



UNITED NATIONS
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION



CONCEPT NOTE: Business and Investment Regional Forum
Tentative dates 22-23 May 2023
Amman, Jordan

MAIN OBJECTIVE OF THE FORUM

The main objective of the Business and Investment Forum is to bring leading private sector companies from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region – **Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Palestine, Syria and Italy** to Jordan with the purpose to promote investments and trade opportunities while showcasing best strategies/practices to strengthen export-oriented value chains. The forum will provide an opportunity for Business to Business (B2B) meetings to leverage additional investment opportunities from the region.

Specific objectives

The forum is aimed to:

- Present Investment opportunities to support local SMEs in export-oriented agro-value chains in Jordan;
- Support local SMEs in Jordan to expand their networking opportunities through Business-to-Business (B2B);
- Best practices to improve productivity and competitiveness and export.

Participation

The Business and Investment Forum is expected to draw on the participation of Jordan authorities, private sector companies, members of regional business networks and industry associations among others from the MENA region and Europe, mainly Italy. A total of 80 participants including Jordanians are expected in Amman to attend the Forum.

Stakeholders from the countries listed below will be invited:

- Iraq
- Palestine
- Other, MENA countries (Egypt, Lebanon and Syria) - BusinessMed to mobilize
- Italy

Tentative programme

Date: 22-23, May 2023; **Venue:** Amman, Jordan

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

As part of UNIDO's efforts to promote business development in the MENA region, a Business and Investment Forum is tentatively planned to take place on 22-23 May 2023, in Amman, Jordan. The Forum is organized jointly by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in partnership with the Union of Mediterranean Confederations of Enterprises (BUSINESSMED)¹ and the Ministry of Industry, Trade, and Supply (MoIT) of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

The main rationale of the Business and Investment Forum is to promote trade and investment opportunities in export-oriented agro-value chains **by fostering Business Networks to encourage new investment opportunities from the MENA region including Italy**. In addition, the Forum will take

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

advantage of having regional stakeholders present to promote other cross-cutting benefits for improved productivity and competitiveness along value chains specifically leading to increased energy and resource efficiency. The Business and Investment Forum is expected to draw on the participation of Jordan authorities, private sector companies, members of regional business networks and industry associations among others from the MENA region (Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria and Italy), Europe in particular, Italy.

The theme of the forum is “**Promoting Inclusive, Competitive and Sustainable Agro-value Chains**”. The growing trend to strengthen export-oriented value chains through capacity needs, financing, increasing energy and resource efficiency and support infrastructure requirements have gained substantial recognition amongst donors, governments, and private sector businesses. It brings a plethora of new opportunities for business development and can help in the transition to a circular economy with more sustainable production and consumption patterns.

The event will be supported by the UNIDO Investment and Technology Promotion Office (ITPO) Italy, with its unique role as a broker to investment and technology agreements between developed, developing countries and countries with economies in transition. ITPO will bring their expertise in opening up opportunities for investors and technology suppliers to find potential partners and facilitate the engagement of the community of investors in their host countries.

The Forum will provide an opportunity for Business-to-Business (B2B) meeting sessions facilitated via the [Business Country Desk Platform \(BCD\)](#), an online B2B matchmaking platform powered by BUSINESSMED that combines a vibrant marketplace with a dedicated space for networking and brokerage between business operators (companies, SMEs/ start-ups, etc.) and institutional structures. The business networking sessions will be extended over the days of the event, in parallel with the plenary panels and presentation sessions.

The Forum is planned to take place in Jordan, relying on its strategic geographic location that makes the Hashemite Kingdom a gateway to the Middle East. By virtue of bilateral and regional free trade agreements, Jordan has a broader outreach to significant consumers in the MENA region, and globally. In addition, the political and economic stability of Jordan attracts foreign capital investments, in particular, to support SMEs in export-oriented agro-value chains.

FORUM ORGANIZATION

Forum methodology

A learning, dynamic, and interactive environment will allow sharing of experiences and best practices in order to attain the desired results. The presenters and facilitators are expected to take an active role in the presentations and facilitation of the sessions. The Forum will include two panel sessions featuring major stakeholders to promote investment and trade opportunities. The Forum will leverage the [BCD](#) online B2B matchmaking platform for the planned B2B sessions which will be available to SMEs throughout the event.

Language requirements

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

Tentative Agenda
Business and Investment Regional Forum
22-23 May 2023, Amman, Jordan

Day 1, Monday, 22 May		
Duration	Location	Programme
09:00-09:30		Arrival and welcoming of participants (Participants should be seated by 9:45 at the latest) - Remote participation available to all registered participants
10:00-10:45	Hall A	Opening remarks, inauguration of exhibition and Business-to-Business (B2B) sessions Master of Ceremonies: (TBC) Welcoming remarks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – H.E. Yousef Al-Shamali, Minister of Industry, Trade and Supply – H.E. The Ambassador of Italy, Mr. Luciano Bizzotti, Embassy of Italy in Jordan (TBC) – Ms. Barbara BELTRAME, President, BUSINESSMED & Vice-President, CONFINDUSTRIA – Designated Representative, Regione Autonoma Friuli Venezia Giulia – Mr. Fabio Russo, Project Manager & Chief of the SME Development and Job Creation Unit, UNIDO HQ Vienna, Austria
	Room B	Exhibition - Garment and Fashion, Food Supplements and Natural Cosmetics value chains <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Businesses, SMEs, Consortia etc. affiliated with UNIDO projects showcase concrete results
	Room B	Opening of B2B sessions (online matchmaking platform) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Dedicated space provided for B2B sessions throughout the entire 2-day event
10:45-11:00		Coffee break and refreshment
11:00-11:45	Hall A	Panel discussion: Topic 1 – “Trade and Investment opportunities to boost export-oriented value chains in the MENA region” Moderator: Mr. Dino Fortunato, Chief Technical Advisor, ITPO Italy Speakers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Mrs. Diana Battaglia, Head of UNIDO Investment and Technology Promotion Office (ITPO), Italy – Mrs. Letizia Pizzi, Director General at Confindustria Assafrica & Mediterraneo – Mrs. Luisa Corbelleto, Coordinator SPRINT FVG – Mrs. Jihen Boutiba, Director General, BusinessMed
11:45-12:00		<i>Discussion/debate</i>
12:00-13:30		Lunch break
13:30-14:15	Hall A	Panel discussion: Topic 2 - “Contribution of Energy efficiency to increase competitiveness along the value chains in the MENA region” Moderator: Adel Ben Youssef, Green & Digital Expert, Professor of Economics, University of Nice Sophia-Antipolis Speakers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Dr. Houda Ben Jannet Allal, General Director, Observatoire Méditerranéen de l’Energie (TBC) – Eng. Tarek Tawfik, Vice President of BUSINESSMED, Vice Chairman of the Federation of Egyptian Industries, FEI (TBC) – Mr. Mohamed Wageih, Project Officer, Agro-food Value Chain, PRIMA Foundation – Ms. Carolina Vigo, Advisor on Sustainable Finance and Environment, BusinessEurope
		<i>Discussion/debate</i>
		Promoting a more conducive environment for women as investors in the MENA region <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Dr. Neila Amara, UNIDO International Project Management Expert
		Panel discussion summary and recommendations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Dr. Eng. Samia Dhahri, Nano-Biotechnology Expert, BUSINESSMED
15:00-15:45	Hall A	Side event – Trade and Investment in an era of digital and green transition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Mr. Ahmad HAMMAD, Expert in Trade and Investment, BUSINESSMED – Ms. Lilia NAAS, Chief Office for Arab States of the International Trade Center (ITC)
15:45-16:00		<i>Discussion/ Debate</i>
Business Networking Cocktail reception: by invitation only		
17:00-18:30		<i>Opportunity for participating businesses, SMEs and companies to network</i>
18:30		End of Day 1

Day 2, Tuesday, 23 May				
Duration	Location	Programme		
09:00-09:30		Arrival and welcoming participants <i>(Participants should be seated by 9:45 at the latest)</i>		
10:00-10:15	Hall A	Business and Investment opportunities in Jordan – Jordan Ministry of Investment		
10:15-10:30		Business Environment and Investment Opportunities in Friuli Venezia-Giulia Region, Italy – Mrs. Lydia Alessio – Verni, Director General Agenzia Lavoro & Sviluppo Impresa & InvestinFVG		
10:30-10:45		Presentation of the Business Country Desk Platform – Ms. Takwa Mrabet, Business Country Desk Coordinator · BUSINESSMED		
10:45-11:00		Coffee break and refreshment		
11:00 -11:45	Rooms	Group 1 B2B round table session – Innovation and Technology	Group 2 B2B Roundtable session – Garment and fashion	Group 3 B2B Roundtable session – Agri-industry
11:45-12:00		<i>Discussion/debate</i>	<i>Discussion/debate</i>	<i>Discussion/debate</i>
12:00-13:30		Lunch break		
13:30-13:45	Room C	Summary and recommendations of the B2B group sessions Presentations – Designated representative of Group 1 – Designated representative of Group 2 – Designated representative of Group 3		
13:30-14:45	Hall A	Side event - Launch of MoTI flagship deliverables ➤ Industrial Intelligence Observatory (IIO) ➤ Jordan Industrial Competitiveness Report (JICR) ➤ Three (3) Value chain Upgrading Strategies and implementation plans – Eng. Sulafa Mdanat, Country Representative, UNIDO Jordan – Designated representative, Ministry of Industry Trade and Supply (TBC)		
13:45-14:15		Closing remarks Master of Ceremonies: (TBC) Welcoming remarks: – Designated representative, Ministry of Investment – Designated representative, Ministry of Industry, Trade and Supply (TBC) – Mr. Emilio Cabasino, Director, Italian Agency for Development Cooperation in Jordan (AICS) TBC – Ms. Barbara BELTRAME, President, BUSINESSMED & Vice-President, CONFINDUSTRIA – Mrs. Diana Battaglia, Head of UNIDO ITPO Italy		
14:15		End of Forum		