



Marrakesh, 12-14 December 2023

مراكش، 12-14 كانون الأول/ديسمبر

High-level Policy Dialogue Empowering Entrepreneurship in the Arab Region Marrakech 12-14 December 2023



The high-level political dialogue represents a unique and significant opportunity for the exchange of ideas, strategic visions, and best practices that contribute to supporting and enhancing the entrepreneurial environment in the Arab world. This dialogue aims to develop mechanisms for regional and international cooperation in an effective and sustainable manner. By bringing together a diverse group of stakeholders, including decision-makers, public policy officials, experts from various fields, local and international organizations, as well as relevant individuals and entities from across the Arab region - especially entrepreneurs - this dialogue seeks to achieve several key objectives.

Among these objectives is the pursuit of interactive and constructive knowledge and experience exchange, sharing successful stories and experiences that can inspire and stimulate further innovation and success in the field of entrepreneurship. Additionally, the dialogue emphasizes the importance of building and enhancing regional and international partnerships, with the goal of expanding horizons and creating new opportunities for cooperation and mutual development. This dialogue stands out as it provides an interactive environment that enables



participants to discuss challenges and explore innovative solutions, aiming to make tangible progress in the field of entrepreneurship and economic development in the Arab region.

Themes and topics

The high-level policy dialogue focuses on three main topics: registering and formalizing small and medium-sized enterprises, enhancing inclusivity in entrepreneurial opportunities for all, and regional and international cooperation. The policy dialogue will include three main sessions, each lasting 90 minutes, in addition to the opening session presented by participating ministers and the closing session where joint recommendations and proposals will be presented. More than 100 individuals representing governments, national, regional, and international entities from the Arab region will participate in the dialogue.

Within these three main topics, the sessions will concentrate on the role of governments in promoting the formalization of small and medium-sized enterprises, addressing issues of inclusion and participation for all demographics, building partnerships, and fostering regional and international cooperation.

Registering and formalizing small and medium-sized enterprises

- This axis focuses on aspects that support the registration and formalization of small and medium-sized enterprises in Arab countries. It includes incentives available to encourage registration and formalization, registration laws, digital aspects, and mechanisms for utilizing technology in registration and governance. Participants will also discuss available opportunities to facilitate licensing processes, permits, preparation of various tax and regulatory reports, streamlining administrative procedures, reducing bureaucratic hurdles, as well as enhancing transparency, efficiency, and effectiveness.

Inclusivity and integration in empowering entrepreneurship (enhancing participation for all)

- This axis aims to assess and address the existing disparities in the involvement of various individuals and groups in entrepreneurship and their ability to access entrepreneurial opportunities, including funding and specialized training. Participants discuss strategies and initiatives aimed at empowering marginalized groups, including rural communities, women, people with disabilities, refugees, and share experiences and best practices in promoting equal opportunities and creating supportive environments. This enhances the role of entrepreneurship in driving social and economic empowerment in the Arab region, achieving sustainable and comprehensive development for all without any exceptions.

Regional and International Cooperation

- This axis showcases existing programs and experiences in the field of regional and international cooperation to support entrepreneurship in the Arab region. Participants discuss how cooperative efforts among Arab countries can enhance access to markets, exchange knowledge and resources, and establish a supportive regional ecosystem that promotes the growth and sustainability of small and medium-sized enterprises. They also present opportunities and challenges in this field, share suggestions regarding initiatives and feasible strategies to achieve more synergy and productive collaboration in supporting small and medium-sized projects and improving the entrepreneurial environment in the Arab region.

Each of the three scheduled sessions will begin with a series of presentations. These presentations will focus on presenting and analyzing successful models of initiatives and projects at the national, regional and international levels, with the aim of highlighting best practices and lessons learned in the field of entrepreneurship and economic cooperation. Practical cases and case studies will be reviewed reflecting rich and diverse experiences, providing a valuable opportunity for inspiration.

Following the presentations, group discussion will be opened between participants. This discussion will include the exchange of different views and experiences, allowing the exchange of experiences and visions among Arab countries. A special focus will also be on exploring new opportunities for networking and joint regional cooperation, as well as exploring ways to expand these initiatives and projects to wider horizons. These discussions will provide a unique opportunity for participants to express their views and propose new mechanisms that contribute to enhancing cooperation and achieving common goals.

Policy Dialogue Agenda

The policy dialogue will take place in the Tichka Hall on the first floor at the entrance to the opening hall.

General Note: Words and interventions are arranged in alphabetical order in Arabic for country names .

Moderators:

- Amal Nagah Elbeshbishi, United Nations Economic commission for Africa- Sub Regional Office for North Africa.
- Nael Al Mulki, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia.

Day One – 12 December 2023

Time	Session Title	Description
11:30 - 12:00	Opening of Policy Dialogues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcoming and Introducing the Policy Dialogue and Its Objectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - H.E. Mr. Younes Sekkouri Minister of Economic Inclusion, Small Business, Employment and Skills. • Speeches of Their Excellencies Ministers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Djibouti: H.E. Ms. Safia Mohamed Ali Minister of Private Sector Investment. - Lebanon: H.E. Mr. Georges Bouchikian Minister of Industry. - Somalia: H.E. Mr. Djibril Abdirashid Haji Abdi Minister of Trade and Industry. - Morocco: H.E. Ms. Aawatif Hayar Minister of Solidarity, Social Inclusion and Family. - Mauritania: H.E. Mr. Lemrabott Ould Bennahi Minister of Trade, Industry, Handicrafts and Tourism. - Saudia Arabia: H.R.H Prince: Fahad Bin Mansour Bin Nasser Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud.

Time	Session Title	Description
12:00-13:30	Registration and legalization of small and medium enterprises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experiences of countries in stimulating and facilitating registration and legalization of small and medium enterprises in the Arab region: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jordan: The experience of the company registration guide, Ikram Al-Sukkar and Aya Rababaa. Tunisia: Tunisia's Startup Law, Wafa Makhoulouf. Syria: Experience the online platform for establishing companies, Rasha Karkouki and Zain Safi. Morocco: The Experience of Self-Entrepreneur, Nouredine Ben Khalil and Imane Belmaati. Open discussion between participants.
13:30 – 14:30 Lunch break		
14:30-16:00	Inclusivity and Integration in Empowering Entrepreneurship (Enhancing Participation for All)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experiences and practices of some countries in promoting inclusiveness in entrepreneurship based on gender, disability, asylum, remote areas, and other groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Palestine: Empowering Entrepreneurial Youth, Rami Mahdawi. Qatar: Entrepreneurial Education in Schools, Emad Al Khaja. Morocco: Economic Inclusion of People of Determination through Entrepreneurship, Moukhtar Moujahidi. Egypt: Women's Empowerment Coalition, Amany Asfour. Mauritania: Access to finance for Mauritanian SMEs, Zoubeide Salek. European Economic and Social Committee, Milena Angelova. Open discussion between participants.

Day Two – 13 December 2023

Time	Session Title	Description
11:30 - 13:30	Regional and international cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing experiences and programs in regional and international cooperation with the aim of developing small and medium enterprises: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jordan Enterprise Development Corporation, Abdel Fattah Al-Kayed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Questions and comments International Council for Small Business, Ahmed Osman <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Questions and comments Islamic Finance Initiatives, Badruddin Ibrahim <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Questions and comments Initiatives of the German Cooperation (GIZ), Hartmut Janus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Questions and comments Initiative for You, Belgian Cooperation Authority, Othman Al-Hajam <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Questions and comments Founder of Mubadara for Youth and Entrepreneurship, Moncef Kettani <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Questions and comments
13:30 – 14:30 Break		

Time	Session Title	Description
14:30 - 15:30	Regional and international cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Initiatives of the Union for the Mediterranean, Abdelkader Khasassi <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Questions and comments - African Union, William Simwanza <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Questions and comments - European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Ihssane Iraqi <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Questions and comments - United Nations Economic Commission for Africa- Subregional Office for North Africa, Zoubir Benhamouche <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Questions and comments
15:30 16:00	The Future Is Now: Practical Steps Toward Empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conclusions and recommendations of the Policy Dialogue: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ESCWA Executive Secretary, Rola Dashti