presented the example of Mexico in linking programme performance to budget allocation. National social development policies and all social programmes in Mexico were evaluated by CONEVAL, a national council for the evaluation of social development policy, which contributed to raise transparency and accountability. CONEVAL evaluations were used by the Ministry of Finance to design budgeting reforms: programmes’ performance was taken into account in budget allocation.

UNCT Representative from UNICEF Jordan emphasized the UNCT’s focus on vulnerable groups and stated that the SEM is a valuable tool to assess and advocate for more efficient and effective expenditures that would benefit the vulnerable groups. The utility of SEM for policy planning, impacting equity and results for the most vulnerable groups, can be enhanced by covering different aspects of social protection floors, expenditure and outcomes for vulnerable groups and regions, and ensuring alignment with existing national policy tools and documents, in particular, with the recently developed Jordan National Social Protection Strategy (2019-2025).

Participants considered that the SEM framework linked social programmes and their performance indicators to budget allocation. It could track social expenditure on each programme and the
targeted beneficiaries, and could therefore be useful for improving efficiency and effectiveness of spending. Recently, Jordan had been removing subsidies and replacing them by cash to the neediest. SEM could be a powerful tool to monitor such changes and test their effectiveness.

59. Discussions addressed social protection transfers, which were adopted by Governments in the context of high poverty rates and high disparities between social groups. However, such transfers were often implemented in isolation from social services (conceptually and programmatically). As a result, the poorest groups sometimes benefited the least from subsidies. This raised the issue of how to measure and define multidimensional poverty, and how to link poverty measurement to fiscal policies.

60. The representative of Tunisia said that the Government’s budget preparation process was based on the target of enhancing effectiveness and performance. Tunisia’s Constitution upheld all social rights, which were embodied in strategies translated into the budget. Budgets of all ministries for 2021 were under preparation and SEM could be used as a tool to align national objectives with the SDGs.

61. At the level of the statistical system, it was proposed to compare between statistics produced by the national statistical offices and ministries, and the statistical needs for monitoring social expenditure, in order to make the necessary changes to the statistical production.

IV. ORGANIZATION OF WORK

A. DATE AND VENUE

62. The regional workshop on the Social Expenditure Monitor for Arab States was held at the United Nations House in Beirut, on 24 and 25 June 2019. The list of participants is provided in annex I to the present report, and the workshop agenda and evaluation in annexes II and III, respectively.

B. OPENING

63. Mr. Mounir Tabet, Deputy Executive Secretary of ESCWA, welcomed the participants, highlighting that SEM was the first attempt to monitor social expenditure in the Arab region. The Monitor was expected to “arm” policymakers with data to fine tune national policies and improve the efficiency of resource allocation to achieve the SDGs. He highlighted the multidisciplinary nature of the project and cooperation between several ESCWA divisions in its design and implementation.

64. Mr. Moctar Mohamed El Hacene, Director of the Economic Development and Integration Division at ESCWA, added that the workshop, which was attended by State representatives from different ministries and experts on the topic of social spending and statistics, provided a platform for participants to propose recommendations aimed at improving the proposed framework for SEM. Mr. Juraj Riecan, Director of the Statistics Division at ESCWA, underlined the integrated character of the SEM framework, considering that presenting collective data from different sources linked to the SDGs was a unique opportunity for the region. Mr. Frederico Neto, Director of the Social Development Division at ESCWA, stated that monitoring social expenditure was at the core of upholding equity and proper distribution of outcomes, adopting the participative approach in policymaking and accelerating the achievement of the SDGs and rights-based development.
Annex I

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### Annex II

**AGENDA**

**Day 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.30 – 9 a.m.</td>
<td>Arrival and registration</td>
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<tr>
<td>9 – 9.30 a.m.</td>
<td>Welcome and opening remarks:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Mr. Mounir Tabet</strong>, Deputy Executive Secretary, ESCWA</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Mr. Moctar Mohamed El Hacene</strong>, Director, Economic Development and</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Integration Division (EDID), ESCWA</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Mr. Frederico Neto</strong>, Director, Social Development Division (SDD),</td>
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<td></td>
<td>ESCWA</td>
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<td><strong>Mr. Juraj Riecan</strong>, Director, Statistics Division (SD), ESCWA</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.30 – 11 a.m.</td>
<td><strong>Session 1: Setting the Stage</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>The session aims to provide an overview of the concept of social</td>
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<td></td>
<td>expenditure and the framework of Social Expenditure Monitor (SEM),</td>
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<td></td>
<td>its usefulness and application to potential budget and policy reforms</td>
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<td>in the context of improving allocative efficiency and</td>
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<td>effectiveness of budgeting towards achieving the SDGs.</td>
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<td><strong>Moderator: Mr. Diego Zorrilla</strong>, UN Resident Coordinator, Tunisia</td>
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<td><strong>Speakers:</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Mr. Niranjan Sarangi</strong>, Economic Affairs Officer, Coordinator of the</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Social Expenditure Monitor (SEM) project, ESCWA</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Mr. Mutasim Al-Kilani</strong>, Head of Sustainable Development Division,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, Jordan</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Mr. Mohamed Bel Haj Hamada</strong>, Economist, CRES, Ministry of Social</td>
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<td>Affairs, Tunisia</td>
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<td><strong>Mr. Abdulhameed Ali Hussein</strong>, Division Director, Techno-Economics</td>
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<td>Division, Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research, Kuwait</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Ms. Hanadi Roma</strong>, Director of Budget Department, Ministry of Social</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Development, State of Palestine</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Ms. Nabila Mbarki</strong>, Ministry of Family, Solidarity, Equality and</td>
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<td>Social Development, Morocco</td>
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<td><strong>Discussants:</strong></td>
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<td>Q &amp; A and discussion from the floor</td>
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<td>11 – 11.15 a.m.</td>
<td>Coffee break</td>
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<td>11.15 a.m. – 1 p.m.</td>
<td><strong>Session 2: Lessons learned in measuring social expenditure</strong></td>
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<td>The session aims to present different experiences of monitoring social</td>
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<td>expenditure around the world, particularly from the Latin American</td>
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<td>countries and OECD countries. The session will draw lessons toward</td>
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<td>improving the SEM framework and its linkages to the SDGs.</td>
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<td><strong>Moderator: Mr. Stefano Prato</strong>, Managing Director, Society for</td>
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<td>International Development</td>
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<td><strong>Speakers:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Ms. Varinia Tromben</strong>, Associate Social Affairs Officer, ECLAC</td>
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<td><strong>Ms. Pauline Fron</strong>, OECD, Statistician, OECD Statistics Directorate</td>
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<td><strong>Discussants:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Mr. Hedi Saidi</strong>, Director General, Arab Institute for Training &amp;</td>
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<td>Research in Statistics (AITRS)</td>
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<td><strong>Mr. Khair Alla Hussein Hamdan Almarzoq</strong>, National Account Statistician,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, Jordan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Session Description</td>
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<td>1–2 p.m.</td>
<td>Lunch break</td>
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| 2–3:30 p.m.  | Session 3: Issues and indicators for measuring social expenditure on education, health, and social protection  
This session aims to discuss the important issues and indicators for measuring social expenditure in the dimensions related to education, health and social protection. It will benefit from the presentation of the national representatives on social protection or social policies and programmes in national context.  
Moderator: Mr. Oussama Safa, Chief, Participation and Social Justice, ESCWA  
Speakers:  
- **Mr. Nasredine Abdennassir**, Deputy Director, Ministry of Social Affairs, Tunisia  
- **Mr. Jamal Jamil Ibrahim Sa’ad Aldeen**, Research Director, The Royal Hashemite Court, Jordan  
- **Mr. Faisal Khalaf Salman Irsheid**, Director of Financial Aid Department, National Aid Fund, Jordan  
Discussants:  
- **Mr. Ziad Abdul Samad**, Executive Director, Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND)  
- **Mr. Nabil Abdo**, MENA Senior Policy Advisor, OXFAM International  |
| 3:30–3:45 p.m.| Coffee break                                                                        |
| 3:45–5:30 p.m.| Session 3 (continued): Focus group discussion  
This session aims to have a country specific focused discussion on reviewing the indicators of the SEM and suggest modifications if there is any. The session will also review a draft questionnaire for at least one selected dimension (Ex. education or health, or both).  
Introduction:  
- **Ms. Dana Hamdan**, ESCWA (Mapping of programmes relating to dimensions)  
- **Ms. Hiba Chehade**, ESCWA (Questionnaire relating to the dimensions)  
Three breakout groups:  
-- Jordan  
-- Tunisia  
-- Kuwait, State of Palestine and Morocco  
Moderators:  
- **Mr. Hedi Saidi**, Director, AITRS (For Tunisia);  
- **Mr. Omar Hakouz**, Regional Advisor, ESCWA (For Jordan);  
- **Mr. Niranjan Sarangi**, ESCWA and **Ms. Souraya Zein**, Associate Economic Affairs Officer, ESCWA (Kuwait, State of Palestine and Morocco) |
| 9:30–11 a.m. | Session 4: Issues and indicators for measuring social expenditure on housing, culture and sports, and environment  
This session aims to discuss the important issues and indicators for measuring social expenditure in the dimensions related to housing, culture and sports and environment. It will benefit from the presentation of the national representatives on policies and programmes on these issues in national contexts.  
Moderator: Ms. Wafa Aboul Hosn, Chief, Economic Statistics, ESCWA  
Speakers:  
- **Mr. Mutasim Al-Kilani**, Head of Sustainable Development Division, Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, Jordan  
- **Ms. Olfa Meddeb Ep Ammari**, Deputy Director, Ministry of Equipment, Housing and Territorial Development, Tunisia |
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tr>
<td>11 – 11.15 a.m.</td>
<td>Coffee break</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.15 a.m. – 1 p.m.</td>
<td>Session 5: Gender budgeting</td>
<td><em>This session aims to have a focused discussion on issues relating to gender budgeting and how the SEM framework can support better informing budgeting for gender equality.</em></td>
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</table>
| Moderator: Ms. Hanadi Roma, Director of Budget Department, Ministry of Social Development, State of Palestine | **Speakers:**  
  - Ms. Rouba Arja, Social Affairs Officer, ESCWA Centre for Women  
  - Ms. Nuha Zaidah, Deputy Secretary General, Jordanian National Commission for Women  
  - Ms. Sonia Abbassi, Director General, Ministry of women, family, childhood and seniors, Tunisia  
  - Ms. Nabila Mbarki, Ministry of Family, Solidarity, Equality and Social Development, Morocco | **Discussants:**  
  - Q & A and discussion from the floor  
  - Coffee break  
  - Lunch break  
  - Session 6: SEM and its linkages to inclusive budgeting for SDGs  
  - Lunch break  
  - Coffee break  
  - Summary of discussions and next steps  
  - Round-table Discussion  
  - Wrap up by Mr. Moctar Mohamed El Hacene, Director, Economic Development and Integration Division (EDID), ESCWA |
Annex III

EVALUATION FINDINGS

The overall assessment of quality of the meeting was positive and encouraging. The majority of participants strongly agreed (46 per cent) or agreed (50 per cent) that the workshop’s quality met their expectation. Most participants strongly agreed (54 per cent) or agreed (38 per cent) that the workshop’s learning objectives were achieved. More than half of the participants (54 per cent) strongly agreed that the workshop combined different learning methods such as examples from the region, and 38 per cent agreed to that statement.

More than half of the participants (54 per cent) strongly agreed that they received preparatory material for the workshop in a timely manner, however some highlighted that it would have been good to have a copy of all presentations beforehand, so they could prepare discussion points prior to the meeting. Most participants agreed that the workshop and all sessions were overall well organized and structured (63 per cent) and were managed efficiently (42 per cent). However, some participants highlighted the fact that the workshop hours were long, and that overall duration should have been 3 days instead of 2. They also highlighted the fact that more time should have been given to discussions and less time to presentations.

The majority of participants strongly agreed that the venue of the workshop was appropriate (54 per cent), but some highlighted that a bigger room would have been more appropriate. Finally, the majority of participants strongly agreed that they were the right person to attend the workshop (58 per cent), and that they would recommend the workshop to a colleague (63 per cent, figures 9 and 10).

Qualitative evaluation findings and lessons learned were as follows:

(a) On the detailed discussions of the technical aspects of the questionnaire: the workshop focus group discussion was meant to discuss only one example of questionnaire. More in-depth and detailed discussions of whole questionnaires will be undertaken during national workshops;

(b) On the availability of presentations prior to the meeting: point well taken. ESCWA presentations were based on the SEM framework, which was shared with participants well in advance. Most presentations were received on the day of the meeting and were made available on a dedicated webpage: https://www.unescwa.org/events/social-expenditure-monitor-sem-arab-states;

(c) On the duration of the workshop: longer duration will be considered, subject to availability of resources.

For additional information or questions, please contact:

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