

## **Executive Summary**

UNDA Project

### **“Strengthening the Statistical Capacity of ESCWA Member Countries in Producing and Disseminating Short-term Economic Indicators for Sustainable Growth”**

Submitted to



by

Faraj Ghunaim, Project Evaluator

Feb, 2018

Project Title:	Strengthening the Statistical Capacity of ESCWA Member Countries in Producing and Disseminating Short-term Economic Indicators for Sustainable Growth
Start date:	2014
End date:	December 2017
Budget	US\$ 518,000
Beneficiary Countries:	Seven focus countries: Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, and Tunisia.
Executing Entity:	UNESCWA, in collaboration with DESA/UNSD
Location of the evaluation	Beirut, Lebanon
Evaluation timeframe:	Dec 2017-Feb 2018
Names and/or organizations of evaluators	Faraj Ghunaim Milestone Consultants
Organization commissioning the evaluation	UNESCWA

## 1. Executive Summary

### 1.1 Overview of the evaluation

The evaluation report assesses the overall achievement of the project objectives and intended goal. It covers the entire duration of the project from December 2014 to its completion in December 2017.

The project under evaluation aimed at strengthening the national capacities in the production, dissemination and use of short-term statistics. The project was implemented by ESCWA's Statistics Division in cooperation with UNSD/DESA from the UN system.

The project focused on three main areas: 1. Promoting the adoption of core short-term economic indicators, 2. Improving capacity of member countries to collect, produce and disseminate indicators and, 3. Increasing use of short-term economic indicators by policy makers, the business community, research institutions and other users of statistics.

### 1.2 Evaluation methodology

The sampling strategy used by the evaluator purposively selected countries from different geographical areas with the highest involvement in the project. As a result, the sample covered the beneficiaries of four countries: Jordan, Palestine, Egypt and Qatar. In addition, the sample included ESCWA staff and international experts and partners. When selecting the interviewees, the evaluator took into consideration gender aspects to obtain a gender balanced sample: out of twenty people interviewed, eight were females.

The evaluation scheme assessed the project according to three OECD-DAC criteria: relevance, effectiveness, and sustainability.

Data were collected using different tools including:

- Desk review of all project documents and materials
- Observation of the end of project workshop 14-15 Dec 2017
- Face to face Interviews with the Palestinian and Jordanian Statistical Offices.
- Face to face Interviews with the Qatari, Egyptian and international experts and partners during Industrial Indicators workshop 11-14 Dec 2017 and the end of project workshop 14-15 Dec 2017 at ESCWA HQ, Beirut.

### 1.3 Conclusions

#### ***Relevance***

The project is found to be fully relevant to the needs of the region as the short-term policy directions have become more critical for Arab policymakers.

#### ***Effectiveness***

The project is found to be mostly effective as it managed to achieve the expected accomplishments and engaged partner countries in compiling STEIs. At the same time, there is some room to increase effectiveness.

### ***Sustainability***

The project is found to be partially sustainable as this project is considered to be the first of its kind and needs further steps to accumulate on the successes and reach full sustainability.

## **1.4 Recommendations**

### ***ESCWA***

1. ESCWA should consider further interdepartmental communications and an ESCWA-wide team spirit to leverage the work of different departments.

### ***Project Team***

2. The project team should consider focusing on a maximum of 5 STEIs when designing a future follow up project to allow for the needed depth.
3. The project team should communicate better the country selection criteria the member countries not selected.
4. The project team should dedicate more time for actual cases (data) during the capacity building activities and provide additional focus at the sub regional level.
5. The project team should increase the number and duration of the Technical Assistance missions even if it means less training workshops.
6. The project team should consider further engagement of other national compilers in addition to the NSO when designing a future follow up project.
7. The project team should integrate a clear Theory of Change in the project design along with the logical framework approach.