The Regional Coordination Mechanism– Arab States

Working Group on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

RCM WG - Synthesis Report
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1. Introduction and Background

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development clearly acknowledges the importance of the regional dimension of sustainable development, as increasingly, regional and sub-regional groupings of countries are identifying solutions to their common development challenges, and regional and sub-regional frameworks are facilitating the effective translation of sustainable development policies into concrete action at the national level. In response, regional institutions are called upon to work collectively to help identify and set priorities, and to develop regional strategies and approaches, not only on cross-border issues, but also on more traditional issues of economic and social development.

In its capacity as chair of the Regional Coordination Mechanism (RCM) Working Group (WG) on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, ESCWA designed a short questionnaire to chart the main regional activities of member organizations of the WG in order to effectively coordinate regional agency efforts and propose areas for future collaboration. The questionnaire covers the period 2016-2017 and focuses on the areas of work of the WG as defined in its terms of reference namely: regional consensus building; research; capacity building; and advocacy. This report is a summary of the key findings of the survey. It highlights trends and patterns, identifies potential gaps and proposes recommended actions based on the shared list of activities, which is not exhaustive.

1.1. The Survey and the Methodology

The survey questions are grouped into 5 categories (see Annex I for a copy of the Survey):

1. **Regional Strategy**: Identifies the key objectives of existing regional or sub-regional strategies for the 2030 Agenda with focus on main areas of activities;

2. **Integration and Cross-Sectoral Analysis**: Lists initiatives at the regional or sub-regional level that include cross sectoral analysis or an exploration of the interaction(s) between the SDGs, targets, and/or indicators;

3. **Regional Meetings and Consensus Building Efforts**: Lists the main regional meetings and consultations on the 2030 Agenda and SDGs in 2016-17;

4. **Capacity Building**: Lists region-tailored, Arabic language training manuals on the 2030 Agenda or SDGs. It also highlights regional capacity building projects and explores any planned regional or sub-regional capacity building workshops on the 2030 Agenda or the SDGs;

5. **Advocacy and Awareness Raising**: Lists major planned advocacy campaigns to raise awareness about the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

![Figure 1: Survey Categories](image)
1.2. The Profile of the Respondents
In total, 15 of the 25 members of the Working Group on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development responded to the questionnaire. The respondents were FAO, ILO, IOM, LAS, OHCHR, UNEP, UN-ESCWA, UNFPA, UN-Habitat, UNOPS, UNISDR, UN-Women, WHO, UNDP and WFP. The responses to the survey are synthesized in this report, and will be presented at the first WG meeting on 25 September 2016 in Cairo.

2. Regional Activities on the 2030 Agenda
Each of the regional organizations has explicit and implicit mandates in support of the new global agenda. These mandates are translated into regional strategies and action plans as well as specific activities that respond to the needs of countries in the region. Ensuring coherence and complementarity between the different initiatives will allow for greater impact and more sustainable results.

The five sections that follow provide a synthesis of the responses of UN agencies and LAS, followed by a summary of the key findings and gaps as well as initial suggestions on the way forward.

2.1. Regional Strategy

2.1.1 Synthesis of Individual Responses on Strategy
FAO does not have a specific regional or sub-regional strategy for the 2030 Agenda. However, it is implementing a few regional initiatives that are expected to contribute to the achievements of the SDGs such as the Water Scarcity Initiative (linked primarily to SDG15) and the regional initiative on building resilience for food security (linked to SDG2, SDG5 and SDG12). Also, FAO is in the process of finalizing a regional Gender Strategy (linked to SDGs1, 5 and 10). The support of FAO to countries in achieving the SDGs will be mainstreamed through Country Programming Frameworks and UNDAFs.

ILO has a global implementation plan for the 2030 Agenda with regional targets and entry points namely: Advocacy and awareness raising with a focus on employment and decent work goals, targets, and indicators and capacity building (adaptation of the SDGs to the national/sub national contexts and Follow Up and Review (FUR). A detailed action plan has not yet been developed.

IOM does not have a regional or sub-regional strategy specifically for the 2030 Agenda. However, fostering good migration governance and positive linkages between migration and development are central to the IOM Middle East and North Africa (MENA) strategy 2017-2020, currently being developed and thus aligns with relevant goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda.

LAS has adopted resolutions at the Summit level in 2015 and 2016 calling on Arab States to establish a mechanism for the implementation of Agenda 2030. LAS will implement the Agenda in cooperation with all its ministerial councils and specialized organizations and the UN and its specialized agencies.

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2 Organizations are listed in alphabetical order. Those not listed, left this part of the questionnaire blank.
OHCHR-ROMENA’s focus is national level interventions, and it aims to include in its regional plan the regional strategy to support UNCTs in integrating human rights into SDGs Implementation in the MENA Region, currently being prepared.

UNDP has no formal regional strategy but its strategic support on the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs in Arab programme countries is guided by the UNDG common Mainstreaming, Acceleration, and Policy Support (MAPS) approach for SDG and delivered primarily through UNDP country offices in response to country demands and specific needs.

UNEP’s strategic approach in the region focuses on following an integrated approach to development, engaging stakeholders and building partnerships, and providing support to the environmentally related targets and indicators across all SDGs. UNEP predominantly works at the regional level, but is engaging at country level in countries where there are active UN Country Team (UNCTs) WGs on SDGs making it is possible to identify synergies and build on integration with UN agencies.

UN-ESCWA has a Regional Strategy for implementing the 2030 Agenda adopted by its member States in December 2015. The Strategy identifies the following pillars: A Voice of the region by creating regional platforms for deliberation and consensus building that feed into global forums; A Think Tank of the region by undertaking innovative research and supporting quality data collection and analysis for evidence-based policy; An Advisor to the region by providing regional, sub-regional and national capacity-building and technical advisory services. Like other UN regional commissions, UN-ESCWA is mandated to support Follow-Up and Review (FUR) of the 2030 Agenda and in the process of finalizing a four-year regional plan of action (2016-2019) with specific outputs and activities under each of the three pillars.

UNFPA has adopted a regional strategy for 2030 Agenda aimed at ensuring the integration of SDGs with particular focus on SDG 3 (Good health and well being), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) in the policy frameworks; national programmes; and monitoring and reporting systems. It also focuses on the integration of the “International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) beyond 2014” review outcomes and respective indicators into the SDG review and reporting mechanisms at the national and regional levels in addition to expanding partnerships with key actors and strengthening SDGs and ICPD related data generation and utilization by all actors. This strategy is operationalized through country and regional programmes covering 15 countries in the Arab States region (including Sudan and Somalia).

UN-Habitat ROAS has developed its Arab Regional Strategic Plan 2015-2019 and it aligns with the principles of the New Urban Agenda being promoted in Habitat III and the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities). The Arab Regional Strategic Plan represents the regional implementation mechanism for SDG 11.

UNOPS is in the process of preparing a four-year regional strategy (2017-2020) to align with the UNOPS Strategic Plan ensuring linkages with the SDGs.

UNISDR’s primary mandate is to coordinate and facilitate the implementation of Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) globally and with regionally-focused strategies and plans. In the context of the 2030 Agenda, the Sendai Framework is coherent with the SDGs. The reduction of disaster risk and potential damages and losses will play a critical factor in achieving the SDGs and their targets by 2030.

UN-Women does not yet have a regional strategy for the 2030 agenda, however, implementing the Agenda, and SDG 5 in particular, is a key component of the regional office strategic note as well as workplans at the country level. UN Women is in the process of developing an SDG engagement strategy as well as a regional flagship initiative.
WHO is currently in the process of developing its regional strategy with a focus on health-specific SDGs and their interlinkages with other goals and targets.

WFP initiated a dialogue with Member States on a new Strategic plan that will align with the 2030 Agenda. The 2017-2021 Corporate Strategic plan will enable the organization to demonstrate its contribution to achieving the SDGs, in particular SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) and partnerships (SGG 17) by aligning the strategic objectives with the relevant targets and indicators of the SDGs. This will be achieved through operational activities and country programmes in countries where WFP has presence and/or operations in North Africa and Middle East.

2.1.2 Summary of Findings on Strategy

- The majority of respondents do not have a strategy dedicated to the 2030 Agenda, however their existing strategies are, or will be, aligned to the priorities of the 2030 Agenda and SDGs;
- Only UNFPA and UN-ESCWA have defined Regional Strategies, while the ILO has region specific targets embedded in its global strategy;
- Most respondents do not have an action plan but they are currently planning a set of activities in relation to the Agenda at the regional and country level.
- Most respondents stressed the importance of identifying priority areas for action, following an integrated approach to development, engaging stakeholders and building partnerships in addition to providing support in relation to targets and indicators;
- Many UN Agencies are focused on one or more specific goals that are related to their main mandates, however all are considering how to ensure a more integrated, inter-disciplinary approach, in line with the integrated nature of the 2030 Agenda.

From the information available, it is not possible to draw any clear conclusions on the synergies and gaps in the existing strategies. However, as a group the RCM 2030 WG should:

⇒ Ensure that the 2030 Agenda at the regional level remains integrated, inter-connected and indivisible.
⇒ Reconfirm that the linkages between the economic, social, environmental, political and cultural pillars are key to achieving sustainable development.
⇒ Use existing regional fora to set regional priorities and enhance collaboration and coordination.
⇒ Consider to elaborate a common framework for collaboration on the 2030 Agenda.
⇒ Devise an action plan in support of the agreed-upon common framework.

2.2. Integration and Cross-Sectoral Analysis

The 2030 Agenda demonstrates the deep interdependence in the development challenges facing humanity, and that addressing those challenges requires understanding those relationships in order to design appropriate policies and programmes. In other words the achievement of some goals will affect the achievement of others, which is also reflected in the way the targets and indicators of SDGs are interlinked – more than half of the SDG targets make explicit reference to at least one other goal. The responses below are a summary of the efforts of agencies in the region to break the silo approach.

2.2.1 Synthesis of Individual Responses on Integration

FAO will Produce and disseminate a flagship regional “Panorama” report on State of Food Insecurity (SOFI), providing annual update as part of the Monitoring and Reporting of the SDGs, especially SDG2.
ILO in collaboration with UN-ESCWA is planning a regional training event on the poverty - decent work - and sustainable growth nexus. Analytical work on the SDGs, including cross-sectoral analysis is expected to be high on the ILO’s agenda.

IOM’s focus is on migration-related targets and indicators. Target 10.7 is of particular relevance but is complemented by other targets across several goals. Thus, the IOM is proposing the Migration Governance Framework as the basis for evaluating member States’ progress on migration-related targets and indicators.

The Arab Woman Organization of LAS has a cross cutting strategy on women and SDGs.

Fostering integrated approaches to the implementation of the SDGs is a priority for UNDP. At the global level, it has developed a number of tools that can be adapted to country needs in the region such as the Rapid Integrated Assessment (RIA), a tool used in 11 countries so far. Recently, UNDP has developed a methodological approach, ‘SDG combos’, to identify interlinkages across targets and goals, and synergies and trade-offs and support countries to think in a systemic way and to operationalize what an ‘integrated approach’ means for the achievement of the SDGs. An Institutional and Coordination Mechanism tool (under finalization) has also been developed to provide information on how countries have established new or adapted their existing institutional framework in order to implement the 2030 Agenda, in a way that fosters horizontal (inter-sectoral) and vertical policy coherence.

UNEP has analyzed environmentally-related SDG targets against national policy in several countries, and is using this as a tool to initiate discussions through UNEP Focal Points on the integrated approach. Such analysis can also be used to support the prioritization of targets at the national level.

In an effort to examine the nature and dynamics of the inter-linkages among the SDGs and the targets, UN-ESCWA has identified three priority clusters to address some of the most urgent challenges in the region, namely: Water – Energy – Food Security Nexus; Poverty – Decent Work – Sustainable Growth Nexus; and Equality – Inclusion – Justice Nexus. The aim of these clusters is to clearly articulate the practical benefits that an interdependent approach to SDGs can offer, such as highlight cross-sectoral interactions, facilitate integrated planning and decision-making, and inform the efficient allocation of resources between competing needs. It has developed a methodology for SDG target screening and relationship mapping in an effort to identify targeted synergies and trade-offs and propose policy interventions.

UNFPA, in cooperation with LAS and ESCWA, has supported the MENA task force on SDG related ICPD indicators. The task force has agreed on 39 indicators that are based on the cross-sectoral analysis conducted as part of the “ICPD beyond 2014” regional review and a cross-sectoral analysis of SDGs.

UN-Habitat ROAS supported the development of the objectives of the LAS Arab Strategy for Housing and Urban Development 2030, one of the first LAS strategies aligned with the SDGs. The Strategy provides a cross-sectoral analysis on housing and sustainable urban development and represents a methodology for localizing and implementing the SDGs in the Arab Region, in particular SDG 11 in addition to other related goals, that can be achieved through addressing the key housing and urbanization challenges towards a New Urban Agenda for the Arab States.

UNOPS will be looking into cross-sectoral linkages within the framework of national as well as UN planning documents. This will ensure UNOPS programmatic alignment with the national and UN frameworks and the subsequent contribution to the realization of SDGs.

UNISDR’s open-ended Intergovernmental Expert Working Group (OEWG) on Indicators and Terminology Relating to Disaster Risk Reduction established linkages with the SDGs WGs to ensure alignment and coherence (where possible) with targets and indicators established for SDGs.
UN-Women, as part of the regional flagship on gender and the SDGs, will provide relevant support to stakeholders on mainstreaming gender, ensuring gender related indicators are able to be tracked and that policy linkages are established with the tracking and monitoring mechanisms.

WHO noted the interlinked topics requiring cross-sectoral analysis both under Health in all policies or under the social, economic and environmental determinants of health. Regional frameworks exist for several areas and the indicators span the range of the SDGs not only SDG3.

WFP studied the interlinkages between the SDGs with particular focus on the ones between SDG2 (zero hunger) and SDG1 (poverty reduction), SDG3 (Health), SDG4 (education), SDG5 (gender equality), SDG6 (Water and Sanitation), SDG10 (inequality), SDGs 13 (climate change) and SDG 15 (land degradation). A number of research studies are currently underway. Research undertaken is also supporting interventions related to climate change adaptation and interlinkages with food security.

### 2.2.2 Summary of Findings on Integration

Different initiatives are taking place at the regional and sub-regional levels that include cross-sectoral analysis or an exploration of the interaction(s) between the 2030 Agenda goals and targets. The nexus approach seems to make it easier to identify an effective and integrated approach to implementing the SDGs as a single package; it can help the UN and member States consider issues such as sequencing, trade-offs, synergies and possible win-win or quick-win scenarios between different policies under each nexus.

- There is clear interest and commitment by UN entities to address the 2030 Agenda more holistically than the MDGs.
- Some agencies appear to be more advanced than others in developing frameworks and methodologies for analyzing the linkages and identifying tools for planning and monitoring.
- Entities with broader mandates are more likely to be addressing the totality of the 2030 Agenda, while entities with a narrow issue-specific mandate are examining the relationship between their area of focus and other goals and indicators.
- There is a lot of potential for inter-agency collaboration. Examples include past reporting outputs, joint knowledge products such as the Arab Sustainable Development Report, MDG related reports and collaborations such as the ESCWA-ILO collaboration.

The 2030 WG may consider:

⇒ Collaborating in the cluster areas currently explored by ESCWA and identifying additional clusters of high relevance to the region through an in-depth cross-sectoral analysis.
⇒ Using an integrated approach of analysis in the preparation of the upcoming WG outputs (Arab Sustainable Development Forum and Regional Sustainable Development Report).
⇒ Exchanging lessons among the group through peer visits and joint missions.

### 2.3. Regional Consultations and Consensus Building Efforts

It has perhaps never been more important for the Arab countries to ensure that they can speak with one voice on the issues and development challenges facing their region. Forging regional consensus among the diverse range of member States and stakeholders is the most important step to ensure that the concerns of the region are heard globally and can shape the global agenda.
2.3.1 Synthesis of Individual Responses on Regional Consensus

**FAO** held a regional workshop on agriculture and gender statistics in an aim to improve gender analysis and use of data for SDGs 1 and 5. Currently, it plans to facilitate a joint Committee on Food Security (CFS) side event with the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), World Bank, LAS and WFP and others. This side event will discuss, among others, SDGs implementation and monitoring in the region specially SDG2. FAO also plans to, jointly with LAS, WFP, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and CFS Secretariat, organize a Regional Multi Stakeholder Forum on Food Security and Nutrition. The forum will facilitate policy dialogue aimed at providing a clear road map for the implementation and monitoring of the SDGs with focus on SDG2.

**IOM** will contribute to existing regional inter-governmental and multi-stakeholder mechanisms. IOM MENA also plans to hold a Symposium on Migration Governance and the SDGs in 2016-2017. The event would target regional institutional partners, government representatives from the Arab region and beyond, academia and civil society. The aim is to raise awareness about the migration aspects of the SDGs and initiate a discussion on migration governance from an Arab perspective.

**LAS**, in partnership with the African Union (AU), is planning to hold two activities in 2017 on SDGs for financial institutions and for Parliamentarians in the two regions. In collaboration with the Summit of South American-Arab Countries, LAS will hold a meeting to exchange success stories and lessons learned on the SDGs, and will initiate a capacity building program between the two regions. LAS will also collaborate with UN-ESCWA and others to hold the 2017 Arab Forum for Sustainable Development.

**UNDP**, in collaboration with UN agencies and regional institutions, particularly LAS, has led the way on mobilizing Communities of Action around the SDGs and common priorities and challenges in the region. These includes the SDGs Conference on Women held in November 2015 in Cairo, which generated a platform for action to implement and monitor the SDGS for women in the Arab Region; The Arab conference on the Role of Civil Society (April 2016); the Arab Ministerial Conference on Implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda in Arab Countries-Social Dimensions (April 2016). It is planning to hold the Regional Parliamentary Forum titled “Succeeding the SDGs Challenge, in the Arab region, through Parliamentary Action: Lessons learned and innovative mechanisms” in October 2016.

**UNEP** is co-organizing with WHO, in December 2016, the first joint Ministerial Meeting of Ministers of Health and Environment to look at the synergies between these two issues. In April 2017 UNEP will organize a Media and Business Forum on Sustainable Development, which will address the role of media and the private sector in delivering on the environmental dimensions of the SDGs. It has also organized with UN-ESCWA in 2016 a regional meeting on water-related SDGs and related indicators.

**UN-ESCWA** plans to hold the next session of the Regional Forum for Sustainable Development in the second quarter of 2017 in collaboration with RCM partners. Building on the success of the three previous Forum sessions (2014, 2015, and 2016), the Regional Forum is multi-stakeholder in nature convening in one platform representatives of government, parliament, civil society, the private sector, academic institutions and experts. The Regional Forum’s outcome is formally presented at the annual High Level Political Forum, thus affording it a unique opportunity to highlight regional priorities and challenges as articulated by the different development stakeholders in the Arab region. At the inter-governmental level, ESCWA has set up a sub-committee on SDG 5 as part of its inter-governmental Committee on Women.

**UNFPA** actively contributed to the regional conference on the Role of Civil Society in SDG Implementation hosted by the Qatar Foundation in Doha in April 2016 in collaboration with UNDP, UN-ESCWA, LAS and GCC.

**UN-Habitat ROAS** will support, in collaboration with LAS, the planning of the Arab Ministerial Forum for Housing and Urban development (AMFHUD) which will be held every two years (next Forum in 2017) to
serve as a regional platform for sharing experience and collaboration between countries in the housing and slum-upgrading sector and further promote and adapt the SDGs to the local particularities of the Arab region, with particular focus on SDG 11 and the implementation of the New Urban Agenda. Currently, UN-Habitat is working with LAS to prepare for the Third UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) to be held in Ecuador in October 2016 including a side event titled “Towards an Arab Urban Agenda”. This event will build on the previous event at the preparatory committee for Habitat III and will further elaborate on the implementation of the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda in the Arab region. Building on the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, the outcome document of Habitat III will be a New Urban Agenda for the next 20 years.

**UNISDR** is planning for the third Arab Conference for Disaster Risk Reduction in March 2017. It will not be directly related to SDGs but will focus on building resilience to disasters in the context of sustainable development challenges and priorities. The targeted audience includes national and local governments, inter-governmental organizations, women, youth, NGOs, civil society, Academia, and Media.

**UN-Women** will be organizing a follow up meeting to the SDG and gender conference in December 2016 in partnership with UNDP, the Arab Women Organization and LAS. In addition, UN-Women and UN-ESCWA are co-chairing the working group on gender and the SDGs (hosted by ESCWA) this group had their first meeting in August 2016 and is scheduled to meet again in early 2017.

**WHO** organized a series of regional activities since the beginning of 2016 mainly focusing on the development of a regional action plan for scaling up healthy city program in Eastern Mediterranean Region, and scaling up the implementation of the UN political declaration on prevention & control of Non Communicable Diseases and developing health financing strategies for universal health coverage in selected EMR member states and others. An event is being planned on Health and the SDGs in the EMR.

**WFP**, In line with SDG 2 and in support to SDGs 3, 4 and 5, organized a regional consultation with partners on Advancing Nutrition, Education and Social Protection in the MENA Region: the Role of National School Meals Programmes in June 2016. Currently, WFP and partners are exploring the possibility of developing a regional initiative during the last quarter of 2016 for school meals and school feeding programmes in MENA. Also, in partnership with Rome-Based Agencies and the Committee for Food Security, a regional multi-stakeholder event will be organized in 2017 on SDG2 in the region.

### 2.3.2 Summary of Findings on Regional Consensus

Regional meetings constitute an important mechanism for debate and exchange of lessons learnt and good practices among the different actors in the region, and are critical to ensure that the voice of the Arab region is consolidated and projected to the global arena. The survey indicates the tremendous efforts that different UN entities are exerting for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

- All WG members are planning at least one major event related to the 2030 Agenda. Most will focus their consultations on a specific theme or issue.
- It was not possible to assess the audience of all the regional meetings planned, but many included government representatives alongside civil society and the private sector.
- The Regional Forum on Sustainable Development appears to have the broadest thematic mandate to cover the 2030 Agenda at large and in particular follow-up and review. It is the only regional forum with access to the High Level Political Forum.

The 2030 WG should consider:

⇒ Ensuring that the regional outcomes of the different regional consultations are fed into the Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, and eventually, the HLPF. The Regional Forum can constitute the annual platform to discuss regional priorities on sustainable development and
initiate a dialogue on the future steps for prioritization of issues and SDGs monitoring and evaluation and the institutional frameworks required for adequate planning, implementation, review and reporting at the regional level.

⇒ Identifying contributions to the Regional Forum for Sustainable Development, and to other regional meetings being organized by sister agencies
⇒ Organizing back-to-back events on their specific areas of work/expertise.
⇒ Reviving a regional calendar of events for major regional conferences and consultations. This will help identify potential events for collaboration and keep all members of the WG informed about on-going activities.

2.4. Capacity Building and Training

Institutional and human capacity development efforts at the local, national and regional level must accompany the roll-out of the 2030 Agenda. Although emanating from the MDGs, the new Agenda differs significantly in its design and institutional set up. Adopting the SDGs at the national level will require adaptation, customization and integration in addition to new institutional structures capable of facilitating the implementation and monitoring of the new agenda. Significant capacity building efforts will also need to be exerted to harmonizing data and measuring the national and global targets. The efforts of all UN agencies will be required to support member States undertake this new challenge.

2.4.1 Synthesis of Individual Responses on Capacity Building

At the regional level, FAO is undertaking an initiative on Small Scale Family farming support evidence-based programming for developing the capacities and competitiveness of Producer Organizations and cooperatives. It is also enhancing the sub-regional cooperation on fisheries, aquaculture and oceanographic research. FAO is also undertaking capacity building activities in relation to methodologies related to assessment of food loss (Goal 12) and Gender and Agriculture. At the national level, FAO is carrying out capacity building for the countries to have full ownership of the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES) methodology by national institutions.

ILO’s main event related to the Agenda is a regional ILO/ITC training jointly organized with UN-ESCWA and titled “Implementing the SDGs in the Arab states: Promoting Inclusive Sustainable Growth and Decent Work”. The course targets Ministries of Labour, Ministries of Planning, and employers and workers’ organizations from selected Arab countries. The course will take place on 5-8 December 2016 at the ITC, Turin, Italy.

IOM’s Migration and Development Training Modules are available in Arabic.

LAS is planning training for Arab member States and LAS secretariat and specialized organization staff on SDGs and multi-dimensional poverty, in addition to capacity building program with South American States on SDGs.

OHCHR-ROMENA did not develop knowledge products specifically on the 2030 Agenda. It developed a number of Arabic-translated reference and training manuals on issues closely related to the implementation of SDGs such as human rights, principles of responsible contracts, extreme poverty and others. OHCHR-ROMENA has a regional capacity building programme that covers inter alia UN human rights mechanisms and follow-up of their recommendations which represents, the main entry point for the integration of human rights into SDGs implementation in the region. This is in addition to a HQ-supported Treaty Bodies Capacity Building programme that is underway and a roundtable on “Agenda 2030 and the Implementation of Recommendations by International Human Rights Mechanisms” that is planned to be held in October 2016 in Kuwait in cooperation with the RC Office and coordination with the Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
UNDP SDG policy and programmatic support described in a set of prospectuses for SDGs. The ones in Arabic covered SDG 1, 6, 8, 10, 14, and 15. UNDP offers country-level SDG support in the region complemented by a set of regional capacity building initiatives focused on cross-cutting/cross-sectoral challenges to the mainstreaming implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the achievement of the SDGs, including the Arab Development Portal, the Mosharaka initiative and Gender & SDGs. It is also tackling Youth, Energy and Climate Change and resilience in partnership with UN organizations and international/regional entities.

Most of UNEP’s guidelines are produced globally and rolled out at the regional and national level for implementation, thus a selected set has been translated to Arabic.

UN-ESCWA is currently producing training material to raise awareness on the components of the 2030 Agenda and to cover selected SDGs. Proposals for projects supporting the implementation of the Agenda in the region and enhancement of knowledge and capacity on approaches to implementations are planned. These projects include the development of knowledge products, training material on the components of the 2030 Agenda and on approaches to its implementation and FUR in the Arab region. They also include the implementation of training workshops on common issues, cross-border challenges, of key thematic areas upon the request of member States.

UNFPA has been supporting UNDG efforts to issue guidance on SDG related ICPD indicators and their integration in the regional SDG review and reporting mechanisms. UNFPA has supported a guidance note on the SDG/ICPD related indicators and is planning to support capacity development initiatives in the same area. It is expected to come up with a well-articulated mapping addressing the key implementation and monitoring challenges including institutional arrangements, data sources and needs facing countries in implementation and monitoring ICPD based SDGs. It will support a regional SDG workshop for government and statistical services aiming to operationalize the SDG/ICPD review and reporting mechanism at country level, as well as guide the integration of relevant indicators into the regional review and reporting mechanisms in October 2016.

UN-Habitat’s City Prosperity Index, a tool designed to allow for a better understanding of the state of the city’s development in a more integrated manner, and identify areas of actions that can help cities to achieve SDG 11 has been translated into Arabic. By end of 2017, UN-Habitat ROAS will also make available in Arabic a City Leader’s Guide on Migration, the UN-Habitat Public Space Toolkit, guidelines on National Urban Policies as well as UN-Habitat’s City and Neighbourhood Profiling Tools for cities in crises. The UN-Habitat ROAS is currently planning to support LAs in establishing an integrated system for capacity building and human development in the field of housing, and urban development at the local, national and regional levels through the Arab Urban Observatories in the region which will include a number of workshops to raise awareness and exchange knowledge and lessons learnt related to the urban-related SDGs.

UNISDR’s Global Education and Training Institute (GETI) carries out capacity building and training workshops, develops material and tailors it to regional contexts and need in coordination with UNISDR Regional Offices. GETI is now looking at aligning its manuals and training material with SDGs noting that Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and SDGs have several targets/indicators in common and need coherent approaches for implementation and reporting at country level. Accounting for disaster losses is a crucial area of concern (mortality, affected, economic loss and damage, all sectors, corresponds to several targets in the SDGs). The related tool, methodology and training manuals are currently available in Arabic with 11 Arab countries already trained and progress made towards developing and institutionalizing disaster loss database in those countries. Making Cities resilient (SDG11) is a set of urban indicators developed and regionalized for cities to assess risk and measure progress against disaster risk
reduction and urban resilience. The tools for cities to develop resilience are available and rolled out in Arab cities. The mayors’ handbook is developed and available in Arabic.

UN-Women plans to adapt the existing Arabic material related to MDGs previously produced in collaboration with UN-ESCWA and CAWTAR to be in line with the new development Agenda. It also indicates that capacity building will be part of the flagship being developed.

WFP did not develop specific training packages but has provided capacity development support in many countries across the region to address SDG2. It developed a partnership with the League of Arab States Arab Water Council (AWC), UNDP and UNISDR, to support through a capacity strengthening initiative in climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction initiative in support of SDGs 12 and 13. WFP also proposed the Climate Risk Nexus (CRN) Initiative to develop capacities of LAS and member states to enact decisions and policies that better manage and reduce the growing complexity of risks that could severely affect the achievements of the required sustainable development goals, at the mean time support the resilience of people and countries.

2.4.2 Summary of Findings on Capacity Building

- All agencies are actively developing or adapting training materials, toolkits and guidance on SDG adaptation, integration, implementation, measurement and monitoring. There is a wealth of materials, resources and knowledge produced both in English and in Arabic that may be available to member States.
- The responses clearly show the tremendous efforts being exerted in localizing knowledge products and tailoring content to serve the needs of the region. Respondents indicated openness in establishing partnerships in the area of capacity building and in some instances already started collaborating on many aspects of the Agenda.
- Training workshops have already been held, and many more are being planned in 2016-2017.
- Partnerships have started to develop on specific thematic issues such as the case of WFP and AWC but more efforts are needed to increase pace of collaboration and joint actions.
- While there appear to be good effort to develop training material on thematic issues, there appears to be a gap in training material focused on integrated planning.

The 2030 WG could consider:

⇒ Collaborating on developing joint products related to integrated planning and adaptation of the SDGs.
⇒ Maximizing the use of knowledge products already produced such as the training course collaboratively developed by UNFPA and UNDG or the ILO and UN-ESCWA.
⇒ Developing a common portal to share all presentations, toolkits, guidance and other training material according to subject or theme.
⇒ Undertaking joint training and capacity building initiatives.

2.5. Advocacy and Awareness Raising

Raising awareness of the new 2030 Agenda and how it differs from its MDG predecessor is an important first step in the process of adoption and mainstreaming of sustainable development. Campaigns at the regional level would serve to promote awareness among different stakeholders and promote a common approach to priority regional goals and targets.
2.5.1 Synthesis of Individual Responses on Advocacy

**FAO** organizes annually a World Food Day event in Cairo and it plans to highlight among other issues the SDGs. Also, technical reports, presentations, blogs, and other activities are planned to cover various aspects of the SDGs.

**ILO** participates in the advocacy campaigns on the SDGs organized by the UNCTs in Lebanon and Jordan.

**UNDP** indicated that SDG related advocacy is mainstreamed into their programs at the national and regional levels.

**UNEP**'s advocacy work is predominantly carried out in partnership with UN organizations and other partners. It also resorts to social media to advocate for the integration of the environmental dimension.

**UN-ESCWA** planned for advocacy campaigns and awareness raising through activities such as the Regional Forum, seminars, meetings, launch events, etc. UN-ESCWA is also making use of print and audio-visual media to raise awareness about the SDGs. In partnership with UNIC Beirut UN-ESCWA supports the preparation of a weekly 15-minute segment on SDGs broadcast on the State-run TV.

**UNFPA** indicated that the SDGs related advocacy is mainstreamed into its programmes at the national and regional levels and is reflected in the respective programmatic frameworks.

**UN-Habitat ROAS** noted that the biennial Arab Ministerial Forum for Housing and Urban development includes advocacy campaigns on the SDGs with the participation of governments, academia, non-governmental organizations and media. The Habitat III Regional Report for the Arab Region in collaboration with UN-ESCWA and Habitat III Secretariat is another opportunity to raise awareness of issues of urban development. The World Urban Campaign (WUC) is a global advocacy and partnership platform to raise awareness about positive urban change in order to achieve green, productive, safe, healthy, inclusive, and well planned cities. Its goal is to place the Urban Agenda at the highest level in development policies. It is coordinated by UN-Habitat and driven by a large number of committed partners - currently 136 partners and networks - from around the world. The City We Need manifesto on the New Urban Agenda is now available in Arabic.

**UNOPS** is member of the UNCT SDGs group in Jordan and within the group works to promote and advance the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs in Jordan. UNOPS will also explore opportunities in the region to partner with other organizations in raising awareness about the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

**UNISDR** launched a 7-year Advocacy Campaign on the 7 targets of Sendai Framework for DRR starting with 2016 focus on reducing mortality from disasters. Although these campaigns are not explicit on the 2030 Agenda, yet they link to and relate to the SDGs noting that SDGs and their targets have several references to disaster risk. Where possible, UNISDR ensures that all its advocacy messages, web stories and communication material clearly highlights the linkages between disaster risk reduction and sustainable development agenda.

**WFP** is in the process of finalizing its Corporate Strategic Communication strategy, which supports the communication aspects of the strategic objectives that are now aligned with the 2030 Agenda. Following a corporate advocacy framework, 2030 messaging is embedded and tailored according to country and regional context. Advocacy messaging will focus on the key objective to achieve food and nutrition security for the millions of poor and marginalized people as well as those affected by conflict and insecurity.

2.4.2 Summary of Findings on Advocacy

- In the area of advocacy and awareness raising, the large campaigns tend to be global in nature with adaptation at the regional level.
At the regional level, many agencies rely on media attention garnered as a result of the organization or launch of existing activities such as meetings and report launches.

Several UN agencies are working at the national level as part of the UNCT.

2030 WG may consider:

⇒ Dedicating regional awareness campaigns on focused priority issues in the region, with clear messages and target audience.

⇒ Identifying key champions from among the RCM members who can be good spokespersons on key issues related to the 2030 Agenda and who can be called upon to address audiences, the media, etc.

⇒ Developing tools and media related knowledge products on the regional dimension of the 2030 Agenda to be used during the regional events.
**Figure 2** summarizes the key recommendations and areas for further consideration by the members of the WG on the 2030 Agenda under the five categories of the survey.

- Regional awareness campaigns
  - Key champions as good spokespersons on key issues related to the 2030 Agenda
  - Tools on the regional dimension of the 2030 Agenda

- Joint knowledge products related to integrated planning and adaptation of the SDGs.
  - Use existing knowledge products
  - Common portal
  - Joint training and capacity building initiatives.

- Advocacy and Awareness Raising

- Integration and indivisibility of the 2030 Agenda
  - The linkages between the economic, social, environmental, political and cultural pillars as key to achieving sustainable development.
  - Use of existing regional fora to set regional priorities and enhance collaboration and coordination.
  - Common framework for collaboration on the 2030 Agenda.
  - Action plan in support of the agreed-upon common framework.

- Regional Strategy

- Integration and Cross-Sectoral Analysis

- The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

- Regional Meetings and Consensus Building Efforts

- Regional outcomes fed into the Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, and eventually, the HLPF.
  - Contributions to AFSD and other regional meetings + Back-to-back events on the subject matter.
  - Regional calendar of events

- Regional Strategy

- Regional Strategy
Annexes

Annex 1. Survey Questionnaire

Mapping Existing and Future Regional Activities on the 2030 Agenda

This brief questionnaire is designed to chart the main regional activities of member organizations of the RCM Working Group on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Arab region, in order to effectively coordinate regional agency efforts and propose areas for collaboration. The questionnaire covers the period 2016-2017 and focuses on the four key areas of work of the WG, as defined in its ToRs, namely: Regional meetings and consensus building; Regional research and publications; Regional Capacity Building initiatives; and Regional Advocacy and PR campaigns.

ESCWA will consolidate the responses to the questionnaire into a synthesis report, summarizing the key priorities and activities of the members along with areas of convergence and gaps. The synthesis report will be presented and discussed at the WG meeting on 25 September 2016.

Focal points should provide information about key programmes and initiatives that are planned for 2016-2017 at the regional level, or that have relevance to regional support of the 2030 Agenda. Responses should be sent to Ms. Karima El Korri, elkorri@un.org and Ms. Ramla Khalidi, khalidir@un.org by 5 September 2016.

Thank you in advance for your time and cooperation!
Mapping Existing and Future (2016 - 2017) Regional Activities on the 2030 Agenda:

[Insert Name of Organization]

Regional Strategy

a. If your organization has a Regional or Sub-regional Strategy for the 2030 Agenda, please identify its key objectives and entry points.

b. If your organization has a Regional or Sub-regional Action Plan for the 2030 Agenda, please list its main areas of activity and their geographic scope.

Integration and Cross-Sectoral Analysis

a. Please list any initiatives by your organization at the regional or sub-regional level that include cross sectoral analysis or an exploration of the interaction(s) between the SDGs, targets, and/or indicators.

Regional Meetings and Consensus Building Efforts

a. Please list the main regional meetings, conferences and consultation events planned by your organization on the 2030 Agenda and SDGs in 2016-17. Please include target audience (inter-governmental, multistakeholder, civil society, etc.), key objective and initial dates.

Capacity Building

a. Please list any region-tailored, Arabic language training manuals or toolkits on the 2030 Agenda or the SDGs prepared by your organization. Please include information on the scope and theme of the training materials as well as the main target audience.

b. Please list any main regional capacity building projects or programmes geared towards supporting the adaptation, adoption, implementation and monitoring and review of the 2030 Agenda planned by your organization. Please provide details on the objectives and key outputs of the programme.

c. If different from information provided under 3a and 3b above, please list planned regional or sub-regional capacity building workshops on the 2030 Agenda or the SDGs.

Advocacy and Awareness Raising

a. Please list any major advocacy campaigns planned by your organizations to raise awareness about the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. Please provide details about the objectives of the campaign, the thematic focus, the target audience, the products and materials produced, etc.