



**4th Meeting of the
Working Group on SME Policy, Entrepreneurship
and Human Capital Development**

**BEYOND THE CRISIS: POLICIES TO
SUPPORT YOUNG ENTERPRISES**

Date

29-30 March 2010

Organised by

The MENA-OECD Investment Programme

In cooperation with

Ministry of Development and International
Cooperation, Tunisia

Venue

Sheraton Tunis Hotel & Towers
Tunis, Tunisia



The **MENA-OECD Investment Programme** invites you to take part in the fourth regional meeting of the Working Group on SME Policy, Entrepreneurship and Human Capital Development.

Background: Working Group on SME Policy Entrepreneurship and Human Capital Development

The aim of the Working Group is to build upon the requests of the MENA Ministers and to deepen the policy dialogue and common agreements as initiated within the October 2008 Steering Group of the MENA-OECD Investment Programme, and recalling the final Declaration of MENA-OECD Ministers in Cairo in November 2007 stressing,

“...the importance of promoting positive interactions between foreign investment and local enterprise development through measures such as development of skills, local entrepreneurship, industrial clusters and SME access to finance.”

Furthermore, recalling the final Declaration of the MENA-OECD Ministers in Marrakech in November 2009, promoting,

“...greater access to finance particularly of micro, small and medium enterprises by increasing transparency of information; ensuring an appropriate legislative framework for secured transactions and collateral; diversifying the sources of finance, i.e., strengthening the banking sector and supporting continuous and sustainable development of stock and bond markets, to finance the growth of innovative entrepreneurs, including women entrepreneurs.

To this end, the **MENA-OECD Investment Programme** invites participants to fourth meeting to discuss outputs related to the Working Group and to define the Work Programme going forward.

Participation and Documentation

MENA and OECD participants are invited to send experts in the areas of SME policy, finance, skills development, and entrepreneurship. As in the previous meeting, other key partners, who are engaged in activities in these areas, are also invited, including Islamic Development Bank, Arab League, Inter-Arab Investment Guarantee Corporation, Union of Arab Banks, World Bank, UNIDO, UNDP, IFC PEP MENA, UNCTAD, EC and the EIB, Transparency International, IEMED and other partners. Private sector engagement is essential for the success of the Programme, as they can provide insights to issues affecting investment decisions and serve as a “reality check” for policy reform plans. Representatives from the Arab Business Council, Arab Investors’ Union, Union of Arab Banks, MENA-OECD Business Network, Business and Industry Advisory Committee to the OECD (BIAC) and Business Councils in MENA countries are invited to join the meeting. Experts from OECD countries and from the Secretariat will be present at the meeting.

The relevant meeting documents will be distributed at the meeting and posted on:
www.oecd.org/mena/investment
http://www.oecd.org/pages/0,3417,en_34645207_34645726_1_1_1_1_1,00.html

Interpretation will be provided in *English* and *French*



Monday, 29 March 2010 (closed meeting)

14.00 - 14.15	Registration and Welcome Coffee
14.15 - 14.30	<i>Welcome by the Chairs</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– H.E. Mohamed Nouri Jouini, Minister, Ministry of International Cooperation and Development, Tunisia– Mr. Pietro Masci, Director, EIB, Balkans and Mediterranean, Department of the Treasury, Ministry of Economy and Finance, Italy (tbc)
14.30-15.00	<i>Beyond the Crisis in the MENA region – SME and Entrepreneurship Outlook</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– General Remarks by the OECD Secretariat
15.00 -15.45	<i>Reporting Back from the European Investment Bank: Results of the Feasibility Study</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Update from EIB representative– Comments from the OECD Secretariat and Delegates
15.45 - 16.00	Coffee Break
16.00- 17.00	<i>2009- 2011 Work Programme Activities</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Young Enterprises : MENA Outlook– Implementation phase – Credit Guarantee Schemes: a tool to promote SME growth and innovation in the MENA Region– Proposal to conduct Joint Learning Study on Access to Finance <i>Roundtable discussion</i>
17.00 - 18.15	<i>Updates from Delegates to the Working Group</i> <p>Delegates to the Working Group are welcomed to provide brief updates on latest developments in SME policy and to comment on the proposals made by the Secretariat on the Work Programme.</p> <i>Roundtable discussion</i>
18.15 - 18.30	<i>Concluding Remarks by the Chairs</i>
18.30	End Day 1/Dinner Programme (by invitation)



Tuesday, 30 March 2010 (open meeting)

8.30- 9.00	Registration
9.00 - 9.20	<p>Opening Remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – H.E. Minister Mohamed Nouri Jouini, Ministry of International Cooperation and Development, Tunisia, Chair of the Working Group – H.E. Senén Florensa, Director General of the European Institute of the Mediterranean, Representing Spanish co-Chair of the MENA-OECD Investment Programme
9.20 - 9.30	<p>Introduction on Young Enterprises: MENA Outlook</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Mr. Pietro Masci, Director, EIB, Balkans and Mediterranean, Department of the Treasury, Ministry of Economy and Finance, Italy, Co-Chair of the Working Group (tbc)
9.30 11.00	Panel 1: The Embryonic Phase – Taking the Leap
<p>Why does an individual go about starting a new business and under what circumstances? What are the motivations and the barriers? How can public policy play a role in influencing the choice of individuals to undertake new entrepreneurial ventures? In this panel MENA and OECD policy-makers will examine the role for direct and indirect policies (i.e. information provision, start-up assistance, mentoring) which aim to support entrepreneurs by answering the immediate needs of potential SME candidates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ms. Lois Stevenson, Visiting Research Fellow, International Development Research Centre, Middle East/North Africa Regional Office – Coordinator Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, Tunisia (tbc) – Private Sector Representative <p><i>Questions and Answers (30 minutes)</i></p>	
11.00 -11.15	Coffee Break
11.15 - 12.45	Panel 2: The Establishment Phase – Embarking on the Journey
<p>The establishment phase marks the beginning of the SMEs lifecycle, a process which will lead to the realization of a business opportunity. Public support schemes can help promising entrepreneurs start off on a positive trajectory and confront difficulties in establishment at an early stage. This panel will discuss schemes which help new entrepreneurs in the establishment phase, including coaching and training activities, tailored services at the local level, financing schemes (i.e. microfinance), incubators, and accompaniment programmes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Prof. Stephen Roper, Professor, Warwick Business School, United Kingdom (tbc) – Mr. Abdelhak Marsli, Secrétaire Général de la Fondation Création d'Entreprises (tbc) – Mr. Hashim Hussein, Head, UNIDO Investment and Promotion Office, Bahrain (tbc) – Private Sector Representative <p><i>Questions and Answers (30 minutes)</i></p>	
12.45 - 14.00	Lunch
14.00 -14.15	<p>Update on the MENA 100 Business Plan Competition A project of the MENA-OECD Business Council</p>
14.15 - 15.15	Panel 3: The Establishment Phase for Innovative SMEs – A Mix Between Public and Private
<p>Innovative SMEs face a different set of entry barriers and hence require a different set of publicly and privately supported schemes to meet their financing and technical needs. This panel will explore equity financing, technology clusters, networks and incubators, and other schemes to support the establishment needs of innovative SMEs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Mrs. Mariarosa Lunati, Principle Administrator, Entrepreneurship Indicators, Statistics Department, OECD Representative, Directorate General for SMEs, Tunisia (tbc) – Mr. Wael Hamdan, Senior Director, Financing Unit, Banque du Liban (tbc) – Private Sector Representative <p><i>Questions and Answers (15 minutes)</i></p>	
15.15 - 15.30	Coffee Break
15.30 - 17.00	Panel 4: The Growth and Expansion Phase
<p>Business survival and growth will depend on a number of factors, including the leadership and management of the SME, the skills and motivation of their staff, availability of adequate sources of financing (i.e. bank financing), and developing export opportunities. Policy-makers and experts will discuss specific policy tools to facilitate the transformation of young enterprises into growing enterprises.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Prof. Salvatore Zecchini, Chairman of the Institute for Industrial Policy, Italy – Chairman of the OECD Steering Committee on SMEs and Entrepreneurship Financing – M. Khalil Ammar, Président-Directeur Général de la Banque de financement des PME (BFPME), Tunisie (tbc) – Dr. Dahlia El Hawary, Advisor to the Minister, Ministry of Investment, Egypt (tbc) – Private Sector Representative <p><i>Questions and Answers (30 minutes)</i></p>	
17.00-17.30	Closing Remarks by the Chairs



About the MENA-OECD Investment Programme

THE MENA-OECD INVESTMENT PROGRAMME was established in 2004 at the request of Middle East and North African (MENA) countries to provide advice on improving the investment policy climate. Facing considerable competition from other regions and a growing pressure from the young workforce, several MENA countries are implementing significant economic and regulatory reforms to increase private sector participation in their economies.

THE KEY OBJECTIVE OF THE INVESTMENT PROGRAMME is to mobilise private investment – foreign, regional and domestic – as a driving force for economic growth and employment throughout the region. The Programme offers a forum for results-oriented policy dialogue bringing together MENA and OECD practitioners. It supports reform efforts of MENA governments to enhance the investment climate by:

- strengthening country capacity for designing, implementing and monitoring investment policy reforms;
- creating a network of dialogue between investment policy makers from MENA and OECD countries;
- creating a favourable environment for employment creation through investment climate improvements;
- assisting ministries and government agencies to co-operate and co-ordinate their work;
- reinforcing the impact of development initiatives supported by international, regional and bilateral donors.

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For additional details, please refer to the following website www.oecd.org/mena/investment