

Under the high patronage of the President of the Lebanese Republic **His Excellency General Joseph Aoun**

AFSD 2025

Arab Forum for
Sustainable Development
Restoring hope, raising
ambition

Beirut, 14-16 April 2025



E/ESCWA/CL5.SDGs/RFSD/2025/INF.1

Information note

Overview

The 2025 edition of the Arab Forum for Sustainable Development (AFSD-2025) will be held from 14 to 16 April 2025 in Beirut, the Lebanese Republic.

The Republic of Iraq will be the Chair of AFSD-2025.

In line with the theme of the 2025 edition of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), AFSD-2025 will discuss inclusive, science- and evidence-based solutions for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

AFSD-2025 will focus on the five SDGs under review at the 2025 HLPF (New York, 14–23 July 2025), namely SDG 3 (good health and well-being), SDG 5 (gender equality), SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth), SDG 14 (life below water) and SDG 17 (partnerships for the Goals). The regional context of conflict and crises will also frame the various discussions.

AFSD-2025 will position the Arab region on the path to key upcoming events on the global multilateral agenda, including the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (Sevilla, Spain, 30 June – 3 July 2025) and the Second World Summit for Social Development (Doha, 4–6 November 2025). Sessions will address the implementation of the Pact for the Future adopted at the Summit of the Future (New York, 22–23 September 2024) and ongoing global processes, including the periodic review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action +30, the United Nations Ocean Conference 2025 and the Doha Programme of Action for Least Developed Countries.

About the Arab Forum for Sustainable Development

AFSD is the primary regional mechanism for the follow-up and review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the Arab region.

Organized annually by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), in collaboration with the League of Arab States and other United Nations agencies working in the Arab region, AFSD brings together Governments and various stakeholders from the region to discuss progress, review national and regional experiences, and consider the latest developments and implementation mechanisms of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs at national and regional levels.

The AFSD report formally delivers the voice of the region to the global HLPF, held annually in New York. It sets out key messages on the opportunities and challenges of implementing the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs in the Arab region.

Ten forums for the Arab region have been held since 2014. For more information, please visit www.unescwa.org/2030-afsd.

Main components of AFSD-2025

A **high-level dialogue** with the participation of government representatives and senior officials of regional and international organizations.

Thematic sessions on the SDGs under review will appraise the state of progress of SDGs 3, 5, 8 and 14 and discuss transformative solutions for accelerating implementation, taking into consideration partnerships for the Goals (SDG 17).

Ten **special sessions** will further reinforce the overall theme of AFSD-2025 and SDG integration, with a specialized and detailed focus on selected regional priorities.

The **Arab SDG Business Roundtable** will bring together business leaders and policymakers to discuss financial inclusion for accelerating the SDGs, with a special emphasis on women, persons with disabilities, and small and medium-sized enterprises.

Ministerial-level discussions to support the Arab countries in positioning the region in key upcoming events on the global multilateral agenda for sustainable development, including the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development and the Second World Summit for Social Development, AFSD-2025 will also discuss the regional implementation of the Global Digital Compact, which is annexed in the Pact for the Future.

A **roundtable on voluntary national reviews in conflict-affected countries** will address approaches and solutions to the complex set of challenges that hamper the ability of these countries to undertake adequate follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda, including meaningful voluntary national reviews.

AFSD-2025 will announce the recipients of the 2025 edition of the **Digital Arabic Content Award**, which recognizes the best Arabic digital content products supporting the SDGs. AFSD-2025 will also feature a **knowledge fair** and **media activities**.



AFSD-2025 documents

The 2024 edition of the Arab Sustainable Development Report (ASDR 2024) will serve as the main inter-agency input to the meeting and will inform the different

sessions. Other documents will be added to the AFSD-2025 website (<https://afsd-2025.unescwa.org>) and shared with participants in due time, including but not limited to:

Annual SDG Review 2025: Financial inclusion in the Arab region

Technical paper on “Meaningful voluntary national reviews of countries in conflict”

Gender snapshot of the Arab region, 2024

Progress report on the SDGs in the Arab region, a regional statistical update of SDG data

The AFSD-2025 agenda and other documents will be made available on the AFSD webpage (<https://afsd-2025.unescwa.org/>) and updated regularly.

Outcomes

AFSD-2025 will result in a set of key messages reflecting discussions at the forum and relevant preparatory meetings.¹ These key messages will be presented by the

Chair of AFSD-2025 at the 2025 HLPF, and will constitute, along with the full report of the AFSD-2025, the Arab region’s main input to the 2025 HLPF.

1. These include a consultative meeting on the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda (Cairo, Egypt, 25–26 February 2025 – to be confirmed) and a youth forum and regional meeting of civil society organizations on sustainable development in the Arab region (forthcoming).

Participants and registration

Participants will comprise high-level representatives of Arab Governments, including ministers and senior officials responsible for planning, implementing and reporting on the 2030 Agenda.

In line with the theme of AFSD-2025, member State delegations may also include representatives of government institutions involved in health, social affairs, economic and employment policies, marine and coastal affairs, data and statistics, financing and technology.

Representatives of regional intergovernmental organizations, civil society networks and organizations, Arab region parliaments, academic institutions,

the private sector and United Nations agencies working in the region will also attend this annual multi-stakeholder event.

Participation will be in-person at the United Nations House in Beirut. Those who are unable to attend physically can follow the online streaming of various sessions through the AFSD-2025 website.

Participants whose attendance is sponsored by ESCWA are requested to register through the link provided in their invitation letter by 10 March 2025. Other participants can register by the 1st of April 2025 through the following link: <https://indico.un.org/event/1015896/registrations/>.

Correspondence

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