

I. 2018 Achievements: Highlights of Key Activities since 23rd RCM:

The Arab Sustainable Development Report-2019 (ASDR-2019) concept was introduced during the November 2017 RCM meeting in Beirut, as a key regional report aimed to fulfil the regional follow-up and review (FUR) mandate entrusted by member States to regional commissions and members of the UN family operating at the regional level. A dedicated ASDR-2019 Task Force ¹(TF), chaired by ESCWA, was established in January 2018 to ensure collaboration and smooth coordination in this joint inter-agency effort.

The ASDR 2019 RCM TF held two meetings in May and June 2018 respectively. The first meeting aimed to discuss the Concept Note of ASDR 2019 and methodology to be followed in the preparation of the report, both of which were finalized based on the feedback received and then endorsed. The second meeting focused on reviewing initial findings and the Regional Assessment TOR and template matrix. It was agreed that each agency would submit an expression of interest detailing the SDG/SDGs in focus and would designate focal points for the preparation and submission of input.

The consensus of the ASDR 2019 TF was as follows:

1. The ASDR will be an analytical situation report on SDG goals in the Arab region;
2. It will examine progress on a regional and sub-regional level.
3. It will offer a goal by goal assessment of achievements and challenges, examined both at target level and through a broader qualitative analysis.

As of today, most partners have provided contributions to the various chapters. By the end of October 2018, a stocktaking exercise assessing gaps in the qualitative analysis will be completed, and so will the quantitative assessment task², carried out by ESCWA ASDR-2019 team.

II. Main Activities and Outputs Planned for 2019:

Going forward, ESCWA will lead the consolidation of all the inputs received from the TF members and other RCM member agencies, thematic contributions from its substantive divisions, including the

¹ The ASDR-2019 Task Force includes the following members: ILO, OHCHR, UN Women, UNDP, UN Environment, UNFPA, UN Habitat, UNICEF, UNISDR, WHO and ECWA. Non-TF members have also been contacted to provide input, including UNESCO, FAO and UNIDO.

² The quantitative assessment is a target-level analysis using the UN Statistical Division officially endorsed, validated and harmonized indicators. Some delay has been registered due to more recent UN Stats data published in the summer, requiring recalculations for all 17 SDGs.

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quantitative analysis carried out by the Unit on the 2030 Agenda of all 17 SDGs. The ASDR-2019 team will prepare draft chapters of the report following a unified structure. Next steps include:

November 2018: A WebEx meeting of the TF to assess progress and agree on the timeline, the endpoint being the launch of ASDR-2019 during the HLPF-2019, if possible during the September Summit. Initial findings may be presented at the AFSD-2019 (April).

Early 2019 (February TBC): An Expert Group Meeting bringing together TF members, experts from partner agencies and external resource persons to discuss the first consolidated draft

III. Decisions Requested from the Members of the RCM (if any):

- Agree on the proposed 2019 work-plan. A revised, more detailed action plan will be circulated prior to the November WebEx meeting.