Department of Economic and Social Affairs
Division for Public Administration and
Development Management

**Economic And Social Commission For
Western Asia**

Citizen Engagement and the Post-2015 Development Agenda

Report of the Expert Group Meeting

Expert Group Meeting
Citizen Engagement and the Post-2015 Development Agenda
Beirut, 3-4 December 2012
ESCWA Headquarters, Beirut, Lebanon

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ESCWA

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The term "country" as used in the text of this publication also refers, as appropriate, to territories or areas.

The term "dollar" normally refers to the United States dollar ($).

The views expressed are those of the individual authors and do not imply any expression of opinion on the part of the United Nations.

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Abbreviations

CE   Citizen Engagement
CEPA   Committee of Experts on Public Administration
CESAQ   Civic Engagement Self-Assessment Questionnaire
CSO   Civil Society Organization
DMB   Development Management Branch
DPA   Data Protection Act
DPADM   Division for Public Administration and Development Management
EGM   Expert Group Meeting
ESC   Economic and Social Council
ESCWA   Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
FOIA   Freedom of Information Act
ICT   Information Communication Technology
MDGs   Millennium Development Goals
MENA   Middle East and North Africa
NGO   Non-Governmental Organization
OECD   Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
UNDESA   United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNPACS   United Nations Public Administration Country Studies

Executive Summary

The Expert Group Meeting on "Citizen Engagement and the Post-2015 Development Agenda", organized by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) in Beirut, Lebanon, from 3 to 4 December 2012, brought together over 30 international and regional experts and senior government officials who agreed that good governance and citizen engagement is critical in attaining national development goals, if such progress is to be sustainable.

Taking their cue from the Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development debates of June 2012, the experts agreed on the importance of good governance in attaining sustainable development as an enabler for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), and for sustainable development after 2015. In countries undergoing political transformation, such as in the Arab region, state structures should be used to increase social participation, especially in places where civil society may be weak or underdeveloped.

The experts called for both Governments and civil society organizations (CSO) to consider measures enhancing mutual collaboration and enabling wide participation of people in policy-making processes. Governments can take advantage of social media networks to improve their own effectiveness and to engage with citizens. The link between effective citizen engagement and access to information was emphasized in this regard. Where advantageous, the use of e-governance techniques and models should be encouraged. In countries with relatively low Internet penetration rates and a high level of illiteracy it is important to consider local context-specific, traditional and/or customized methods of providing information and involving people in consultations and decision-making processes for development management.

The experts highlighted the importance of educating the population on important development issues such as state budgetary and financial planning processes as key factors for successful citizen participation in policy debates and enhanced public accountability. To increase efficiency of public consultations, it is necessary to build the capacity of public servants, their research and moderation skills, as well as plan for responding to public consultation processes as a follow-up. Wherever possible, making resource provisions will enable information sharing, public consultation and participatory policy-making debates. Initiatives to strengthen Civil society organizations' (CSOs) should also be considered to enable greater and more targeted citizen engagement.

In the ESCWA region, the public sector must undergo reform to build the trust of citizens in governments and public services, and citizen engagement can become a key factor for achieving this goal. The extensive challenges facing the region cannot be tackled alone. The public sector must be willing to solicit the assistance and cooperation of civil society, the

private sector, think tanks and the international community (including the UN) if it is to succeed in its development goals.

The experts studied a number of institutional and regulatory structures as well as effective channels and modalities set up by governments and CSOs to interact with their citizens. The potential of the Internet and mobile technologies were examined. They were seen to afford governments' better contact with their citizens, enhancement of service delivery and capture of public preferences on development choices.

In this regard, participants reviewed a policy tool for governments, namely the Citizen Engagement Self-Assessment Questionnaire (CESAQ), which is still in development by the UNDESA/DPADM for systematically assessing their institutions' readiness to engage citizens in the management of their development policies and programme.

Part One: Introduction

In June 2012, at Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development, the UN Member States stressed that effective governance at local, national, regional and global levels representing the voices and interests of all is critical for advancing sustainable development. Among other commitments for sustainable development hey resolved to strengthen the institutional framework for sustainable development, which will, inter alia, enhance the participation and effective engagement of civil society, promote transparency and broad partnerships. Hence a global development framework after 2015, which is the target date for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), shall give people capacity to control their lives and ensure that no group is marginalized from policy-making processes.

The right of people to voice and participate in public policy-making has been long articulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations, which established the right of everyone to take part in the government of his/her country, directly or through freely chosen representatives (Article 21).[1] Today, public participation remains as one of the core principles of defining the post-2015 agenda at global and national levels. The legitimacy and successful implementation of any strategy is contingent on participation, and the post-2015 agenda should incorporate national strategies to ensure wide participation for setting global, national and local goals and targets through the process of public consultations.

In light of the mass social movements that the Arab world has been witnessing since December 2010, participation and citizen engagement have become particularly relevant to the ESCWA region. While many Arab governments had mechanisms to engage their citizens at the level of local development councils and municipal governments, and civil society actors such as trade unions and NGOs had opportunities to voice their issues though ad hoc consultations in the past, there is still room to greatly enhance and mainstream citizen engagement mechanisms, particularly within the public sector and policy-making processes.

In this sense, the demand for more systematic citizen engagement and public participation in the post-2015 agenda setting has been amplified globally, particularly in the ESCWA region, where much of the failures of past governance are attributed to the exclusion of people's needs and voices from policy-making processes. The necessity for a greater understanding of citizen engagement practices from around the world in these transitional times of state-building in the Arab countries was one of the key drivers behind the Expert Group Meeting in Beirut, Lebanon, with a special focus on the ESCWA region.

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[1] The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948, http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml

1.   Objective of the Meeting

The Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on "Citizen Engagement and the Post-2015 Development Agenda" was co-organized by ESCWA and UNDESA/DPADM. It intended to seek expert views on key institutions, legal and regulatory frameworks, and good practices of citizen engagement in managing development. More specifically, as reflected in the Aide Memoire (see Annex I), the Expert Group Meeting intended to:

- Call for governance norms to reflect principles of inclusion and participation, and promote transparent, accountable, capable institutions at national and local levels to make development more dynamic, inclusive, equitable and sustainable;

- Examine public consultations and make a case for the importance and advantages of consulting citizens for improving public services and achieving better development outcomes;

- Examine some of the current practices of citizen engagement in decision-making and policy formulation processes employed by UN Member States, particularly in the Arab region;

- Present successful cases and practices of citizen engagement in different countries and discuss the challenges of moving from theory to practice;

- Present a self-assessment tool on citizen engagement for public sector actors to better understand existing measures and create a benchmark for more improvements in citizen engagement.

2.   Work Programme

The work programme has been prepared in line with the conceptual framework on citizen engagement adopted by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs/Division for Public Administration and Development Management (UNDESA/DPADM). It evolved along three key stages of citizen engagement: informing, consulting and involving people in decision making (see Annex II).

The experts addressed the topics of key benefits and challenges from the public administration's perspective in providing a conducive environment for citizen engagement at all three stages. Discussions were enriched by country case studies and plenary debates of invited experts and public servants, which then led to a set of recommendations for Member States as well as for the future work of ESCWA and DPADM.

3. Attendance

The EGM brought together a wide range of local, regional, and international experts. It included representatives of academia, public sector, civil society organizations, and media experts from ESCWA countries and abroad, as well as ESCWA and DPADM staff. A total of 31 participants took part in the meeting (see the complete list of participants in Annex III).

4. EGM Opening and Proceedings

The meeting opened with a speech by Mr. Tarik Alami, Director, Emerging and Conflict Related Issues Division (ECRI/ESCWA), who focused on the importance of citizen engagement in light of the Arab mass social movements and as a conduit for attaining national development goals. Following his opening speech, an opening video message was delivered by Ms. Haiyan Qian, Director, Division for Public Administration and Development Management, UNDESA. Ms. Qian stressed the importance of citizen engagement and public participation in the post-2015 development agenda. She also shared her vision for governance structures in order to achieve the global ambition for a better future, and highlighted the role of technology in helping to drive these changes.

Mr. Alami chaired the opening session of the EGM. The first plenary session "*Citizen Engagement – Information*" was chaired by Mr. Hannes Siebert, Senior Advisor, Common Space Initiative, UNDP. Ms. Lamiaa Khalafallah, Secretary-General of the National Population Council, Sudan, chaired the second plenary session "*Citizen Engagement – Consultation*", followed by Ms. Lamia Moubayed, Director of the Basil Fuleihan Institute of Economy and Finance, Lebanon, who chaired the third session "*Citizen Engagement – Decision Making*". Panel discussions of the second day focused on "*Determinants of Successful Citizen Engagement*", chaired by Mr. Ionut Sibian, from the European Economic and Social Committee; as well as on "*Internet and Social Media*", chaired by Mr. Daniel Alvaro de Pitangueira, from the Department for Social Participation, Brazil. The recommendations session was chaired by Mr. Adib Nehmeh, Chief, Governance and State-Building Section, ESCWA.

Part Two: Summary of Discussions

1.   Global Debate for the Post 2015 Development Agenda and Citizen Engagement

Post-2015 Development Agenda

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) set by the UN Member States at the turn of the millennium allowed achieving significant improvements in human well-being. Extreme poverty has fallen in every region; the proportion of people without access to decent water has been cut in half; housing conditions have improved for more than 200 million slum dwellers; 40 million more children are attending school; the world has achieved parity in primary education between girls and boys; and an estimated 5.2 million people in low and middle-income countries are now receiving life-saving HIV treatment.[2] Nevertheless, many challenges remain: climate change, poverty eradication, creation of jobs, reducing inequality, providing social protection, and ensuring a strong voice for civil society.

UN Member States are now in the process of wide consultations and consolidating the new vision for sustainable development post-MDGs. This vision continues to build on fundamental principles of human development, defined in 1986 as a "constant improvement of the well-being of the entire population and of all individuals on the bases of their active, free and meaningful participation in development and in the fair distribution of benefits resulting there from."[3] In 2012, a report to the Secretary-General entitled *Realizing the Future We Want for All*, prepared by the UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, recognized development as "…resulting from the complex interaction of multiple economic, social, cultural, ecological, political and legal factors,"[4] and envisaged it to be people-centered, based on environmental sustainability, inclusive economic growth, equitable social development and justice.

Three dimensions of sustainable development: a need for additional two dimensions - political and cultural

While this vision was conceived by the UN Member States and reaffirmed at the Rio+20 Summit in 2012, the complexity of accomplishing it is incontrovertible. The 2008-2009

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[2] The United Nations Report on The Millennium Development Goals Report 2012, pages 4-5
http://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/Resources/Static/Products/Progress2012/English2012.pdf
[3] Presentation, by Mr. Adib Nehmeh, Chief, Governance and State Building Section, ECRI,
Declaration on RtD (A/RES/41/128), 1986 (http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/41/a41r128.htm)
[4] Realizing the Future We Want for All, June 2012
(http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Post_2015_UNTTreport.pdf)

financial crises and its continuing impact, coupled with political and social turbulences especially in the Arab world, as well as persistent environmental degradation, pose significant challenges in all three major areas of human development – economic, social, and environmental. In addressing these challenges, it becomes increasingly important to view governance as an essential factor affecting human development. Responsive governance empowers and allows people to exercise their right to development. It contributes also to the *political dimension* of sustainable development along with peace and security to ensure transitions towards political and democratic reforms, especially in the Arab region.

The *cultural dimension* (knowledge, skills, values and behavior) should also be taken into account as an important factor influencing sustainable development along with the other four: economic, social, environmental and political. Societies place different emphasis on the importance of cooperation, competition, or consumerism, which impacts their choices of governance models and their ability to attain social coherence. This is especially important for the Arab region, where internal transformation within society since Arab mass movements is shaping the state-citizens relationships for the foreseeable future.

Transformation versus Transition: A New Social Contract

One of the important peculiarities of socio-political changes in the Arab region is the debate on transformation versus transition of countries. The experts from the Arab region emphasized that transition is usually characterized by a change from one known to another known condition. This was the case, for example, with countries of the former Soviet bloc that embarked on transition from a planned to market economy, and from centralized to democratic forms of governance.

Mass movements in the Arab region started primarily as an outcry against economic and social hardships of vast population strata, which then formulated a need to change political regimes and governance systems. The patrimonial[5] model of the state prescribing civic obedience was rejected under demands for greater state accountability and people-centred development. People, previously disengaged from political processes, started exploring options for a new social contract with the state. In upcoming years, if not decades, this transformation will likely continue in the region posing additional demands for engaging citizens in the process of formulating policies. As one of the experts mentioned, "We are in the first five minutes of new era."[6]

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[5] Patrimonial state was defined as a form of governance in which all power flows directly from the leader, and state assets are owned predominantly by the leader and ruling elite. This constitutes essentially the blending of the public and private sectors.

[6] From the presentation of Mr. Paul Simon, Director, Carnegie Middle East Center: *Decision-Making and the Arab Revolution: A Changed Modus Operandus?*

The experiences and events of the past create challenges today and require creative approaches. In the ESCWA region, as experts highlighted, there is a need to create something new out of the old structures and systems. Policy-making in much of the Arab world used to be top down with little consultation and citizen engagement. This is no longer viable even in countries where there were no direct changes of political systems. Because of the old discredited regimes, the governments of today have to learn from scratch how to support and engage with their people.

Experts discussed the fact that electoral mechanisms alone are not sufficient to ensure proper representation. They found that in the period of instability following change, it is preferable to adopt a set of mechanisms that ensure comprehensive representation and the establishment of community dialogue on equal terms. They also stressed the need to distinguish between the mechanisms that are supposed to create the current governance structures, and the mechanisms that are supposed to create consensus and long term constitutional and constituent texts.

It was also suggested that the unions and other civil society institutions should have a greater role in the ESCWA region. This would strengthen the balance within the structures of state administration and the community to the benefit of citizen engagement.

Another suggestion was to deepen and expand dialogue among development partners in the Arab countries, especially the exchange of experiences, to learn about successful experiences, and to think in a common way in the search for solutions to problems and bottlenecks that citizen movements face. They called ESCWA to play a bigger role at this level, particularly in terms of promoting dialogue among the various development partners at regional and national levels.

2. The Stages of Citizen Engagement

Definitions

The UN Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA) refers to citizen engagement as a "desired outcome or logical end of participatory governance."[7] Citizen participation implies the involvement of citizens in a wide range of policy-making activities in order to "orient government programs toward community needs, build public support, and

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[7] UN Document (E/C.16/2007/2)

encourage a sense of cohesiveness within neighborhoods."[8] Thus, *citizen engagement in public administration*, according to the working definition of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs/Division for Public Administration and Development Management (DESA/DPADM), implies "*the involvement of citizens in decision-making process of the State through measures and/or institutional arrangements so as to increase their influence on public policies and programmes ensuring a more positive impact on their social and economic lives.*"[9]

To enable such involvement, citizens must have access to public information; be consulted by their governments; and be involved in important policy debates and decision-making processes to the extent possible. Within this conceptual framework, citizen engagement could be divided into three stages:

(i)   **Inform** - one in which the public is properly informed;

(ii)   **Consult** - one in which the public is consulted on policy;

(iii)   **Decision-Making** - one in which the public has some kind of input in decision-making policy development and execution.

Additional stages of citizen engagement?

Due to prolonged disengagement from political and policy-making processes, the majority of people in ESCWA countries are often unaware of their right to information or the state obligation to consult them. The experts from the region argued that, in such circumstances, raising awareness of people becomes equally important for a successful citizen engagement, and it can also be considered as a preliminary stage to the provision of information, consultations, or involvement of people in decision-making.

Other specialists suggested that for better developmental results, it may be advisable to engage citizens not only in the processes of informing, consulting, and decision-making, but also in implementing and evaluating public policies. Thus, a five-stage model of citizen engagement could be conceptualized:

(i)   Raising awareness

(ii)   Sharing information

(iii)   Engagement in consultations

(iv)   Engagement in decision-making

(v)   Engagement in implementation and evaluation of policies

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[8] UN World Public Sector Report 2008,
http://www.unpan.org/Directories/UNPublicAdministrationGlossary/tabid/928/language/en-US/Default.aspx
[9] Working definition for the United Nations Public Administration Country Studies (UNPACS) as reflected in Citizen "Engagement Research and Content Development Methodology" working document.

For the sake of conceptual clarity, "raising awareness" can precede the three stages and "engagement in impregnation and evaluation of policies" can conclude the three stages. In addition, according to the experts' opinion, the term "public engagement" might be preferable to "citizen engagement" in order to denote inclusion of citizens, private sector players, institutions and various development partners. The two themes can be retained to differentiate the scope of engagement.

3.   Summary of Discussions

According to the preliminary findings of the United Nations Public Administration Country Studies (UNPACS)[10] presented at the EGM, the principle of informing citizens on public matters is reflected in the constitutions of almost all 193 Member States. In addition, there are at least 99 Member States with enacted legislation on Access to Information, and 28 Member States with draft legislation. There are 76 Member States that also have Data Protection Acts regulating the protection of sensitive or personal information. Similarly, provisions for consulting citizens on major public issues are stipulated in special legislative acts of at least 66 out of the193 Member states. About 80 countries have further devised dedicated institutions to enhance public consultations and public participation. In the ESCWA region, three countries have enacted and another three have drafted legislation on access to information. Two countries have Data Protection Act, and five countries have relevant legislation and institutions promoting public consultation and social dialogue through Economic and Social Councils (ESC).

While provision of information and consulting the public on policy matters at various degrees are relatively common globally, the practices of involving citizens in interactive policy discussions or decision-making processes are less documented. The experts discussed, at the plenary sessions, different aspects of citizen engagement at information, consultation and decision-making stages. Country specific case-studies from Canada, Brazil, Lebanon, Republic of Moldova and Tunisia were further discussed. The main themes and key arguments of the experts are provided below.

Citizen engagement: a case to justify democracy and effectiveness?

In an increasingly complex, fast-paced and interdependent world, as the experts argued, there are two main justifications for increasing citizen engagement:

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[10] UNPACS are prepared based on the analytical research being undertaken by Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Division for Public Administration and Development Management (DESA/DPADM)

(i)   Democracy - builds upon the notion of rights and responsibilities between the state and citizens; and

(ii)   Effectiveness - the common good and goals become bigger than governments can single-handedly address. They involve people, private companies, civil society organizations (CSOs), and special interest groups. Thus, when dealing with complex issues, there are two things the governments can do: to reduce the goal or to accept that engagement of others is necessary.

The democracy argument has a tendency of becoming political, whereas the effectiveness argument allows for more candid public reflections. In this sense, in the Arab region, both justifications play a pivotal role as they: (a) strongly influence ongoing debates about a new, transformative socio-political contract between the state and its citizens; and (b) address the effectiveness and efficiency of new governments acting on existing problems to determine the outcomes of such debates, as well as the political future of the region.

An additional argument in favor of citizen engagement and social participation was the correlation observed in Brazil between participation and decreasing level of inequality and increasing level of trust within society towards the government.

Technological change and accessibility of information

Governments have constitutional obligations to provide information to the public, and many countries are increasingly opening government data for public use. With the advancement of information and communication technologies (ICTs), the Internet, social media, CSOs, special interest groups, journalists, and ordinary citizens became more effective in communication and lobbying for public interests. They gained greater leverage on sharing information with the public and circumventing state censorship. The Arab mass movements were an example of successful use of technology in sharing information and getting self-organized in articulating public demands.

Together with a speedy turnover of information, however, comes the challenge of verifying information and its sources, protecting websites from potential spam-attacks, making web content accessible to people in rural areas, to different language groups, and to the most disadvantaged who often lack the means of accessing information. CSOs scan get better organized and share information without waiting for government to provide it. In addition, an increased collaboration is required among public information providers and media outlets, CSOs, and special interest groups in order to make information more accessible, practical, and visually powered. Governments and CSOs should seek avenues of sharing and customizing information according to the needs of various population groups.

The role of social media

Digital and social media have become major tools for enhancing the spread of information and citizen engagement, especially in the Arab world. Their benefits include instant visibility, inexpensiveness, ability to create stronger relationship with the public at large, to help with fundraising, and to create transparency and increase accountability at relatively low cost. Thus, the ability of people to engage and interact through social media shall not be underestimated. Many Arab citizens are already highly engaged on social media. For instance, it was quoted that the top 10 videos on YouTube are political. The debate on Egypt's constitutional process was tracked and commented online, and social media, such as Facebook, was instrumental in organizing the initial wave of the Arab social movement. The fact that new political websites appear daily in great number is indicative in that regard; according to the findings of the United Nations E-Government Survey 2012, 77 governments make use of social media.

The experts of the field suggested, nonetheless, that the more time individuals spend on the Internet, the lower is their degree of trust in governments, and the lower is the level of citizen compliance. It is also known that such possible negative effects of the Internet can be mitigated through citizens' increased use of e-government tools. Being an excellent way to disseminate information to the public in a rapid and transparent manner, the Internet and social media can become a cornerstone for e-participation and e-consultations, as well as contribute to increased citizen engagement. Public institutions also become vital in ensuring online privacy and civil freedoms of their citizens, as well as in setting standards for the protection and use of private data by public and private actors.

Notwithstanding numerous benefits of digital and social media in countries with relatively low internet penetration rates, high level of illiteracy and poverty, the reliance on modern technologies alone may hinder wide participation in policy-making processes. In the ESCWA region, for example, connectivity and Internet penetration rates are still fairly low in many countries.

Capacity of government institutions to respond to citizen engagement

Better communication means do not necessarily translate into better public services and higher achievement rates. As noted by an expert from Egypt, the Committee of Anti-Corruption in Egypt became a dead-end for complaints on corruption cases while communication between citizens and the Committee has improved significantly over the last two years. As a measure of improving transparency and accountability, the Committee requested citizens to inform on corruption cases directly. With commonly used smart/camera phones and social media, the instances of recording corruption became widespread. However, a high number of complaints and investigation requests had soon paralyzed the agency. The lack of human resources and

poor legal and judiciary structures inherited from the previous regime made it close to impossible to have an adequate follow-up on alarming cases. As a result, the public servants started to witness increasing dissatisfaction and distrust towards the government's intention to reform. The Internet and the availability of dedicated websites[11] enables people to record and report on corruption cases, but it requires adequately developed public and judiciary institutions to respond to demands for accountability.

An example of citizen engagement from the Republic of Moldova also demonstrates the need for planning the government response after consultations. An otherwise successful initiative of nation-wide online consultations created significant challenges for the government in absorbing the volume of feedback and comments. As experts highlighted, one of the key elements of successful engagement is to build the capacity of public servants, their research skills as well as online moderation skills that would allow greater efficiency. It was also noted that youth engagement is instrumental for success in citizen engagement, especially through online platforms.

In the ESCWA region, in addition to the abovementioned challenges, a change in relations between state and citizens is often observed. The experts noted that while in some countries the governments used to be very strong, in others the government may have not been the most powerful political actor in the society. Often under new regimes, however, there is a strong and engaged society lacking the legal and institutional framework to operate, while the state is unable to control the situation. The public sector lacks mechanisms to communicate its needs or policy choices to citizens and CSOs, being generally regarded as inefficient. Due to decades-long mistrust in government agencies, public servants are often perceived as parts of the old regime, which makes it difficult for them to relate to the social/civic sentiments, which they often share, and yet to perform their public duties. Thus the culture in public sector will need an overhaul in trust-building. In countries undergoing political transformation, such as in the Arab region, state structures should be used to increase social participation, especially in places where civil society may be weak or even nonexistent.

Lack of specialized knowledge as a hurdle for engagement

Strong financial accountability is key to state accountability. It is often difficult for citizens to get involved in such issues as budgeting without specialized knowledge. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has found in most countries in the world that people are financially illiterate or have lack of knowledge, are often unaware of the links between public debt and public deficit or various techniques of budgeting and public

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[11] One such website is www.ipaidabribe.com, which is considered to be a "bribe hotline" allowing people in many countries to share their experiences of giving bribes

management.[12] Citizens have to be educated in order to be able to participate in consultation processes on budget.

The cost of engagement

Sharing information, extensive consultation and public engagement come at a cost to the public administration. In many countries, this may create an additional strain to the public budget and become a limiting factor for government-supported engagement initiatives. Yet, the Brazilian experience of extensive popular consultations suggests greater social cohesion and better policies and programmes as an outcome. In 2010, more than 80 percent of the Brazilian federal and regional institutions displayed interactions with the citizens, and 90 percent of federal programmes were publicly debated. The costs of such consultation and public debates were internalized by public administration budgets.

Similarly, the example of European Economic and Social Councils suggests that consultations serve as a consensus-building mechanism among various players of public, private, and CSOs. By and large, as UNPACS findings suggest, the Economic and Social Councils in different countries have two functions: promoting social dialogue and providing advice to the government. While the role of ESCs varies from country to country, the importance of these two functions are essential for the society.

In countries where civil society organizations are not strong and lack financial base, however, the challenges on engaging the public in consultations and policy debates remain. The majority of countries in the ESCWA region search for the most viable paths to strengthen their civil society, and the Iraqi experiences could become valuable contribution in this sense.

4.   Self Assessment Questionnaire

The Citizen Engagement Self-Assessment Questionnaire (CESAQ) developed by the Development Management Branch (DMB/DPADM) and discussed by the experts, while in its early stages, may turn into a useful tool for assessing existing mechanisms and capacities within the public sector for successful citizen engagement. The CESAQ can assist governments in examining legal and institutional framework, prevailing practices in engaging citizens, as well as to designing an appropriate framework to support engagement and public participation.

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[12] Presentation by Ms. Lamia Moubayed, Director, Basil Fuleihan Institute of Economy and Finance, Lebanon

There was a consensus among the experts that there is not one single approach or activity to ascertain citizen engagement mechanisms. The importance of finding the 'right mix' of policies and activities is crucial. Within this context, the self-assessment questionnaire can serve to identify what is the state of government to citizen (G2C) relations, to assess the existence and possibility of measuring institutional arrangements that would involve citizens in decision-making processes.

The CESAQ is designed to assist in taking stock of the regulatory framework, the organizational framework, the channels and modalities, and the outreach measures for citizen engagement. It could be utilized in early stages of political transition or transformation, and assist in identifying challenges to citizen engagement and acceptable policy options. In the implementation stages of political reform, the outcome of the questionnaires could facilitate dialogue to support policy inclusiveness and provide feedback on citizen engagement practices while monitoring and evaluating public policy programmes and their outcomes.

The questionnaire is intended for many users, such as public sector employees, civil society figures, governmental officials, etc. Three different versions are planned to target the civil society, the private sector and the public sector. The questionnaire can be used by the UN Member States on their own, or through requests for further UN assistance.

Conclusion and Recommendations

At the conclusion of the Expert Group Meeting in Beirut, participants agreed on the following recommendations:

Recommendations for the global debate on the post-2015 development agenda:

- Consider the importance of viewing *governance* as an essential component for successful human dimension of sustainable development. Responsive governance empowers and allows people to exercise their right to development. It contributes to the *cultural* and *political dimensions* of sustainable development, which are important factors contributing to success in three important areas of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. Hence, *participatory governance* is a key concept with a specific and high value for citizens and states and is critical to defining the post-2015 development agenda;

- Consider the importance and specificities of current socio-political changes in the Arab region described as *transformation* rather than *transition*. The latter is characterized by a change from one "known" to another "known" condition, while the former is characterized by a shift from a "known" towards the "unknown", with resulting uncertainties and the need to construct a new social contract between the state and its citizens.

Recommendations on the citizen engagement model

- Consider including *awareness raising* as a preliminary (optional) stage for citizen engagement, preceding the stages of information, consultation, and decision-making. In addition, to consider formalization of citizen engagement not only in the processes of informing, consulting, and decision-making, but also in implementing and evaluating public policies.

Recommendations for creating an enabling environment for citizen engagement

- Both Governments and CSOs should consider measures enhancing collaboration between public information providers and media outlets, CSOs, and special interest groups. Cooperation in sharing and customizing information according to the needs of various population groups is also required to enable wide participation of people in policy-

making processes. The link between effective citizen engagement and access to information is crucial. Governments must enact legislation and regulations and set up relevant institutional frameworks needed to interact with the public in a more real and transparent manner and allow for citizen engagement in the realm of consultation and decision-making.

- Governments must take advantage of social media networks to improve their own effectiveness and to engage with citizens. On the other hand, the citizens should be encouraged to use modern ICT tools, including social media, to advance those policies they find beneficial.

- Where appropriate, governments shall increase the use of e-governance techniques and models. Being useful ways to disseminate information to the public in a rapid and transparent manner, the Internet and social media can become a cornerstone for e-participation and e-consultations, as well as contribute to increased citizen engagement.

- In countries with relatively low Internet penetration rates and high level of illiteracy, it is important to consider local-context-specific, traditional and/or customized methods of providing information and involving people in consultation and decision-making processes.

- In countries undergoing political transformation, such as in the Arab region, state structures should be used to increase social participation, especially in places where civil society may be weak or even nonexistent. In such cases, CSO strengthening initiatives should be considered to enable greater and more structured citizen engagement.

- To the extent possible, educate the population on important issues related to budgetary and financial planning processes of the state to allow for greater citizen engagement, participation in policy debates and enhanced public accountability.

- Plan and prepare governments' responses after public consultation processes as a follow-up measure, aimed at enhancing state- citizens' relations and mutual trust. To increase the efficiency of the government response, it is necessary to build the capacity of public servants, their research skills, as well as online and offline moderation expertise.

- Wherever possible, make provisions in relevant budgets to enable information sharing, public consultation and participatory policy-making debates.

- In the ESCWA region, the public sector has unique challenges and opportunities in light of the Arab mass social movements. It must both take steps to engage citizens in

constructive ways, as well as enhance and/or establish mechanisms in which citizens, civil society, and the private sector are solicited regarding their needs and demands.

- The public sector must also undergo reform in light of the changing political landscape of the ESCWA region. On the one hand, public sector employees must begin to see themselves as serving all citizens instead of only the ruling elite. On the other hand, the private sector and citizenry must begin to see the public sector as provider of public goods and services.

- The challenges facing the region are so extensive that the government cannot tackle them alone. The public sector must be willing to solicit the assistance and cooperation of civil society, the private sector, think tanks and the international community (including the UN) if it is to succeed in its development goals. Only by engaging all aspects of civil society will the public sector be able to achieve its role as a service provider to the citizen.

Recommendations on the Citizen Engagement Self-Assessment Questionnaire (CESAQ)

The citizen engagement self-assessment questionnaire developed by DPADM, when ready, should be used as a tool by the public sector, private sector, and civil society actors. By aiming to identify the right mix of policies and activities to facilitate citizen engagement, the self-assessment questionnaire could serve a practical purpose.

The questionnaire should be aimed at target audiences, be well translated, and must take into account the specific challenges of self-assessment in the ESCWA region. It should be circulated to the Member States via ESCWA, and its results and findings should be used to better articulate a multilateral approach to advance citizen engagement.

While the core of the questionnaire should remain consistent to make sure that the same information can be collected for all countries, the questionnaire must be adapted to specificities of each country (e.g. network, nested political and cultural structures, perception biases, organizational context, etc.). This is especially true in a diverse group of countries such as the Arab region and particularly in those countries undergoing transformation.

Annex 1 : Aide-Mémoire

UNITED NATIONS

Expert Group Meeting and Capacity Development Workshop

Citizen Engagement and the Post-2015 Development Agenda

Beirut, Lebanon 3-4 December 2012

Aide Memoire

6 November 2012

A. Background and Context

1. More and more governments strive to provide information to their citizens on the use of public resources for, inter alia, transparency and accountability purposes. Over the last two decades governments have also increasingly adopted innovative ways of promoting citizen participation in legislative affairs, executive decision-making, judicial processes as well as the overall public administration system and processes, including public service provision and delivery.

2. Government-citizen relations are therefore categorized through three layers[13:] (i) governments providing information to the citizens, (ii) governments initiating consultation with the citizens to solicit their feedback on issues that might concern

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[13] OECD, 2001. Citizens as Partners: Information, Consultation and Public Participation in Policy-making. Organization for Economic Cooperation & Development, Paris; and OECD, 2001, Engaging Citizens in Policy-making: Information, Consultation and Public Participation. PUMA Policy Brief No 10.

them, and (iii) citizens engaging in decision-making more integrally, interactively and jointly with the government and other relevant actors.

3. Both the government-to-citizen (GtoC) and citizen-to-government (CtoG) exchange of information has benefitted from the availability of information and communication technology (ICT). This has, in turn, raised people's expectations of the extent and quality of public services creating a demand for greater accountability and quality standards that adhere to those observed in the global arena. Against a low supply of public information and accountability, a "non-violent, desegregated, transgressive, youth-generated, and technologically savvy movement" has swept across[14] the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region generating a demand for a new social contract for citizens and better development opportunities for all -men and women alike. This brought to the forefront citizen's demand for participating and having a role in shaping the transitional period, and beyond, to meet the demands of the "Arab Spring" – the popular uprisings started in 2011.

4. At the global level, preliminary discussions on the post-2015 development agenda strongly evidence the need for an open and inclusive consultation process, engaging people directly in defining it. This framework is to build on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and reflect the urgent need for transformative change in order to achieve a more inclusive growth and sustainable global development. It is argued that the new framework should focus on human development, while addressing emerging challenges, including continuing conflict, gender, human rights, inequalities, etc.

5. As part of the post-2015 agenda, governance norms, must reflect principles of inclusion and participation, and promote transparent, accountable, capable institutions, at national and local levels, to make development more dynamic, inclusive, equitable and sustainable. Defining the post-2015 development agenda will therefore require convening national reviews to include country perspectives making full use of all available mechanisms such as new social media and more traditional town hall meetings to ensure participation.

6. These themes were debated in a seminar, organized by DESA/DPADM in collaboration with the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the Ministry of the Interior of Morocco, in Rabat on 20-21 October 2011 on "Challenges and

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[14] Farzaneh Milani, Reflections on women in the Arab Spring, Middle East Program, 2012

Opportunities of Participatory Governance in North African Countries: Engaging Citizens and their Organizations in Public Development Affairs through Adequate Institutions".   The seminar provided an opportunity for reflecting on the role of Economic and Social Councils (ESCs) and other similar institutions including committees for development, centres for population studies, observatories of employment and fight against corruption, committees of "rural engagement", social development agencies. These institutions can provide a framework for multi-stakeholder dialogue and analysis on development challenges at the national level and contribute to policy-making by governments in an informed and participatory manner. ESCs complement other institutions such as parliaments and popular assemblies, and while the latter have specific functions in law making and political affairs, ESCs contribute with a more direct dialogue among diverse development stakeholders. Some ESCs include only organizations of workers and employers and focus narrowly on labour issues within a traditional social dialogue framework, yet others have a wider membership, encompassing different economic and social groups, and promote a broader dialogue on public development matters.

7. Seminar discussions highlighted the need for a two tier approach for capacity building to enhance participatory governance among interested stakeholders in countries of the region: i) assist countries at a fundamental level to enhance democratic processes; and ii) assist countries at an operational public administration level, to foster adequate reforms to increase transparency and accountability, counter corruption, and engage citizens, including particularly the youth and women, for better development management through participatory public administration methods. Recommendations addressed to the United Nations included:

- Carry out a series of technical assistance and capacity Development activities specifically devoted to enhance participatory governance

- Support the implementation of participatory governance reforms including undertaking a benchmarking review of regulatory frameworks and civic engagement institutions in each country

- Promote the mainstreaming of the effective use of ICT applications in public sector management both at the national and the local levels of government.

- Support the development of training programmes to enhance human and institutional development capacity of institutions engaged in participatory

governance (such as ESCs, civic or social observatories and forums, research centres and think tanks including in universities, etc.).

- Assist in brokering cross-country experiences, collaboration, cooperation, partnership, and networking among CSOs in North Africa to advance participatory governance, transparency, and anti-corruption.

8. Seminar participants requested DESA/DPADM to submit the Rabat seminar report "to all stakeholders and the States with a timetable for implementation and targets for each country followed by a system of monitoring and evaluation". In line with the above recommendations, DESA/DPADM started, in January 2012, a research on policies, regulatory and organizational frameworks which governments around the world apply in engaging citizens. The objective is to provide government policy makers and civil society with online access to this information including an assessment tool that assists tracking progress on participatory governance measures taken by each Member State.

B. Mandate

9. The Division for Public Administration and Development Management of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DPADM) assists the United Nations Member States in fostering efficient, effective, transparent, accountable and citizen-centric public administrations and public services through innovation and technology. The Division supports the United Nations intergovernmental policy deliberations by providing information on and policy-oriented analysis of the role of public administration and governance in the development process via the United Nations Committee of Experts in Public Administration (CEPA). The Committee is responsible for supporting the work of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) concerning the promotion and development of public administration and governance among Member States, in connection with the UN Millennium Development Goals and the post-2015 global development agenda.

10. The United Nations General Assembly and ECOSOC, through their numerous resolutions on public administration and development, provide the mandate for DPADM to foster good governance and sound public administration by promoting

transparency, accountability, corruption prevention and citizen engagement.[15] The most recent of these resolutions, namely ECOSOC 2011/22 of 27 July 2011, requests the Secretariat—among others—to continue to enhance its support for capacity-Development in the public sector, promoting participatory governance institutions with a view to making public administration more open, transparent, accountable and responsive to citizens in all countries. The resolution also requests the Secretariat to continue implementing activities around the themes of public service delivery and the engagement of citizens.

11. CEPA agreed during its 11th session (held in New York in April 2012) that the needs in the Arab region are daunting; particularly in the transition phase after the Arab spring. It therefore emphasized the need for the United Nations Secretariat to provide sustained support to countries in the region.

12. As a follow-up to the requests made by the Rabat seminar participants and CEPA experts, UNDESA/DPADM plans to organize an expert group meeting (EGM) and a capacity development workshop on citizen engagement for the post-2015 Development Agenda in the Arab Region building on the knowledge developed during the above seminar and leveraging on the knowledge and regional expertise of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UNESCWA).

C. Objectives of the Expert Group Meeting and Capacity Development Workshop

13. A central message of the Arab Spring is that strengthening governance is necessary to encourage people's participation. In parallel development experts from around the world agree that Internationally Agreed Development Goals (IADG), including the MDGs need the engagement of all stakeholders including citizen to achieve development objectives. While the Arab Spring transformed the MENA region into a

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[15] The United Nations General Assembly, resolutions 49/136 of 28 February 1995, 50/225 of 19 April 1996, A/RES/53/201 of 22 February 1999,
56/213 of 21 December 2001, 57/277 of 20 December 2002, 58/231 of 23 December 2003, 59/55 of 2 December 2004, 60/34 of 30 November
2005, all on public administration and development; *The United Nations Economic and Social Council,* resolutions 2002/40 of 19 December
2002, 2003/60 of 25 July 2003, 2005/3 of 31 March 2005, 2005/55 of 21 October 2005, 2006/47 of 28 July 2006 and 2007/38 of 4 October 2007,
2008/32 of 25 July 2008, 2009/18 of 29 July 2009, 2011/2 of 26 April 2011 and 2011/22 of 27 July 2011, all on public administration and
development.

laboratory of various forms of governance, the global discussion among politicians, citizens and development experts, in its own way, contributes to future innovation of governance and development management. The Expert Group Meeting and Capacity Development Workshop draw benefit from these developments by bridging the global and the regional discourse through two back-to-back events.

14. The **Expert Group Meeting (EGM)** intends to bring together government officials, academics, representatives from ESCs and other international development experts. Based on an analysis of the demand for and the potentials and limitations of citizen engagement in the context of the Post-2015 Development Agenda, the EGM aims to provide advice on international norm setting concerning key institutions, as well as legal and regulatory frameworks for engaging citizen in development management. The Post-2015 discussion is already ongoing among development stakeholders but it is far from being completed. More information, better insight and additional proposals are needed before Member States can agree on far reaching new joint policies. The EGM aims at contributing to this process.

15. The findings of DESA/DPADM research on existing regulatory and institutional frameworks for participatory governance in 193 United Nations Member States, including those specifically pertaining to the MENA region, will be presented during the EGM. The meeting will also review ESCWA's work on the quantitative benchmarks for monitoring progress for a new state-citizen relationship in the Arab region including the roadmap for an enhanced partnership of centralization and decentralization serving participation, reconciliation and development. The EGM will provide an opportunity to exchange knowledge, information, experiences and good practices for conducting assessments (self-assessment and peer reviews) of existing frameworks of citizen engagement in the post-2015 agenda, including through e-participation.

16. Due to the global character of the Post-2015 discussion, developments in the Arab region will be examined along with other international experience in engaging citizens in the process to innovate governance and development management. While this may stimulate the discussion on solutions for the Arab region, the EGM aims at contributing to the normative discussion on citizen engagement which includes other regional and global perspectives.

17. On the contrary, the specificity of the MENA region will be addressed in terms of capacity development. Therefore, the **Capacity Development Workshop** will focus on the Arab region, and where necessary and possible, it may even consider the situation and demand arising in individual countries of this region. The workshop intends to bring together decision-makers at the national and local government levels, representatives of ESCs, civil society organizations and other development experts who have expertise and experience with respect to the region.

18. The workshop will discuss the outlook, application and further development of an assessment tool for governments with respect to their engagement of citizen also leveraging on the use of information and communication technologies (ICT). In addition, the workshop will also help identify needs for capacity development and training requirements to track progress on participatory governance and citizen engagement in development management in the Arab region. This will include new capacity development projects which may be pursued by UNDESA, other organizations within the United Nation system (such as the UN regional commissions), and other international agencies and organizations active in the field of participatory and inclusive development. All this aims at building new capacities and the provision of new tools at the country level.

19. Held back-to-back with the EGM, the workshop will provide an opportunity to learn from the global research findings, as well as international and regional expertise, and strengthen capacities, to conduct assessment of citizen engagement in the post-2015 agenda in the MENA region. The aim is that of enhancing public governance, improving transparency, and public accountability for a more dynamic, inclusive, equitable and sustainable development in the region.

20. At the end of the two events, analytical report/s will be prepared to capture the deliberations and conclusions of both the EGM and workshop. The report/s will aim to disseminate information, including some guidelines, deemed useful for governments, civil society and other non-state actors to assess requirements and monitor progress on citizen engagement at the current and future stages of participatory governance.

D: Thematic Focus of the Expert Group Meeting and Capacity Development Workshop

21. There is no blue print on how citizen engagement should look in all countries around the world. Nonetheless, what's needed is a common understanding of citizen engagement, the setting of policy regulatory and organizational frameworks and the development of channels/modalities and relevant capacities. This is not only needed because the world is, in general, becoming more and more integrated. More specifically, it is required because the future relationship between citizen and their government is currently discussed in several important contexts: be it developments so seemingly separate like the Arab Spring or the global discussion on Post-2012 Development Agenda, in both cases new frameworks for development are explored. In spite of all differences, there is a common link in the form of a thematic focus on how governance can be improved to achieve agreed development goals and what role citizen, as stakeholders of the society, should play in this context.

22. Citizen engagement is related to rights and responsibilities of cities. Citizens have (and where they don't have they claim) the right to have a voice on all governance and public administration matters relevant for their own life. At the same time, citizens share responsibility for the development of the country and society. Rights and responsibilities of citizen are a great chance and a challenge for both government and society, but if applied in a fruitful manner they generate added value and can stimulate economic and social development.

23. Recent developments in the MENA region, longer term experience gained in other parts of the world, research carried out by experts and deliberations undertaken by inter-governmental bodies suggest that there are common experiences which allow formulating guidelines and common tools for analysis and capacity building to support citizen engagement.

24. In the EGM the thematic focus will be discussed with an eye on norms and frameworks for citizen engagement. Guiding questions include the following:

- What are the provisions for informing citizens and for classifying information (public, confidential, special access, data protection, etc.)? What are the required organizational frameworks?
- What are the potentials and requirements of the Freedom of Information Act, open government data or of databases like UNPACS of UNDESA?
- What are the institutional arrangements required for consulting citizens?

- Can ICT help in consulting citizens and what are determinants of good consultative processes?

- Why and how citizens are engaged in governance and public administration?

- Why and how citizens should be engaged in the development of the Post 2015 Development Agenda?

- What lesson concerning citizen engagement can be learned from the Arab Spring?

- How do governments engage people in decision making?

- What is the role of public participation in development management?

- What are successful practices of citizen engagement in decision making processes?

- What specific opportunities exist at the local level and what framework should be provided by national policies for citizen engagement?

- What can be described as criteria for successful citizen engagement?

- What further demand exists for research and capacity building?

25. The capacity Development Workshop shares the same thematic focus on improving governance to achieve development goals and on the role of citizen in this context. Nonetheless, the perspective is more practical with a specific focus on the situation and demand of capacity building in Arab countries. Among others the following will be discussed at the workshop:

- How can citizen participation be strengthened in the region? What are the policy options for an engaged participatory Arab citizen? What are the suitable mechanisms for Arab States to evolve toward participatory-democratic systems of governance?

- What are the examples of good practice on citizen engagement from Member States in the region?

- What are the basic steps that must be taken in order to build the architecture of a new state-citizen relationship?

- What are the regulatory and institutional frameworks needed?

- In which way different segments of the population (youth, women, and civil society) contribute towards the post-2015 development agenda?

- What is the dynamic between central and decentralized governance mechanisms during and post the Arab uprising? Is local governance a conduit to participation and reconciliation or a catalyst of national fragmentation and civil

strife? What is the roadmap for an enhanced partnership of centralization and decentralization that would serve participation, reconciliation and development? How to monitor progress and what are the quantitative benchmarks to consider?

• What are the deliverables/targets for implementing citizen engagement assessments in the next 2-3 years in the region?

• What are the requirements for human resource development?

• What is the role of the United Nations and especially of UNDESA and ESCWA in capacity building and in providing other advisory services to the region

26. For further information on the two events, including the respective programmes, please see:

Capacity development workshop: www.unpan.org/beirut2012

Expert Group Meeting: www.unpan.org/egmbeirut2012

E: Participants

27. Attendance to both the EGM and workshop will be per invitation only. A roster of international experts will be compiled for the EGM. As for the workshop, DESA/DPADM and ESCWA look forward to have a selected group of approximately 30 national and local senior government officials from the MENA region, representatives of ESCs, officials from international and civil society organizations, including the private sector, research institutions, youth and women organizations and other development stakeholders having significant direct experience or deep knowledge on the engagement of citizens in the region.

F: Outcomes and Outputs

28. The EGM and workshop are expected to have the following outputs:

• Analytical report/s, produced at the end of the events, summarizing deliberations, conclusions and recommendations. The draft report/s will be circulated for comments among all participants, and subsequently the final report/s will be published and disseminated for the general public.

- Self-assessment questionnaire for participatory governance normative and institutional frameworks in the MENA region. This will assist practitioners to assess minimum requirements for participation at each of the three stages of participation.

- Enhanced knowledge and shared information for all participating experts, on institutional frameworks, instruments and mechanisms for citizen engagement in the Arab region. This information will be further made publicly available through internet in the knowledge base of DPADM, namely the United Nations Public Administration Country Studies (UNPACS).

G: Venue and Dates

29. The EGM and CDW will take place in Beirut (Lebanon) from 3 to 6 December 2012.

H: Organization

30. To facilitate inclusive participation of experts and practitioners from the Arab countries, the events are to be conducted in Arabic and English, with simultaneous interpretation.

31. DESA/DPADM and UNESCWA will be the co-organizer of these events sharing their human and financial requirements.

For information contact:

ESCWA

Mr. Youssef Chaitani, First Economic Affair Officer
Governance and State Building Section
Emerging and Conflict-Related Issues Division
UN-ESCWA
Riad Solh Square
Beirut, Lebanon
Tel: 961-1-978619; E-mail: chaitani@un.org

UNDESA/DPADM

Ms. Elia Armstrong

Acting Chief, Development Management Branch

Division for Public Administration and Development Management

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Email: armstronge@un.org

Ms. Valentina Resta

Governance and Public Administration Officer

Development Management Branch

Division for Public Administration and Development Management

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

E-mail: restav@un.org

Ms. Arpine Korekyan

Governance and Public Administration Officer

Development Management Branch

Division for Public Administration and Development Management

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

E-mail: korekyan@un.org

Annex 2: Work Programme

Expert Group Meeting (EGM)
on
Citizen Engagement and the Post-2015 Development Agenda

United Nations House
The Mezzanine Conference Room
Beirut 3- 4 December 2012

Early Registration: Monday Dec. 03, 2012, Reception Area, Mezzanine Conference Room, from 8:30 am to 9:00 am.

DAY 1- EXPERT GROUP MEETING

8:30 - 9:00   Registration: Reception Area, Mezzanine Conference Room

9:00 - 9:30   Welcoming Remarks: Mezzanine Conference Room

9:30 - 9:40   Mr. Tarik Alami, Director, Emerging and Conflict Related Issues Division (ECRI, ESCWA)

9:40 - 9:50   Ms. Haiyan Qian, Director, Division for Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM/DESA), represented by Ms. Valentina Resta, Public Administration Officer

9:50 - 10:45   Opening Session: the Post-2015 Development Agenda and Citizen Engagement

Chair: Mr. Tarik Alami, Director, Division for emerging and Conflict related Issues, UN ESCWA

9:50 - 10:05   *Realizing the Future We Want for All -- Setting the Post-2015 Development Agenda and Public Administration: The Imperative for Citizen Engagement*
Ms. Haiyan Qian, Director, DPADM/DESA
(video message presented by Ms. Arpine Korekyan, Public Administration Officer, DPADM/DESA)

10:05 - 10:20 *Arab Transition and the Post-2015 Development Agenda*

Mr. Adib Nehmeh, Chief, Governance and State Building Section, ECRI

10:45 - 11:00   BREAK

11:00 - 12:15 Plenary Session I Citizen Engagement – INFORMATION

Chair: Mr. Hannes Siebert, Senior Advisor, Common Space Initiative, UNDP
Rapporteur : Mr. Hossam Ragheb, Advisor to the Minister of State for Administrative Development, Egypt

11:00 - 11:20 *Information - a "Must" in Government-Citizen Relations: Regulatory Frameworks - Constitution, FOIA and DPA, and Consultative process*
Ms. Arpine Korekyan, Governance and Public Administration Officer, DPADM/DESA

11:20 - 11:35 *Efficacies and Burdens of Digital and Social Media for Civic Engagement and Information Sharing*
Mr. Jad Melki, Assistant Professor of Journalism and Media Studies; Chair, Dept. of Sociology, Anthropology, and Media Studies, American University of Beirut

11:35 - 12:30 Discussion & 2-3 Recommendations

12:30 -13:00 BREAK (30 minutes)

13:00 - 14:30 Plenary Session II   Citizen Engagement -- CONSULTATION

Chair: Ms. Lamia Kalafalla, Secretary-General, National Population Council, Sudan

Rapporteur : Dr. Zuhair Al Kayed, Associate Professor for the Doctorate Program in Public Administration,World Islamic Sciences and Education University (WISE)

13:00 - 13:15 *Why Consult and What Practices Exist? Economic and Social Councils and Similar Institutions*
Mr. Ionuț Sibian, European Economic an Social Committee

13:15 - 13:30 *Transition,   Citizen-State   Engagement   and   Consultation: An Administrative Perspective*
Ms. Ghada Moussa, Ministry of Administrative Reform, Egypt

13:30 - 13:45 *Viable Consultation Mechanisms during a Heightened Political Turmoil: a Possibility?*
Mr. Karam Karm, Common Space Initiative, Lebanon

13:45 - 14:30 Discussion & 2-3 Recommendations

14:30-14:45 BREAK

14:45 - 16:15 Plenary Session III   Citizen Engagement – DECISION-MAKING

Chair: Ms. Lamia Moubayed, Director, Basil Fuleihan Institute of Economy and Finance, Lebanon
Rapporteur: Mr. Nicu Cretu, Executive Director of Moldova Regional Broadcasters Association, Moldova

14:45 - 15:00 *How do Governments Engage Citizens in Decision-Making? Examples from Ministries of Planning, Public Administration and Development Management*

Ms. Valentina Resta, Public Administration Officer, DPADM/DESA

15:00 - 15:15 *Decision-making and the Arab Revolution: A Changed Modus Operandus?*

Mr. Paul Salem, Director, Carnegie Middle East Center

15:15 - 15:30 *The Role of Public Participation in Development Management*

15:30 - 15:45 *Collaborative Governance -- What Models of Citizen Engagement Can Transform Decision-making?*

Mr. Don Lenihan, Vice President, Engagement at the Public Policy Forum in Ottawa, Canada

15:45 - 16:15 Discussion & 2-3 Recommendations

DAY 2- EXPERT GROUP MEETING

9:00 - 9:15   Wrap up of previous day

Presenter: Ms. Hyam Nashash, Assistant Professor of Educational Administration, Jordan and Member of UN Committee of Expert on Public Administration

9:15 - 11:00 Plenary Session IV Determinants   of   Successful   Citizen Engagement

Chair: Mr. Ionuț Sibian, European Economic an Social Committee
Rapporteur : Ms. Rasha Al-Mahdi, National Population Council, Sudan

9:15 - 9:30 *Determinants of Successful Civil Society Engagement: A CSO Perspective*

Mr. Ziad Abdel Samad, Director, Arab NGO Network for Development (15 min)

9:30 - 9:45 *Determinants of Successful Civil Society Engagement: A Public Sector Perspective*

Mr. Houssam Ragheb, Advisor to the Minister of State for Administrative Development, Egypt (15 min)

9:45 - 10:00 *Governance and Public Participation in Tunisia*

Ms. Aude-Annabelle Canesse, Researcher at the Institut de Recherche pour le Développement specialized in Development policies, Governance, Participation and Administration, France

10:00 - 10:15 *How to Move from Policies (i.e. regulatory and institutional frameworks) to Successful Practices (i.e. channels and modalities) for the 3 stages of Citizen Engagement?*

Mr. Daniel Avelino de Pitangueira, Department for Social Participation, Brazil

10:15 - 11:00 Discussion & 2-3 Recommendations

11:00-11:15 BREAK

11:15 - 12:45 **Presentation of the Citizen Engagement Self-Assessment Questionnaire**

Chair: Mr. Youssef El Khalil, Senior Director, Financial Operations Department, Central Bank of Lebanon
Rapporteur: Fernando Cantu-Bazaldua, Economic Affairs Officer, Division for Emerging and Conflict Related Issues, UNESCWA

11:15 - 11:45 *Assessing for Citizen Engagement Readiness*
Mr. Ulrich Graute, Interregional Adviser, DPADM/DESA

11:45 - 12:00 *Psychometric Lessons from Cross-Cultural Research*
Mr. Charles Harb, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, American University of Beirut

12:00 - 12:45 Discussion & 2-3 Recommendations

12:45-13:15 BREAK

13:15 - 14:45 **Plenary Session V   Internet and Social Media**

Chair: Mr. Daniel Avelino de Pitangueira, Department for Social Participation, Brazil

Rapporteur: Mr. Syed Ahmed, Associate ICT Officer, Information Communication Technology Division, UN ESCWA

13:15 - 13:30 *Information Technology and its Prospects for Citizen Engagement*
> Mr. Nicu Cretu, Executive Director of Moldova Regional Broadcasters Association, Moldova

13:30 - 13:40 *Governance in the global Information Society: "Internet Governance" versus "e-Government/e-Governance" Paradigms*
> Mr. Ayman El-Sherbiny, Chief, Section for Information and Communication Technology Policies, ESCWA

13:40 - 13:50 *Media and Mobilization: The Road to Democratic Transformation in the Arab Region*
> Mr. Wael Gamal, Editor in Chief, Al Shorouk News, Egypt

13:50 - 14:00 *The Digital Age and Social Mass Movements*
> Mr. Samir El Bahie, Policy and Government Affairs Manager for Middle East and North Africa, Google

14:00 - 14:45 Discussion & 2-3 Recommendations

14:45-15:00 BREAK

15:00 - 16:30 Expert Recommendations (Round Table)

> **Co-Facilitated by: Mr. Adib Nehmeh, Chief, Section for Governance and State-Building Section, ESCWA**
> **Mr. Don Lenihan, Vise President, Engagement at Canada's Public Policy Forum in Ottawa, Canada**

Annex 3: List of Participants

Expert Group Meeting on
Citizen Engagement and the Post-2015 Development Agenda

Brazil
Mr. Daniel Pitangueira de Avelino. Deputy Director of Social Participation Presidency of Republic Tel: +55 (61) 3411-4384 Email: daniel.avelino@presidencia.gov.br
Ms. Mariana Helena Mansurcunha Department for Social Participation SNAS- Secretariat General de Articulaçao Social in Brazil Palacio do Planalto, anexo II-A, sala 105 Praca dos Tres Poderes 70150/900 Tel: 556186021910 Email: amriana@gmail.com

Canada
Mr. Donald Lenihan Vice President Engagement Canada's Public Policy Forum in Ottawa 1405 - 130 Albert Street Tel: 613-795-6828 Email: don.lenihan@ppforum.ca

Egypt
Ms. Ghada Moussa Director of Governance Center Ministry of State for Administrative Development Cairo Egypt Tel: 01222-386339 Email: gmoussa@ad.gov.eg
Mr. Hossam Ragheb Minister Advisor Ministry of State for Administrative Development Cairo-Egypt Tel: +202 22645435 Email: hragheb@ad.gov.eg
Mr. Omar Abou Eich Deputy Assistant Minister for International Cooperation Ministry of Foreign Affairs Cairo-Egypt Tel: 0020225749854 Email: oeich@hotmail.com
Ms. Alia El Mahdi Professor Faculty of Economics and Political Sc Cairo University-Egypt Tel: 35711678 Email: alia.almahdi@gmail.com
Mr. Wael Gamal Editor in Chief Shourouk News Cairo-Egypt Tel: +2 01227418071 Email: wgamal@shorouknews.com
Mr. Samir Al Bahaie Regional Policy & Government Relations Manager, Google 47th Salam Axis, New Cairo, Cairo, Egypt Email: samirb@google.com

France
Ms. Aude-Annabelle Canesse Political Scientist Institut de Recherche pour le Dévelopement specialized in Development policies, Governance, Participation and Administration Tel: 33679636372 Email: aacanesse@gmail.com

Iraq
Mr.Jamal Al-Jawahiri Board Member & Finance Director Iraqi Al-Amal Association Baghdad-Iraq Tel: 0096417171618 Enail: jamal.j@iraqi-alamal.org

Jordan
Mr. Zuhair Al Kayed Associate Professor for the Doctorate Program in Public Administration Tel: 00962-777468503 Email: zalkayed@yahoo.com
Ms. Hyam Nashash Assistant Professor of Educational Administration CEPA Tel: 962-796657436 Email: hyam_nashash@yahoo.com

Lebanon
Mr. Paul Salem Director, Carnegie ME Center Beirut-Lebanon Email: psalem@carnegie-mec.org
Mr. Jad Melki Asst. Professor of Journalism and Media Studies Acting Chairperson, Dept.of Sociology, Anthropology, and Media Studies Tel: +961-1-340460 / 350000 Email: jadmelki@yahoo.com
Mr. Charles Harb Chairperson of the Dept of Psychology American University of Beirut P.O.Box 11-0236 / (Department) Riad El-Solh / Beirut 1107 2020 Lebanon Tel: +961-1-340460 / 350000 Email: ch17@aub.edu.lb
Mr. Karam Karam Head Research Common Space Initiaitive Tel: 961 03 066850 Email: karam.karam@commonspaceinitiative.org
Mr. Hannes Siebert Senior Advisor, Common Space Initiaitive Tel: (+961) 1 980 274/5/6\ Fax: (+961) 1 980 275 Email: hannessiebert@gmail.com

Lebanon
Ms. Lamia Moubayed Bissat Director Institut des Finances Basil Fuleihan Ministry of Finance-Lebanon, 512, Corniche al Nahr. P.O.Box: 16-5870 Beirut, Lebanon Tel: 961 1 425147/9 Fax: 961 1 426860 Email: ch17@aub.edu.lb
Mr. Ziad Abdel Samad Director Arab NGO Network for Development TBD Tel: 9611319366 Email: abdel.samad@annd.org
Mr. Youssef El-Khalil Director of Financial Operations Lebanese Central Bank Hamra- Beirut Tel: 961-1—343306 Email: ykhalil@bdl.gov.lb

Romania
Ms. Ionut Eugen Sibian Executive Director / Member Group III EESC Romania/Civil Society Development Foundation; EU/E Tel: 40752444300 Email: ionut.sibian@gmail.com

Sudan
Ms. Rasha El-Mahdi Head of policies and programs National Population Council Tel: 249-9-12213082 Email: rashaalmahdi@hotmail.com
Ms. Lamia Kalfalla Secretary General National Population Council Tel: 00249912329693 Email: limiaa@yahoo.co.uk

Republic of Moldova
Mr. Nicolae Cretu Executive Director Association of Regional Broadcasters Sciuseu, 93, Chisinhu R. Molodova Tel: 003732267435004 Email: nicu@cretu.md

Yemen
Mr. Nasser Al-Baham Director of Good Governance Policies Ministry of Planning and International Coop Sallala - AlSteen Street Tel: 00967771288306 Email: nbaham1981@gmail.com
Ms. Hind Al-Eryani Journalist Gulf News Editor Tel: 00961-708550075 Email: hindaleryani@gmail.com

Civil Society Organization
Mr. Patricio Cuevas-Parra Senior Policy Advisor World Vision International Tel:9614401980/1/3 ext:30 Fax:9614401982 Mob:96170687729 Email: patricio_cuevas-parra@wvi.org

Civil Society Organization
Ms. Olivia Pennikian Advocacy Manager World Vision Lebanon Tel:9614401980/1/3 ext:67 Fax:9614401982 Mob:9613002119 Email: olivia_pennikian@wvi.org

UN/DESA
Ms. Valentina Resta Governance & Public Administration Officer UNDESA/DPADM Development Management Branch (DMB) Two UN Plaza, Room: DC2-1706, New York, NY 10017 Tel: +1 212 963 8423 Email: restav@un.org
Ms. Arpine Korekyan Governance & Public Administration Officer UNDESA/DPADM Development Management Branch (DMB) Two UN Plaza, Room: DC2-1706, New York, NY 10017 Tel: +1 212 963 5982 Email: korekyan@un.org
Mr. Ulrich Graute Inter-regional Adviser, Dr. Phil, AcSS UNDESA/DPADM Development Management Branch (DMB) 2 UN Plaza 44th St, DC2-1728 New York, NY 10017, USA Tel: 001(212)963-8836 Email: graute@un.org

ESCWA
Mr. Syed Ahmed Associate ICT Officer Information and Communication Technology Division UN-ESCWA Riad Solh Square, Beirut-Lebanon Tel: 961-1-981304 Email: syed.t.ahmed@un.org
Mr.Youssef Chaitani First Economic Affairs Officer Democratic Transition and State-Building Section Emerging and Conflict Related Issues Division UN-ESCWA Riad Solh Square, Beirut-Lebanon Tel: 961-1-981305 Email: chaitani@un.org

ESCWA
Mr. Tarik Alami Director Emerging and Conflict Related Issues Division UN-ESCWA Riad Solh Square Beirut-Lebanon Tel: 961-1-981301 Email: alamit@un.org
Mr. Adib Nehmeh Chief Democratic Transition and State-Building Section Emerging and Conflict Related Issues Division UN-ESCWA Riad Solh Square Beirut-Lebanon Tel: 961-1-981302 Email: nehmeh@un.org
Mr. Ayman El-Sherbiny Chief Section Section for Information and Communication Technology Policies UN-ESCWA Riad Solh Square, Beirut-Lebanon Tel: 961-1-981303 Email: el-sherbiny@un.org

ESCWA
Mr. Fernando Cantu-Bazaldua Economic Affairs Officer Democratic Transition and State-Building Section Emerging and Conflict Related Issues Division UN-ESCWA Riad Solh Square, Beirut-Lebanon Tel: 961-1-981306 Email: cantu@un.org
Mr. Elias Attieh Research Assistant Democratic Transition and State-Building Section Emerging and Conflict Related Issues Division UN-ESCWA Riad Solh Square Beirut-Lebanon Tel: 961-1-981307 Email: attiehe@un.org

Basic Statistical Data:
Number of Total Participants

	Number of Total Participants	Percentage
Male	23	74.2 %
Female	8	25.8 %
Total	31	100 %

Geographic Representation of Participants:

	Africa	Asia and Pacific	North America	Latin America and Caribbean	Europe
Male	4 (50%)	14 (82%)	1 (100%)	1 (50%)	2 (67%)
Female	4 (50%)	3 (18%)	0 (0%)	1 (50%)	1 (33%)