



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



Distr.

LIMITED

22 March 2018

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

E/ESCWA/SDPD/2018/WG.7/INF.1

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

Third Consultative Meeting on Food Security Monitoring in the Arab Region

27 – 28 March 2018, Le Commodore Hotel – Beirut

INFORMATION NOTE

I. BACKGROUND

Within the context of the project on “Promoting Food and Water Security through Cooperation and Capacity Development in the Arab Region”, particularly component four on “Enhancing the assessment capacity of the status of food security in the Arab countries”, ESCWA, in collaboration with partners, has developed a draft framework for the purpose of monitoring food security in the Arab region. The draft framework is the result of a long consultative process that included extensive desk research and a thorough analysis of both national and regional policies that relate to food security through any of its four dimensions, namely **availability, access, utilization** and **stability**; and a series of consultative meetings that brought together experts from regional and international organizations, the project national focal points, and UN organizations.

Based on the extracted recommendations from the consultative process, the draft framework was developed to reflect the specific challenges that hinder the Arab region’s progress towards achieving food security, and it was presented during the “Second Consultative Meeting on Food Security Monitoring in the Arab Region” that took place during 1-2 February 2018 at the UN House in Beirut. The meeting brought together experts from the United Nations’ Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development (AOAD), the High-Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition, and academia. Participants discussed the proposed framework, including its set of indicators and underlying methodology, detailed hereafter.

Regional strategies were scanned, and a number of indicators related to food security was recognized. These indicators were then compared against the SDGs’ targets and indicators, and those that intersected were selected as being considered of high priority to the region vis-à-vis the SDGs, resulting in an extensive list of indicators. The list was reduced by eliminating indicators that did not fit the following criteria:

- a) Having clear metadata (at least for the region);
- b) Having data that covers 50% or more of the Arab countries (i.e. **at least 11 out of 22**) and 50% or more of the total population of the Arab region;
- c) Indicator’s data to be available from trusted sources;
- d) Having the same directions and representation of the SDG indicators (and not necessarily the same wording); and
- e) Being relevant to the context of the Arab region.

The meeting was concluded with a consensus on developing the draft framework further using the same methodology, and to present the outcome in the form of “dashboards” to the project’s national focal points.

In this context, ESCWA, in coordination with AOAD, is organizing the “Third Consultative Meeting on Food Security Monitoring in the Arab Region” on 27-28 March 2018 at the “Le Commodore Hotel”, in Beirut, Lebanon, to present and finalize the proposed framework, including its dashboard and indicators, in preparation for its submission and possible adoption/endorsement by the General Assembly of AOAD.

II. OBJECTIVES

The objective of this “Third Consultative Meeting on Food Security Monitoring in the Arab Region” is to review the proposed framework and the proposed indicators for monitoring food security at the national levels, and to vet them in order to seek official endorsement by the Arab countries.

Specifically, the meeting will aim to:

- Present the draft framework for food security monitoring at the national level and its dashboard;
- Reach consensus on the content of the draft monitoring framework, both structurally and substantively, by meeting participants (high level representation of ministries of agriculture and national statistics offices as well as experts and representatives of regional and international organizations and the academia).
- Finalize the framework and raise it to AOAD’s General Assembly for endorsement and adoption.

III. PARTICIPANTS

The meeting will bring together the project’s national focal points on food security, high-level representatives of national statistical offices, members of academia, individual experts, and representatives of regional and international organizations.

IV. ORGANIZATION OF THE MEETING

The meeting will be held at the “Le Commodore Hotel” in Hamra, Beirut, Lebanon, on 27 and 28 March 2018, and will promptly start on the 27th at 09:00 am.

V. LOGISTICAL INFORMATION

Participants are requested to return completed registration form to ESCWA together with a scanned passport sized photograph so an access ID could be issued well ahead of time. Registration forms should be submitted to ESCWA no later than **Monday 5 March 2018** to allow time to make the necessary administrative arrangements.

VI. CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence and inquiries concerning the meeting should be addressed to:

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