



CONCEPT NOTE: Regional Business Networking Forum and LevelUp Project Achievements

Date: 22-23 May 2023

Venue: InterContinental Hotel, Amman-Jordan

MAIN OBJECTIVE OF THE FORUM

The objective of the Forum is in two folds, 1) Present the key achievements of the LevelUp project and, 2) Promote Business-to-Business (B2B) networking while showcasing best strategies/practices to strengthen export-oriented value chains, in particular, Garment and Fashion, Food Supplements and Natural Cosmetics. Private sector companies from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region – **Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Palestine, Syria** and **Italy** are expected to join the Forum.

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

The Forum will be under the patronage of the Ministry of Industry, Trade, and Supply (MITS) of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and organized within the framework of the LevelUP – Advancing Jordanian Industries project entitled “Job Creation for Youth and Women through the Improvement of Business Environment and Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) Competitiveness” funded by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS). The LevelUp project is implemented by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), in partnership with the Ministry of Industry, Trade, and Supply (MITS) of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and aims to increase Jordan’s private-sector contribution to job creation and promote the economic inclusion of youth and women (including through self-employment) by supporting the development of competitive small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). [Level UP – Advancing Jordanian Industries \(levelupjordan.org\)](http://levelupjordan.org)

The event is organized in partnership with the Union of Mediterranean Confederations of Enterprises (BUSINESSMED)¹ and is supported by UNIDO Investment and Technology Promotion Office (ITPO) Italy, with its unique role as a broker to investment and technology agreements between developed, developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

The main objective of the Forum is aligned to the joint efforts by UNIDO and MITS within the project to avail opportunities for Jordanian SMEs and entrepreneurs to engage with companies in the MENA region and Italy to promote business networking, while showcasing best practices and achievements of the LevelUp Project.

FORUM ORGANIZATION

Forum methodology

The Forum will employ a dynamic and interactive approach to facilitate sharing of experiences and best practices among participating companies from the MENA region, Italy and Jordanian SMEs. The B2B thematic roundtable sessions will be organized in parallel with the session to present the key achievements of the LevelUP project. Throughout the Forum, opportunities for participating SMEs to network will be facilitated by BusinessMed’s [Business Country Desk Platform \(BCD\)](#), B2B matchmaking platform powered that combines a vibrant marketplace with a dedicated space for networking and brokerage between business operators (companies, SMEs/ start-ups) and institutional structures.

Language requirements

The working language of the Forum will be English, and interpretation in Arabic will be provided. All documentation and background materials will be available in English and Arabic.

¹BUSINESSMED is the main representative of the private sector that reflects the interest of 24 Confederations of Enterprises from States members of the Union for the Mediterranean – UfM. <https://www.businessmed-umce.org/en/home/>

AGENDA

Day 1, Monday 22 May 2023			
Duration	Location	Description of programme	
09:00-09:45			
<i>Arrival and welcoming of participants (Participants should be seated by 9:45 at the latest)</i>			
10:00-10:40	Al-Mukhtar II	<p><i>Opening remarks,</i></p> <p>MC: Ms. Hana M. Alaraj</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Mrs. Jihen Boutiba, Secretary General of BUSINESSMED – H.E. The Ambassador of Italy, Mr. Luciano Pezzotti, Embassy of Italy in Jordan – Mr. Cristiano Pasini, Director of the Division for Capacity development, Industrial Policy advises and Statistics UNIDO HQ, Austria – H.E. Ms. Khuloud Al Saqqaf, Minister of Investment, Acting minister of Industry Trade and Supply (MITS) and Acting minister of Labour 	
10:40-11:00	Al-Mukhtar I	<p><i>Opening of B2B and Exhibition</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Eng. Sulafa Mdanat, Country Representative, UNIDO Jordan - Mrs. Letizia Pizzi, Director General at Confindustria Assafrica & Mediterraneo - Mr. Giulio Tarlao, Coordinator, International Relations and European Programming, Regione Autonoma Friuli Venezia Giulia 	
11:00-11:20			
<i>Coffee break and refreshment</i>			
Achievements of LevelUp Project		Presentations and B2B thematic roundtable sessions	
11:20-12:00	Al-Mukhtar II	<p><i>Welcome and opening remarks</i></p> <p>MC: Ms. Hana M. Alaraj</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Mr. Emilio Cabasino, Head of office, Italian Agency for Development Cooperation in Jordan (AICS) – Mr. Fabio Russo, Chief of the SME Development & Job Creation Unit, UNIDO HQ Vienna, Austria – H.E. Ms. Dana Alzoubi, Secretary General, (MITS) 	
12:00-12:25		<p><i>Key highlights of Project Outcomes</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ms. Dong Guo, Statistician, UNIDO HQ, Austria – Mr. Anders Isaksson, Chief, Capacity Development and Policy Advice Unit, UNIDO HQ, Austria – Mr. Abdallah Hindawi, Senior SME Expert, UNIDO Jordan 	
12:25-12:30		<p><i>Video presentation on the Industrial Intelligence Observatory (IIO)</i></p>	
12:30-12:40		<p><i>Key highlights on MITS key publications</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Jordan Industrial Competitiveness Report 2022 (JICR) – Upgrading Strategies, three (3) value chains, Natural Cosmetics, Garment & Fashion, Food Supplements 	
12:40-13:00		<p><i>Closing remarks</i></p> <p>MC: Ms. Hana M. Alaraj</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Mr. Fabio Russo, Chief of the SME Development & Job Creation Unit, UNIDO HQ, Austria – Eng. Sulafa Mdanat, Country Representative, UNIDO Jordan 	
11:20-11:30		Al Badiya	<i>Business Opportunities in Jordan</i>
11:30-11:40			<i>Business Environment and Opportunities to boost economic cooperation between FVG-Triveneto Region, Italy and MENA Region</i>
11:40-11:50	<i>Presentation of the Business Country Desk Platform</i>		
11:50-12:00	Al-Mukhtar I	<i>Visit to the Exhibition & B2B area</i>	
12:00-12:45	Group 1 Al Badiya	<i>B2B round table session – Natural Cosmetics</i> Eng. Salameh Al-Laboun, Technical Support Engineer, Jordan Chamber of Industry (JCI)	
12:45-13:00	Group 2 Al Aarz	<i>B2B Roundtable session – Garment and fashion</i> Eng. Ihab Qadri, JCI board member and representative of Garment and Leather Sector	
	Group 3 Zara	<i>B2B Roundtable session – Agri-industry</i> Mr. Mohammad AlKhalailah, Head of R&D unit (JCI)	
13:00-14:00	<i>Lunch break</i>		
14:00-14:45	Al-Mukhtar II	<p><i>Panel discussion –Twin transition: A catalyst of Trade and Investment in the MENA Region</i></p> <p>Moderator: Dr. Eng. Samia Dhahri, Nano-Biotechnology Expert, BUSINESSMED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Dr. Adel Ben Youssef, Green & Digital Expert, Economics Professor, University of Nice Sophia- Antipolis – Ms. Soussen Ben Romdhane, Business Development Officer, the International Trade Center – Mr. Kareem Hassan, Executive Director of ESCWA Technology Centre for Development 	
14:45-15:00	<i>Discussion and summary of key recommendations</i>		
15:00-15:20			
<i>Coffee break and refreshment</i>			
15:20-15:55	Al-Mukhtar II	<p><i>Panel discussion: “Contribution of Energy efficiency to increase competitiveness along the value chains in the MENA region”</i></p> <p>Moderator: Adel Ben Youssef, Green & Digital Expert, Professor of Economics, University of Nice Sophia-Antipolis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Eng. Tarek Tawfik, Vice President of BUSINESSMED, Vice Chairman of the Federation of Egyptian Industries, FEI – Dr. Mohamed Wageih, Project Officer, Agro-food Value Chain, PRIMA Foundation – Mr. Fadi Marji, Member, EDAMA - Energy, Water & Environment 	
15:55-16:10		<i>Discussion and summary of key recommendations</i>	
16:10-16:25		<p><i>Closing remarks</i></p> <p>MC: Ms. Hana M. Alaraj</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Mrs. Letizia Pizzi, Director General at Confindustria Assafrica & Mediterraneo – Mr. Adil Okab Hussein AL SHNAWA – Chairman of the Iraqi Federation of Industries (IFI) – Mrs. Diana Battaglia, Head of UNIDO ITPO Italy 	
<i>Business Networking Cocktail reception: by invitation only</i>			
17:00-18:30	Poolside	<i>Opportunity for participating businesses, SMEs and companies to network</i>	
18:30	<i>End of Day 1</i>		

Day 2, Tuesday 23 May 2023		
Duration	Location	Description of programme
Industry on-site visits 09:00-12:00		
<i>Industry on-site visit – Garment and Fashion</i>		
08:30-09:20		<i>Gather for bus pick up at hotel (Participants should be gathered at the pre-function room by 09:15 at the latest)</i>
09:20-10:00		<i>Travel from InterContinental Hotel to Amman, Alabdali Hadyana uniform — Focal point: Ms. Thekayat Alsaadi</i>
11:15-12:00		<i>Return to InterContinental Hotel</i>
<i>Industry on-site visit – Natural Cosmetics</i>		
08:30-09:20		<i>Gather for bus pick up at hotel (Participants should be gathered at the pre-function room by 09:15 at the latest)</i>
09:20-10:00		<i>Travel from InterContinental Hotel to Amman, Abu Nseir village street Modern Chemicals Co.- Kima — Focal point: Eng. Rawand Azzouni</i>
11:15-12:00		<i>Return to InterContinental Hotel</i>
<i>Industry on-site visit – Food Supplements</i>		
08:30-09:20		<i>Gather for bus pick up at hotel (Participants should be gathered at the pre-function room by 09:15 at the latest)</i>
09:20-10:00		<i>Travel from InterContinental Hotel to Amman, Khalda BioEnergyTech — Focal point: Ms. Soha Hmoud</i>
11:15-12:00		<i>Return to InterContinental Hotel</i>
<i>Business Networking meeting</i>		
09:00-12:00	Al-Mukhtar I	<i>Opening of B2B sessions (matchmaking platform) — Dedicated space provided for B2B sessions</i>
12:00-13:00		<i>Lunch break</i>
13:00		<i>End of Forum</i>

NB: Registration will be on a first-come, first-served basis, interested participants are advised to register ahead of time by sending an email to s.hawatmeh@unido.org with the subject "**Industry On-site Registration**". **Maximum of 12 participants for each on-site visit**

Venue floor plan

