

Concept Note
UNSD/ESCWA Technical Assistance to Lebanon on Improving Energy
Statistics for Sustainable Development – Assessment Mission
2 – 5 July 2019, Beirut, Lebanon

Background

1. Energy is fundamental for socio-economic development. The availability of and access to energy and energy sources is particularly essential to poverty reduction and further improvements in the standards of living. However, at the same time, with the constantly increasing demand for energy, there are growing concerns about the sustainability and reliability of the current production and consumption patterns and the impact of the use of fossil fuel on the environment.
2. Due to the critical role energy plays in socio-economic development, the availability of high-quality energy statistics has always been a matter of concern for the statistical community. The United Nations Statistical Commission has discussed issues relevant to energy statistics since its inception, and in 1976 agreed on the use of energy balances as the key instrument in the coordination of work on energy statistics and the provision of data in a suitable form for understanding and analysing the role of energy in the economy.
3. The United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), as the secretariat of the Statistical Commission, has been involved in developing methodology, compiling and publishing country energy data and assisting countries to improve their energy information systems.
4. The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), among other objectives, supports economic and social development in member countries. The Statistics Division at ESCWA not only acts as a regional focal point for UNSD, other organizations and member States, but strives to improve the production and dissemination of high-quality socioeconomic statistics and indicators in the Arab region. It provides member States with support to strengthen their national statistical systems. As such, UNSD and the Statistics Division at ESCWA have held a number of joint events and projects, including in the area of energy statistics.
5. One of such joint projects is the Programme on Statistics and Data under the 10th Tranche of the United Nations Development Account (DA10), which aims at strengthening the capacity of developing countries to measure and monitor Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) indicators. The Programme's Environmental Pillar, which also covers energy statistics, has Lebanon as one its target countries.

6. Lebanon, through its Ministry of Energy and Water (MEW), have requested support in improving energy statistics and developing energy balances. SDG indicators 7.2.1 on renewable energy and 7.3.1 on energy efficiency can both be derived from a well-compiled energy balance that follows the International Recommendations for Energy Statistics (IRES). As such, the request falls within the scope of the DA10 Programme on Statistics and Data, and UNSD and ESCWA are glad to collaborate with Lebanon as part of the Programme. An assessment mission is being proposed as a starting point in this process.

7. Lebanon's energy strategy for demand and supply is at a turning point. Significant oil and gas resources are currently untapped. In 2010, the United States Geological Survey (USGS) estimated that 1.7 billion barrels of recoverable oil and 122 trillion cubic feet of recoverable natural gas may be found in the Levant Basin Province¹. This can provide Lebanon with energy for domestic consumption and for exports, increasing revenues and reducing large deficits of the government budget. On the other hand, the Lebanese Government's National Infrastructure Investment Program (CEDAR) is requested to do major reforms to obtain funding, among which reform of its power sector, whose deficit amounted to \$ 1,295 billion in 2017, accounting for 2.4% of GDP², and whose losses on the grid can amount to 40%.³ In this context, to guide energy and economic policies, information on supply of all kinds of energy products, transformation processes to secondary energy and end use consumption are crucial, through the compilation of annual energy balances.

Objectives

8. The objective of this assessment mission is to assist the General Directorate of Oil at the Ministry of Energy and Water and the Central Administration of Statistics (CAS) in producing a step-by-step plan towards meeting Lebanon's energy statistics needs. For this purpose, other government stakeholders' views need be considered so that the collective national policy needs in this area are incorporated in the plan. Cooperation and coordination among agencies will be essential to improve Lebanon's energy statistics in a cost-efficient way.

9. In this respect, we suggest that the General Directorate of Oil at the Ministry coordinates with the Central Administration of Statistics and invites other government agencies in designing the plan, for example other Directorates in the Ministry and Lebanese Petroleum Administration, IPT (Issa Petrol Trade), Electricité du Liban, and the Lebanese Solar Energy Society (LCES). There are many different possible institutional arrangements to distribute work according to need, capacities and available human resources.

¹ Lebanon Economic Vision 2018

² Summary of the electricity file in Lebanon. Alnahar Newspaper. March 7, 2018 20:10

³ Energy Procedia 19 (2012) 310 – 320

10. ESCWA and UNSD will identify the UN and other partners interested in supporting later stages of the plan, such as the UNDP, EU, IEF, IEA and World Bank to discuss projects and funds related to energy information.

11. Prior to the mission, it will be useful to identify data users and data producers and all possible data sources on production, imports, transformation, and consumption by sector for all energy products.

Organizers of the assessment mission

12. This assessment mission will be organized by UNSD and the Statistics Division of ESCWA on one side, having MEW on the other as the focal point of all Lebanese institutions involved.

Participants

13. As many local participants from Lebanese government institutions as deemed appropriate by the MEW are expected in the workshop. At least one person from CAS is expected to attend. Other non-governmental stakeholders are welcome at MEW's discretion.

14. Both ESCWA and UNSD will each provide two facilitators/resource persons, for a total of four resource persons.

Organization of the programme

15. The mission will be organized over 4 days, beginning with a two-day initial visit to the Ministry of Energy and Water premises, followed up by a two-day workshop at ESCWA to work on the available data and brainstorm a step-by-step plan towards meeting Lebanon's energy statistics needs.

16. The programme will be organized around five themes:

- i) Knowing users and uses of energy statistics in Lebanon;
- ii) Identifying data gaps and possible additional data sources to fill such gaps;
- iii) Institutional cooperation (identifying coordinators, mechanisms, actors best suited for assuming specific responsibilities, etc.); and
- iv) Compilation of energy balances, as well as indicators (energy SDG indicators therein contained) to serve applications and energy policy for sustainable development (including energy efficiency and CO₂ emissions).
- v) Dissemination of energy statistics and energy balances.

17. The two-day visit to MEW will focus on the first three themes, even if the issue of identifying data gaps is more easily done if it makes reference to the energy balances. It

will start with a presentation from the local authorities detailing the request for assistance and the country needs as currently understood. Each stakeholder should briefly describe what intended uses they have for the energy data. Current data sources used by each of them should be explained, so that an inventory of existing sources can be compiled. The inventory can then be compared to the full data needed for the compilation of a comprehensive energy balance, so that the gaps can be identified. A brainstorming exercise on possible existing or additional data sources can take place. At the same time, current commonalities can be identified, and possible synergies and cooperation arrangements can be explored.

18. The workshop will devote a full day to talking about the international methodology on energy statistics set forth by the *International Recommendations for Energy Statistics* (IRES), including the Standard International Energy Product Classification (SIEC) and harmonised definitions for energy products and flows. Concepts and compilation of energy balance will be explained as well. The final day of the workshop will focus on practical considerations for national energy statistics programmes and drafting of an implementation plan.

Draft agenda:

Day 1 - MEW		Participants/ Institutions
Time a.m.	Getting to know users and uses (current and desired) of energy statistics in Lebanon Partners and donors on projects related to energy information.	All stakeholders to be invited by MEW (main statistical and information/data units included).
Time p.m.	(technical meeting) Compiling an inventory of current data sources, on imports, transformation, end use consumption by sector (agriculture, industry, transport, households, etc..) identifying gaps and exploring additional possible sources	CAS and MEW, others as appropriate to be invited by MEW
Day 2 - MEW		
Time a.m.	Identifying commonalities and exploring of synergies toward a more efficient data collection system	CAS and MEW, and identified stakeholders
Time p.m.	Exploring how responsibilities can be assigned (is there a need for changing the legal framework?), what news kinds of cooperation can be made (institutional arrangements).	CAS and MEW, and identified stakeholders
Day 3		ESCWA venue
Time a.m.	(technical meeting) International methodology in Energy Statistics	CAS and MEW, and identified stakeholders
Time p.m.	(technical meeting)	CAS and MEW, and identified stakeholders

	Principles of compilation of Energy Balances – exercise with the energy balance of Lebanon	
Day 4	ESCWA venue	
Time a.m.	Roundtable discussion wit national partners and donors on practical considerations for national energy statistics	CAS and MEW, and identified stakeholders
Time p.m.	Drafting of step-by-step plan	CAS and MEW, and identified stakeholders

Expected outcome

19. At the conclusion of this assessment mission, it is anticipated the drafting of a plan of implementation (roadmap) for meeting Lebanon’s energy statistics needs. One of the main goals of the plan will be the compilation of energy balances, which will support the calculation of SDG 7 indicators. Further communication may be needed in order to finalize the roadmap.

20. Meanwhile, the participants will gain: (i) an enhanced understanding of the all the actors involved and their data needs; (ii) knowledge of data gaps and the needs to modify current programmes to fill such gaps; (iii) knowledge of the international methodology on energy statistics; and (iv) using the balance in sound policy making for sustainable development.