

# Expert Group Meeting on National Accounts and Economic Statistics

12-14 July 2011, Amman, Jordan

## Provisional Agenda

**Tuesday, 12 July 2011**

*Morning session: 9:00 hrs. – 13:00 hrs.*

9:00 – 9:30 Registration

9:30 – 10:00 Opening of the meeting

Objectives of the meeting

Administrative matters and introduction of participants

10:00 – 10:30 Coffee break

10:30 – 13:00 **Item 1: Availability of basic data sources for National Accounts estimation in the ESCWA region**

- The frame (business registers, censuses, business economic surveys)
- Administrative data sources
- Classifications and definitions

*The session will discuss the availability and quality of basic data sources for National Accounts estimation. For each item discussed (frame, administrative data, classifications and definitions), there will be a brief introduction on international available recommendations and good practices followed worldwide. A scheme highlighting different positions with respect to good practices, from 'best' to 'worst' practices, will be presented, and a snapshot of the situation in each member country will be tentatively made in order to have a clear understanding of the situation in the region. On the basis of the outcomes, and after a discussion of the strategies for improvement at the national level, the major gaps and problematic areas will be identified and regional recommendations will be derived. The discussion will feed into the regional strategy for improving economic statistics and National Accounts in the region, which will form the object of discussion under Item 3 of the agenda.*

13:00 – 14:00 Lunch

*Afternoon session: 14:00 hrs. – 17:00 hrs.*

14:00 – 15:30 **Item 1 (cntd.): Availability of basic data sources for National Accounts estimation in the ESCWA region**

15:30 – 17:00 **Item 2: Short-term and early warning economic indicators**

*After a brief introduction on recent developments in this area and the outcomes of recent global initiative, this session will discuss the availability and quality of a*

*core set of short-term economic statistics. The focus will be on a minimum set of principal (Arab) economic indicators, composed by: industrial production, prices (consumer, producer and unit values of imports and exports), retail trade and turnover, and employment/unemployment indicators. For each indicator discussed, there will be a brief introduction on international recommendations available and good practices worldwide. A major focus will be on timeliness, frequency and treatment of the indicators (seasonal adjustment, trend-cycle estimation and working/trading days corrections). A scheme highlighting different positions with respect to good practices, from 'best' to 'worst' practices, will be presented and a snapshot of the situation in each member country will be tentatively identified in order to have a clear understanding of the situation in the region. On the basis of the outcomes, and after a discussion of the strategies for improvement at the national level, the major gaps and problematic areas will be identified and regional recommendations will be derived. The discussion will feed into the regional strategy for improving economic statistics and National Accounts in the region, which will form the object of discussion under Item 3 of the agenda.*

### **Wednesday, 13 July 2011**

*Morning session: 9:00 hrs. – 13:00 hrs.*

09:00 – 10:30 **Item 2 (cont.): Short-term and early warning economic indicators**

10:30 – 11:00 Coffee break

11:00 – 13:00 **Item 3: Strategy for improving basic data sources and short-term economic statistics in the ESCWA region (breakout group discussion)**

*Participants will be divided into two groups, which will be responsible to identify – based on the discussion of the previous two sessions – the main elements of a strategy for improving basic data sources and short-term economic statistics in the region, respectively. A plenary session will follow (afternoon) for further discussion and consolidation/synthesis of the main recommendations.*

13:00 – 14:00 Lunch

*Afternoon session: 14:00 hrs. – 17:00 hrs.*

14:00 – 17:00 **Item 3 (cont.): Strategy for improving basic data sources and short-term economic statistics in the ESCWA region (plenary meeting)**

### **Thursday, 14 July 2011**

*Morning session: 9:00 hrs. – 13:00 hrs.*

09:00 – 10:00 **Item 4: Follow-up on the 2010 regional seminars in Muscat (Oman) on the 2008 SNA implementation in the ESCWA region: way forward and national actions plans**

*Member countries will be requested to briefly report on advances made in the implementation of the SNA in the last year with respect to recommendations of the seminars held in Muscat and future plans, including the preparation of the national action plans for implementation of the new system.*

10:00 – 10:30 **Item 5: The research agenda on the 2008 SNA**

*The session will consist in a brief overview of the work on the research agenda of the 2008 SNA, coordinated under the auspices of the ISWGNA.*

10:30 – 11:00 Coffee break

11:00 – 13:00 **Item 6: Discussion on selected challenging issues on SNA 2008 implementation**

*Following the outcomes of the Expert Group Meeting held in Cairo in 2009, successive events organized by ESCWA in National Accounts, and the publication of the “Booklet on National Accounts in the ESCWA region: Sources and Methods”, this session will serve as a discussion for selected topics in SNA 2008 implementation. Three issues will be tackled: (1) Allocation of FISIM to branches of economic activity and implementation of SNA recommendations; (2) Insurance services; and (3) Holding companies*

13:00 – 14:00 Lunch

*Afternoon session: 14:00 hrs. – 16:00 hrs.*

14:00 – 15:30 Meeting evaluation and future steps

15:30 – 16:00 Closing