

STRENGTHENING SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH IN THE ARAB REGION

DIAGNOSIS, OPTIONS AND STRATEGIES

Monroe Hotel Beirut, Lebanon

11-12 April 2006

AGENDA

DAY 1: Tuesday, 11 April

9:00–10:00 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

This session will present the objectives of the meeting and briefly outline the respective initiatives supported by the co-organizers. It will also allow workshop participants to introduce themselves and their particular interests.

Nada Al Nashif, *Chief, Regional Programme Division, UNDP-RBAS, New York*

Ragui Assaad, *Director, Regional Bureau of the Population Council, Cairo*

Necla Tschirgi, *Consultant, IDRC, Ottawa*

10:00–12:00 SESSION 1: REVIEW OF THE STATE OF REGIONAL SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH IN THE ARAB WORLD

This panel will examine the state of regional social science research projects, networks and institutions in the region with a view to identifying challenges, gaps, needs and opportunities. Participants are asked to consider the following questions:

1. What are the experiences of existing networks in the region?
2. What lessons can be extracted from their successes and shortcomings?
3. What comparative experiences apply from other regions?
4. What are the main impediments to strengthening regional social science mechanisms and institutions?

Chair: Necla Tschirgi

Panelists: Heba Handoussa (tbc)

Ragui Assaad (tbc)

Roula elRifai (tbc)

Salim Nasr (tbc)

12:00– 12:15 *Break*

12:15–13:30 SESSION 2: PRESENTATION OF THE CESPAC PROPOSAL

This session will present the feasibility study prepared for UNDP’s RBAS by the Gulf Research Center (GRC) on setting up a Center for Human Development and Economic and Social Policies in the Arab Countries (CESPAC).

Chair: Azza Karam, UNDP-RBAS

Presenter: Christian Koch, GRC

1:30–3:00 *Lunch*

3:00– 4:00 SESSION 3: DISCUSSION OF THE CESPAC STUDY

This session will examine the feasibility of the CESPAC proposal in light of previously identified constraints and opportunities.

Chair: Ragui Assaad, Population Council

4:00–4:30 *Break*

4:30–5:30 SESSION 4: CHALLENGES OF INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This session will examine lessons learned from previous experiences with institutional development and their implications for new initiatives.

Chair: Salim Nasr (tbc)

8:00 pm *Dinner:* Venue to be determined

DAY 2: Wednesday, 12 April

9:30–11:00 SESSION 1: OVERVIEW OF OPTIONS FOR REGIONAL RESEARCH NETWORKS

This session will open the discussion to various options and proposals for strengthening regional research institutions and networks or creating new ones.

Chair: Paul Salem (tbc)

11:00– 11:30 *Coffee Break*

11:30–13:00 SESSION 2: PRINCIPLES AND VISION FOR REGIONAL RESEARCH

This session will seek to identify the key principles for supporting social science research in the region and articulate a vision for future work in this area.

Chair: Nada al Nashif

1:00–2:30 *Lunch*

2:30–4:00 SESSION 3: CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

This session will examine the practical steps for moving the agenda forward.

Chair: Azza Karam