



United Nations
Office for South-South Cooperation



Statistical, Economic and Social Research
and Training Centre for Islamic Countries



South-South in Action: Transforming Potentials into Shared Prosperity

**The Statistical, Economic and Social
Research and Training Centre for
Islamic Countries (SESRIC)**

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United Nations
Office for South-South Cooperation



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South-South in Action: Transforming Potentials into Shared Prosperity

**The Statistical, Economic and Social
Research and Training Centre for
Islamic Countries (SESRIC)**

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

BAPA+40	Second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CTGAP	Cape Town Global Action Plan
CVE	Countering violent extremism
DoI	Declaration of Intent
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FMoH	Federal Ministry of Health
GDP	Gross domestic product
GNI	Gross national income
GSSD	Global South-South Development Expo
ICHM	Islamic Conference of Health Ministers
ICLM	Islamic Conference of Labour Ministers
IsDB	Islamic Development Bank
LPRD	Libya Programme for Reintegration and Development
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
NSO	National Statistical Office
NSS	National Statistical System
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OIC	Organisation of Islamic Cooperation
OIC-StatCom	OIC Statistics Commission
OICStat	OIC Statistics
OIC-CIF	OIC Countries in Figures
ONMT	Mauritania's National Occupational Health Office
OSH	Occupational safety and health
RL	Reverse linkage
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SESRIC	Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries
SHPA	Strategic Health Programme of Action
SME	Small and medium-sized enterprises
SSC	South-South Cooperation
SSR	Security sector reform
StatCaB	OIC Statistical Capacity Building Programme
SWOT	Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats
TIKA	Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency
TQS	Tobacco Questions for Surveys
TrC	Triangular Cooperation
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNOSSC	United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation
WHO	World Health Organization

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to UNOSSC staff member, Shams Banihani, for her contributions to and coordination of the report. SESRIC also offers a special word of appreciation to the partner institutions and experts from the various programmes and activities for their generous cooperation and valuable contributions.

This publication is dedicated with great appreciation to all staff, partners and stakeholders who have made great achievements possible over the last 40 years and who believed in the power of Islamic solidarity, development cooperation and partnership.

Foreword

The world has undergone major economic and political transformations since the Buenos Aires Conference (1978), which laid the foundations of South-South cooperation. With increasing global interdependence, developments in the South have been intensive and challenging. The nations of the South have become actively involved in facing their socioeconomic development challenges by fostering technical cooperation to share their knowledge, skills, and resources. South-South cooperation has been strengthened to the extent that even the less developed countries, traditionally recipients of technical support, have started to provide know-how and best practices to help others.

Today, countries of the South have a significant role not only in enhancing truly global partnerships for development, but also in providing solutions to contemporary issues, such as climate change, migration and security. These countries have actively participated in and contributed to the Post-2015 Development Agenda debates and their vision of development has been incorporated into the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), with 57 Member States, provides an important platform for cooperation in the Global South. OIC itself serves as a forum for dialogue and cooperation. It brings Member States together for policy dialogue, technical cooperation and joint action through various high-level fora, including the Islamic Summit, the Council of Foreign Ministers, four standing committees and a dozen sectoral ministerial conferences.

Thus, OIC has great potential to strengthen South-South cooperation by providing strong political backing, linking countries with development needs to those with solutions, and by enabling the sharing of the technical knowledge, skills and resources necessary to facilitate the individual and collective development endeavours of its Member States.

At the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC), we are pleased to see that OIC Member States are becoming increasingly involved in identifying common interests and supporting cooperation as a way to cope with their development challenges. As a subsidiary organ of OIC, SESRIC executes a wide array of programmes and activities, from providing up-to-date statistics and policy analysis to conducting training and capacity-building programmes. All support the South-South cooperation and sustainable development efforts.

SESRIC contributes to South-South cooperation by preparing reports on important issues that are on the OIC agenda. These reports, which have been acknowledged by related OIC conferences and meetings, provide information for development, highlight best practices and, thus, guide the policymaking process within the OIC cooperation framework. Moreover, technical projects and capacity-building activities conducted in the framework of South-South cooperation play a pivotal role in strengthening public institutions, legislation and policies, which are instrumental in achieving the national and regional development objectives of OIC Member States.

Development solutions that promise to increase the socioeconomic well-being of the peoples and countries of the South already exist somewhere. We will continue to invest in efforts to enhance the momentum of South-South cooperation with the goal of attaining sustainable development in OIC Member States.



Nebil Dabur

**Director General
Statistical, Economic and
Social Research and Training
Centre for Islamic Countries
(SESRIC)**

Foreword

It is with great pleasure that the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) has joined forces with the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC), to present this joint SESRIC-UNOSSC publication, the latest volume in the South-South in Action series.

UNOSSC launched the South-South in Action series in 2016 to promote global knowledge sharing and highlight opportunities for development cooperation, in the spirit of Southern solidarity and towards the attainment of internationally agreed development goals, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The sharing of successful policies, initiatives and activities promotes their adoption and adaptation in other countries and contexts. There is also potential for development partners to know and recognize opportunities for collaboration that exist in the Global South.

With this in mind, I am delighted to see the success of the SESRIC today. The publication showcases some of the great achievements that have been made over the 40 years since its conception. Through providing the most up-to-date statistics, undertaking analytical research studies and engaging in various training and capacity building programs, the Centre has made remarkable progress, establishing itself as the main socio-economic information bank on the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) countries, with the most comprehensive statistical database on OIC countries, an important platform for cooperation in the Global South.

Through identifying new areas of cooperation, enhancing policy dialogues and promoting partnerships, the Centre has responded to the needs of 57 OIC member countries, catalysing South-South cooperation within the OIC nations. SESRIC directly responds to calls to action from both the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the OIC-2025 Programme of Action, focusing on knowledge building and policy dialogue to plan, implement and monitor the achievement of the targets identified in both these documents.

SESRIC shares the underlying principles of South-South Cooperation, namely national ownership and sovereignty, equality, non-conditionality, non-interference and mutual benefits, incorporating these into its operational agenda through its commitment to all-inclusiveness, coherence, synergy and a focused approach. OIC also utilizes triangular cooperation as a complement to South-South cooperation through partnerships with countries and organizations from the North.

The publication provides insight on the emerging field of Southern partnerships. It shares successful policies, initiatives and best practices, as well as raising awareness of opportunities for collaboration that exist in the Global South. It is through accessing the wealth of technical knowledge and experiences in this report that we can strengthen development cooperation in the OIC through the understanding of the role of the SESRIC as a successful intergovernmental organization that supports the global development agenda through utilizing South-South cooperation modalities.

My office, UNOSSC, in dialogue and cooperation with its global partners, remains committed to facilitating these partnerships, enhancing solidarity and partnership to further development cooperation.



Jorge Chediek

Envoy of the Secretary-General on South-South Cooperation and Director, United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation

Executive Summary

The main purpose of this report is to share the experiences, including successful policies, initiatives and best practices, of the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC), in addressing the development challenges of OIC Member States using South-South and triangular cooperation modalities.

The first chapter provides a brief overview of the Centre's vision, mission and philosophy in relation to fulfilling its mandates and promoting partnership and collaboration among OIC Member States. This includes discussion of South-South Cooperation approaches and tools used within the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) system today and, more specifically, the instruments that SESRIC has developed to promote partnerships among OIC Member States.

Since its founding in 1978, SESRIC has been a focal point for South-South technical cooperation and a facilitator for the exchange of knowledge, experience and best practices among OIC Member States. The second chapter of this report highlights the unique initiatives and activities of the Centre, particularly those with a profound impact on national, regional and international development goals. These activities are aligned with the Centre's three main mandates: collating, processing, and disseminating socioeconomic statistics; conducting economic and social research; and organizing and supporting training and technical cooperation.

The third chapter illustrates the intersection of and complementarities between SESRIC activities and initiatives and regional and global development agenda and policy arrangements, including the OIC-2025, the Sustainable Development Goals, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development, the New Urban Agenda, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and other internationally agreed global agendas.

The final chapter concludes with a discussion of the major challenges that the international community and, more specifically, OIC Member States face in achieving global and regional development goals. This includes summarizing important lessons learned from SESRIC's experiences in promoting partnership and collaboration among OIC Member States.

There are a number of opportunities and potentials that still need to be tapped to achieve prosperity in the South. SESRIC is marking a major milestone with a strong record of achievements. Sustaining and further strengthening these achievements in order to expand development gains will be an important task in the years ahead.



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DIC STRATEGIC HEALTH PROGRAM OF ACTION
2014-2023 (DHC-SHPA)

Develop a mission using DHC
Align the different
Present the work of the
of health and
Community

Chapter I

Enhancing South-South Cooperation for
Development on Four Continents

Enhancing South-South Cooperation for Development on Four Continents

The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) member countries today make up a significant portion of the global population, economic activity and geographical area. They represent a community that is highly diverse, but also shares certain economic, social and cultural aspects. All these diversities and commonalities across the Middle East, Asia, Africa, and Latin America offer unique potentials and opportunities for cooperation in the Global South. In fact, on the occasion of its 50th anniversary in 2019, OIC has good reason to celebrate the achievements in fostering South-South cooperation (SSC) through its major endeavours in promoting multilateral partnerships among its members.

The Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC, or the Centre) is one of OIC's most important institutions. As such, it has played a critical role in identifying potential areas of cooperation, enhancing policy dialogue and promoting partnerships among OIC Member States since it was founded in 1978. This report showcases some of SESRIC's great achievements over its 40-year history.

This section provides background information about OIC and SESRIC and then presents the Centre's vision, mission and philosophy in terms of fulfilling its mandates and promoting partnership and collaboration among Member States. To provide a proper perspective on socioeconomic development in the region today, the section also provides general information on the socioeconomic characteristics of OIC

Member States. It concludes with a discussion of the SSC modalities used within the OIC system today and, more specifically, the instruments that SESRIC has developed and uses to promote partnerships among Member States.

1.1 A brief history of OIC and SESRIC

The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) has worked to maintain dialogue, solidarity, confidence and cooperation among its member states since it was established in 1969. Its overall mission is to promote peace and stability, facilitate cooperation, support economic, social and institutional reforms of its Member States, and, thus, contribute to building a better world. Over the years, OIC has evolved into an organization whose agenda is shaped increasingly by the actual needs of its Member States.

OIC members span a vast geographic area, with 57 States from four continents. Most are located in the southern hemisphere. For that reason, OIC embodies SSC, whose agenda is set by developing countries themselves, with the expectation of benefiting politically from stronger partnerships, economically from expanded economic opportunities and improved connectivity, and geopolitically from greater stability and security. By providing strategic direction for addressing developmental challenges, encouraging knowledge sharing and mutual learning, providing financial assistance, and supporting the reforms related to global development agenda, OIC also helps its members to improve economic governance and

the efficiency of state institutions. Governments of OIC Member States have also adopted policies and measures that are part of the OIC agenda.

OIC is also recognized for its efforts to support South-South development and for using triangular cooperation (TrC) to complement SSC. OIC partnerships with countries and organizations from the North and multilateral organizations facilitate efforts to address the knowledge gap that many OIC countries face in confronting their socioeconomic challenges. In effect, OIC cooperation is multi-stakeholder in nature, including policy dialogues among governments, as well as the private sector, civil society, academia and multiple development partners.

The OIC Charter forms the basis for its operations. The OIC-2025 Programme of Action, anchored in the Charter's provisions, focuses on 18 priority areas with 107 goals. Among those areas are peace and security; defending and restoring the rights of the Palestinian people; poverty alleviation, trade, investment and finance; agriculture and food security; education; employment and industrial development; science and technology; health; climate change and sustainability; countering terrorism, extremism and Islamophobia; inter-cultural and interfaith dialogue; empowering women; and promoting human rights and good governance.

Key OIC organs include the Islamic Summit, Council of Foreign Ministers, four standing committees, executive committee, International Islamic Court of Justice, Independent Permanent Commission of Human Rights, Committee of Permanent Representatives and General Secretariat (OIC Charter, Article 5). The number of sectoral ministerial conferences and other institutions working to achieve the OIC's objectives has also grown steadily over the years.

Moreover, OIC has served as an incubator for new organizations in areas where needs were identified but cooperation mechanisms did not exist. OIC includes more than 30 institutions, which are classified, based on their degree of autonomy, as subsidiary, specialized or affiliated organs and institutions (Figure 1). The complementary strengths, existing synergy and coordination among these institutions are essential to ensure the effective implementation of the resolutions and decisions of OIC bodies, as well as to promote successful policies and activities relevant to achieving the development goals.

As Figure 1.1 shows, OIC cooperation is increasing in scale and scope. It is recognized as crucial to collective efforts to address many challenges affecting the Islamic world. Although internal or regional political difficulties may hinder the development of some OIC Member States, it is encouraging to see that today they all benefit from and contribute to OIC cooperation processes. Moreover, as reflected in resolutions and decisions, the governments of OIC Member States recognize their responsibilities to one another and their shared challenges.

SESRIC is one of the oldest OIC institutions and was founded as a subsidiary organ of OIC, pursuant to Resolution No. 2/8-E adopted by the Eighth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (ICFM), held in Tripoli, Libya in May 1977. The Centre began its activities in Ankara, Turkey on 1 June 1978. Today, with the knowledge and experience it has acquired serving OIC Member States by providing up-to-date statistics, analytical research studies, and training and capacity-building programmes, the Centre catalyses and remains integral to SSC within the OIC region.

Figure 1: OIC Institutions

Subsidiary Organs

- Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC)
- Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA)
- Islamic University of Technology (IUT)
- Islamic Centre for the Development of Trade (ICDT)
- International Islamic Fiqh Academy (IIFA)
- Islamic Solidarity Fund and its Waqf (ISF)

Subsidiary organs are established within the OIC framework, in accordance with the decisions taken by the Islamic Summit or Council of Foreign Ministers. OIC Member States automatically become members of these organs and their budget is approved by the Council of Foreign Ministers.

Affiliated institutions are entities or bodies whose objectives are in line with the objectives of the OIC Charter, and are recognized as affiliated institutions by the Council of Foreign Ministers. Membership in these institutions is optional and open to organs and institutions of OIC Member States.

Specialized Institutions

- Islamic Development Bank (IsDB)
- Islamic Research and Training Institute (IRTI)
- Islamic Corporation for the Insurance of Investment and Export Credit (ICIEC)
- Islamic Corporation for the Development of the Private Sector (ICD)
- International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC)
- Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO)
- Islamic Broadcasting Union (IBU)
- International Islamic News Agency (IINA)
- Islamic Committee of the International Crescent (ICIC)
- Islamic Organization for Food Security (IOFS)

Specialized institutions are established within the OIC framework, in accordance with the decisions taken by the Islamic Summit or Council of Foreign Ministers. Membership in these institutions is optional and open to OIC Member States. Their budgets are independent and are approved by their respective legislative bodies stipulated in their Statute.

Affiliated Institutions

- Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (ICCIA)
- Organization of Islamic Capitals and Cities (OICC)
- Islamic Solidarity Sports Federation (ISSF)
- Organization of the Islamic Shipowners Association (OISA)
- World Federation of Arabo-Islamic International Schools (WFAIIS)
- Islamic Cooperation Youth Forum (ICYF)
- International Union of Muslim Scouts (IUMS)
- Federation of Consultants from Islamic Countries (FCIC)
- Islamic World Academy of Sciences (IAS)
- General Council for Islamic Banks and Financial Institutions (CIBAFI)
- Federation of Contractors from Islamic Countries (FOCIC)
- OIC Computer Emergency Response Team (OIC-CERT)
- Standards and Metrology Institute for Islamic Countries (SMIIC)
- Islamic Cement Association (ICA)
- International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM)
- Association of Tax Authorities of Islamic Countries (ATAIC)
- Organization of Islamic Cooperation Broadcasting Regulatory Authorities Forum (IBRAF)
- The Real Estate Union in Islamic States (REUOS)

1.2 SESRIC's main mandate, vision, mission and philosophy in promoting South-South cooperation

SESRIC is marking a major milestone with a strong record of achievements. It has shown that it can successfully fulfil its mandate, assigned 40 years ago, as a subsidiary organ of OIC. The Centre's main objective is to support socioeconomic cooperation and development among OIC member states by conducting activities in the areas of statistics, research, training and technical cooperation.

The Centre's mandate focuses on three major activities:

- Collating, processing and disseminating socio-economic statistics and information on and for the utilisation of the member countries; Please see <http://www.sesric.org/sesric-about.php>
- Conducting economic and social research on issues of economic and social development in the Member States to help generate proposals that will initiate and enhance cooperation among them; and,
- Organizing and supporting training programmes in selected fields geared to the expressed needs of the Member States; in particular, to assist them to build and strengthen the capacities of their administrative and technical personnel in relevant fields, as well as in the general objectives of OIC.

SESRIC plays a central role in enhancing cooperation networks among relevant institutions in OIC member states. It maintains effective relationships with OIC institutions and with other national, regional and international organizations to create synergies in a variety of areas. The interaction between SESRIC and OIC institutions has evolved over time into a substantive coordination process. This allows for harmonizing work plans, increasing coherence and complementarities, thus avoiding overlaps, and contributing to the effective use of existing resources and structures. Excellent working relationships and regular contacts between OIC's General Secretariat and SESRIC have led to joint activities and increasing synergies that support OIC cooperation. Moreover, continuing support from OIC member countries and their engagement in SESRIC activities have contributed significantly to sustainable development efforts.

SESRIC's mission, broadly speaking, is to identify coherent solutions to economic challenges in the OIC region, assist and facilitate joint responses, and help Member States reach their own development goals. All-inclusiveness, coherence, synergy and a focused approach are basic pillars of SESRIC's vision (Figure 2). More generally, SESRIC plays a bridge-building role in discussions of the socioeconomic development of OIC Member States. Through its policy recommendations, it offers a long-term context for greater growth, employment and competitiveness.

Figure 2: Basic Pillars of SESRIC’s Vision



Over the past decades, SESRIC has proved capable of guiding the policymaking process and achieving practical results in responding to the needs of OIC Member States. It is recognized as a successful statistical and socioeconomic research organ. SESRIC’s activities remain focused on developing and implementing regional programmes, which aim to sustain stability, unlock development potential, improve connectivity and build institutional and human capital.

SESRIC has made considerable efforts to ensure that its development agenda resonates with trends in the OIC sectors and, simultaneously, focuses on areas where impacts can be ensured and sustained. OIC has called for its Member States to become more integrated, smart, sustainable and inclusive. This has been at the heart of SESRIC’s socioeconomic research activities. As a main research organ of OIC, SESRIC continues to provide information that offers insights into socioeconomic trends, identifies issues and shapes future policy.

SESRIC has implemented many capacity development activities that have achieved meaningful results. These activities include

providing technical expertise and training in a number of socioeconomic areas and fields of immediate interest to OIC member countries. Training and technical cooperation activities provide member countries a platform from which to work together and share best practices. These activities also help to establish stronger relationships with national and international institutions, civil society organizations, and national and international structures, thus improving SESRIC’s image and ability to contribute to and strengthen cooperation with member countries.

SESRIC has also introduced new measures and developed new approaches in its mandated areas in taking results-oriented and well-coordinated actions, as described in the next section. Acting as the Secretariat of the OIC Statistical Commission (OIC-StatCom), SESRIC has increasingly been recognized for its role in collating, processing and disseminating timely and reliable statistical data for OIC member countries. Furthermore, the Statistical Capacity Building Programme (StatCaB) allows SESRIC to contribute in needs assessments, share best practices and improve the technical capacities of national statistical systems. In general, SESRIC’s



statistical work enables OIC cooperation to take sound and evidence-based decisions when programming activities.

SESRIC seeks to keep socioeconomic cooperation high on the OIC agenda and to become a driver for a positive change. In this context, it explores, on an ongoing basis, new avenues that support SSC and the socioeconomic development of OIC member countries. SESRIC takes its inspiration from the OIC-2025 Programme of Action¹, resolutions passed by OIC bodies, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), both in terms of issues addressed and of accelerating progress through better cooperation in areas of common interest.

In identifying coherent solutions to the emerging challenges in the OIC area, such as the rise of violent extremism, climate change and natural disasters, and macroeconomic instabilities, SESRIC encourages as open, transparent and regular dialogue with civil society, promotes gender-sensitive policies and projects, and advocates for improvement of governance that could have a positive influence on the environment.

1.3 Socioeconomic profile of OIC Member States

With its 57 Member States, OIC forms one of the world's largest intergovernmental organizations, after the United Nations and its agencies. Marking the diversity of OIC countries in terms of resources and development levels, they are considered a heterogeneous group of countries. Taken together, the Member States total 24.5 percent of the earth's entire land area. The largest OIC countries are Kazakhstan, Algeria, Sudan, Saudi Arabia and Indonesia; collectively, their land area represents 36 percent of the total OIC landmass. The total population of the OIC countries rose from 1.57 billion in 2010 to around 1.8 billion in 2017, or approximately 24 percent of the global population. Indonesia, Pakistan, Nigeria and Bangladesh are among the world's most populated countries, with populations exceeding 150 million (SESRIC, 2018a).

OIC countries are largely urbanized, with their urban populations exceeding 50 percent of the total, on average. Thirty-nine of the world's 150 largest cities are in the OIC area. The largest cities in the OIC region by metro population in 2018 are Jakarta, Indonesia (with a population of 30.2

¹ The OIC-2025 Programme of Action reflects the determination of all the governments of OIC Member States to embrace the policy approaches required to attain the development levels necessary to enhance the prosperity of all their citizens. It seeks to stimulate the key long-term drivers of growth, such as innovation, skills and the integration of trade, together with improvements in infrastructure, education, health and good governance. The OIC-2025 Programme of Action also emphasizes the shared vision of the OIC Member States to ensure peace and security by developing a culture of dialogue among nations and civilizations.

million); Karachi, Pakistan (27.5 million); Cairo, Egypt (20.4 million); Dhaka, Bangladesh (18.9 million); and Lagos, Nigeria (16.1 million). Each of these cities is home to more people than many countries in the world.

The population of OIC countries is very young and the total population is growing at higher rates than the rest of the world. Young people (0-24 years) totalled 52 percent of the total OIC population in 2017. This relatively younger age structure in OIC countries offers important opportunities, but also presents challenges. This is perhaps the most valuable – but not the only – source of socioeconomic development available to OIC countries.

Some OIC subregions are well endowed with oil and natural gas reserves. In 2017, 58.6 percent of globally-proven oil reserves were located in OIC countries, particularly in the MENA region. A number of OIC countries have made significant additions to their oil reserves and production capacities in recent years by adopting best practices in the industry, realizing intensive explorations and enhanced recoveries. Accordingly, the share of OIC countries in the global production of crude oil increased from 44.8 percent in 2010 to 45.5 percent in 2017 (SESRIC, 2018b). Of the 23 oil-producing OIC countries, Saudi Arabia alone accounted for 29.3 percent of the total OIC crude oil production in 2017. Saudi Arabia and four other countries – Iraq, Iran, the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait – account for approximately 70 percent of total oil production in the region. OIC countries are estimated to have total natural gas reserves corresponding to 58 percent of the 2017 global proven natural gas reserves, concentrated primarily in Iran, Qatar and Saudi Arabia (SESRIC, 2018b). OIC countries collectively supplied 32.8 percent of global natural gas production in 2017.

In addition to the energy sector, the OIC countries hold potential economic resources in certain sectors, such as agriculture, tourism and mining,

and constitute a large strategic trade region. However, this potential has not translated into the sought-after levels of economic and human development. In 2017, OIC countries produced 15.3 percent of the world's total GDP (expressed in current USD and based on purchasing power parity). When measured in current prices, however, OIC countries accounted for only 8.2 percent of 2017 global production (SESRIC, 2018c).

In 2017, the top 10 OIC countries in terms of GDP volume produced 73.9 percent of total OIC output. In current prices, Indonesia has the highest share of GDP (15.5%), followed by Turkey (12.9%), Saudi Arabia (10.4%) and Iran (6.6%). Among OIC countries, Qatar registered the highest GDP per capita in 2017, followed by the United Arab Emirates and Brunei Darussalam. Qatar's GDP per capita was 5.5 times higher than the OIC countries' group average, which reflects a high level of income disparity. In 2014, 87.5 percent of the OIC adult population was estimated to hold only 20.1 percent of total OIC wealth, while less than 1 percent (0.95%) of the adult population controlled 46.7 percent of the total wealth (SESRIC, 2016).

As of December 2018, 21 OIC Member States, particularly those in sub-Saharan Africa, remained on the UN list of Least Developed Countries (UN, 2018). According to the World Bank 2019 classification, only seven OIC nations qualify as high-income countries (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Brunei Darussalam, with GNI per capita above USD 12,056), and 16 are among the group of upper middle-income countries (GNI per capita between USD 3,896 - 12,055) (World Bank 2019).

The OIC average unemployment rate remained stable in 2017, at 6.8 percent. However, unemployment is significantly higher among youth (15.3%) and women (9.3%). In some Member States, growing numbers of people are entering the labour market, thus paving the

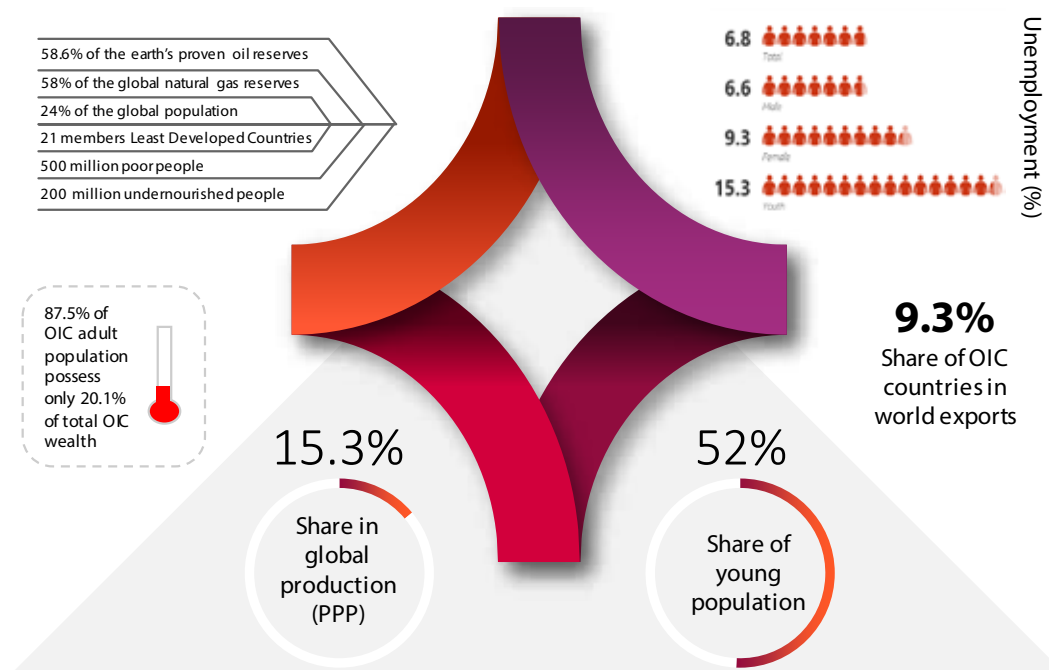
way for unemployment to remain persistently high. High youth unemployment rates cause major concern in some countries because of their major economic, social and political implications. In 2017, Libya posted the highest youth unemployment rate (46%), followed by Palestine (43%), Mozambique (42.7%), Jordan (39.8%) and Tunisia (36.3%) (SESRIC, 2018c).

In addition, OIC countries accounted for only around 9.3 percent of global exports of goods in 2017. The share of intra-OIC trade in total OIC Member States' trade - a major indicator of intra-OIC cooperation - has also been increasing over

the last decade, reaching almost 20 percent in 2017 (SESRIC, 2018c). In previous years, OIC countries were able to attract only approximately 5 percent to 9 percent of global foreign direct investments.

Life expectancy at birth has increased in OIC countries from 62.6 years in 2000 to 67.8 years in 2016. However, only six OIC countries (Lebanon, Albania, Qatar, Maldives, the United Arab Emirates and Brunei Darussalam) have achieved higher life expectancy rates than the world average of 72.2 years (SESRIC, 2018a).

Figure 3: Basic Socioeconomic Facts about OIC Countries



One of the most important challenges facing the Islamic world today is education and skills development, which are the fundamental building blocks for reducing poverty and inequality, improving people's prosperity and health, as well as ensuring sustainable development and sustaining peace within society. According to the Education Index, a component of the UNDP Human Development Index, in 2017, 26 OIC countries fell into the low development category for education,

16 into medium development, 12 into high development and only one - Kazakhstan - into the very high development category. Although this picture is not very satisfactory, it is encouraging to note that between 2010 and 2017, Education Index values have risen by varying degrees in the 55 OIC countries for which data is available. Thus, the number of OIC countries in the high development category jumped from two in 2010 to 12 in 2017 (SESRIC, 2018c).

According to the 2017 Multidimensional Poverty Index, more than 500 million people in 48 OIC Member States with available data are poor, corresponding to 35.3 percent of the total population. More than one-third of the population in 24 OIC countries is multi-dimensionally poor; 20 of those countries are in sub-Saharan Africa (SESRIC, 2018c). The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the UN estimates that between 2014-2016, there were 200 million undernourished people in OIC countries, corresponding to 27.5 percent of the world's undernourished people (SESRIC, 2018c). On the other hand, although the share of undernourished people in the OIC population fell from 17.6 percent in 1999-2001 to 13 percent in 2014-2016, the total number of undernourished people has been increasing since 2012-2014.

In terms of ecological issues, the ecological footprint of many OIC countries unfortunately exceeds their biocapacity. This means that they run an ecological deficit. In other words, most OIC nations consume more resources annually – such as water, land and forests – than nature can regenerate in that time. According to the Global Footprint Network's National Footprint Accounts, in 2014, only 11 OIC countries had a biocapacity reserve; thus, the others had a biocapacity deficit. The outstanding debt to the planet accruing from this biocapacity deficit takes the form of climate change, which is increasing the frequency of severe droughts and floods, affecting rainfall patterns and rapidly eroding the amount of fresh water available in the OIC area (SESRIC, 2018d).

Although the socioeconomic profiles of OIC countries are heterogeneous, they face many similar problems. Exchanging experiences and participating in SSC modalities can help to identify many solutions. Much work remains to address the important issues highlighted above.

More than ever, economic security represents the main challenge facing ordinary people. Poverty, unemployment and inequality threaten the everyday security of average citizens in the OIC area. OIC cooperation should thus focus primarily on providing a context for greater growth and employment in the OIC countries through results-oriented activities. In addition, they should become more competitive regionally and internationally. To that end, OIC Member Country governments should create a more supportive environment for economic development. OIC economies should rely on deeper regional cooperation and economic integration as the best option for positive development. The OIC General Secretariat and other OIC institutions have already developed and use a range of mechanisms and instruments, such as regular conferences of ministers responsible for different thematic areas (including the economy, health, education, tourism, labour, youth, women, environment, agriculture and water) and the adoption of strategic action programmes in these areas. SESRIC plays a significant role in supporting policy dialogue and partnership among the Member States by actively contributing to these mechanisms.

1.4 Instruments developed and used by SESRIC to promote South-South cooperation

Islamic values of tolerance, justice, human dignity, solidarity and peace constitute the essentials of SSC modalities within the OIC. As the OIC's main statistics, research and training organ, SESRIC has promoted technical cooperation among OIC countries through a variety of programmes and initiatives in line with its mandate in the areas of statistics, research, training and technical cooperation. While implementing its activities, the Centre has provided or carried out capacity-building, technical assistance,

mapping excellence, exchange of best practices and knowledge, skills development, networking and policy dialogue on a wide range of socioeconomic issues. In this regard, the Centre plays a constructive role in facilitating OIC-level SSC, such that intra-OIC knowledge sharing and the functional exchange of useful experiences among national institutions have become a critical modality of cooperation within the OIC.

SESRIC has contributed to knowledge and experience sharing among the relevant institutions in Member States through a dynamic partnership with various stakeholders, including government entities, international institutions, non-governmental organizations and the private sector. Considering the persistent challenges that hinder socioeconomic development in OIC countries, this multi-stakeholder approach has enabled SESRIC to diversify its interventions as it seeks to assist governments in their change management efforts for development. Meanwhile, it has improved the Centre's competence in networking with different actors, while identifying correct solutions for the benefit of Member States.

In this connection, in recent years, SESRIC has embarked upon several capacity development projects and initiatives that have enhanced knowledge transfer and adoption in different contexts, based on the governing principles of mutuality, unity and solidarity. In implementing projects, SESRIC adopts a cooperation mechanism through which Member States are actively involved to share knowledge, technology, expertise and best practices using a tripartite approach: provider country, recipient country, and SESRIC as facilitator.

Networking is one of SESRIC's main tools for providing technical assistance. It has been key to establishing closer cooperation for sharing knowledge, experience and new technologies, conducting joint research and training, and exchanging good practices in various fields of interest among similar local, national and regional institutions, researchers and practitioners. Systematic relationships among partners have generated awareness of OIC development issues, enhanced knowledge in the fields concerned, and helped to develop a better understanding of the current situation at the country and regional levels, with those findings reflected in reports and knowledge products.







Chapter II

**SESRIC in Action:
Using Potentials, Broadening Impacts**

SESRIC in Action: Using Potentials, Broadening Impacts

This section highlights the unique initiatives and activities of SESRIC, particularly those with a profound impact on national, regional and international development goals. They focus on the Centre’s three main mandates: statistics; economic and social research; and training and technical cooperation. This section also provides case studies that present the Centre’s best practices in terms of SSC.

2.1 Developing the knowledge base and enhancing policy dialogue

The SDGs, endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly in September 2015, and the OIC-2025 Programme of Action, endorsed by the OIC Member States in 2016, both call for a focus on knowledge building and policy dialogue to plan, implement and monitor achievement of the goals and targets identified

in both documents. Therefore, at a time when the definitions of “developed” and “developing” have blurred in light of these global and regional development agendas, OIC countries must increase their interactions and cooperation linkages through accumulated knowledge and continuous dialogue for policy improvement.

According to a working paper on knowledge sharing prepared for the G-20 Development Working Group,² knowledge sharing for development may be grouped into six different approaches: unilateral; bilateral; multilateral; North-South; South-South; and TrC. Since its founding, SESRIC has continued to use multilateral, South-South and TrC approaches to facilitate the flow of knowledge among OIC countries and relevant stakeholders to develop knowledge bases for better policy formulation.

Figure 4: Selected SESRIC Publications



² See http://www.oecd.org/knowledge-sharing-alliance/OECD-Post-2015_Policy-Dialogue-Knowledge-Sharing-and-Engaging-in-mutual-learning.pdf.

In its capacity as the OIC’s main socioeconomic research organ, the Centre regularly studies and evaluates economic and social developments in OIC Member States with a view to generating proposals that can enhance cooperation among them. This is done primarily by preparing regular technical background reports and research studies on a wide range of socioeconomic issues that are included on the agendas of various related OIC conferences and meetings, particularly the OIC sectoral ministerial conferences and the annual sessions of the relevant standing committees (Figure 4).

SESRIC research activities are currently conducted under four main thematic areas; each area covers a diverse set of topics (Figure 5). The areas are as follows:

- i. Economic Development Studies
- ii. Human and Social Development Studies
- iii. Infrastructure Development Studies
- iv. Resilience Building Studies

Figure 5: Research Areas and Topics

Economic Development Studies 	Agriculture and Rural Development
	Trade, Finance and Investment
	Productivity, Growth and Competitiveness
	Labour market and Employment
	Poverty and Inequality
	Tourism
	Regional Cooperation and Integration
Human & Social Development Studies 	Health, Nutrition and Disease Control
	Education and Skills Development
	Social Protection and Progress
	Population and Migration
	Youth
	Women and Family
Infrastructure Development Studies 	Elderly, Children and People with Special Needs
	Transportation and Connectivity
	Energy
	Water Resource Management
	Urban Development
	Science, Technology and Innovation
Resilience Building Studies 	Environment and Environmental Sustainability
	Natural Disasters and Disaster Risk Management
	Conflicts, Peace and Security
	Radicalism and Violent Extremism
	Palestine and Al Quds Al Sharif
	Displacement and Forced Migration
	Diaspora and Minorities

Through its research activities, the Centre contributes significantly to the OIC policy dialogue via monitoring, analysis and reporting of current situations at the OIC level and suggesting appropriate policy actions to meet the challenges and strengthen intra-Islamic cooperation in the areas concerned.

Figure 6: Tools for Knowledge Production and Enhancing Policy Dialogue



Recently, the Centre has also been taking the lead in charting sectoral strategic plans to provide frameworks for joint action and key recommendations to support OIC Member States in strengthening cooperation and streamlining their national strategies and policies to implement the OIC-2025 and Sustainable Development Agenda 2030.

To that end, SESRIC guided the preparation and is now facilitating implementation of OIC programmes of action in the areas of health (adopted in 2013); women (2016); labour (2017); Islamic tourism (2018); and youth (2018). In addition, the Centre is working on at least five strategic plans focused mainly on social issues, including child welfare; family institutions

empowerment; gender policy; well-being of the elderly; and well-being of people with special needs. To provide greater insight on the importance of these strategic documents for SSC, two are discussed in more detail below.

The OIC Strategic Health Programme of Action 2014-2023 (OIC-SHPA) is the OIC's primary guiding document to facilitate and promote SSC among its 57 Member States in the area of health. In line with the resolutions of the 2011 Third Islamic Conference of Health Ministers (ICHM), the SHPA was prepared through a consultative process involving all relevant stakeholders. The SESRIC research team led the preparation of this strategy in collaboration with the OIC General Secretariat, the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Global Fund and six lead country coordinators from Kazakhstan, Turkey, Indonesia, Malaysia, Sudan and Oman. Health experts from more than 30 Member States and 10 international organizations participated in the Expert Advisory Group Meeting to review and finalize the SHPA.

The SHPA is a cooperation framework of the OIC Member States, relevant OIC institutions and international organizations to strengthen health care delivery systems and improve health across the Islamic world. It identifies six thematic areas of cooperation: Health System Strengthening; Disease Prevention and Control; Maternal,

Newborn and Child Health and Nutrition; Medicines, Vaccines and Medical Technologies; Emergency Health Response and Interventions; and Information, Research, Education and Advocacy. The SHPA focuses on capacity-building as the main tool to achieve its targets by facilitating and promoting South-South transfer of knowledge and expertise in the health sector. Since its adoption by the Fourth ICHM in October 2013, the SHPA has been instrumental in garnering support and streamlining intra-OIC regional efforts to improve universal health care coverage across the Islamic world. To date, implementation of the SHPA has led to the development and launch of several SSC initiatives, such as the Ibn Sina Health Alliance of NGOs, OIC Maternal and Child Survival Project, OIC Network on Population and Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn and Child Health and the integration of the Tobacco Questions for Surveys (TQS) into national surveys in OIC countries. Undoubtedly, these programmes and initiatives are making a substantial contribution to achieving health-related SDG targets in some of the world's poorest countries across the developing world.

The OIC Labour Market Strategy provides another example. It was prepared by SESRIC at the request of the Third Islamic Conference of Labour Ministers (ICLM) in 2015 and adopted by the Forth ICLM in 2018. It aims to stimulate cooperation among Member States in addressing common labour markets problems and challenges. The strategy is also well aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 8 (SDG8), which seeks to promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all. Increasing labour productivity, reducing the unemployment rate, especially for young people, and promoting policies that encourage entrepreneurship and job creation are essential components of sustained and inclusive economic growth. The OIC Labour Market



Strategy identified five thematic cooperation areas for strategic action: 1) encourage labour market participation; 2) enhance employability; 3) protect worker safety and well-being; 4) promote labour productivity; and, 5) reduce unemployment. Twenty-one strategic goals and 162 actions are identified under these thematic areas. The implementation mechanism strongly supports SSC, as the spirit of this document is to promote partnership and knowledge sharing among the countries in specific policy areas.

To build the knowledge base, the Centre collaborates with regional and international organizations to prepare joint studies on subjects of mutual interest to the collaborating institutions. *The Best Practices Guidelines and Toolkit on Engaging the Private Sector in Skills Development* is an example of such publications, prepared jointly with UNDP. SESRIC also supports development of the knowledge base in other regional organizations, including the D-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation and the Turkic Council, where the Centre prepares reports of specific interest to those institutions in promoting intra-regional cooperation and partnership among them.



The Centre also organizes events to promote policy dialogue and knowledge sharing among development partners. In this connection, SESRIC and the IsDB jointly organized an International Symposium on Financing for Development, on 22-23 November 2018 in Istanbul, Turkey.

The Symposium presented opportunities for innovative financing mechanisms, as well as effective modalities for using existing resources to finance development in developing countries, with a particular focus on OIC Member States. A special session was held on South-South Cooperation in Financing for Development, where the high-level representatives of regional organizations discussed prospects for intra-regional cooperation. The Centre also organizes research seminars to share the findings of the latest SESRIC studies with external stakeholders and to facilitate discussion and further knowledge sharing.

To support knowledge accumulation in applied research, the Centre publishes an academic journal, the *Journal of Economic Cooperation and Development*, since 1994. It includes original papers addressing important economic and social issues of immediate concern to developing countries. It gives particular attention to papers that deal with the potentials for and possibilities of promoting and expanding economic and technical cooperation among developing countries.



Another critical dimension of developing the knowledge base is the availability of accurate, timely, reliable and consistent statistical data. Based on the well-known DIKW (data-information-knowledge-wisdom) hierarchy, the correct and contextualised application of knowledge (wisdom) requires gathering parts as data, connecting them as information and forming a whole as knowledge.



As the main socioeconomic information bank on and for OIC countries, SESRIC focuses particularly on improving data and information availability and accessibility on and for the Member States. The OIC Statistics (OICStat) Database, maintained and hosted by the Centre, serves as the primary online statistical source for users around the world who are interested in data and information about OIC countries. As one of the most significant components of the knowledge base at SESRIC, the OICStat is updated regularly and enriched with information collected from or provided by international and national statistical sources. Currently, the OICStat hosts more than 770 socioeconomic indicators under 24 categories for the 57 OIC Member States, dating back to 1985.

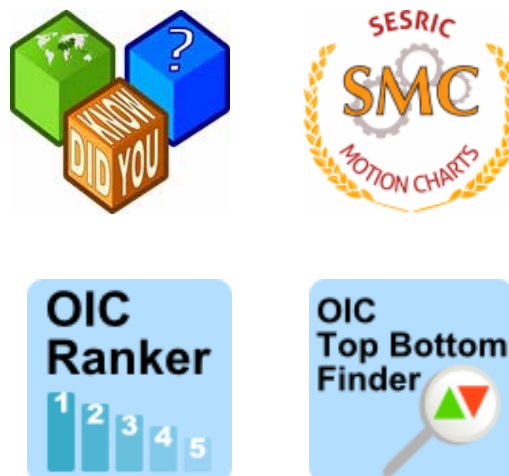


As another component of SESRIC's knowledge base, the OIC Countries-in-Figures (OIC-CIF) profiles the most recent information on OIC countries. The profile information is presented under: (i) Background; (ii) Geography and Climate; (iii) Society and Demographics; (iv) Government and Politics; (v) Economy and Sectors; (vi) Selected Country in Figures; (vii) International Partnerships; (viii) Logistics; and (ix) Special Links. Information for each country can also be exported to the desired report format for easy access by users.

Other online knowledge base components, which work concurrently with the OICStat, include the OIC Top/Bottom Finder (OIC-TBF) and OIC Ranker. While OIC-TBF extracts the full list of OICStat indicators in which an OIC Member Country is positioned at the very top or bottom,

the OIC Ranker has been developed to rank OIC Member States by a selected indicator hosted under the OICStat.

Figure 7: Selected Statistical Tools of SESRIC



In addition, striking facts about OIC countries have been reflected through the Did You Know (DYK)? Module since 2010. The DYK seeks to highlight the current situation of OIC countries on a specific socioeconomic variable in a one-page snapshot format. Information is presented graphically at the individual country level, together with the average values for the OIC and other country groups.

SESRIC's major statistical publications are considered the knowledge base outputs. They include the Statistical Yearbook of OIC Member Countries, SWOT Outlook on OIC Member Countries, OIC Infographics Series and the OIC Statistical Outlook and provide varying levels of detail based on the intended target audience. The Statistical Yearbook presents time series data in tabular format for some of the important indicators currently hosted under the relevant categories of the OICStat. The SWOT Outlook on OIC Member States follows the analytical approach of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats (SWOT) method to present profiles of the group of OIC Member

States, comparing it to the world and groups of non-OIC developing and developed countries to show where they stand and may move in various areas of concern. The OIC Infographics Series offers data users the ability to instantly grasp a selected statistical theme on the OIC countries group.

As of January 2019, SESRIC has been issuing the OIC Statistical Outlook series as a periodical thematic statistical publication. Each OIC Statistical Outlook covers one of the selected categories hosted at the OIC Statistics Database (OICStat). It provides data both for all OIC Member States with OIC and global aggregate values, where applicable, and brief analysis with figures that review the performance and progress of the OIC Member States in the thematic category covered.

To enhance policy dialogue among the chief statisticians of OIC countries, SESRIC serves as the Secretariat of the OIC Statistical Commission (OIC-StatCom), which is the apex body for official statistics at the OIC level. In its capacity as the Secretariat of the OIC-StatCom, SESRIC organizes the regular sessions of OIC-StatCom in collaboration with the IsDB. The Commission is a highly instrumental platform aimed at supporting policy formulation for national statistical systems (NSS) and enhancing cooperation among the national statistical offices (NSOs) of the Member States to develop better national strategies and policies.

On the 40th anniversary of its founding, SESRIC stands ready and committed to continue to develop and, even, expand the spectrum of knowledge base services to better support the policy dialogue processes in and among OIC countries.

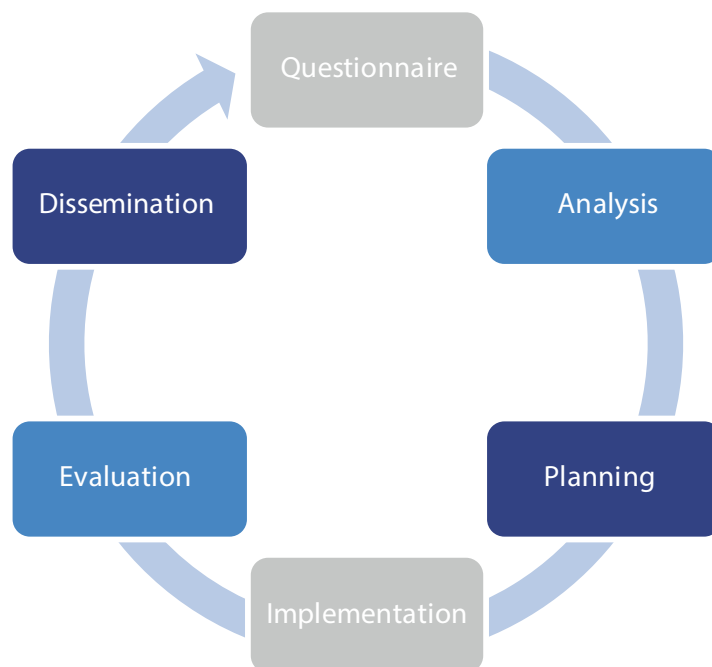
2.2 Facilitating the transfer of knowledge and best practices

Since its founding in 1978, the Centre, whose membership is drawn entirely from the developing and least developed countries, has been a focal point for South-South technical cooperation and a facilitator for the exchange of knowledge, experiences and best practices among OIC Member States. Over its 40 years, SESRIC has launched many programmes and activities to address the development challenges of OIC Member States by using South-South and TrC approaches and tools.

The Centre carries out its role of facilitating and promoting South-South cooperation among OIC countries via different modalities for building technical capacity, such as training, study visits, technical assistance, exchange of best practices, skill development, networking and policy dialogue on a wide-range of socioeconomic issues. Within this framework, the Centre has played a constructive role in strengthening intra-OIC knowledge sharing by facilitating the functional exchange of useful experiences and best practices among the national institutions of the Member States. SESRIC thus continues to implement its flagship programme, the OIC Capacity Building Programme (OIC-CAB), which currently includes 28 sector-specific capacity-building programmes covering a wide range of areas, such as finance, trade, agriculture, environment, health, poverty alleviation, natural disaster management, and transport and communication.

SESRIC follows the capacity-building cycle throughout the implementation phase of capacity-building activities, from designing the questionnaire developed to identify Member States' needs and capacities to conducting the evaluation. It works closely with national

Figure 8: Selected Statistical Tools of SESRIC



institutions at the beneficiary and provider levels, while facilitating the exchange process. The questionnaires prepared on each capacity-building programme are disseminated through diplomatic channels and sent to the OIC Member States’ embassies every two years. The questionnaires are also deployed through the sectoral focal points of the Member States’ national authorities and SESRIC’s roster of experts. This process seeks to match solutions providers with solutions seekers. Figure 8 illustrates the capacity-building cycle that SESRIC follows and Figure 9 illustrates the matchmaking between countries.

Each year, SESRIC organizes approximately 100 capacity-building activities using SSC modalities (Figure 10). Through these programmes, the Centre has facilitated knowledge sharing and capacity-building for more than 15,600 people over the last decade. This represents a great achievement. It is also investing in its capacities to provide online training courses and reach more people who can share and benefit from each other’s knowledge and experiences.

In the area of skill development, the Vocational Education and Training Programme for the Member States of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC-VET) provides a platform for the technical and vocational education and training (TVET) authorities of the OIC countries to identify and follow a strategic roadmap for TVET policies developed in their countries. Moreover, the programme also facilitates developing and implementing VET projects and activities for responsive skill development initiatives.

The Centre’s important strengths in facilitating SSC projects and activities within the OIC region include building partnerships and mobilizing resources Centre. For example, SESRIC and the IsDB are two main technical organizations of OIC and long-standing partners in supporting OIC countries’ development efforts. After 35 years of cooperation, they have adopted a more strategic and results-oriented approach, particularly over the last five years, via the Reverse Linkage (RL) cooperation modality. It seeks to enhance national capacities through matchmaking between provider countries and beneficiary

Figure 9: Matching Countries to Facilitate South-South Cooperation

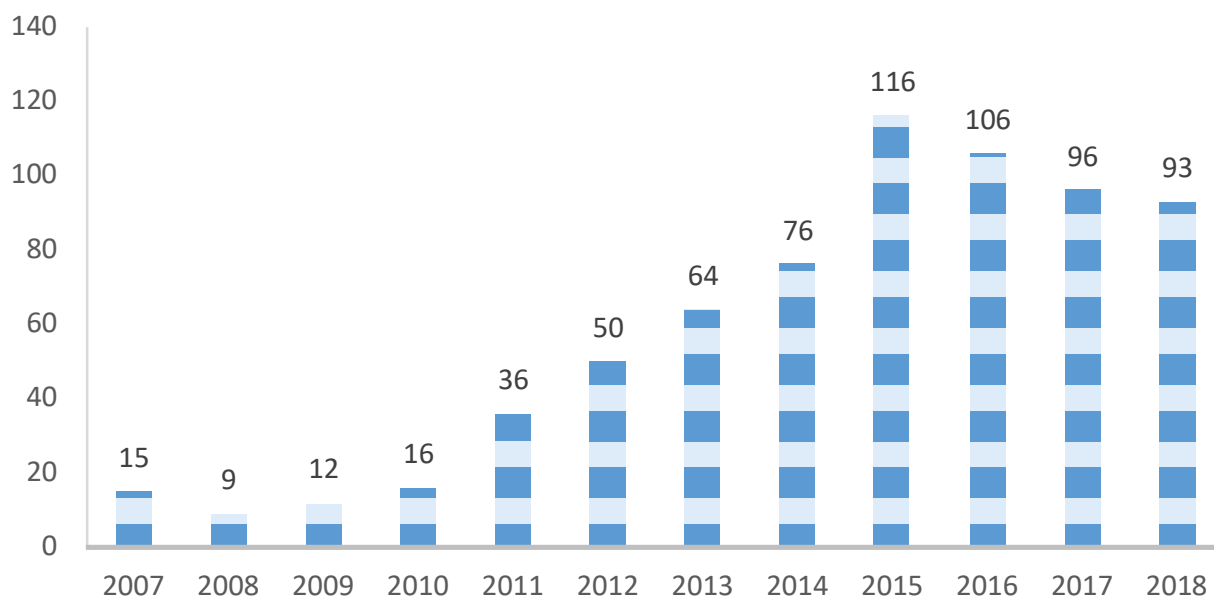


countries. At year-end 2018. SESRIC's commitment to cooperate in Reverse Linkage projects, together with other stakeholders, involved a total of six projects in the Gambia, Uganda, Pakistan, Sudan, Bangladesh and Suriname.

SESRIC also believes that it is very important to identify and document Member States' best practices, successful models and approaches that other institutions in developing countries may be able to reproduce. With the aim of using the potential in the OIC region, the Centre,

Figure 10: OIC Capacity-Building Programmes (OIC-CAB)

Distribution of Activities Implemented (by year)



in collaboration with IsDB and local partners, initiated a landmark study, Mapping OIC's South-South Potential, with a pilot study of Turkey. Mapping Turkey's Resource Centres selected five key thematic areas: (i) health and nutrition; (ii) agriculture, livestock and food security; (iii) transport and communications; (iv) disaster and emergency management; and, (v) technical and vocational education and training. It identified the excellence centres in these areas as potential partners for SSC in the international arena. The study later scaled up to other OIC countries, including Pakistan and Indonesia. SESRIC participated in those studies and helped to produce the reports.



2.3 SESRIC featured initiatives

SESRIC leverages multidimensional expertise in research, statistics and training to support the development efforts of OIC Member States by initiating innovative solutions, approaches and South-South implementation modalities. The following programmes and projects highlight the Centre's current efforts to achieve the goals set for the benefit of OIC Member States.

Case Study 1: Strengthening coordination and capacity-building on preparedness and response to health emergencies in OIC Member States

PROJECT IN BRIEF

Region(s): Sub-Saharan Africa

Project Status: 2016 – ongoing

OIC 2025 Programme of Action: 2.12. Health

Sustainable Development Goals: Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

Partners: SESRIC, Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA), Federal Ministry of Health of Sudan, Ministry of Health of Turkey

Contact: Mrs. Fatima Zahra Kamal (fzkamal@sesric.org), Technical Cooperation Specialist, SESRIC

OIC Member States face a variety of health threats, which may be further exacerbated by natural disasters and armed conflicts in certain settings. Some Member States lack the capacities and health systems to mitigate, manage and respond to these risks. Due to the increasing frequency and impacts of health emergencies, the need for trained health staff, resilient health systems and collaboration among the OIC countries is even

more crucial today as a solution to protect and promote the health status of people in these countries.

The OIC Strategic Health Programme of Action 2014-2023 (OIC SHPA), prepared under SESRIC's leadership, is the main health framework document within the OIC. The OIC SHPA has six thematic areas; one relates specifically to the thematic area of Emergency Health Response and Interventions. Each thematic area has a working group as its implementation modality, composed of a lead country coordinator, other interested Member States and relevant OIC institutions. All working group members provide technical support to address specific barriers, seeking synergies wherever possible to contribute to the relevant activities in the respective area.

Within this context, SESRIC launched the project, Strengthening Coordination and Capacity Building on Preparedness and Response for Health Emergencies in OIC Member States, in February 2017 to promote South-South and TrC in health emergencies among OIC Member States. In line with OIC SHPA Thematic Area 1 on Health System Strengthening and Thematic Area 5 on Emergency Health Response and Interventions, the project's objective was to build the health workforce's capacities in health emergencies. In addition, it sought to develop networks and communication channels among Member States' health staff and workers for future collaboration in the area of health emergencies.

The project was designed in two phases. The first focused on building emergency healthcare capacity in Sudan, the lead country coordinator of Thematic Area 5. In the second phase, the project will be expanded to other interested OIC countries, where the trained Sudanese experts will also participate in knowledge sharing and capacity-building.

The first phase of the project was initiated in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Health of Sudan (FMoH), the Ministry of Health of Turkey, SESRIC and the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA). The project sought, in particular, to use and transfer Turkey's extensive knowledge and capacity in both health system strengthening and emergency health response and interventions to Sudan and develop the Sudanese Ministry's institutional and human capacity in emergency preparedness and response.

After a careful process to select candidates for the training of trainers in Sudan, three training sessions on Emergency and Disaster Medical Services were held in Khartoum between November 2017-March 2018, for 243 experts from FMoH. Two training for trainers courses on Disaster and Prehospital Medicine were then held for two groups of 30 and 29 selected



experts on 2-13 May 2018 and 1-11 October 2018 at the International Urla Emergency Disaster Training and Simulation Centre in Izmir, Turkey. Subsequently, 59 Sudanese trainers conducted three pilot training courses on Disaster and

Prehospital Medicine in 2018 in Khartoum for medical staff from the FMOH, under the supervision of four Turkish specialists. The Sudanese instructors will later provide training programs on their own for Sudanese medical staff.

Given the importance of using the skills acquired during the training courses in the project, the partners also explored the possibility of enhancing the infrastructure of a pilot district, assigning priority to the staff working in this district when planning the trainings, as well as establishing an ambulance radio system.

The project's first phase was completed successfully. It was encouraging to see that the Sudanese health staff developed the ability to provide trainings on a subject in which they had lacked significant capacity. The SSC mechanism was key to the project's success. The participants also quickly recognized the effectiveness of such trainings in developing their skills. Dr. Salma Ahmed Mohammed Shammet, resuscitation doctor and programme participant, said, "We learned the importance of organization, planning and, most importantly, team work. Everyone was supporting each other."

After successful implementation of the first phase of the project in Sudan, the next phase will target other interested OIC countries based on the results of the survey that SESRIC conducted. So far, 243 trainees benefited from the Disaster and Prehospital Medicine training and 59 Sudanese trainers were trained within the framework of this project. Approximately 360 experts from twelve selected OIC countries are scheduled to receive training in 2019 with the support of the Turkish supervisors and the trained Sudanese experts. Finally, 60 selected trainers will benefit from a training of trainers and a joint exercise will be held at the Urla Training Centre in September 2019.

Case Study 2: OIC Statistical Capacity Building (StatCaB) Programme for national statistical offices

PROJECT IN BRIEF

Region(s): All OIC

Project Status: 2007 – ongoing

OIC 2025 Programme of Action: All Goals

Sustainable Development Goals: Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

Partners: SESRIC and the Constituents of the National Statistical Systems of OIC Member Countries.

Contact: Mrs. Nenden Octavarulia Shanty (nshanty@sesric.org, statcab@sesric.org), Researcher, Statistics and Information Department, SESRIC

Access to accurate, timely, reliable and consistent statistical data is of utmost importance for policymaking and strategy development in any country. However, OIC countries have varying levels of capacities to produce statistical data that meet the relevant internationally accepted standards. In that context, SESRIC plays an important role in strengthening and improving National Statistical Systems (NSSs) in OIC Member States with a view to producing better national statistics and, thus, helping policymakers to introduce better national policies and strategies. The Centre contributes significantly to enhancing the technical capacities of the constituents of the NSSs of OIC Member Countries.

To meet this objective, the Centre carries out a flagship statistical skills development initiative, the OIC Statistical Capacity Building Programme

(StatCaB). It tries to identify the statistical needs and capacities of constituents of the NSSs of OIC countries and facilitates the exchange of experts among OIC countries by conducting activities to strengthen their NSSs.

The OIC StatCaB Programme was initiated in early 2007. In a short period of time, it has become SESRIC's leading capacity development programme, which has encouraged the Centre to initiate such programmes in other areas. To trigger the statistical cooperation linkages and thus contribute to the efforts of OIC countries to improve their statistical systems, the Centre collects information from the constituents of the NSSs of OIC countries through biennial questionnaires. The findings from these questionnaires enable the Centre to assess the needs and capacities of the constituents of the NSSs of OIC countries. Based on those findings, OIC countries are matched for short-term statistics courses, study visits and technical missions.

These statistical activities represent the purest form of the South-South cooperation (SSC) spirit. To increase the visibility of OIC StatCaB and OIC countries' contributions to it, the Centre regularly reports on the activities implemented at both the OIC and international levels.

Without national ownership and investment in the NSSs, it will be difficult to develop systems to monitor and evaluate progress and, thus, design sound, evidence-based policies. Moreover, statistical coordination among the broad range of stakeholders at the national and international levels plays a pivotal role in operationalizing the policies and mobilizing resources. In 2010, the Istanbul Declaration of the Meeting of NSOs proposed creating the OIC Statistical Commission (OIC-StatCom) to facilitate cooperation and experience sharing among the OIC countries' NSOs and serve as a collaborative platform to discuss joint activities. In this regard, ownership by and involvement of national entities in the OIC-StatCom's activities further encouraged SESRIC to increase its statistical activities to address topics of common interest to OIC countries.



Statistics Course on 'Human Settlements and Housing Statistics' on 27-29 November 2018 in Benin

The statistical activities that SESRIC facilitates for OIC countries unlock opportunities to transfer knowledge and contribute to standardizing national statistics production processes, in line with international standards and norms. The impacts of the OIC StatCaB Programme have led OIC countries to request more activities. This highlights the solidarity among the members and embodies the SSC principles.

Since the first StatCaB activity in 2007, the Centre has organized more than 378 activities with the participation of experts and high-level officials from the NSOs and other constituents of the OIC Member States' NSSs. In total, approximately more than 8,000 experts and statisticians from almost all OIC countries' NSOs, line ministries and governmental bodies benefited from these activities, provided by 26 OIC countries and relevant international organizations.

SESRIC has received many thanks and letters of gratitude from NSO directors expressing their desire that statistical cooperation among OIC countries continue and increase through the OIC StatCaB Programme. In addition, most of the evaluation forms completed by participants in the OIC StatCaB Programme report that the knowledge and experience shared by the provider country during these activities are critical to developing the statisticians' skills and to enhancing the NSOs institutional capacities.

Over the next five-year period, the OIC StatCaB Programme seeks to conduct approximately 100 activities, working through the SSC modality, increase the number of provider Member States to 30, and focus on activities related to measuring the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.



"The programme is excellent. It focuses on sharing the idea of implementing best practices to produce accurate, relevant statistics that meet stakeholder requirements."

**- Ms. Puan Khairiyah Binti Mokhtar,
Department of Statistics (DoS) of Malaysia in
Pahang.**



Tourism Statistics Course, held on 4-6 December 2018 in Brunei Darussalam

Case Study 3: BINA Programme to rebuild Libya's human and institutional capacities

PROJECT IN BRIEF

Region(s): North Africa

Project Status: 2016 – ongoing

OIC 2025 Programme of Action: 2.2 Counter-terrorism, Extremism, Violent Extremism, Radicalization, Sectarianism and Islamophobia

Sustainable Development Goals: Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

Partners: SESRIC, Libya Programme for Reintegration and Development (LPRD), Islamic Development Bank (IsDB)

Contact: Mr. Murad Fayad (mfayad@sesric.org), BINA Programme Project Coordinator, SESRIC

The Libyan economy, which depends heavily on oil and gas exports, has been struggling since 2014 due to security challenges, political instability, oil production disruptions and declining global oil prices. As of 2019, the country remains divided between rival administrations, leaving national and local institutions facing challenges in providing protection and basic services to its people. The country's unresolved conflict is expected to have long-lasting consequences, particularly on human and institutional capacities.

In an effort to support institutional capacity-building, SESRIC developed its flagship initiative, BINA, together with its partners, the Libya Programme for Reintegration and Development (LPRD) and the IsDB. The initiative emphasizes South-South and TrC modalities to achieve the expected outcomes. It aims to help fragile states such as Libya overcome their challenges by rebuilding human and institutional capacity based on professionalism, efficiency, transparency and good governance. The programme's main objective is to accelerate state rebuilding by improving the performance and efficiency of national institutions and civil society organizations, as well as to foster private sector development in the post-conflict era.



The programme is expected to produce a conceptual framework for public administration and security sector reform, countering violent extremism for Libya's transition process by enhancing Libyan institutions' capacities in public governance and introducing economic diversification, while empowering the private sector and engaging it in development.

As part of the conceptual frameworks that articulate Libya's transition to recovery and development, refined in collaboration with prominent Libyan and Turkish think tanks, a research project was initiated by May 2018 in the areas of security sector reform (SSR) and countering violent extremism (CVE). Libyan and Turkish researchers were contracted to conduct the SSR and CVE research, including a July 2018 workshop in Ankara to produce an inception report for CVE and SRR research and agree on an appropriate communication mechanism. This clearly demonstrates that the project approach is based on mutual learning and bilateral cooperation between two strategic OIC Member States under SSC.

The capacity-building project enhanced the public management and governance capacities of Libyan public and civil society institutions through the transfer of knowledge, assets and skills. This included comprehensive local training in Libya and study visits to Turkish institutions.

Sixty officials from the Libyan Foreign Ministry received training on institutional reform from June 2017–March 2018 in Tripoli, Libya. They also received training in geopolitics and strategic history in Libya under the Bina Initiative from October 2017–April 2018.

LPRD staff participated in a study visit to institutions in Turkey, including TEPAV, TUBITAK, TIKa, SESRIC, IsDB, TODAIE, SETA and IHH. This was conducted after 55 LPRD officials received management training in Tripoli.

In parallel, 21 officials from the Libyan Audit Bureau received training on change management and institution- building between July 2017-August 2017. Senior-level representatives of the Libyan Audit Bureau, officials from the Turkish Audit Bureau and other financial and public institutions, along with Libyan diplomats and technical experts, also attended a high-level workshop hosted at SESRIC headquarters in December 2017. The participants contributed critical inputs to the Bureau's strategic institutional planning and enriched its role in public administration reform in Libya.

Mr. Adel Gasar, HR Director in the Libyan Audit Bureau, said, "The bridging between counterpart institutions and sharing of experiences and the most recent approaches has been of the upmost benefit in rebuilding institutions and reform."

Figure 11: Model of BINA Business Incubator

Since it was launched, the BINA Programme has focused on the private sector's ability to sustain job creation and introduce economic diversification, supported by innovation management, entrepreneurship support and SME development. In July 2018, SESRIC and a leading management consulting company signed a contract for consulting support on building a vibrant SME sector in Libya.

A project team was formed, training materials and curricula for the training of trainers was prepared, and pre-incubation and inception trainings were completed in cooperation with the relevant stakeholders. Fifteen people will receive training on delivering pre-incubation training. When it is completed, 95 participants will have received pre-incubation training in Libya. Meanwhile, a Bina incubator will be established in Istanbul. It will host 30 participants, who will receive three-month incubation training and have an opportunity to participate in matchmaking and partnership opportunities in cooperation with Turkish counterparties.

An SME stakeholder analysis was conducted to map the project's major stakeholders and identify the most appropriate strategy to address their interests and obtain their commitment to the BINA Programme. This analysis helped the BINA team to better identify, engage, manage and communicate with stakeholders in Libya's ever-changing sociopolitical landscape.

To facilitate SSC among OIC Member States, the BINA programme has begun to share its experiences in the Libya context with other fragile and conflict-affected OIC Member States. For example, the team shared their experiences with the BINA business incubator model with their Afghanistan counterparts in a workshop organized by the OECD.

As in most post-conflict and fragile states, coordination among stakeholders in Libya remains an issue due to fragmented or collapsed government and civil society institutions. International projects, such as BINA, in conflict-affected situations must adapt their operating



Reintegration and Development in Libya: The Role of Think-Tanks workshop held in Ankara, Turkey, February 2016 to explore the potential contribution of think tanks to the BINA programme

model. Indeed, events on the ground inevitably impede the regular development of planned activities. Conflict and fragility also have devastating effects on a country's institutions and thus affect the context of any project.

The area of occupational safety and health (OSH) has gained great importance and momentum with the proliferation of industries, advancing technology and increasing levels of population and participation in labour markets. According to the International Labour Organization, around 2 million fatalities are estimated to occur around the world annually as a result of work accidents and occupational diseases. Similarly, those accidents and diseases are one of the most problematic areas in OIC countries.

Case Study 4: Capacity development project: Improving occupational safety and health (OSH) in Mauritania

PROJECT IN BRIEF

Region(s): Western Sahara

Project Status: 2016 – ongoing

OIC 2025 Programme of Action: 2.9 Employment, Infrastructure and Industrialization

Sustainable Development Goals: Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

Partners: SESRIC, Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA), National Occupational Health Office (ONMT) of Mauritania, Directorate General of Occupational Health and Safety (DGOHS) of the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services of Republic of Turkey

Contact: Mr. Onur Çağlar (ocaglar@sesric.org), Technical Cooperation Specialist, SESRIC

As in many countries within the OIC region, the Islamic Republic of Mauritania struggles with work accidents and occupational diseases and seeks to address the socioeconomic consequences of accidents at work and work-related fatalities. In this regard, Mauritania's National Occupational Health Office (Office National de la Médecine du Travail - ONMT) asked SESRIC for technical support through its OIC Occupational Safety and Health Network (OIC-OSHNET) to enhance its OSH legislation, obtain technical training for its employees, including on-the-job trainings and simulations, and update its laboratories in line with international standards.

SESRIC recognized the urgent need to strengthen the capacity of the ONMT and gave the request priority under its OIC-OSHNET and Occupational Safety and Health Capacity Building (OSHCaB) Programme. SESRIC then approached the relevant authorities in Turkey and coordinated

a peer-to-peer consultation process to conduct a detailed diagnosis of the ONMT's current capacities. These efforts led to the design of a capacity development project with a joint action plan, which will be converted later into a project document, in cooperation with the Directorate General of Occupational Health and Safety (DGOHS) of the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Security of the Republic of Turkey, to strengthen ONMT's human resource and institutional capacities.

Consequently, a Declaration of Intent (DoI) was signed among SESRIC, the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA), ONMT and the DGOHS on 8 December 2017 to operationalize the capacity development project, Improving Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) in Mauritania.

The project seeks to tackle the challenges of occupational accidents and diseases through joint efforts and by combining the complementary advantages of the partnering institutions to improve occupational safety and

health conditions in Mauritania. To realize this objective, the project was structured around the following three main components:

- Improving OSH legislation structure, with a focus on creating healthier, more efficient working environments in Mauritania,
- Improving ONMT's occupational hygiene laboratories, and
- Developing ONMT's human resource capacity through technical and on-the-job trainings.

When the project is complete, the capacity and the quality of the services that ONMT delivers to workplaces are expected to increase and the ONMT staff's knowledge and skill set will be developed. ONMT also adapted its studies in accordance with international standards and methods. Thus, building the agency's capacity led to the creation of the quality management system for occupational hygiene laboratories and accreditation.



"I am grateful to see the high level of commitment of all partners to the project and I am also confident that these efforts will eventually provide significant contribution to our endeavours to tackle the challenges of occupational accidents and diseases in Mauritania."

- Dr. Moustapha El Ghazwani, Director General of the ONMT during the joint monitoring group meeting held in Nouakchott, Mauritania.

The project's first component, which seeks to enhance the OSH legislation structure and ensure the development of legislation, was completed successfully in 2017. This followed three technical study visits and comprehensive studies, conducted and prepared jointly by experts from the OSH authorities of Mauritania and Turkey. As an outcome, the relevant stakeholders, including workers, labour unions and government actors in Mauritania, participated actively in developing a guide summarizing the draft legislative proposals.

When the legislative phase of the project was finalized, the second component – upgrading Mauritania's laboratories - was launched at the end of 2017. A joint monitoring group meeting was held at ONMT headquarters in Nouakchott on 18-20 June 2018. The project partners reviewed and monitored the progress of the overall project and examined the technical specifications of the devices and equipment to be provided to ONMT under the project.

In addition, a visit was held to the new ONMT building, where the new OSH devices and

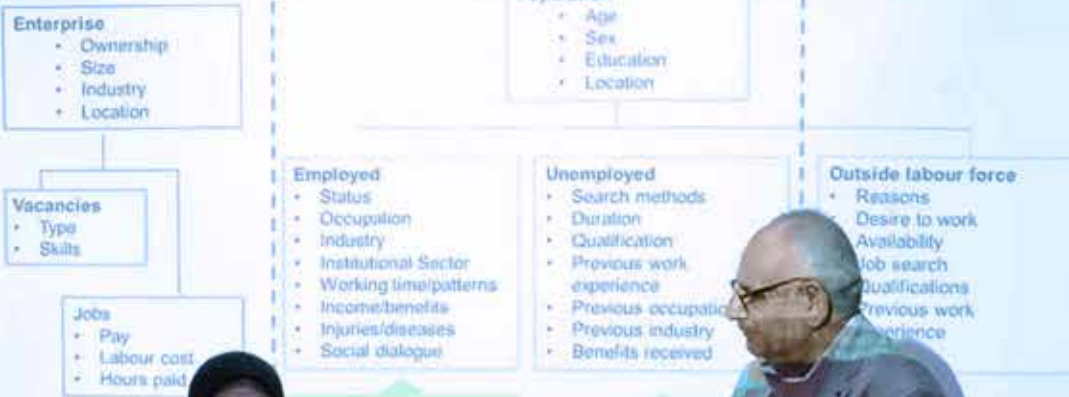
laboratory will be established and operated, to observe the status of the construction. Construction was completed by the end of November 2018 and ONMT moved its existing organization to the new building, which offers a modern working environment. The new devices and equipment for the new ONMT headquarters are scheduled to be delivered for installation by the second half of 2019. Meanwhile, the project's third component - enhancing the capacity of the ONMT staff - is scheduled to begin in parallel with procuring the devices and is to be completed by the end of 2019.

Overall, the project's ongoing success is based on the positive working relationships among the project partners and a well-established TrC structure and culture. The project partners' strong commitment and the effective use of SSC has helped to meet the project's targets to date. The project is likely to be expanded to include other OIC countries, thanks to its significant potential for replicability and scaling-up through the experience acquired in Mauritania.



New ONMT building - built as the beneficiary country's contribution within the scope of the project

DIMENSIONS OF LABOUR STATISTICS



Chapter III Supporting a Regional and Global Development Agenda on Multiple Fronts

Supporting a Regional and Global Development Agenda on Multiple Fronts

This section illustrates the intersection of and complementarities between SESRIC activities and initiatives and regional and global development agenda and policy arrangements, including the OIC-2025, the Sustainable Development Goals, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development, the New Urban Agenda, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and other internationally agreed global agendas. It is probably quite unusual for a regional organization to contribute to so many global development programs and actions plans at the same time. That is what SESRIC has achieved over the past years.

3.1 Importance of South-South cooperation in achieving global development goals

Global challenges are growing in many areas, but global communities are also responding to them. Today, a number of global development agendas are in place under which countries can coordinate to address these challenges collectively. They also acknowledge the role of SSC in achieving the goals. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was adopted three years ago. This ambitious set of targets calls for a new and inclusive global partnership, of which South-South and TrC is an integral part, as highlighted under SDG Goal 17. This is also in line with the motion in the Buenos Aires outcome document of the second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation (A/73/L.80), which calls for South-South and TrC in support of national and regional efforts towards achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Similarly, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing

for Development welcomed the increased contributions of SSC to poverty eradication and sustainable development. The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 also called for further strengthening of SSC as a partnership modality.

The significant achievements of many developing countries are among the main drivers of the growing importance and contribution of SSC to global development goals. Over the past decades, SSC has gradually shown that it can make a significant contribution to development outcomes through a variety of flexible and complementary cooperation modalities, including innovative financing, peer-to-peer dialogue, knowledge and skills exchange, and transfer of know-how and resources to achieve the regional and global development agendas and collaborate for a common future.

Against a backdrop of profound transformations in the configuration of the global economic landscape and a changing world, SSC – which is based on demonstrated solidarity, equality, good faith, dignified lives, reciprocal benefits, win-win results, solidarity, mutual trust and assistance – can help developing nations pave a new path for development and prosperity.

South-South and TrC is an important pioneering measure that unites developing nations to work towards self-improvement. It is a key element of international cooperation for development. It also offers viable opportunities for developing countries in sharing knowledge and experiences around known, tested and successful policies in areas such as institutional strengthening, health, education, agriculture, science and technology, climate change, infrastructure, trade, finance and investment, and regional integration.

3.2 SESRIC's role in supporting global development goals through SSC

Given the values of the Islamic world, which are based on the principles of Islamic solidarity, partnership and cooperation, intra-OIC SSC offers great potential to address development challenges in OIC countries. Having made significant progress in socioeconomic development, some OIC countries have advanced from the status of recipient to that of donor in certain areas and have begun to share their resources and capacities with other countries. This is thanks to flexible modalities under SSC. Moreover, since SSC is more an expression of solidarity rather than a donor-recipient relation, many OIC countries remain ready to share their development experiences in a host of areas with other OIC and non-OIC developing countries.

SESRIC supports SSC with the goal of maximizing its development impact and accelerating poverty eradication, particularly in terms of the least developed OIC countries. In this regard, the Centre hosts two major programs to support capacity development through SSC: the OIC Capacity Building Programme and the Vocational Education and Training Programme for the Member States of OIC (OIC-VET). These programs seek to increase the skill set of the human resources in OIC countries by implementing modalities such as networking, training, technical study visits and workshops.

These programs are implemented in socioeconomic areas of immediate interest to OIC Member States to support them in addressing challenges by drawing on capacities in other OIC countries. While implementing activities under these programs, the Centre emphasizes SSC, as it performs the roles of knowledge broker, capacity builder, technical assistance provider, and facilitator of experience sharing and knowledge exchange.

As underscored in the Nairobi Outcome Document of the High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation, SESRIC acknowledges the importance of the five normative principles of SSC - national ownership

and sovereignty, equality, non-conditionality, non-interference, and mutual benefits - and incorporates them into its operational agenda throughout the design and implementation processes. This approach can be seen in the Centre's active participation at OIC-level and global SSC events, such as the 2017 South-South Development Expo (GSSD), Regional Networking Forums on South-South and Triangular Cooperation for the Arab States, Europe and CIS, and the Dialogue Meeting of the Technical Cooperation Agencies of the OIC Member States. SESRIC contributed to carrying out these major events as a longstanding SSC contributor and implementing partner and increased the level of OIC participation.

Achieving the goals of the OIC-2025 Program of Action and the SDGs requires a strong commitment by all parties, including Member States, international organizations, academia and civil society. This inclusive multi-stakeholder approach reflects the spirit of the Nairobi Outcome Document. As it has throughout its 40 years, SESRIC continues to work to align its operational agenda with global development agendas and support OIC countries' efforts to achieve the goals and targets identified in these agendas.

SESRIC also supports the implementation of all regional and international development agendas in OIC Member States by taking a leading role in conducting research and producing knowledge on socioeconomic trends, capacities, challenges and solutions. As the main OIC research organ, SESRIC executes its research mandate primarily by (i) writing background research reports to promote and support policy dialogue; (ii) preparing sectoral strategic plans to strengthen cooperation and joint policy action; and (iii) organizing international policy events to discuss major developmental issues and propose potential solutions.

Over the last 40 years, SESRIC has accumulated substantial knowledge and expertise in conducting socioeconomic research on issues ranging from the economy to health and from

gender to climate change. Its research work contributes directly to supporting Member States in monitoring progress, assessing programmes and policies, setting priorities and, ultimately, strengthening SSC.

Under the OIC umbrella, the Centre is at the heart of a unique research-policy nexus that is instrumental for promoting evidence-based public policies and achieving greater policy coherence at the national and regional levels. Indeed, policy coherence is recognized as integral to implementation under the SDG framework. All countries, including OIC members, are encouraged to adopt appropriate measures to “enhance policy coherence for sustainable development.”

Similarly, SESRIC prepares comprehensive research reports for more than a dozen sectoral ministerial sessions on a regular basis to help spearhead and streamline national and intra-OIC regional efforts to enhance policy coherence. This ultimately helps Member States achieve a sustainable future by integrating the social, economic and environmental dimensions of development into their national and regional policy frameworks. The Centre also organizes high-level international policy events to bring together thought leaders, policy makers, academics and other relevant stakeholders to discuss major developmental issues and propose potential solutions with regards to the implementation of regional and global development agendas, such as OIC-2025 and Sustainable Development Agenda 2030. These fora also play an important role in raising awareness among and involving relevant stakeholders in the planning, implementation and monitoring of national and regional development agendas, as recommended under the SDG framework.

SESRIC’s current research agenda is aligned closely with the developmental priorities of OIC Member States. Its research activities encompass monitoring progress towards the implementation of all major regional and international development initiatives including,

but not limited to, OIC-2025; 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; Paris Agreement on Climate Change; Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020; and Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030).

In its mandated area of statistics, SESRIC works to contribute to the efforts of OIC Member States in strengthening their statistical capacities to both provide the necessary data and information to support decision-making processes in their countries and meet their reporting requirements under international initiatives.

In light of the latter, SESRIC’s statistical activities and initiatives intersect significantly with regional and global development and policy arrangements. In the area of official statistics, SESRIC adheres to two principles at the global level, the Fundamental Principles of National Official Statistics and the Principles Governing International Statistical Activities. Both address bilateral and multilateral cooperation in statistics and require that cooperative activities contribute to the professional growth of the statisticians involved and to improving the quality and accessibility of statistics in the organizations and in countries.

In addition, SESRIC’s statistical capacity building activities at the international development agenda level support the OIC countries’ monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals. Specifically, in line with SDG 17.18, resources that SESRIC mobilizes in the area of official statistics contribute to the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts. At the OIC level, SESRIC’s statistical capacity-building activities concurrently strengthen the national statistical systems of OIC countries in achieving the targets of the OIC-2025 Programme of Action.

In terms of statistical capacity-building and cooperation, the Cape Town Global Action Plan (CTGAP) for Sustainable Development Data calls for a commitment by governments,

policy leaders and the international community to undertake key actions under six strategic areas. SESRIC's OIC StatCaB Programme makes a significant contribution to achieving CTGAP Objective 6.1: Ensure that resources are available to implement the necessary programmes and actions as outlined in the global action plan (both domestic and from international cooperation), under Strategic Area 6: Mobilize resources and coordinate efforts for statistical capacity-building. The OIC StatCaB Programme does this by identifying and coordinating existing resources, including South-South and TrC mechanisms, to strategically address needs and identify resource gaps. The biennial questionnaires that SESRIC distributes focus on the specific needs of OIC countries, based on the internationally classified statistical activities.

SESRIC's activities also reflect a coordinated approach to supporting the global development agenda in line with its mandates. For example, SDG 3 promotes good health and well-being. While the OICStat database includes 73 health related indicators to monitor the latest developments in the area of health, the OIC Health Report analyses the latest statistics to identify potential challenges and areas of cooperation in the OIC countries. The IbnSina Health Capacity Building Programme mobilizes resources to improve health service delivery and practices in OIC Member States. These activities are further supported by additional initiatives, such as the Tobacco Free OIC initiative and Integration of the Tobacco Questions for Surveys (TQS) into the National Surveys in OIC countries to achieve better health outcomes. While all these activities collectively serve the purpose of achieving SDG 3, they also help the Member States to achieve OIC-2025 Goal 2.12. Most of the SDGs offer similar examples, including education, gender, water, employment, climate change, and peace and security, where the Centre designs its interventions in coordinated fashion.

The above are also aligned with other global development agendas. With regard to the New Urban Agenda, for example, the Centre produces reports on urban development to identify the challenges, conducts training on sustainable urbanization and disseminates statistics on urbanization. Under the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Centre prepares reports on disaster risk management and conducts training through its Disaster Risk Management Capacity Building Programme. In terms of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the Centre prepares reports on environment, water and climate change, conducts training under its various capacity-building programmes, and disseminates statistics related to climate change and the environment. The list may be expanded further to other areas where the international community sets priorities for action.

Today, the Centre is proud of its role as a successful intergovernmental organization that supports the global development agenda by using SSC modalities. Building on its achievements analysing the challenges and opportunities and strengthening cooperation in various socioeconomic fields, the Centre will continue to play a key role in enhancing solidarity and partnership. SESRIC is also aware that every penny spent to strengthen national statistical systems constitutes an investment in the future and fulfils the requirements of regional and international development initiatives and will also continue to increase its statistical activities to benefit OIC countries.





Chapter IV

Achieving Prosperity in the South: The Road Ahead is Long and the Time is Short

Achieving Prosperity in the South: The Road Ahead is Long and the Time is Short

This section highlights the major challenges that the international community and, more specifically, the OIC Member States face in achieving global and regional development goals. It then summarizes important lessons learned from SESRIC's experiences in promoting partnership and collaboration among Member States. The section concludes with a discussion of the opportunities and potentials that need to be tapped to achieve prosperity in the South.

4.1 Unrelenting challenges to achieving development goals

The global economy is experiencing a fundamental transformation as a result of the remarkable economic performance of developing countries over the last few decades. As poverty rates fall in many parts of the developing world, health, education and employment outcomes improve. As developing countries continue to grow faster than developed countries, they move up the global value chain, shifting the global economic centre of gravity toward the South. Expanded SSC, which has reached unprecedented levels, can be understood as part of this global transformation, driven by growing prosperity in the South. This is not an ephemeral phenomenon and will continue to be part of the new global development architecture.

SESRIC recognizes this transformation and the growing capacities of developing countries in a wide spectrum of areas. It designs its activities to tap into this potential. It also views SSC as an expression of solidarity, rather than a donor-recipient relationship. Guided by principles of respect for national sovereignty, the Centre seeks

alternative modalities to mobilize capacities effectively for knowledge sharing and peer-to-peer learning among OIC countries. It thus plays an important role as a broker of knowledge sharing. SESRIC's activities facilitate the transfer of knowledge and best practices and promote greater collaboration among Member States.

However, tremendous challenges remain to eradicating poverty and improving the standard of living for citizens of countries in the South. They face important economic, social and environmental challenges that exceed their current capacity to overcome. It is therefore even more crucial to facilitate SSC to respond to local development needs and reduce development asymmetries. Otherwise, growing disparities between the countries of the North and South will trigger additional economic, social, political and environmental unrest.

The challenges that global communities face to achieving their development goals include a lack of financial resources, increasing frequency and impact of natural disasters and conflicts, climate change, economic and social inequality, rapid urbanization, and unsustainable consumption and production patterns. Although greater awareness exists among global communities of the need for coordinated action and policy coherence, it is critical to use every opportunity to enhance partnership and solidarity and reduce vulnerabilities to these potential challenges that the world may face in the near future. SESRIC remains committed to supporting South-South and TrC to build capacities and reduce asymmetries in developmental outcomes.

4.2 Lessons learned from SESRIC's experiences

Since its founding in 1978, SESRIC has accumulated a wealth of knowledge and experience across a wide spectrum of social and economic areas. Without reliable data, it is not possible to identify challenges and propose new policies. Without knowing the challenges and possible policy interventions, it is not possible to design tools and methodologies for cooperation. Recognizing all these needs, SESRIC has invested in capacities to develop data collection and dissemination, research, and technical cooperation. Today, guided by its long-term experiences, it is more capable than ever to further support partnerships and solidarity among OIC Member States.

The Second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation (BAPA+40) which was held in Buenos Aires in March 2019 on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the 1978 United Nations Conference on Technical Cooperation among developing countries, recognized the expansion in the scope of SSC and TrC contributing to regional, subregional and interregional integration, which will bring new opportunities and challenges for OIC countries. These challenges can be addressed with holistic approaches combined with effective cooperation, inclusive partnerships and sustainable dialogue. Both the 2030 Agenda, which is the global roadmap for comprehensive and sustainable development, and the OIC-2025 Programme of Action, the overarching development agenda for OIC countries for the next decade, highlight the importance of SSC in addressing the development challenges of the developing Southern countries.

Based on the lessons learned from long-term experiences with technical cooperation among OIC countries, the two most substantial takeaways that might meaningfully contribute to OIC countries' development agenda are as follows:

- Commitment and solutions take precedence over financial resources/funding.

- Solidarity, partnership and cooperation are the key prerequisites in OIC countries to leverage socioeconomic cooperation.

Notwithstanding the limitations, many countries express their readiness, willingness and solidarity to exchange experiences, best practices and development solutions with other Member States to help them achieve their economic and social development goals. This is where SESRIC can initiate successful cooperation and partnership among Member States. It will continue to draw on this expression of solidarity to strengthen cooperation even further.

Overall, SESRIC's activities are highly diverse, with specific objectives and unique implications. They also face the following specific implementation challenges, among the many others that SESRIC has faced and addressed, particularly within the last decade:

- Lack of institutional commitments;
- Natural barriers, such as language and distance; and,
- The challenge of identifying resource centres.

Bringing together partners with limited resources has been always a challenge for SSC. A willingness to cooperate is sometimes determined by individuals, rather than institutions. When those individuals no longer influence the decision-making process, it can be difficult to sustain the knowledge-sharing platforms. OIC Member States' capacities, knowledge and expertise are also very varied. While this divergence creates space for potential cooperation, other barriers - such as language, reluctance to participate in international cooperation mechanisms and financial constraints - hamper SSC or reduce its impacts.

The need to determine capacities has always been a challenge for South-South practitioners. Matching needs and capacities through SSC is a fundamental SESRIC cooperation modality. However, the Centre has many reliable partners and knowledge provider institutions, which have been identified and worked together over the past decades.

SESRIC and the IsDB have also developed a mapping methodology to facilitate the identification of resource centres for all stakeholders. It involves: (i) identifying the sectors of the country with comparative advantages, together with the relevant local partners; (ii) conducting a comprehensive survey of these institutions to collect additional information to assess and shortlist the top achievers in each sector; and (iii) publishing concise but comprehensive profiles of the resource centres selected. These studies, in cooperation with the country's relevant local organizations, and identification of the top performers are carried out using an independent and analytical scoring and ranking approach. To date, SESRIC has contributed to Mapping Resource Centres in Turkey and Pakistan. More studies are planned with the IsDB, to be operationalized jointly in the coming years.

The OIC StatCaB Programme, the Centre's flagship capacity-building programme, provides further insights into SESRIC's experiences. This broad, capacity-building programme offers a comprehensive set of trainings. Inevitably, it faces challenges, which, during the Programme's planning and implementation, include the geographical distances between OIC countries, language and political stability.

SESRIC recognizes these challenges and tries to overcome them by further diversifying the types of statistical activities. In addition to short-term statistics courses, study visits and technical missions facilitate mobilization of the staff, knowledge transfer and sharing of best practices among OIC countries. StatCaB activities are also conducted primarily in the OIC's three official languages - Arabic, English and French – as well as Russian among CIS countries to reach a broader audience. Further, the materials used are made online available at the OIC-StatCom website free of charge so that they can be accessed quickly whenever necessary. Over the next five years, the OIC StatCaB Programme will seek to increase its activities to 600, increase the number of provider Member States to 30 and focus on activities related to measuring achievement of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

4.3 Opportunities for the future

Countries seek to achieve better developmental outcomes, but their knowledge and experiences differ. Today, knowledge sharing and peer-to-peer learning are among the most dynamic components of SSC and TrC, which facilitate sharing innovative solutions among countries that are on similar development pathways. It is therefore important for development partners to raise awareness of common problems and achieve broader access to available knowledge and experience in tackling development problems in developing countries.

As the OIC's main technical and research arm, in cooperation with its longstanding partners, SESRIC focuses on fulfilling the development challenges of OIC countries in areas including poverty, health, agriculture and education. The Centre has initiated many programs and projects within its mandate and area of work on a range of socioeconomic areas and fields of immediate interest to OIC Member States, based on statistical and research outcomes. The Vocational Education and Training Programme for OIC Member States (OIC-VET) and the OIC Capacity Building Program (OIC-CBP) are among those whose impacts are felt over almost all OIC countries. Within the scope of these initiatives, the Centre seeks to support Member States' efforts to enhance the capacities and quality of their human resources and national institutions. To that end, the Centre adopts implementation modalities that include exchange of experts, short-term training courses, workshops and study visits. It works closely with a wide range of relevant OIC, national, regional and international institutions.

The social, economic and environmental challenges facing OIC countries call for innovative and impactful solutions, which must be developed in consideration of the countries' specific characteristics. SESRIC always acts responsibly to develop OIC-level development solutions to help countries overcome their challenges by strengthening solidarity and unity. However, despite the progress achieved so far, challenges vary. The need to develop cost-

efficient and effective solutions drives SESRIC to develop innovative and impactful tools for South-South development cooperation.

In this regard, SESRIC remains committed to promoting and strengthening partnerships among Member States by exchanging experiences and developing complementary capacities. The Centre will also continue to identify and analyse Member States' main development challenges and formulate alternative policies and strategies to address them. Recognizing the devastating impacts of natural disasters and conflicts, the Centre will collaborate with authorities to support rebuilding capacities in affected countries, as in the case of the BINA initiative. SESRIC thereby aims to foster self-reliance within Member States so that they can identify solutions to their development problems and support their aspirations through SSC and TrC.

The challenge for SESRIC in the coming years will be to sustain and further strengthen its achievements in order to expand development gains by harnessing potentials, capitalizing on Member States' successes, dynamism and inspiration in various fields, and facilitate the sharing of knowledge, experiences and resources. In addition, as envisaged in the BAPA+40 outcome document on the important role of regional institutions in driving SSC, SESRIC could play its role in strengthening inter-regional collaboration, sharing knowledge and best practices, and nurturing synergies among centres of excellence. The goal is to scale up partnerships to reap the benefits of the Global South and advance global development goals.

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