Regional Workshop

Strengthening Transparency and Accountability in Priority Sectors in the Arab Region

Tunis, 1-3 June 2016

Programme

Overview

Under the patronage of the Minister of Public Function, Governance and Anti-Corruption in the Republic of Tunisia, the regional workshop on "strengthening transparency and accountability in priority sectors in the Arab region" is convened in Tunis on 1-3 June 2016, organized by UNDP's Regional Hub in the Arab States, in cooperation with the "Arab Anti-Corruption and Integrity Network' (ACINET) and the support of the Siemens Integrity Initiative.

The event is based on the results of the regional consultations that were held by UNDP in 2014, which had called for strengthening collective action against corruption and supporting specific preventive initiatives in sectors that deliver basic services to people and generate considerable funds for the State, thus having a direct impact on the sustainable development agenda. As such, the event, which brings together more than sixty experts from the region and beyond, including independent experts and representatives from relevant ministries, agencies and relevant organizations from 9 Arab countries, aims to establish a common interactive space for expert stakeholders to exchange views on how to support collective action against corruption on the one hand, and what approaches are most suitable to reduce corruption risks in priority sectors in Arab countries on the other, while also enabling them to participate in the development of specialized tools on collective action and transparency and accountability in the health, customs and justice sectors drawing on related international standards and comparative experiences.

The regional workshop begins its first day with two plenary sessions on good practices and lessons learned on sectoral initiatives on the one hand, and collective action on the other, while exploring related efforts in the Arab region, available opportunities and existing challenges. Based on those two plenary session, participants divide into four working groups to contribute to the development of specialized working tools in four key areas, and then reconvene in a final plenary session to present their findings and recommendations.

- Working Group (A) will crystallize conclusions and recommendations to contribute to the development of specialized training materials that may be used by anti-corruption agencies in Arab countries to strengthen collective action against corruption at the national and local levels. Discussions will focus on a number of topics moderated in an interactive manner by experts from UNDP and ACINET. The Working Group will select a rapporteur to present the conclusions and recommendations during the final plenary session.

- Working Group (B) will crystallize conclusions and recommendations to contribute to the development of a practical guide for assessing and managing corruption risks in the health sector as well as specialized training materials that may be used by key stakeholders in Arab countries to strengthen transparency and accountability in this sector. Discussions

will focus on a number of topics, moderated in an interactive manner by experts from UNDP and the World Health Organization. The Working Group will select a rapporteur to present the conclusions and recommendations during the final plenary session.

- Working Group (C) will crystallize conclusions and recommendations to contribute to the development of a practical guide for assessing and managing corruption risks in the customs sector as well specialized training materials that may be used by key stakeholders in Arab countries to strengthen transparency and accountability in this sector. Discussions will focus on a number of topics, moderated in an interactive manner by experts from UNDP and the World Customs Organization. The Working Group will select a rapporteur to present the conclusions and recommendations during the final plenary session.

- Working Group (D) will crystallize conclusions and recommendations to contribute to the development of a regional tool that may be used by ACINET to monitor the state of integrity in the justice sector in Arab countries, starting with the judiciary and prosecution. Discussions will focus on a number of topics, moderated in an interactive manner by experts from UNDP and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime. The Working Group will select a rapporteur to present the findings and recommendations during the final plenary session.

The event is expected to provide a solid, evidence-based, participatory platform to advance the development of specialized working tools that would enrich regional efforts on collective action against corruption and specific preventive initiatives in priority sectors in Arab countries, while also opening the door for expanding related efforts to new sectors, thus contributing to a qualitative leap in processes of national anti-corruption strategies, which are rapidly growing in the region but are yet to achieve satisfactory results for ordinary citizens as well as decision-makers.

Agenda

Wednesday, 1 June 2016

09.15 – 11.00   First Plenary Session

Transparency and accountability in sectors that are most vulnerable to corruption in the Arab region

Objective: Examine the concept of sectoral approaches, including related benefits and challenges, and explore the most appropriate approaches to enhance transparency and accountability in the sectors that are most vulnerable in Arab countries in light of available data and participants' views, while enabling them to learn more about related good practices and lessons learned in a number of comparative experiences.

Speakers

- Mr. Mustafa KHAWAJA, Director General of Records and Statistical Observation in the Central Bureau for Statistics, State of Palestine, and member of the high level group for the Sustainable Development Goals Indicators
- Mr. Arkan EL SEBLANI, Chief Technical Advisor and Manager, UNDP's Regional Project on "Anti-Corruption and Integrity in the Arab Countries"
- Ms. Patricia REVEZ, Integrity Development Advisor, World Customs Organization
- Dr. Hala ABOU TALEB, In Charge of Health and Human Rights at the Regional Office for the Middle East, World Health Organization

Open discussion

- Ms. Rania MARDINI, Lecturer at the American University of Beirut and independent international expert on governance, financial management, accounting and auditing

11.00 – 11.15	Break

11.15 – 13.00	**Second Plenary Session**
	Collective action against corruption and the means to advance it in the Arab region
	Objective: Enhance participants' understanding of the concept of collective action against corruption, its importance and main mechanisms, while enabling them to engage in an open discussion on the status of related efforts in the Arab region and requirements to further promote them in light of available opportunities and existing challenges.

Speakers

- Dr. Juanita OLAYA, Independent international expert on sustainable governance and anti-corruption
- Mr. Anis ABOU EL MIKIAS, Representative of the General Confederation of Enterprises of Morocco
- Mr. Qusay SALAMA, Director of the Integrity Network Initiative, Egyptian Junior Business Association

- Mr. Saeed MOUSSA, President, Shauub for Democracy and Culture Foundation, Republic of Iraq

Open discussion with participants

- Mr. Badri EL MEOUCHI, Independent international expert on corporate governance and anti-corruption

13.00 – 14.00	**Lunch**

14.00 – 18.00	**Parallel Working Session (A): Collective Action** **Objective:** explore the training needs to promote collective action in developing, implementing and monitoring national anti-corruption strategies, and formulate a series of recommendations to design training programmes that may add value to the related efforts in Arab countries.	**Parallel Working Session (B-1): Health** **Objective:** update participants on the state of the health sector in the Arab region, and explore how corrupt practices influence it and the means to prevent them in light of the particularities of the sector and the good practices and the lessons learned from comparative experiences.

Thursday, 2 June 2016

09.00 – 13.00	**Parallel Working Session (B-2): Health** **Objective:** discuss the proposal for a guide on corruption risk assessment and management in the health sector, and formulate a series of recommendations to enrich it and facilitate its utilization in the field in interested Arab countries.	**Parallel Working Session (C-1): Customs** **Objective:** update participants on the state of the customs sector in the Arab region, and explore how corrupt practices influence it and the means to prevent them in light of the particularities of the sector and the good practices and lessons learned from comparative experiences.

13.00 – 14.00	**Lunch**

14.00 – 18.00	**Parallel Working Session (B-3): Health**	**Parallel Working Session (C-2): Customs**
	Objective: explore the training needs to strengthen transparency and accountability in the health sector and promote collective action to safeguard it against corruption, and formulate a series of recommendations to design training programmes that may add value to the related efforts in Arab countries.	**Objective:** discuss the proposal for a guide on corruption risk assessment and management in the customs sector, and formulate a series of recommendations to enrich it and facilitate its utilization in the field in interested Arab countries.

Friday, 3 June 2016

09.00 – 13.00	**Parallel Working Session (G-3): Customs**	**Parallel Working Session (D): Justice**
	Objective: explore the training needs to strengthen transparency and accountability in the customs sector and promote collective action to safeguard it against corruption, and formulate a series of recommendations to design training programmes that may add value to the related efforts in Arab countries.	**Objective:** conduct an in-depth discussion on the state of the judiciary and public prosecutions in the Arab region and the influence of corruption on their capacity to deliver justice, and formulate a series of specific measurable recommendations to strengthen integrity and safeguard them against corruption.

13.00 – 14.00	**Lunch**

14.00 – 16.00	**Third Plenary Session**
	Conclusions and cooperation prospects
	Objective: present the findings and recommendations of each of the four parallel working sessions and enrich them through an open discussion, while reviewing the perspectives and the preparedness of participants to engage in cooperative efforts to follow up on implementation.

Findings of the parallel working sessions

- Four rapporteurs from the four working groups
- Comments by participants

Concluding Statements

- Mr. Kamal AYADI, Minister of Public Function, Governance and Anti-Corruption, Republic of Tunisia and Chair of the Arab Anti-Corruption and Integrity Network

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