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## METAC enters Phase III

This month, METAC entered its third Phase (May 2010-April 2015), in which work will remain focused on core activities and will respond to emerging needs. More emphasis will be put on regional activities and training to enhance knowledge sharing among countries in the region, as recommended by the External Independent Evaluation. In response to donors and METAC evaluations, METAC will move toward a results-based management system to track the implementation of its TA projects and activities, and enhance the accountability of TA to donors and country authorities.

## Public Debt Management

We are pleased to announce that METAC has a new area of technical assistance. Public Debt Management is replacing Central Bank Accounting and will focus on improving public debt and money markets development. The new resident advisor, Ms. Nelly Batchoun, a Jordanian national, joined METAC last month. She will assess the state of public debt in METAC countries and will prepare a work plan to enhance debt management frameworks and improve coordination between debt management and monetary policy.

## The 18<sup>th</sup> Arab Economic Forum Beirut



Mr. Chami, METAC Coordinator, participated in a panel discussion on the role of the youth of the region during the Arab Economic Forum that was organized by the Al-Iktisad wal Aamal Group in Beirut on May 20-21, with the participation of the Prime Minister of Greece, the Secretary General of the Arab League, and under the patronage and presence of Prime Minister Hariri. Mr. Chami presented the results of the roundtable discussions that were held in the region early this year, as part of the IMF Youth Dialogue, focusing on unemployment, investment and growth, the region integration into the world economy, and the role of the IMF. Students from different universities were present and expressed interest in a continuation of this dialogue in the future.

## METAC and AITRS conduct a training course in Jordan

METAC and the Arab Institute for Training and Research in Statistics (AITRS) conducted a training course on Data Dissemination Practices in Amman, Jordan, from May 3-6, 2010. METAC provided the course program and content. Mr. Gillmore Hoefdraad, METAC's Statistics Advisor and Mr. Husam Khalifa, a METAC short-term expert, contributed to this seminar, which was attended by 26 participants from 14 countries in the Middle East.

## CPI Mission for Afghanistan in Beirut

METAC sponsored a Consumer Price Index (CPI) mission for Afghanistan that was held in Beirut, Lebanon during the period May 17-28, 2010. Mr. Dale A. Smith, METAC short-term expert worked with two officials from the Central Statistics Organization (CSO) to develop an updated market basket for the new CPI. The cooperation of the CSO officials, who carried a large number of tabulations on household expenditure data from 2007/2008 National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (NRVA) Survey, was key to the success of the mission.

## Upcoming Events

### Steering Committee Annual Meeting

On June 8, 2010 METAC will hold its annual Steering Committee meeting in Beirut. The meeting will be chaired by Ms. Raya Haffar, the Minister of Finance of Lebanon. Statements will be made by the IMF's Middle East and Central Asia Department (MCD) representative, METAC Coordinator, Technical Assistance Departments, the Office of Technical Assistance Management (OTM), and resident advisors. METAC financial position will also be discussed, and the TA workplan for FY2011 will be presented.

### Fiscal Forecasting and Budgeting Workshop

The Public Financial Management (PFM) area is organizing a workshop in Beirut from June 14-16, 2010 on Fiscal Forecasting and Budgeting for METAC and non-METAC countries with already an early confirmation of participation from Kuwait.

