REPUBLIC OF LEBANON
MINISTRY OF ECONOMY & TRADE
General Directorate Of Economy & Trade

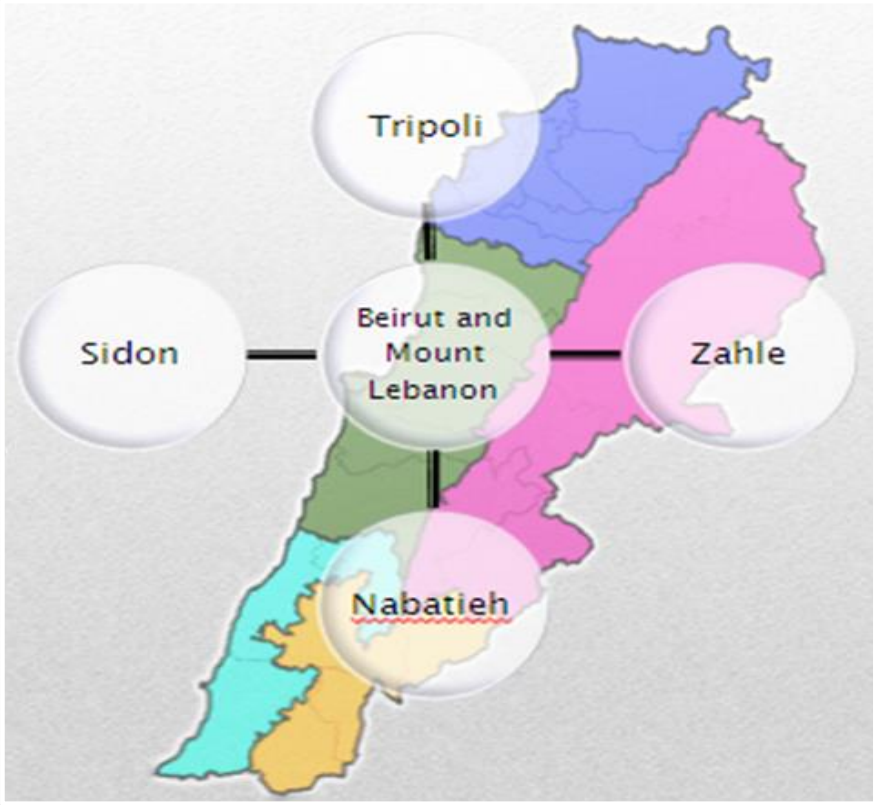
“Review of Capacity-building and Technical Assistance on Consumer Protection Law and Policy”

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Introduction



The importance of the Ministry of Economy and Trade (MoET) in Lebanon lies in the fact that it assists in developing and applying economic and social strategies directly related to consumers.

Planning

Developing a National Consumer Protection Policy

Developing effective strategic plan for consumer protection

Identifying and analyzing consumer market problems

Evaluation of implemented consumer protection programs

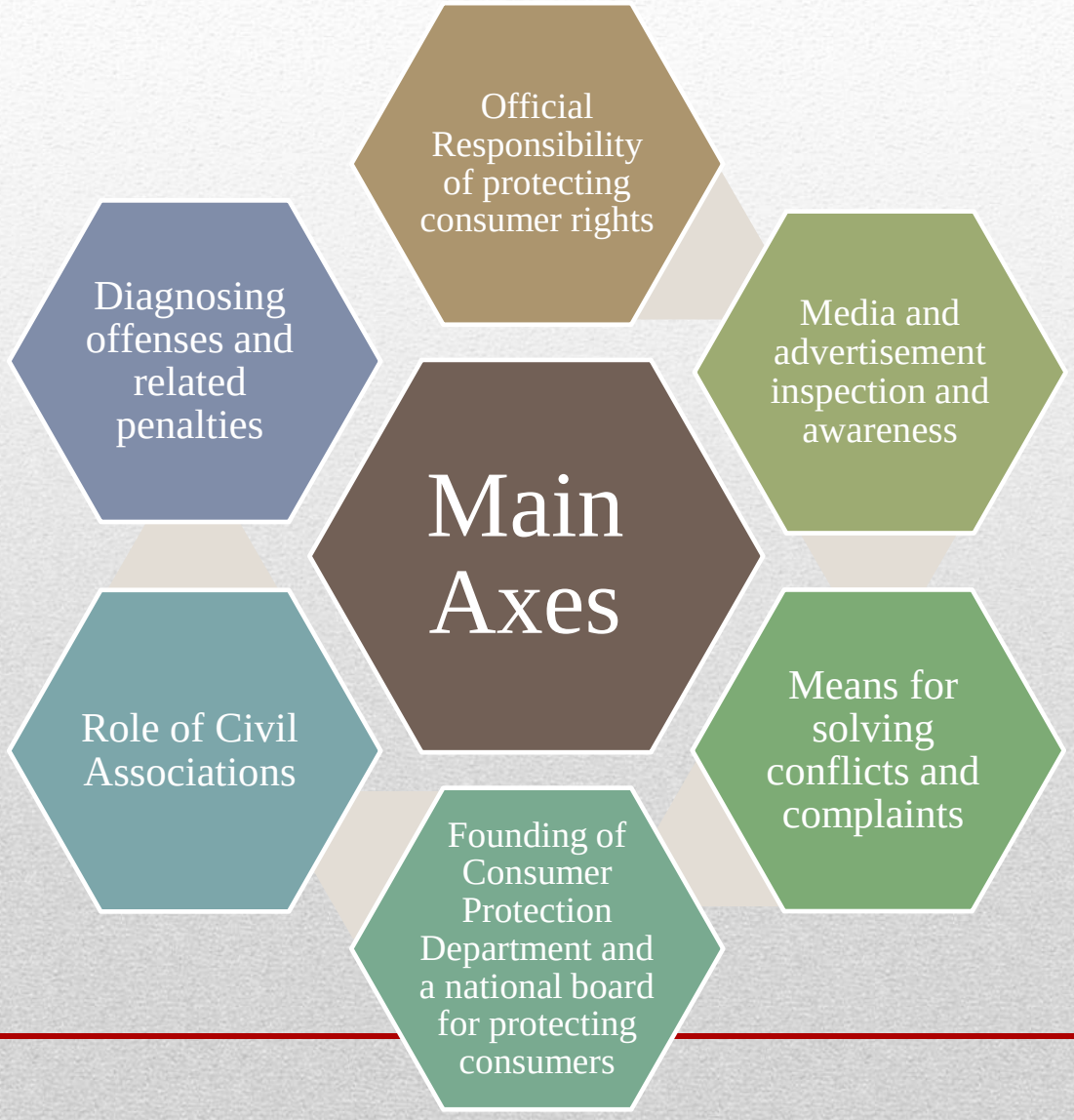
Awareness and educational programs for consumers

Consumer Protection Law

Law no. 659 issued on 4/2/2005 and applied starting 10/5/2005



Main Axes of Consumer Protection Law



Consumer Rights

Health and safety protection	**Fair treatment**
Acquiring valid information	**Substituting or fixing goods or price refunding**
Compensating damage resulting from consumption	**Founding consumer protection associations**

National Consumer Protection Council

Article 61

The “National Consumer Protection Council” shall propose suggestions aimed at realizing the following goals:

- To promote the role of the consumer in the national economy.
- To safeguard the consumer safety and health and protect his rights.
- To ensure the safety of goods and services and improve their quality.
- To inform and educate the consumer and to encourage him to adopt permanent consumption methods **and to use environment friendly products.**
- To suggest the definition of the procedures of implementation of the provisions of this Law.



Sanctions

Violations	Sanctions
Deceptive advertisements	Imprisonment between 1 - 3 months for a fine of 10 to 50 million LL or either of them.
Dealing with contaminated or expired food products	Imprisonment between 3 months to 1 year for a fine of 25 to 50 million LL.
Using illegal or non-calibrated weight tools	Imprisonment between 3 months to 2 years for a fine of 30 to 50 million LL.
Copying a trademark	Imprisonment between 3 months to 3 years for a fine of 40 to 75 million LL.
Non-announcement of prices	Fine of 5 to 20 million LL.

Consumer protection Law weaknesses

- MoET is currently working with the Parliament to **update the Consumer Protection Law (CPL)** in order to make it more effective

- Because of the current economic situation and the degradation of the LBP, the sanctions value mentioned in the law became obsolete, so we are discussing with the concerned parliamentary committee different forms to **update the sanctions**

- After 20 years of CPL implementation, several issues and problems were experienced and needs to be modified in CPL, for example court procedure are very slow and awards are being delivered after several years from ticket issuing.

What previously being done?

Review and simplification of Procedure process



Consumer Complaints, Single Window, …

Development of awareness guides



Citizen Guide, Business Guide, Inspector Guide

Activation of the Consumer Court and mediation within the ministry



Capacity building

SUCCESSFUL INITIATIVES

Capacity building
SUCCESSFUL INITIATIVES





- Awareness Campaigns in schools and universities
- Youth integration in consumer protection activities through internships (1)
- Technical Cooperation with Local Authorities / Municipalities
- Periodic E-Magazine on consumer protection topics
- Using New technology in consumer protection complaints handling: CP application- social media etc..

Youth integration through internships



1- Increase awareness on consumer rights

2- Raise the sense of responsibility for the new generation

3- Strengthen confidence in the Consumer Protection Directorate's work through the transparency

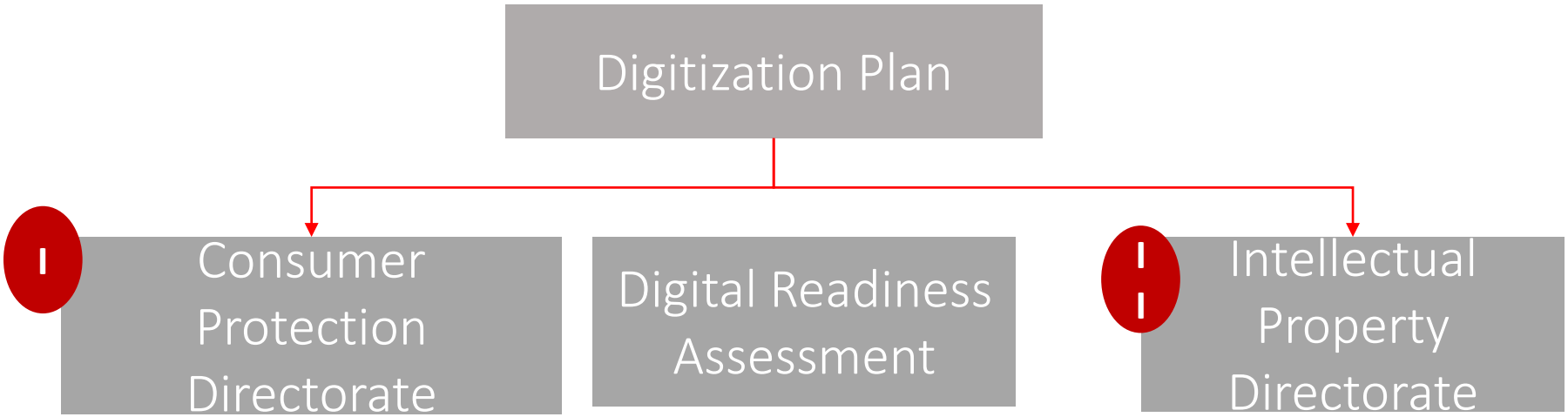
What is currently being done?



Digitization

and full automation of CPD

Our Vision – A fully Digitized Ministry

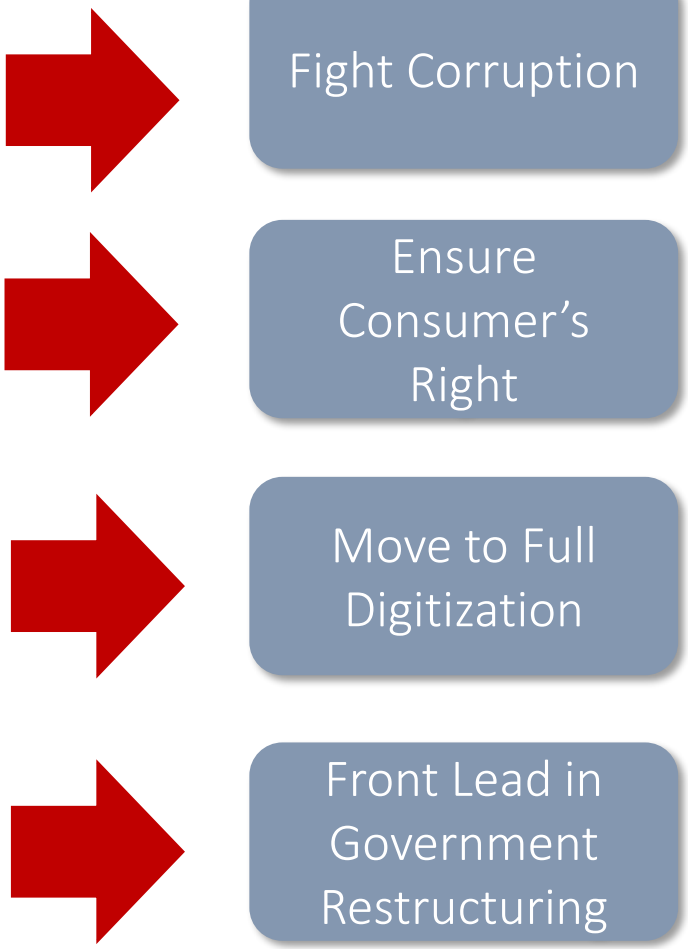


- One of the key directorate of the ministry in charge of protecting consumer rights but also facilitating business procedures
- 20 functions will be automated by Jan 2024
- The 1st ministry to have a fully digitized platform

- Digital readiness assessment conducted with our partner UNDP to assess IT infrastructure readiness

- Our upcoming plan is to work on the automation of the IP department which will also support the ministry in further transparency

At the Ministry of Economy and Trade we are taking the lead in moving towards full digitization



- By focusing all interaction with the automated tool, we will be reducing all room for corruption
- By providing consumers with a faster and more streamlined tool to submit their complaints, we are making sure that consumers especially vulnerable consumers including women are protected
- We will be the first ministry pionnering the move to full digitization, paving the way for a leaner government
- By moving towards digitization we are paving the way for full fledge reforms and showing the donor community that we are taking reform seriously

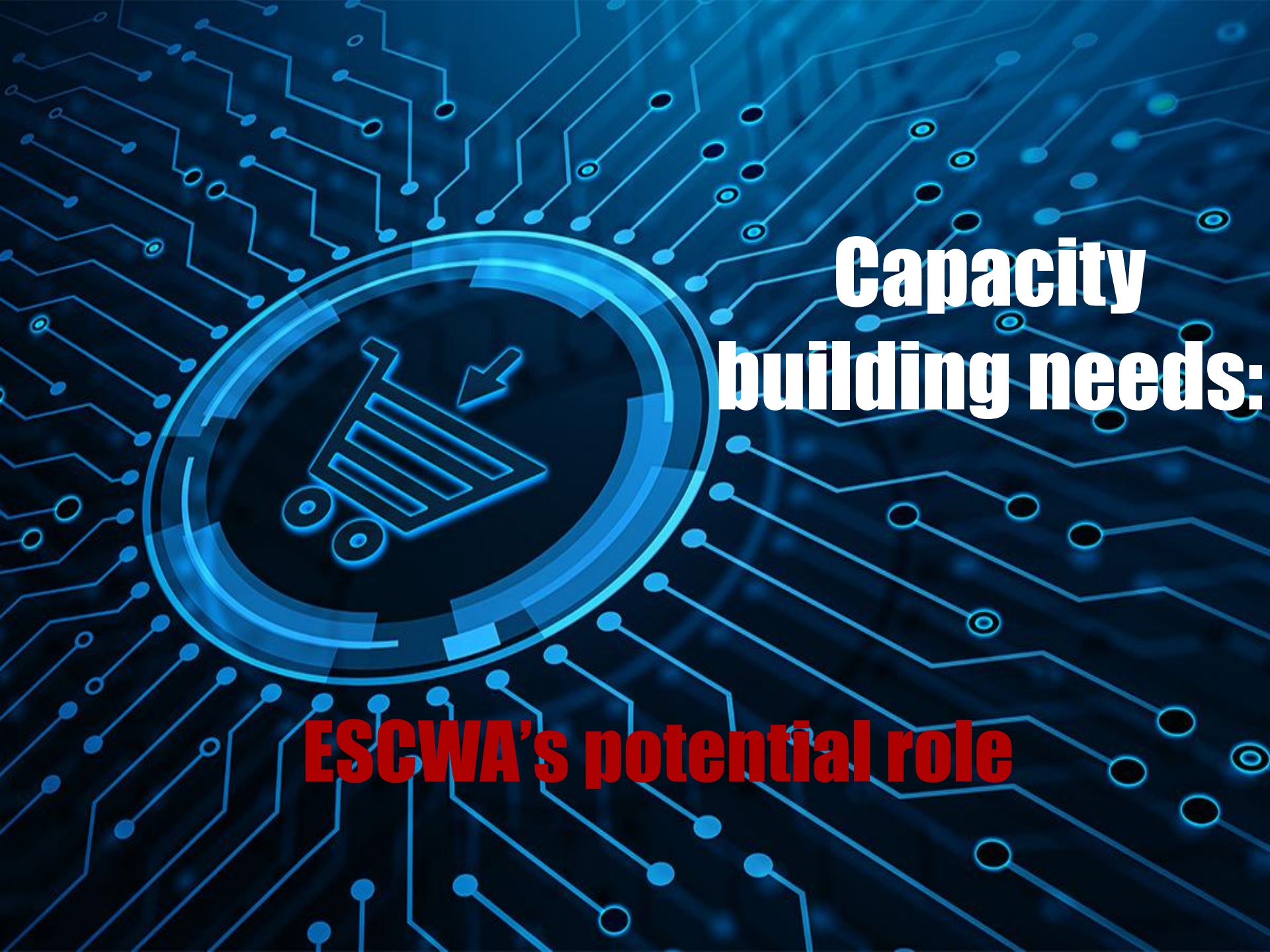
Past experiences with UNCTAD

UNITED NATIONS
UNCTAD

Previously UNCTAD assisted us in creating a Training/Conference Room

Helped us a lot in enhancing Capacity Building

Several Training on CP Law were held in this room for different stakeholders



Capacity building needs:

ESCWA's potential role

Legislation

Laws' amendment and development

- Consumer protection laws should be amended at the same pace as trade development ex: e-commerce
- Quality and safety standards should be properly developed, standardized, and enforced

Training and Equipment Needed



1- Consumer Protection issues (e.g. identification of fraud, counterfeit products, fair trade laws, price fixing, E-commerce etc.)

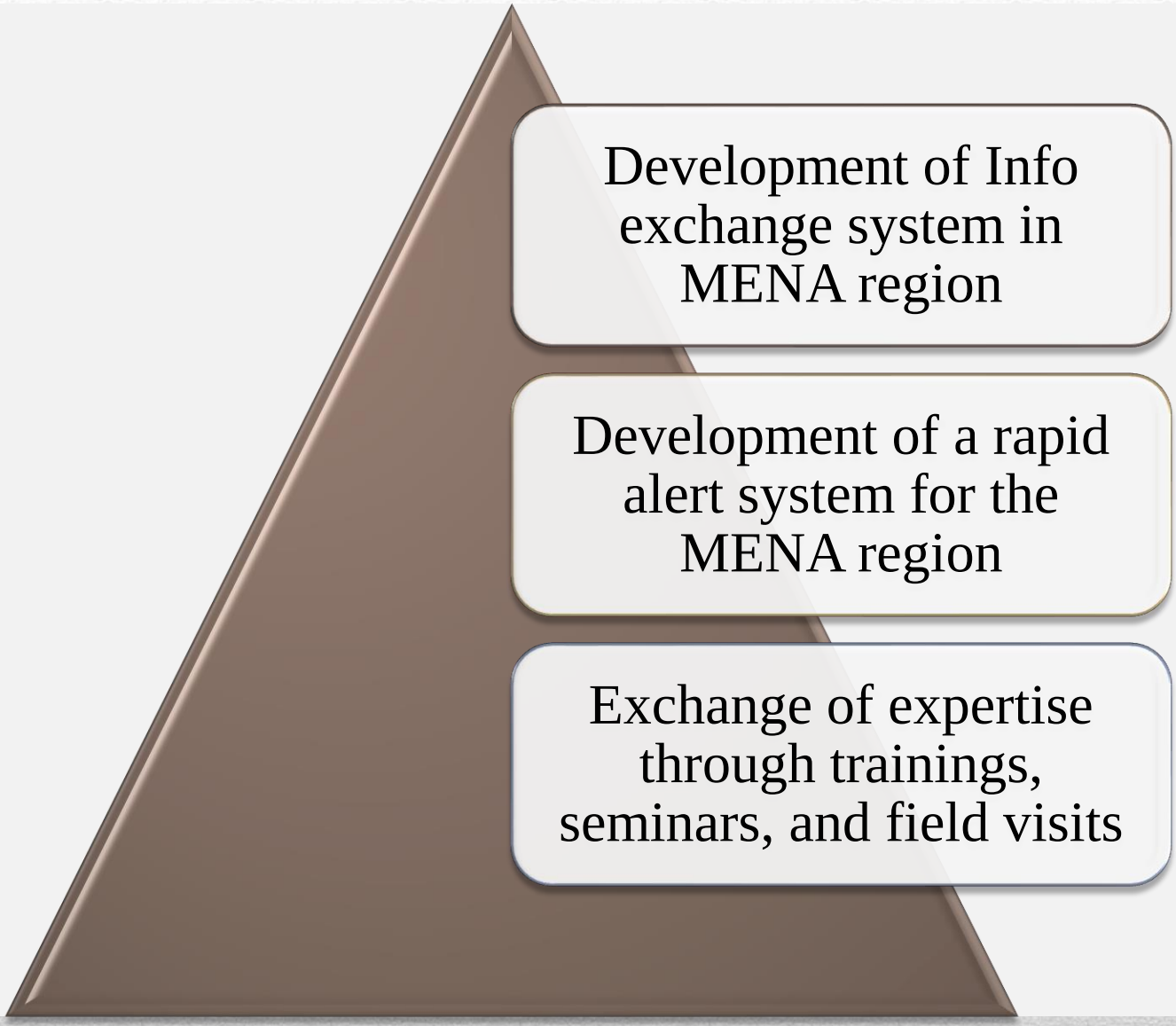
2- Management and Leadership skills

1- Manuals

2- Toolkit



In addition ESCWA can help in:



As a summary
Technical Assistance

- Review and update of CPL
- Support in the digitization of CPD work and inspection
- Inspection Equipment and Tools needed for CPD especially in the following sectors: Food safety, Metrology, e-commerce, …
- Training for new updates in Consumer Protection especially in e-business

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THANK YOU

BAHREIN, 2024