



**UN-ESCWA**

UNITED NATIONS - Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia



# STATISTICS on INTERNATIONAL TRADE in SERVICES, Amman, 12-14 May 2012

Overview  
Trade Statistics in ESCWA region  
Ismail Lubbad  
Division of Statistics, ESCWA





## Contents:

1. ESCWA statistical activities on SITS;
2. ESCWA statistical activities IMTS;
3. Current status of SITS in ESCWA region
4. Looking forward



## Work done by ESCWA on SITS

1. A **seminar** on SITS jointly with WTO, UNCTAD, IMF and UNSD, Beirut, 2004
2. A WS on compilation of SITS jointly with IMF and UNSD ,Cairo, February 2007
3. A National WS on SITS, Damascus, June 2009
4. A Training WS jointly with WTO and WB ,Oman, January, 2011
5. Cooperation with UNSD on Data collection
6. Today meeting



## ESCWA Seminar on SITS – December 2004

### Purpose

- Introduction of the *Manual on SITS (2002)*;
- Urge member countries to implement concepts of *MSITS* progressively taking into account their national information needs, priorities, and resources.



## ESCWA Seminar on SITS – December, 2004, Outcome

(e.g. **Identified problems included:**

1. Concepts and definitions particularly with regard to BOP National Accounts data;
2. Methods of compilation to satisfy BOP and National Accounts needs; Application of existing international concepts
3. Much of *MSITS* requirements new data needed for implementation of GATS) and hence would require time, resources, and training



## ESCWA Seminar on SITS – December, 2004 Follow-Up Actions

- ✓ **Six consultancy missions** to member countries during 2005-06
- ✓ Three missions to **GCC** countries – Kuwait, Oman, and UAE;
- ✓ Three missions to **non-GCC** countries- Egypt, Yemen, and Syria.
- ✓ Further follow up action to Syria in 2009 – Training workshop by the ESCWA SD



## Consultancy missions – Purpose

- ✓ Evaluate current status of SITS;
- ✓ Identify compilation issues;
- ✓ Provide recommendations on improvements;
- ✓ Initiate action to collect new data recommended in MSITS to conform with the four modes of supply of trade services.





## Consultancy missions – Evaluation

- ✓ Consultancy mission visited institutions (principally NSOs, Central Banks, Ministries of Economy and Commerce) in the six countries that compile data on SITS to take stock of current availability of data;
- ✓ These data were compiled for the purpose of BOP and National Accounts compilation.





# Consultancy Mission's Findings

Separate reports were prepared for each of the countries. Each of the reports included assessment of :

- 1.Data sources
- 2.Available data -modes of supply
3. Institutional issues
4. Plan of action
5. Recommendations



# Consultancy missions – Major Recommendations

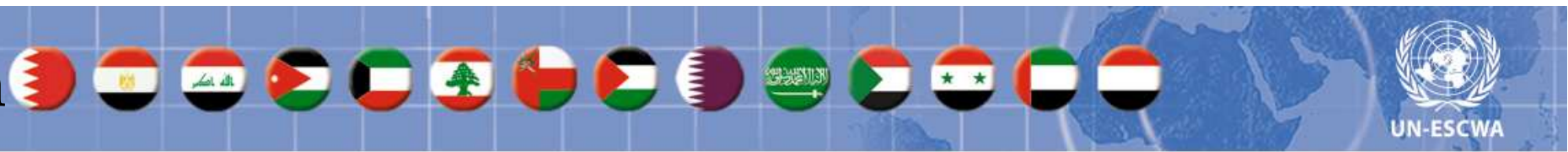


- ✓ Collect additional data relying heavily on development of new surveys;
- ✓ Extension of the ESCWA inspired FDI survey to cover all foreign investments in home countries and host countries investments abroad;
- ✓ Active involvement of NSOs in the project as Central Banks not equipped to undertake surveys
- ✓ Recommendations to be implemented over a short, medium, and long-term time frame.



## Follow-up actions by member countries

1. UAE has initiated a comprehensive survey on foreign investments that should improve SITS;
2. Syria has made serious attempts to compile data on SITS; however TA needed to make progress;
3. In Egypt, improvements made by the Customs in trade statistics should result in more reliable data on services related to insurance and transportation of goods;
4. Central Bank's failure to validate data reported on ITRS and other shortcomings have resulted in poor quality data on services



- Kuwait's Central Bank had made considerable efforts to collect data on SITS at the time of the consultancy mission but it does not appear that any new improvements have been made



- Oman's achievement in development of services statistics also illustrates the importance of institutional collaboration (e.g. cooperation among MONE, CBO, and MOC);
- At the time of the mission, data on services related to BOP compiled by the Central Bank and based on surveys, administrative records, and statistical modeling;



- Comprehensive use of administrative records not made;
- Simple formulas used to derive data on transportation and insurance of goods instead of using data available from Customs records such as the Single Administrative Document (SAD).



## Follow-up actions by member countries – Example of Oman (Contd)

- ✓ Ministry of National Economy 's(MNEO) survey on FDI from 2002 in cooperation with CBO and the Ministry of Commerce and initiated by ESCWA provided useful data on SITS never before available in Oman especially on construction and business services by FDI enterprises;
- ✓ MNEO later extended the FDI survey to cover all foreign investments in Oman and Oman's investments abroad also in cooperation with CBO and MOC;
- ✓ New survey provided additional data.





## Follow-up actions by member countries – Example of Oman (Contd)

- ✓ MONE's survey to derive Tourism Satellite Account (TSA) is one of the best efforts by any country;
- ✓ The TSA data provides reliable data related to travel services;
- ✓ Omani professionals at MONE have developed sufficient expertise in the fields of foreign investments and tourism statistics to assist other countries fulfilling one of the goals of "train the trainers" of ESCWA;



## Follow-up actions by member countries – Example of Oman (Contd)

- ✓ MONEO has upgraded the collection of foreign investments statistics from that of a project (one time effort) to that of divisional responsibility (permanent function)
- ✓ New division on foreign investments to be staffed by 5 permanent employees
- ✓ A new division also established at MONEO to foster data quality



## Follow-up actions by member countries – Example of Oman (Contd)

- ✓ MONEO professionals have made professional presentations at ESCWA workshops on services (e.g. Syria)
- ✓ ESCWA's assistance in various fields of statistics to MONEO greatly influenced these developments



## **Work done by ESCWA on SITS(cont..)**

### **FDI/ ESCWA/UNCTAD: (2003-2006)**

Countries: (Bahrain, Jordan, Syria, *Qatar*, UAE, *Kuwait*, Oman, KSA)

Main activities:

- 1. Conduct a survey to collect data on FDI**
- 2. Disseminate data**
- 3. Build DB on FDI statistics**
- 4. TA in research and policy making**



# ESCWA WS In Syria 2009

- Data collection:
- Modes of supply
- BoP and national accounts
- National WG in trade in services



# A Training WS ,Oman, 2011

- (i) GATS agreement and the need to improve SITS;
- (ii) International recommendations on balance of payments (BPM 6) and (MSITS ver. 2010);
- (iii) Foreign Affiliates Statistics (FATS) (EU regulation and OECD handbook);
- (iv) Statistics of the international supply of services by modes; and
- (v) Classifications ( CPC Version 2.0, BPM6, EBOPS, ICFA/ISIC)



# Looking Forward

1. TA to ESCWA MCs upon request. TA to focus on countries that have demonstrated positive follow up actions
2. Sub-regional training and WS on SITS
3. Enhance regional cooperation
4. Encourage MCs to create national committees to harmonies the data collection and compilation on SITS
5. Exploring possibilities of obtaining funds for projects on SITS
6. Assist in conducting FDI for the rest of ESCWA MCs
7. Enhancing the capacity of ESCWA MCs in targeting Tourism statistics as a significant economic activities in the region





# IMTS and ESCWA

## **Main activities:**

- ✓ Provide technical assistance and capacity building to ESCWA members countries;
- ✓ Publishing annually the External Trade Bulletin of the ESCWA Region;
- ✓ Member of the international TF on IMTS
- ✓ ESCWA Project on: Strengthening the development of (IMTS) and the compilation of e-commerce in Member Countries of the ESCWA



## Project on IMTS 2006-2009

**Partners: UNSD, UNCTAD / MedStat**

**The objective** of the project is to assist ESCWA member countries in developing and improving their capacity to collect, process, analyze and disseminate trade data for the formulation, monitoring and evaluation of national plans and policies for international and regional trade negotiations.



## Strengthening the Development of (IMTS) and the compilation of e-commerce in ESCWA Region

- **Project Activities**
  - A. Study tours
  - B. Workshops

Reviewing the status of the compilation of  
IMTS and e-commerce



## ESCWA Project (cont..)

### B. Workshops

- ✓ Workshop on Data Compilation and Application of Methodological Concepts, Amman, 28/10 – 2/11/2007;
- ✓ Workshop on Data Quality and External Trade Indices. Cairo, 12-15 June 2008;
- ✓ A WS on Trade indices, UNSD, Med, Mar, 2009
- ✓ A WS on e-commerce in 2009;
- ✓ A training on trade indices, Dec 2009
- ✓ Project website:  
<http://www.escwa.un.org/divisions/scu/tradestats/details.asp?menuID=1>



# ESCWA Project (cont..)

## Expected Accomplishments:

- I. Improved quality of IMTS, including recording of IMTS related information at Customs and other relevant offices, and better data validation at National Statistical Offices, as well as improved dissemination of IMTS and trade indicators;
- II. Improved measurement of e-commerce, particularly in relation to IMTS;
- III. Initiate a network of trade statisticians for sustainability of capacity.



## Evaluation of the ESCWA project on IMTS

### Objectives:

1. to measure the impact of the project on the improvement of IMTS in the ESCWA region;
2. to generalize the lessons learnt and future interventions

### Methodology:

Desk review

Quantitative (questionnaires)

Qualitative – country visits



# Evaluation of the ESCWA project on IMTS

## Main Recommendations

- ✓ Establish distinct “modules” within the overall IMTS that could be achieved in short periods;
- ✓ Plan for delivery of assistance to include sub-regions (GCC) as well as individual countries;
- ✓ Continue the practice of collaborating with other international organizations and
- ✓ Establish a permanent regional body that meets periodically to discuss IMTS issues in the region.