INNOVATION FOR DEVELOPMENT AT ESCWA

for promoting knowledge-based economies in the Arab region

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Chief, Innovation Section
Content

• Knowledge-based economies and innovation in the Arab region

• Innovation activities at UN-ESCWA

• Proposal for collaboration with UN-ECE
KBE and Innovation in the Arab region
Knowledge-based economies (KBE) in the Arab region (1)

• UNEMPLOYMENT
  • Unemployment rate is around 25% for youth (15-25) in 2014
  • Youth unemployment is estimated to rise further (28% in 2018)
  • Many of the unemployed are educated
  • Problem in all countries including GCC

• ECONOMIES OF THE REGION
  • Prices of energy and energy related products are decreasing
  • Growth in non-oil sectors is needed in all countries
  • Ongoing political instability and unrest have negative impact on tourism, investment and trade sectors

Source: SURVEY OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENTS IN THE ARAB REGION 2013-2014
Title of Section

KBE in the Arab region (2)

Knowledge Economy Index for ESCWA Members States

Source: World Bank, Knowledge for Development Database
ARAB REGION

- Lies 6th in world rankings
- Rank has not changed since last update

COUNTRIES

- Most of the countries have moved down in world-wide rankings in the last year
- UAE highest at 42, and Sudan lowest at 137
## KBI and KI in the Arab region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ESCWA Member States</th>
<th>KEI</th>
<th>KI</th>
<th>Economic Incentive Regime</th>
<th>Innovation</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>ICT</th>
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Innovation and KBE

• Generation and exploitation of knowledge

• Knowledge and knowledge-rich products and processes are necessary for the creation of wealth

• Knowledge enhances competitiveness and so economic and social development

• To create knowledge, innovation and creativity are needed

• Governments should foster innovation and creativity to achieve KBE visions
## Innovation in the Arab region
Innovation Input and Output in the Arab Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>World Ranking</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Score (0-100)</th>
<th>Efficiency ratio</th>
<th>Innovation Input Sub-index Score</th>
<th>Innovation Output Sub-index Score</th>
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<td>0.1</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Global Innovation Index, 2013*
SUCCESS STORY IN JORDAN - MAKTOOOB

- **Maktoob** (based in Jordan) is the world’s *Largest* Digital Arabic Content generator

- The Acquisition of Maktoob by Yahoo in 2009 marked the 1st *Multimillion$ purchase* from a U.S. portal company in the MENA region.

- Jordan’s ICT sector employs 1% of the workforce but contributes to 15% to the GDP.
SUCCESS STORY IN EGYPT – SMART VILLAGE

Based in Cairo, it’s one of the Most important steps with regard to fostering Innovation and increasing GDP
SUCCESS STORY IN EGYPT – SMART VILLAGE

- It’s the house for **120 Top Local and Multinational companies** in ICT field
- In 2010, Egypt was ranked **#5 worldwide** for offshore and outsourcing services
- Outsourcing exports generated **more than $1B in revenue** in 2010.
SUCCESS STORY IN UAE - DCDC

• In 2010, the UAE was ranked the Most Innovative Country in the MENA region and the 24th in the world

• Dubai Silicon Oasis is the Leading Innovation Hub for High-Tech industries

• Dubai Circuit Design Center, headquartered at the DSO, is the 1st Design center in the MENA region for Advanced integrated circuits
Innovation at UN-ESCWA
VISION

TDD aspires to play a major role with ESCWA member countries in their transformation toward knowledge-based society and global competitiveness in the market, while striving to increase employment, reduce poverty and enhance quality of life through appropriate technologies and their applications.

- Innovation is an integral part in achieving this vision
- Two entities have activities related to Innovation
  - Newly established Innovation Section, Beirut
  - ESCWA Technology Centre, Jordan
Innovation Section

Objective

Promote innovation in technology for sustainable social and economic development, and for building knowledge-based economies in the Arab region.
Innovation Section

Goals

• Enhance innovation policies, strategies and eco-systems in the Arab region and improve their coherence at regional level.

• Promote innovation in public & private sectors to increase productivity and improve efficiency

• Encourage entrepreneurship and start-up creation, through capacity building and skills development especially for youth.

• Promoting the use of technology and innovation in various sectors for developing knowledge based economy in the Arab region.
ESCWA Technology Centre

**Objective**
To Assist member countries and their public and private organizations to acquire the necessary tools and capabilities to accelerate socio-economic development in order to attain technological parity with other nations and regions.

**Goals**
- To develop capabilities in **problem solving** and **policy formulation**
- To foster **synergy and complementarity** at the regional level in the application of technology
ESCWA Technology Centre: Thematic Areas

• National **Technology Transfer** Systems (measure, policies and mechanisms)

• Inclusive Sustainable **Industrial** Development (innovation and green)

• Regional **RDI integration** (matchmaking, outsourcing and partnerships)

• Harnessing **STEM in SDG** (curricula, culture, competitions, productivity, others)
Selected Achievements in Innovation field


   • In collaboration with selected incubators, contribute to the growth of the DAC industry by promoting entrepreneurship and supporting the creation of DAC startup in the Arab region.

   • Project activities included:
     • Studies about the status of DAC and the status of DAC industry
     • Business Models for Digital Arabic Content and Practical guidelines for young entrepreneurs.
     • National competitions for Digital Arabic Content
     • Incubation of the best ideas in the local incubators
Implementation of DAC


Collaboration with 6 Incubators

- Encouraging Innovation
- Offering New Job opportunities
- Increasing DAC

Collaborating Incubators:
- Elgazala Tunisia
- ADU Abu Dhabi
- Berytech Lebanon
- Aden Univ. Yemen
- iPARK Jordan
- PICTI Palestine
Selected Achievements in Innovation field

2- Technology Commercialization Tours (ETC)

• These tours facilitated the matching of investors and innovators in Jordan, Egypt, Palestine, Lebanon and other countries.

• 114 SMEs up to 5 years of age, registered in 2 months

• After mentoring, 34 top companies were selected to pitch to 17 potential investors from the MENA region

• 11 Business deals had been closed
2- Technology Commercialization Tour

• In 2013, the goal of the second round of the Technology Commercialization Tours were to Scale Up this project and to increase the number of deals at regional level.

• More than 300 Innovation projects were qualified from 6 member states of the ESCWA region

• At least 30 Investors enrolled

• Almost 50 Business deals were closed
3- STUDIES & REPORTS

• Towards a legal framework for intellectual property that promotes innovation and creativity
• The Broken Cycle: Universities, Research and Society in the Arab World
• Database for regional incubators
Proposals for Collaboration between UN-ECE & UN-ESCWA
Proposals for collaboration between ECE and ESCWA

• Collaboration for preparing research report, organizing expert group meetings and implementing advisory services in the area of innovation policy and strategies for enhancing knowledge base economy.

• Encouraging the creation of international and regional partnerships and developing projects for promoting entrepreneurship, incubation programs and accelerators in order to boost the creation of startups and SMEs in the Arab region.

• Sharing of knowledge, lessons learned and good practices for the introduction of innovation concepts in public sector especially for increasing efficiency and enhancing transparency.
Proposals for collaboration between ECE and ESCWA

• Collaboration in the organization of capacity building workshops, targeting decision makers, on innovation and knowledge base economy.

• Bridging the gap between ESCWA region and other regions especially for building national innovation eco-systems and for establishing regional hub for innovation.

• Promoting smart government and smart specialization in the Arab region.
THANK YOU

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