United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security

Arab Region

Regional Report on The Attainment of SDGs in Conflict-Affected Countries in the Arab Region

Background information

Countries in the Arab region have been heavily impacted by conflicts. These conflicts have resulted in tragic loss of life, forced displacement, physical destruction, strained and failing institutions that together result in complex and interconnected insecurities, often spilling over to neighbouring countries within and beyond the region. Today, the region is the source of more than half of the world's refugees, and host to one third of them. Conflicts are further compounded by challenges of climate change, youth bulge and high rates of unemployment, with over 30 percent of youth unemployed in the region. Responding to the urgent challenges faced by countries affected by conflict in the region, the Arab Committee for Sustainable Development requested the League of Arab States through its Department of Sustainable Development and International Cooperation to prepare a regional report on the importance of SDGs and their implementation in conflict affected countries.

Goals and objectives

The overall aim of the programme is to establish a regional yet context-specific Report that incorporates tools and approaches necessary for achieving SDGs in the participating countries. The Report helps address the multifaceted challenges faced by countries affected by conflict in the Arab region and their impact for these countries and the region in general.

DURATION
November 2019 – July 2022

UN IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES
IOM, UNESCWA, HSU

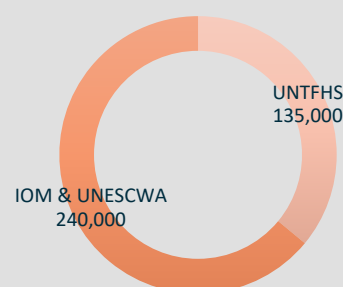**OTHER KEY PARTNERS**
The League of Arab States

BENEFICIARIES
Iraq, Somalia, Yemen, Libya, Sudan, Syria, Jordan and Lebanon

TOTAL BUDGET
US$ 375,000

POOLING OF RESOURCES

UNTFHS
135,000

IOM & UNESCWA
240,000

Beneficiaries

The programme directly benefits eight countries in the Arab region (Iraq, Somalia, Yemen, Libya, Sudan, Syria, Jordan and Lebanon), as well as the League of Arab States and participating UN and non-UN entities.

Applying the Human Security approach

Echoing the five pillars of the 2030 Agenda, the Report calls for an integrated framework anchored in the human security approach to advance the SDGs in conflict-affected countries faced with complex and often recurring challenges. Based on country-specific and regional reviews, as well as in-depth analyses and extensive consultations, the Report provides evidence-based examples of lessons learned and successes in strengthening the localization of the SDGs, enhancing institutional cooperation and data collection, and managing competing priorities and challenges, including the recent Covid-19 pandemic. The Report adds further value by offering an exhaustive repository of existing frameworks to strengthen responses to current gaps and opportunities in the achievement of sustainable peace and development in the Arab region.

Together with high-level events to disseminate the findings of the Report, a coordination mechanism will be established at LAS with the support of a technical team comprising UN and non-UN partners. Operating across the humanitarian, development, and peace nexus, future efforts will benefit from a collective repository of tools and approaches that strive to overcome the obstacles to joint analysis, planning, and programming, support country-specific prioritization, and harmonize efforts to localize national development plans and tackle the interrelated challenges of poverty, vulnerability, inequality, exclusion, and displacement, among others. These efforts will build on the findings of the Report and will institutionalize a new way of working together for the region.

Achievements

- The programme initiated consultative meetings with stakeholders from Iraq, Libya, Sudan, and Yemen during the Arab Sustainable Development Week in November 2019. A stock-taking survey collected input from 32 questionnaires from diverse stakeholders, including government focal points, UN agencies, and regional civil society organizations, revealing regional vulnerabilities and opportunities. To explore specific country challenges more deeply, 33 e-consultations were conducted, emphasizing the need for improved coordination and capacity in data collection and SDG implementation. These consultations among others highlighted the importance of tailored, context-specific strategies to drive sustainable development in the region.

- A thorough desk review was conducted, analyzing studies, policy papers, and initiatives at global, regional, and country levels. This included an analysis of Voluntary National Reviews for Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, and Sudan. The findings were shared and discussed in a Regional Task Force meeting in February 2020, providing critical insights. This comprehensive review laid the foundation for informed decision-making and strategic planning in conflict-affected countries in the region.

- Following national validation workshops, a Regional Report on Attaining SDGs was completed, translated into Arabic, and shared for review in December 2020. The report emphasized integrated implementation, addressing vulnerabilities, fostering multi-stakeholder partnerships, and overcoming data constraints.

- After the report's release, the LAS ECOSOC Committee approved and endorsed it through a resolution at a high-level meeting in February 2021. Subsequently, during its 9th meeting in June 2021, the LAS Arab Sustainable Development Committee requested its Technical Secretariat to prepare a vision for an inclusive and multi-stakeholder coordination mechanism to ensure the implementation of the report's key recommendations.

- Initiated at the request of the LAS ECOSOC Committee, the UNTFHS launched a second phase of the programme in 2023, aimed at translating the guidance from the regional report into practical action to support national stakeholders in nine countries in the Arab region to operationalize the HDP nexus to advance sustainable development through the application of human security.

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. Final boundary between the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan has not yet been determined.