

I. 2017 Achievements: Highlights of Key Activities since 22nd RCM:

[The Working Group on 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#)¹ (2030 Agenda WG) was established in 2016 as the successor of the inter-agency MDG Thematic WG and the transitional post-2015 Thematic WG. It aims to enhance coordination among regional UN actors and the League of Arab States in their efforts to provide support in the adaptation, implementation and follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda.

In 2017, based on recommendations from Regional Coordination Mechanism (RCM) and Regional UN Development Group (R-UNDG) members, it was agreed to consolidate thematic inter-agency work under focused Taskforces (TFs) that would report to the 2030 Agenda WG co-chaired by ESCWA and the R-UNDG. Four tasks were established and are the [Arab Forum for Sustainable Development Taskforce](#), [the Arab Sustainable Development Report Taskforce](#), [the Country Support Taskforce](#), and [the SDG Data Taskforce](#).

In 2017, several activities were implemented under the overall framework of the 2030 Agenda WG before the four TFs were established. Future reports will present progress of each task force.

Arab Forum for Sustainable Development (AFSD-2017)

Mandated to organize the annual high-level forum for review and follow-up of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Arab region, ESCWA led the organization of AFSD-2017 in cooperation with members of the 2030 Agenda WG² and the Ministry Delegate to the Head of Government in charge of General Affairs and Governance of the Kingdom of Morocco. Convened in Rabat, Morocco from 3 to 5 May 2017, the forum adopted the theme of “Advancing implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing Arab region” in alignment with the 2017 HLPF.

¹ Membership in the WG was open to all participating RCM members

² Participating members: The International Labour Organization, the United Nations Development Programme, UN-Women, the Food and Agricultural Organization, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Children’s Fund, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the World Food Programme, the United Nations Office for Project Services, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and the International Organization for Migration

AFSD-17 brought together high-level representatives from ministries and bodies responsible for planning and following up implementation of the 2030 Agenda together with representatives from Arab parliaments, a wide range of regional and international organizations, civil society networks and organizations, the private sector, think tanks etc. The programme of work of the 2017 Forum included plenary sessions focusing on the key theme of “Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing Arab region.” It also included special sessions focusing on Arab region priorities, such as gender equality, the environment, population, food security, health and poverty, and incorporation of the Agenda in development planning.

A Scientific Committee composed of WG members was established to ensure relevance and coherence of the substantive contributions to plenary and special sessions of the AFSD-2017. The ESCWA Unit on the 2030 Agenda carried out the coordination role throughout the preparation process.

Key messages from the AFSD-2017 were presented at the HLPF by the Government of Morocco (the forum chair). They were also presented to a number of regional events including the Arab Sustainable Development Week (Cairo, 14-17 May 2017) organized by LAS.

Arab Sustainable Development Report (ASDR-2019)

In conjunction with a broad range of regional, sub-regional and thematic reports that will be produced in the coming years, and building on the experience, findings and impact of the first Arab Sustainable Development Report (ASDR-2015), ESCWA will lead the preparation of the ASDR, a regional report on the 2030 Agenda to be issued every four years. ASDR-2019 would be published in the first quarter of 2019, launched during the Arab Forum for Sustainable Development of the same year, then presented at the HLPF.

Please see the ASDR TF Report for further details on the Taskforce.

Regional Seminar for Parliamentarians in the Arab Region on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

In a joint effort to implement one of the main recommendations of AFSD-2017 on empowering parliamentarians from the Arab countries in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, ESCWA and UNDP organized, in collaboration with the Islamic Development Bank, a Regional Seminar for Parliamentarians on 8-9 November 2017 in Beirut.

Within the broader framework of the Agenda 2030 and not only the SDGs, the Regional Seminar addressed the role and capacity needs of parliamentarians in the Arab region in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and in accordance with the different parliamentary functions of representation, legislation, budgeting, and oversight. The Seminar concluded with a set of messages and recommendations that will be submitted to the 2018 edition of the Arab Forum for Sustainable Development. It also set the stage for further targeted capacity building and training for MPs and

parliamentary staff, and the possible establishment of a regional network of parliamentarians on the 2030 Agenda, supported by ESCWA and UNDP, to serve as a platform for peer learning, experience sharing and consensus building around key regional development priorities.

II. Main Activities and Outputs Planned for 2018:

Following the decision to revise the terms of reference of the 2030 Agenda WG, now co-chaired by ESCWA and R-UNDG, and the establishment of four TFs, outputs directly linked to each TF are listed under their respective work-plans (please refer to the attached four documents). The Secretariats of the 2030 Agenda WG are responsible for overall coordination of regional initiatives on the 2030 Agenda and will undertake regular information sharing through knowledge platforms, calendar of events and other regional platforms.

Other activities planned by the 2030 Agenda WG members can be included in this section as part of the 2018 work-plan provided that they meet the following set of criteria approved during the December 2016 RCM meeting:

1. Be regional in nature;
2. Fall under one of the four categories of the proposed Plan of Action (Research and Knowledge Products, Regional Consultations and Meetings Capacity Building and Advisory Services Advocacy and Awareness Raising);
3. Be a collaborative effort between at least two or more RCM members;
4. Be directly relevant to the 2030 Agenda;
5. Have allocated human and financial resources.

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

- a) Review Section I and add any relevant activities implemented since the 22nd RCM;
- b) Review Section II and add any planned activities for the coming year, in accordance with the set criteria;
- c) Discuss the new functions of the 2030 Agenda WG in light of the recent changes and the establishment of the four TFs;
- d) Discuss the membership of the four TFs and finalize the lists of agency focal points in each TF to allow rolling-out of activities starting December 2017;
- e) Discuss and approve the proposed work-plan of the four TFs