



ESCWA

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

Annual Report 2013

40 years with the Arab World



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United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

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Photo credit: ESCWA

RIMA KHALAF
Executive Secretary

FOREWORD

The Arab region has attained significant achievements during a time fraught with challenges. Today, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) is celebrating its fortieth anniversary and has identified several reasons to be optimistic in the present period of unrest; a period of broken and budding dreams, with its harsh realities and its hope for a bright future enjoyed by all.

In 2013, ESCWA continued to demonstrate its steadfast commitment to the Arab region, by living its worries and ambitions and sharing its dreams and concerns: a past full of challenging experiences, a present that is paving the way to an unclear future and a bright tomorrow desired by Arabs.

ESCWA works with member States to develop effective approaches to assist citizens in tackling the complex challenges of this fateful transition period. It assists countries in developing inclusive national development plans that benefit all persons, regardless of age, gender or social background. It believes that individuals should be the focus of political commitment and practical approaches and the measure of success in any plan, programme or roadmap.

The Commission's work is multi-dimensional but its approach has always focused on achieving regional consensus to highlight the region's priorities at international events and in treaties. It is extremely aware of the importance of regional integration in advancing the citizens of the Arab world.

The ESCWA family has grown to include Libya, Morocco and Tunisia, broadening the Commission's regional reach and adding new dimensions and elements to its work. As the Commission's presence in the region grows, so does its ability to deliver on the promise of regional integration, which ESCWA incorporates as a key issue in every economic and social development priority area. ESCWA spares no effort in striving to secure the benefits of regional integration when working on access to knowledge and technology; just and equitable economic development; women empowerment; the sustainable management of natural resources; development during crises and instability; poverty alleviation; and youth engagement.

Regional integration calls for a holistic approach to development; always recognizing the local as part of the regional and the regional as part of the global. ESCWA will continue to bring together relevant stakeholders from across the region and develop strategic relationships to exchange views and agree on ways forward regarding all aspects of economic and social development. It aims to build fruitful partnerships, similar to its alliance with the League of Arab States, which shares the Commission's desire to achieve regional integration as the basis for a new development approach in the Arab world, so as to ensure the well-being of all citizens.

ESCWA strives to assist Governments and civil society actors in consolidating and capitalizing on political transitions. It therefore held a series of discussions throughout 2013, with a view to building consensus on the appropriate political and economic courses of action.

National development planning is increasingly benefitting from the depth and breadth of the Commission's technical expertise that its regional perspective and interdisciplinary approach can provide. In 2013, ESCWA endeavoured to work closely with Governments at their request in this regard. ESCWA is playing a key role in preparing for the post-2015 development agenda, taking into account regional specificities and requirements, so as to ensure equitable, inclusive and sustainable development. It is leading the intergovernmental process, in collaboration with the League of Arab States, to identify regional sustainable development goals.

Women empowerment and gender equality are central to the Commission's work, in collaboration with Governments and civil society institutions. Member States unanimously adopted the Kuwait Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women at the sixth session of the ESCWA Committee on Women. The Palestinian case is always visible in the work of the United Nations and always present in the global conscience. The Commission's work on the issue is varied and reflects its solidarity with Palestine. ESCWA hosted the Prime Ministers of Lebanon and the Palestinian National Authority in Beirut to commemorate the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. ESCWA also provided institutional strengthening and technical capacity development to Palestine through workshops, training sessions and technical advisory missions targeting Palestinian civil servants. Moreover, ESCWA continues to highlight the plight of the Palestinian people by preparing the Secretary-General's annual report on the effects of the Israeli occupation, in cooperation with other United Nations entities, for consideration by the General Assembly.

As ESCWA begins the next chapter of its history, it salutes the resilience, dedication and resolve of its staff members, who often work in challenging conditions. It renews its promise to the peoples of the Arab region and the international community to progress towards a future abounding with bright prospects, built by the region's citizens to secure a better, diverse and peaceful tomorrow, founded on human rights and dignity for all.



Photo credit: Ayman Moadad - edited by Ghazal Lababidi

ESCWA IN BRIEF



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40 YEARS SERVING THE ARAB REGION

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) marked its fortieth year in 2013. The Commission was established pursuant to resolution 1818 (LV) of the United Nations Economic and Social Council to boost economic activity in its Member States, strengthen cooperation between them and address developmental challenges at the regional level.

The Commission serves a region of tremendous diversity, which has witnessed tumultuous change and plays a crucial role in the global economy and in international peace and security. Since its establishment, ESCWA has been hosted by three Arab capitals: Beirut, Baghdad, and Amman. It has grown to encompass 17 Member States: Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen, thus covering nearly all Arab countries.

Over the past 40 years, the Commission has worked hand in hand with countries in the region, supporting their efforts to realize sustainable economic and social development. Major technical cooperation projects and capacity-building activities were undertaken in response to the needs and priorities of Member States. The Commission offers a platform for inclusive and open debate on a variety of social and economic issues, with a view to sharing good practices and lessons learned throughout the Arab region. Furthermore, the analytical work of ESCWA has informed policymakers and helped them reach consensus on some of the major socioeconomic policy challenges that the region has faced.

ESCWA is one of five regional commissions, the regional arms of the Economic and Social Council, which act as conduits between the global and regional arenas, ensuring that regional priorities are discussed and considered in international debates. As a growing number of issues can no longer be addressed effectively at the national level alone, regional commissions are playing an increasingly significant role by providing technical expertise and platforms for collaboration, analysis, advice and sharing of good practices at the regional level.

There are eight intergovernmental bodies at ESCWA: the Technical Committee of senior officials; and seven specialized subsidiary committees that support the formulation of the work programme of the Commission and offer a platform for interaction between specialists from Member States and ESCWA staff. These committees report to the main governing body of ESCWA, which meets once every two years.

FIGURE 1: ESCWA AND THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

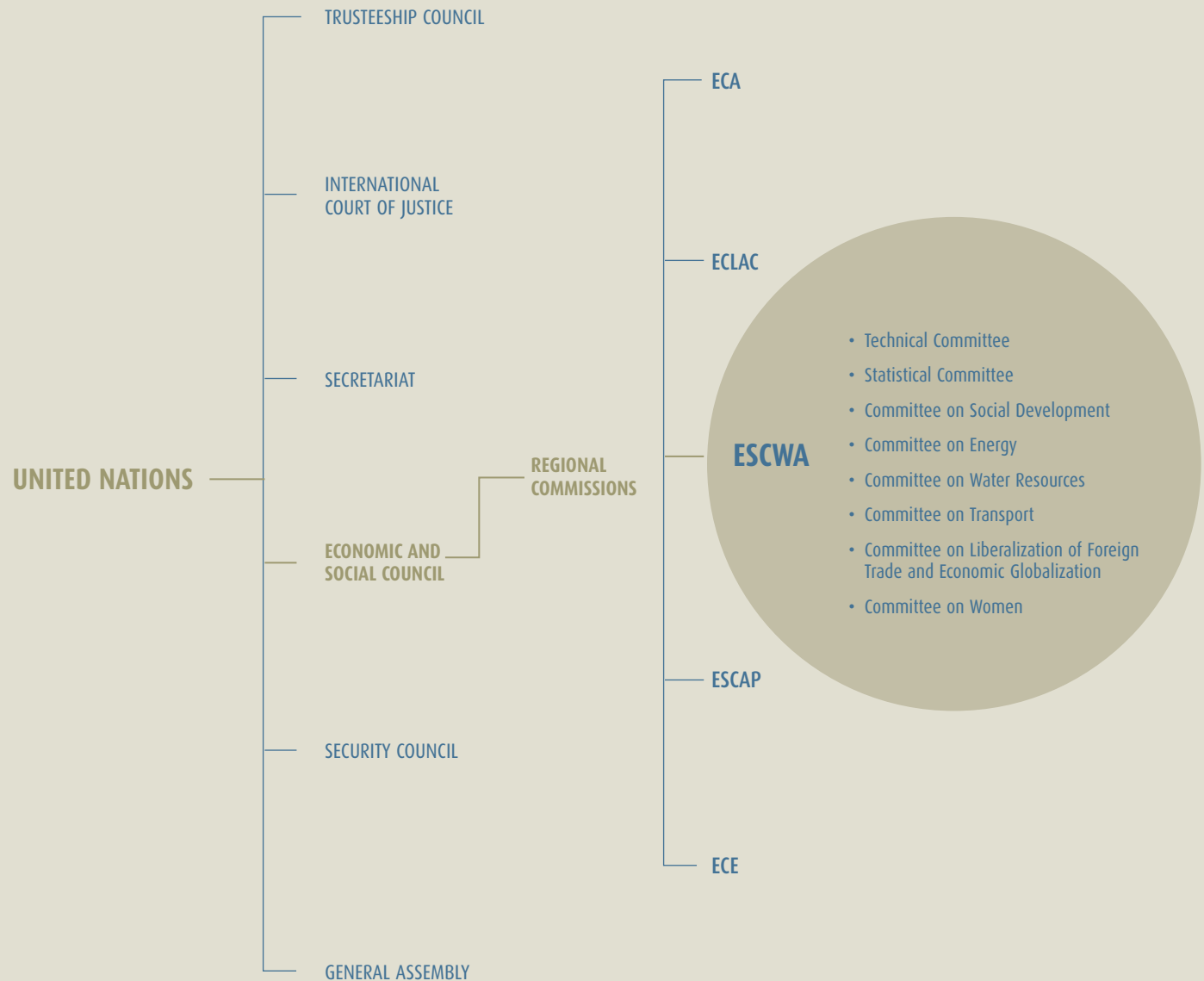
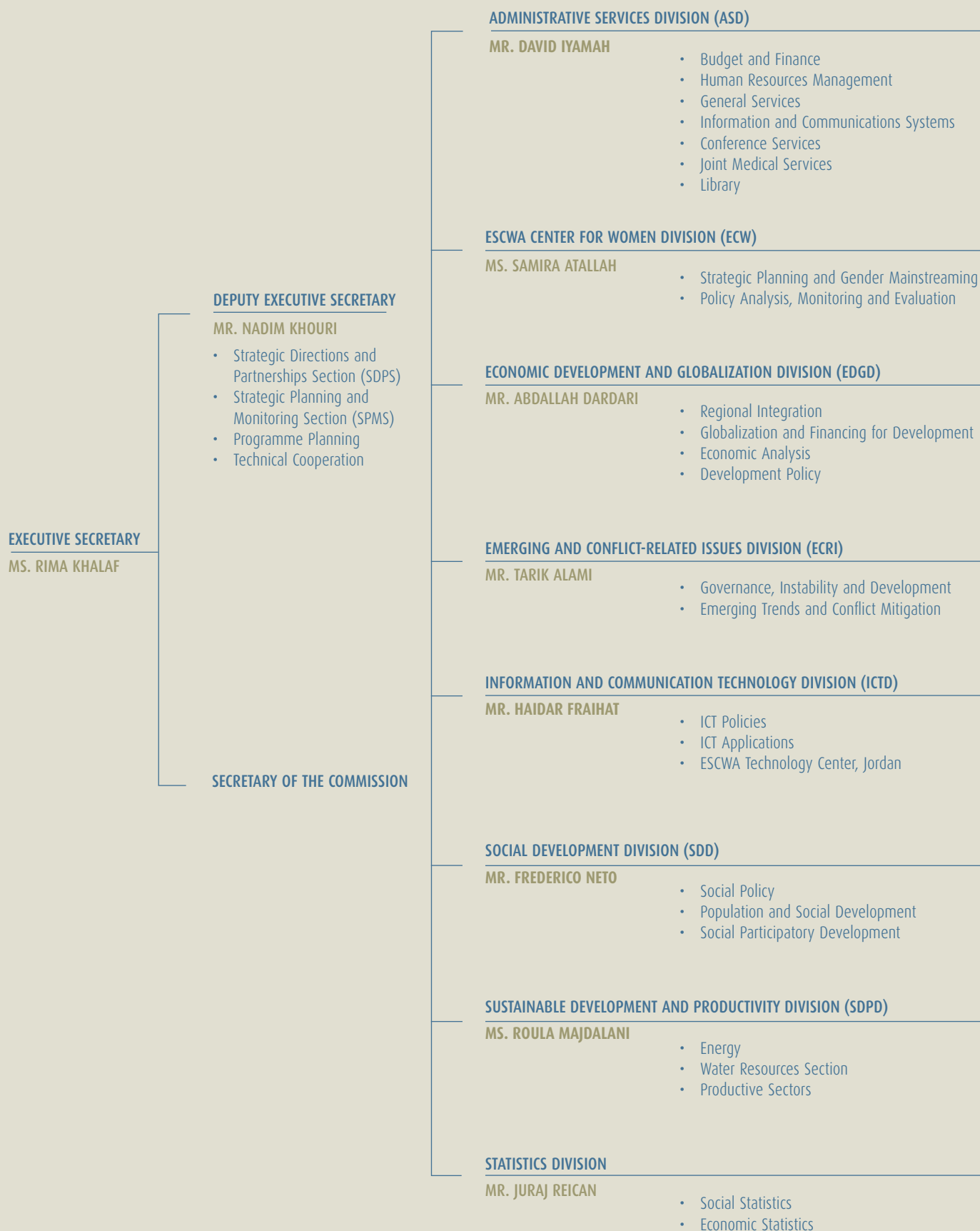


FIGURE 2: ESCWA'S ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



ESCWA EMPLOYS 379 STAFF OF WHICH 42% ARE WOMEN

The work programme of ESCWA is implemented through seven subprogrammes, supported by Administrative Services Division.

Currently, ESCWA employs 379 staff of which 42 per cent are women, a far higher share than is typical for the Arab region in general (25 per cent on average). Furthermore, women occupy 40 per cent of senior managerial positions at ESCWA, a significant gain since 2010, when this indicator stood at only about 13 per cent. Finally, in 2013, two thirds of international staff appointed at ESCWA were from countries that were either underrepresented or unrepresented in the United Nations Secretariat. Thus, the internal practices of ESCWA clearly demonstrate commitment to equitable gender and geographic representation.

ESCWA IN NUMBERS

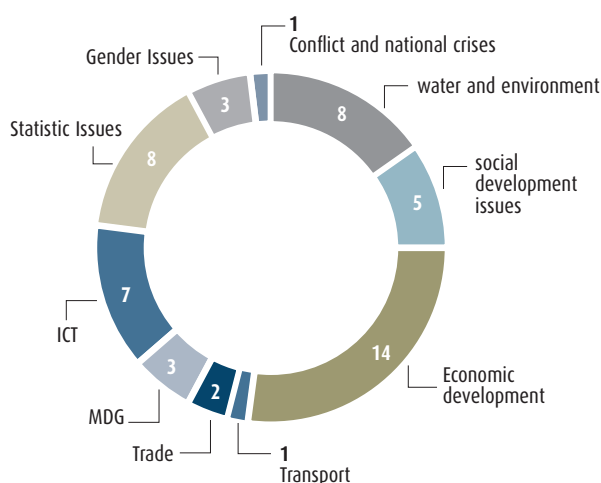
ESCWA strives to ensure an optimal implementation of its programme of work and enhance its value added services to Member States. The Commission's results-oriented approach to planning and implementation sets priorities across subprogrammes, with interdisciplinary outputs and outcomes. This approach enhances synergies between the normative work of ESCWA and the technical assistance it provides to Member States; it also places a stronger emphasis on practical and measurable outcomes.

During the biennium 2012-2013, ESCWA achieved an **implementation rate of 98 per cent** of its regular budget programme, with 457 outputs implemented. This is a significant improvement over implementation rates that the Commission achieved in 2008-2009 (82 per cent) and 2010-2011 (96 per cent).

ESCWA also sought to elevate the importance of programme evaluations, finalizing evaluations of **two of the seven subprogrammes** and **two regional projects**. The findings and recommendations of the evaluations will be used to enhance areas of identified strengths and address gaps and weaknesses, as well as to improve future activity planning.

During 2013, ESCWA completed **49 technical advisory missions** (figure 3) that included convening national workshops on a variety of subjects such as water and environment, social development issues, economic development, transport, trade, statistics, and gender issues. The technical advisory services of ESCWA built the capacity of close to 470 officials in the following areas: formulating and implementing policies; measuring the performance of public programmes; building on successful initiatives to better address public needs; and learning from other regional experiences to strengthen policies and programmes. In addition, two study tours were organized in the fields of economics, sustainable developments and social issues.

FIGURE 3: TECHNICAL ADVISORY MISSIONS BY TOPIC



Source: ESCWA

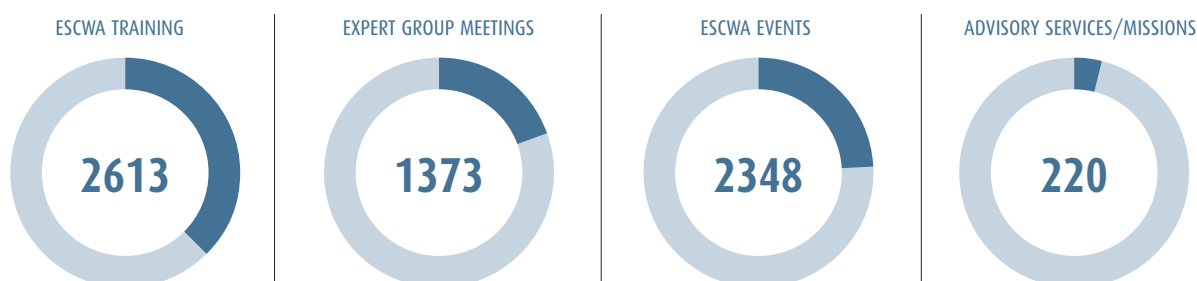
Note: Some missions cover more than one topic.

FIGURE 4: NUMBER OF ESCWA ACTIVITIES, 2013



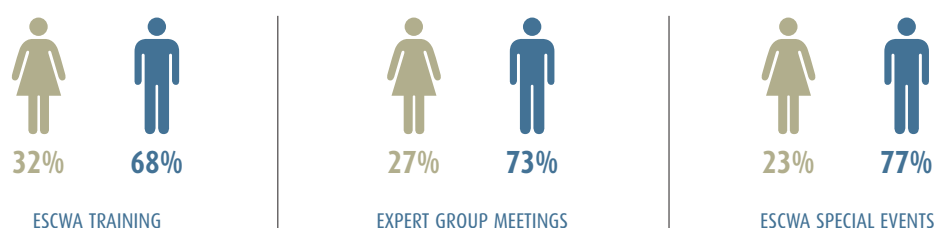
Source: ESCWA

FIGURE 5: NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN ESCWA ACTIVITIES, 2013



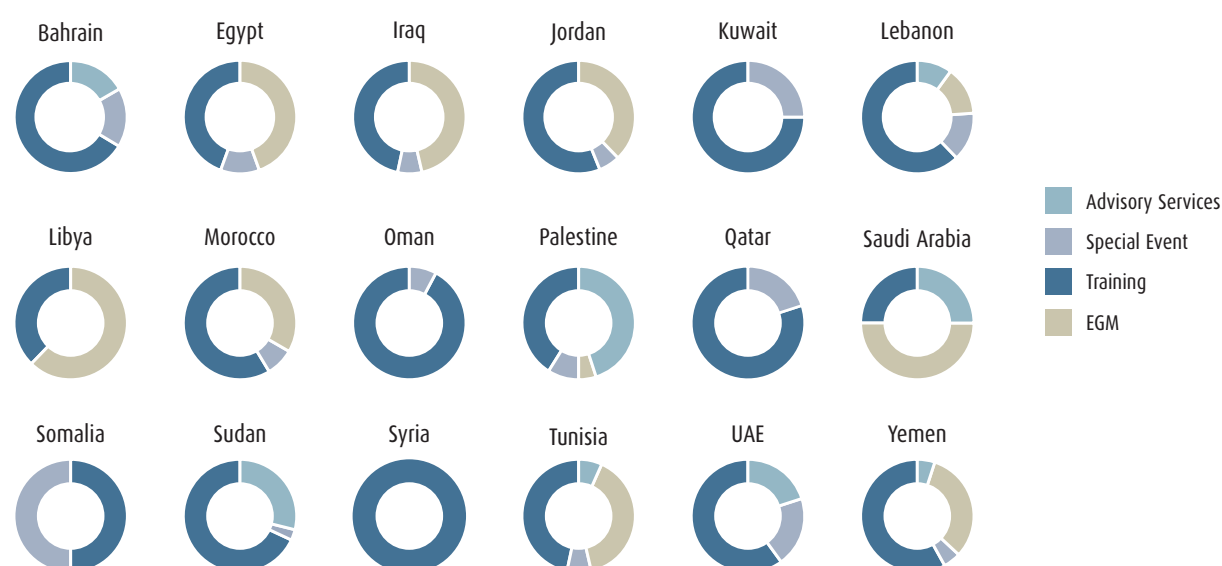
Source: ESCWA

FIGURE 6: PARTICIPANTS IN ESCWA ACTIVITIES BY GENDER, 2013 (PERCENTAGE)



Note: Figures are approximate, as gender-disaggregated data were not available for all events.
Source: ESCWA

FIGURE 7: TYPES OF SERVICES OFFERED BY ESCWA TO MEMBER STATES



Note: The charts represent the type of service nationals from each member state received.
The service was not necessarily provided in the participants' country of origin.
Source: ESCWA

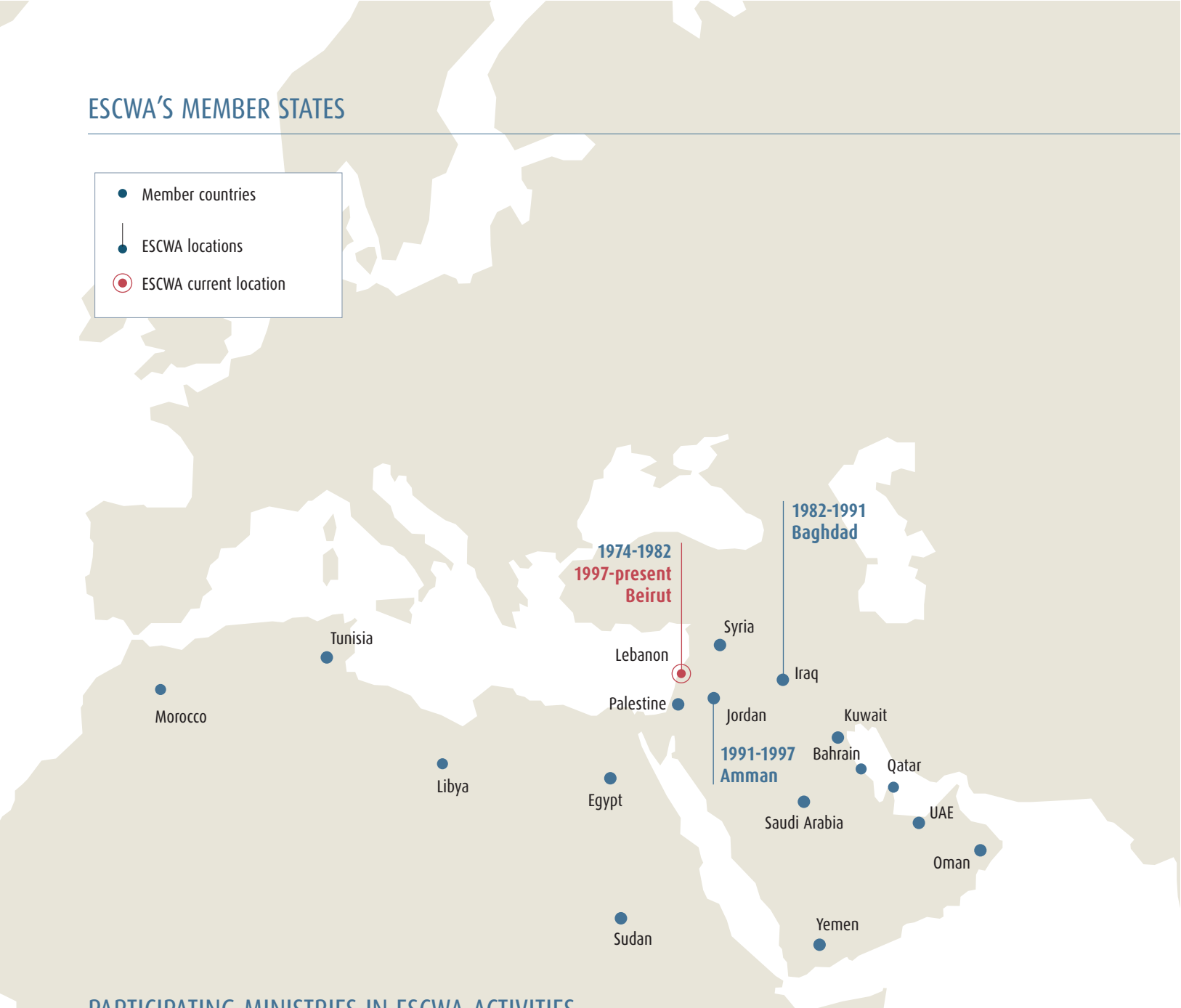
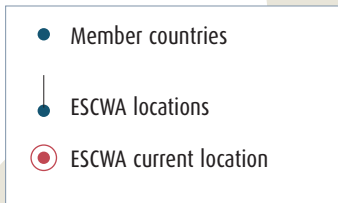
KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

ESCWA has embraced knowledge management as a philosophy for building a learning organization. To date, notable knowledge management activities include the following:

- Introducing and promoting the use of “Unite Connections” – a UN- wide online platform – to facilitate knowledge sharing across the Divisions of ESCWA and United Nations entities/teams, and serve as a project workspace.
- Planning for the development of the ESCWA website to serve as an interactive information portal, with a simplified structure and a strong organizational identity.
- Developing and adopting a systematic approach to records management across ESCWA.

A Knowledge Management Committee was established, mandated to recommend and implement initiatives to stimulate cultural change, information sharing and innovation. The Committee is developing an ESCWA-wide knowledge management road map that aims to build a culture of knowledge sharing and provide simple ways to access knowledge to enhance daily operations and decision-making in the Commission. The road map will also promote digitization and the web presence of ESCWA, and it will ultimately enhance the dissemination of ESCWA outputs and optimize the overall functioning of the Commission.

ESCWA'S MEMBER STATES



PARTICIPATING MINISTRIES IN ESCWA ACTIVITIES

• BAHRAIN

- eGovernment Authority
- General Organization For Youth and Sports
- Labour Market Regulatory Authority
- Legal Department, National Women's Machineries
- Municipalities and Local Authorities
- Supreme Council For Women
- Telecommunication Regulatory Authority

• EGYPT

- Central Agency for Public Mobilisation and Statistics
- Authority For Investment And Free Zone
- Legal Department, National Women's Machineries
- Ministry of Admin. Development
- Ministry of Communications and Information Technology
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Ministry of Manpower and Emigration, Egypt
- Ministry of Planning
- Ministry of State for Administrative Development
- Ministry of State for Youth
- National Telecommunication Institute
- National Telecommunication Regulatory Authority
- Statistics Institutions

• IRAQ

- Central Organization for Statistics
- Communication and Media Commission
- Inter-Agency Technical Committee = National Youth Policy
- Ministry of Communications
- Ministry of Construction and Housing
- Ministry of Justice
- Ministry of Migration and Displacement
- Ministry of Industry and Metals
- Ministry of Planning
- Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation
- Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities
- Ministry of Water Resources
- Ministry of Youth and Sports
- National Investment Commission (NIC)
- National Women Machineries
- Office of Deputy Prime Minister For Construction and Services

• JORDAN

- Central Bank of Jordan
- Higher Council For Youth
- Investment Board

- Jordanian Mail Council
- Legal Department, National Women's Machineries
- Ministry of Agriculture
- Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs
- Ministry of Culture
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources
- Ministry of Finance
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates
- Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
- Ministry of Industry and Trade
- Ministry of Information and Communications Technology
- Ministry of Interior
- Ministry of Labour
- Ministry of Municipal Affairs
- Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation
- Ministry of Public Sector Development
- Ministry of Public Works and Housing
- Ministry of Transport
- Ministry of Water and Irrigation (MWI)
- Municipalities and Local Authorities
- Municipality of Al-Kafarat
- National Information Technology Centre

- Prime Ministry
- Statistics Institutions

• KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

- Council of Civil Service
- Information Technology
- Majlis Ash-Shura
- Ministry of Civil Service
- Ministry of Communications and Information Technology
- Ministry of Economy and Planning
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Finance
- Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs
- Municipalities and Local Authorities
- Saudi Arabian General Investment Authority SAGIA

• KUWAIT

- Central Agency for Information Technology (CAIT)
- Legal Department, National Women's Machineries
- Ministry of Information, Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research
- Ministry of Information
- Ministry of Interior
- Ministry of Planning
- Ministry of State for Youth Affairs

• LEBANON

- Central Administration of Statistics
- Central Bank of Lebanon
- Directorate of General Security
- Directorate of Internal Security Forces
- Directorate of Urban Development
- Legal Department, National Women's Machineries
- Ministry of Agriculture
- Ministry of Defense
- Ministry of Education and Higher Education
- Ministry of Energy and Water
- Ministry of Finance
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants
- Ministry of Interior and Municipalities
- Ministry of Justice
- Ministry of Public Health
- Ministry of Public Works and Transport
- Ministry of Social Affairs
- Ministry of Telecommunications
- Ministry of Trade and Economy
- National Commission For Lebanese Women
- Office of the Minister of State for Administrative Reform
- Presidency of the Council of Ministers
- Telecommunications Regulatory Authority

• LIBYA

- Council Ministry
- General Administration For Economic and Social Planning
- General Directorate For Institutional and Human Development
- General Information Authority
- Libyan Interim Government
- Ministry of Communications and Informatics
- Ministry of Economics
- Ministry of Education and Civil Society
- Ministry of Exterior and International Cooperation
- Ministry of Planning
- National oil company

• MOROCCO

- Ministry in Charge of Moroccans Living Abroad and Migration Affairs
- Ministry of Economy and Finance
- Ministry of Equipment and Transportation
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation
- Ministry of General Affairs and Governance
- Ministry of ICT
- Ministry of Industry
- Ministry of Interior
- Ministry of Investment and Digital Economy, Statistics Directorate
- Ministry of Trade, Industry and Modern Technologies
- Ministry of Transport and Customs

- Ministry of Youth and Sports
- Municipalities and Local Authorities
- National Centre for Scientific and Technical Research
- Office of Railway Transport
- Statistics Institutions

• OMAN

- Authority For Electricity and Water
- General Secretariat of the Cabinet of Ministries
- Information Technology Authority
- Ministry of Commerce and Industry
- Ministry of Education, Information Technology Authority (ITA)
- Ministry of Finance
- Ministry of Manpower
- Ministry of National Economy
- Ministry of Regional Municipalities and Water Resources
- Ministry of Social Development
- Municipalities and Local Authorities
- National Women Machineries
- Rural Authorities
- State Audit Institution
- Supreme Council For Planning
- Telecommunication Regulatory Authority
- The Public Authority for Small and Medium Enterprises Development

• PALESTINE

- Department of Palestinians Expatriates Affairs
- General Personnel Council
- Higher Council For Youth and Sports
- Legal Department, National Women's Machineries
- Ministry of Awqaf and Religious Affairs
- Ministry of Culture
- Ministry of Environmental Affairs
- Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Technology MTIT
- Ministry of Labour
- Ministry of Local Government
- Ministry of Planning and Admin Development
- Ministry of Social Affairs
- Ministry of Telecom and Information Technology
- Ministry of Women Affairs
- Municipalities and Local Authorities
- Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS)
- Palestinian National Internet Naming Authority
- Palestinian Water Authority
- Statistics Institutions
- Zakat Fund

• QATAR

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Ministry of Information and Communications Technology
- Ministry of Labor
- Ministry of Municipalities and Urban Planning
- National Secretariat for Development Planning NSDP

• SUDAN

- Al-Jazirah State
- Central Bureau of Statistics
- Federal Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Communications and Information Technology MCIT
- Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Ministry of Foreign Trade
- Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs
- Ministry of Human Resources and Labour
- Ministry of Planning
- Ministry of Science and Telecommunications
- Ministry of Statistics
- Ministry of Welfare and Social Security
- Municipalities and Local Authorities
- Municipality of Khartoum
- National Council for Persons with Disabilities
- National Information Center
- National Investment Authority
- National Population Council
- National Telecommunication Corporation

- Pension Funds
- Poverty Monitoring Centre
- Social Security Funds
- State of Gadaref
- State of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
- State of South Darfur
- State of The North
- State of The White Nile
- Statistics Institutions
- The Higher Council for Strategic Planning
- Zakat Fund

• SYRIA

- Legal Department, National Women's Machineries
- Ministry of Communication and Technology
- Ministry of Health
- Municipalities and Local Authorities
- Syrian Investment Authority

• TUNISIA

- Government officials
- Legal Department, National Women's Machineries
- Merchant Marine and Ports Office
- Ministry of Development and International Cooperation
- Ministry of Equipment and Environment
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of ICT
- Ministry of Information and Communication Technologies
- Ministry of Investment and International Cooperation
- Ministry of Social Affairs
- Ministry of State Domains and Land Affairs
- Ministry of Trade
- Ministry of Transport
- National Institute of Statistics
- National School of Administration (NSA)
- National Statistics Counsel
- Presidency of the Government
- Prime Minister's Office
- Statistics Institutions

• UNTIED ARAB EMIRATES

- Administration For Youth and Cultural Affairs
- General Women's Union
- Legal Department, National Women's Machineries
- Ministry of Economy
- Ministry of Interior
- Ministry of Labour
- Prime Minister's Office
- Telecommunications Regulatory Authority

• YEMEN

- Aden ICT Incubator
- General Investment Authority
- Higher Council For Motherhood and Childhood
- Legal Department, National Women's Machineries
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Electricity and Energy
- Ministry of Emigrants Affairs
- Ministry of Industry and Trade
- Ministry of Local Governance
- Ministry of Oil and Minerals
- Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation
- Ministry of Public Works And Highways
- Ministry of Telecommunication and Information Technology
- Ministry of Transport and Customs
- Ministry of Youth and Sports
- Municipalities and Local Authorities
- National Information Center
- Presidency Cabinet
- Statistics Institutions
- Yemen Telecom

ESCWA ACTIVITIES BY TOPIC, 2013

A

- Advancement Of Women
- Agreement On International Roads In Arab Mashreq
- Agriculture and Food Security
- Age-Structural Transition
- Anti Corruption

B

- Bilateral Investment Treaties

C

- Carbon Emissions
- CEDAW
- +20 Beijing
- Citizenship
- Civic Engagement
- Climate Change
- Competitiveness In ICT Sector
- Cyber Legislation

D

- Development Finance/Aid For Trade
- Democratic Governance
- Aid For Trade
- Development Policy
- Dispute Settlement
- Demographic Trends
- Disability
- Development Agenda-post 2015
- Development Finance
- Digital Arabic Content
- Development Indicators

E

- E-Commerce
- Economic Statistics
- Economic and Social Dimensions of Crises
- Economic Modeling
- Education
- E-Government
- E-Learning
- Economic Growth
- Energy Efficiency
- Energy Resources
- Environment

F

- Fiscal Policy

G

- Gender Tools And Concepts
- Global Supply Chains
- Gender-Based Violence (GBV)
- Governance
- Gender Mainstreaming
- Gender Statistics
- Green Economy
- Green Technology

H

- Human Development
- Health

I

- Impact Of ICT On Social and Economic Development
- Industrial Innovation
- Industrial Statistics
- Integrated Management of Resources
- Integrated Social Policy
- Investment Laws/Policies
- Information and Communication Technology
- International Gender Instruments
- Institutional Frameworks and Legislation
- Institutionalizing Tools To Address Violence Against Women
- International Migration
- Internet Governance
- ICT Infrastructure
- Impact Of ICT On Social and Economic Development
- Infrastructure Investments
- Investment/Finance In ICT
- Islamic Finance

K

- Knowledge-Based Economy
- Knowledge Society

L

- Labour-Intensive Work Programs
- Legislation On Violence Against Women (VAW)
- Livelihood

M

- Measurement Models For ICT Impact
- Micro-Insurance
- Millenium Development Goals (MDGs)
- Monetary Policy
- Microcredit
- Macroeconomic Policy
- Middle Class Economics
- Migration Statistics
- Monitoring and Evaluation

N

- National Accounts Verification
- National Statistics Strategies
- National Innovation Systems
- National Strategies For Women
- Negotiations

O

- Oil Data Compilation

P

- Participation and Dialogue
- Performance Indicators
- Poverty Mapping
- Political Transitions
- Program Cycle Management
- Pro-Poor Urban Development
- Partnership For Development
- Population Dynamics
- Population Census
- Poverty Reduction
- Protection For Women and Girls During War
- Public Administration
- Public-Private Partnerships

R

- Remittances
- Renewable Energy
- Role Of State and Civil Society In Gender Based Violence Elimination
- Research and Development In ICT
- Role Of ICT In SMES and Startups
- Role of Women In Negotiations and Decisions Making
- Role of Women In Peacebuilding and Post-War Reconstruction
- Rural Development

S

- Shared Water Resources
- System Of National Accounts 2008
- Social Protection
- Social Planning
- Social Movements
- Supply Chains
- Sustainable Transport
- Security Sector Reform
- Social Media
- Sectoral Statistics
- Sustainable Consumption and Production
- Sustainable Development
- Sustainable Energy

T

- Trade Logistics/Costs
- Transition management
- Trade Facilitation
- Trade
- Transport

W

- Water and Energy Nexus
- Water Resources
- Water Scarcity and Drought

Y

- Youth Employment
- Youth Policies

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

ESCWA activities are funded through the following sources: the United Nations regular budget; the Development Account; the Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation (RPTC); and other voluntary contributions.

TABLE 1. ESCWA'S BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES FOR BIENNIUM 2012-2013 (US\$)

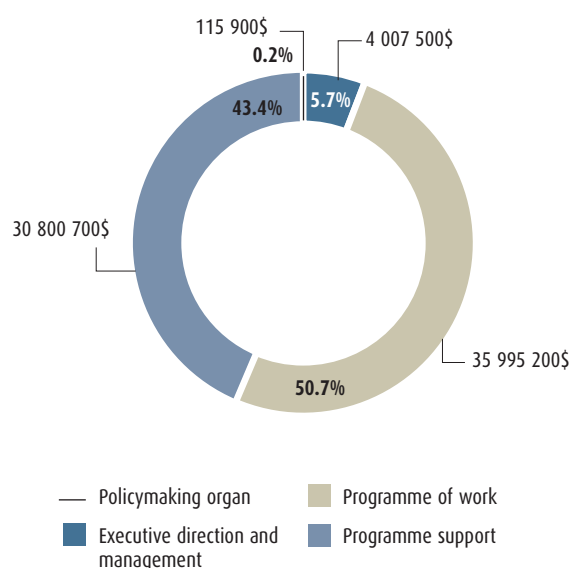
COMPONENT	BUDGET	EXPENDITURE
	2012-2013	31-Dec-13
Polymaking Organs	115,900.00	106,811.94
Executive Direction and Management	4,007,500.00	3,735,132.69
Programme of Work	35,995,200.00	34,979,897.13
Programme Support	30,800,700.00	30,381,214.12
Total Regular Budget	70,919,300.00	69,203,055.88
Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation	4,602,300.00	4,212,071.58
Safety and Security	12,068,600.00	11,991,299.81
Development Account and Extrabudgetary	8,193,209.10	4,271,826.17
Budget covered from Programme Support Account	825,193.96	825,193.96
Grand Total	96,608,603.06	90,503,447.40

Note: As of February 2014, reported expenditures are unofficial and unaudited.

Regular budget

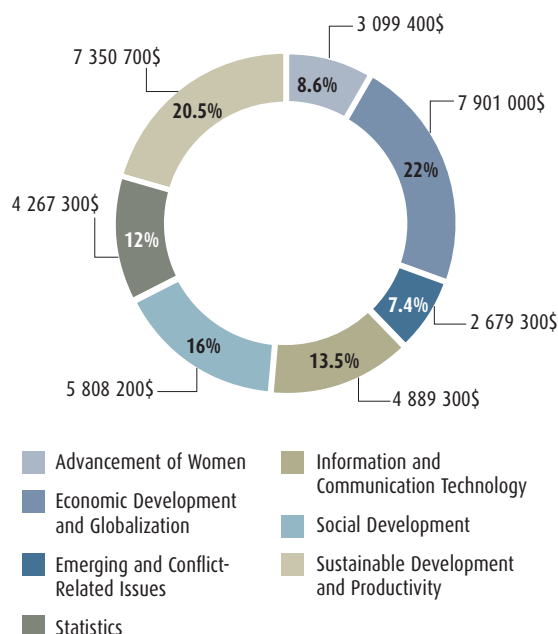
The United Nations regular budget provides funding for ESCWA to achieve the objectives and results set in its Strategic Framework, which is derived from the mandates given by the United Nations. All other funding sources of ESCWA activities are intended to support and complement the direction outlined through the regular budget.

FIGURE 8. DISTRIBUTION OF ESCWA 2012-2013 REGULAR BUDGET RESOURCES BY FUNCTIONAL AREA (TOTAL: US\$ 70.92 MILLION)



Source: ESCWA

FIGURE 9. DISTRIBUTION OF ESCWA 2012-2013 RESOURCES BY SUBSTANTIVE AREA OF WORK (TOTAL: US\$ 36 MILLION)



Source: ESCWA

Development Account

The Development Account (DA) is a funding programme for capacity-development projects, geared towards distinct development impact through national, subregional, regional and interregional economic and social cooperation between Member States. It enhances the quality and impact of the work of ESCWA by providing dedicated resources for operational capacity development projects.

Funding from DA supports projects, which are implemented within a biennium-specific theme (referred to as a tranche), to promote, strengthen and expand opportunities for South-South cooperation, share experiences and create synergies between the United Nations and other development interventions.

Under the seventh, eighth and ninth tranches of DA, ESCWA led in 2013 fourteen projects for a total of US\$7.5 million. The projects focus mainly on institutional capacity-development in areas such as climate change, trade facilitation, gender mainstreaming, youth policies, and migration.

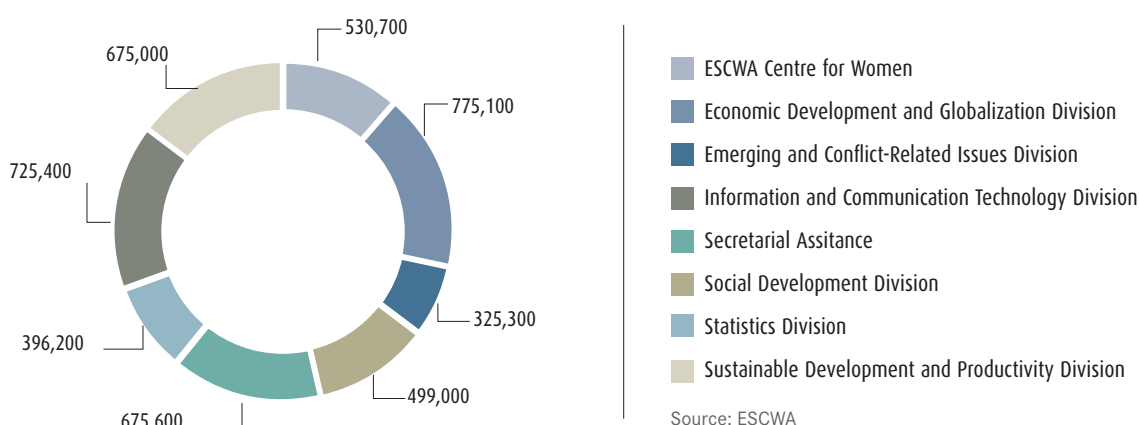
TABLE 2. DA PROJECTS AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2013

Name of Project	BUDGET	STATUS
SEVENTH TRANCHE		
Strengthening capacities in the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia region to negotiate bilateral investment treaties	502,200	Closed, December 2013
Strengthening Capacities of policy makers in the ESCWA region to formulate national youth policies and plans of action: Responding to the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY)	379,000	Closed, December 2013
Capacity-building on climate change mitigation for poverty alleviation in Western Asia	547,200	In progress (expected close date June 2014)
Regional Project for Strengthening Statistical Capacity for the ESCWA Countries in Energy Statistics and Energy Balance	509,000	In progress (expected close date December 2014)
Strengthening national capacities in ESCWA region in developing green production sectors	491,000	In progress (expected close date December 2014)
EIGHTH TRANCHE		
Academy of ICT Essentials for Government Leaders in the ESCWA Region (AIGLE)	509,000	In progress
Institutional and capacity building for Arab Parliaments and other stake holders for the implementation of SCR 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security	510,000	In progress
Strengthening capacities to utilize workers' remittances for development	464,000	In progress
Developing the capacities of the Arab countries for climate change adaptation by applying integrated water resources management tools	517,000	In progress
Building capacities in developing appropriate green technologies for improving the livelihood of rural communities in the ESCWA region (8th Tranche Additional)	591,000	In progress
NINTH TRANCHE		
Strengthening the statistical capacity of ESCWA Member States in producing and disseminating short-term economic indicators for sustainable growth	518,000	In progress
Promoting renewable energy investment for climate change mitigation and sustainable development	632,000	In progress
Strengthening national capacities for integrated, sustainable and inclusive population and development policies in the Arab region	714,000	In progress
Developing the capacity of ESCWA Member States to address the water and energy nexus for achieving sustainable development goals	525,000	In progress

Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation

The objective of the Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation (RPTC) is to develop the capacity of Member States to formulate and implement policies for sustainable economic and social development. The programme promotes cooperation and the sharing of experiences across countries and regions, and the building of knowledge networks to facilitate exchange and assistance. In its early years, RPTC activities focused on advisory services, training and field projects. Now, however, RPTC enables ESCWA to operationalize its normative work by developing targeted trainings to address issues identified through research and analysis while collecting field data and information which in turn informs its research and analytical activities. Further, RPTC has also shifted from providing ad hoc services to preparing country plans. These services are intended to bridge the gap between the strategic needs of individual countries and the regular budget resources of ESCWA. It allows the Commission to build on its unique advantages through well-established national and subregional networks of policymakers and technical experts, who are critical for long-term sustainability. Technical cooperation activities aim to achieve a multiplier effect by targeting cross-border issues that impact a wide range of beneficiaries.

FIGURE 10. DISTRIBUTION OF RESOURCES UNDER THE REGULAR PROGRAMME OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION (TOTAL: US\$ 4.6 MILLION)



Voluntary contributions

In 2013, ESCWA received over US\$2 million and commitments for over US\$4 million in voluntary contributions to implement national and regional activities under its seven subprogrammes. These activities and projects respond to the needs of the region in different sectors including water, environment, statistics, technology and innovation, social and economic development and gender. In addition, new projects were developed to respond to the emerging needs of ESCWA Member States in transition.

FIGURE 11. VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS (ALLOTMENTS RECEIVED- US\$)

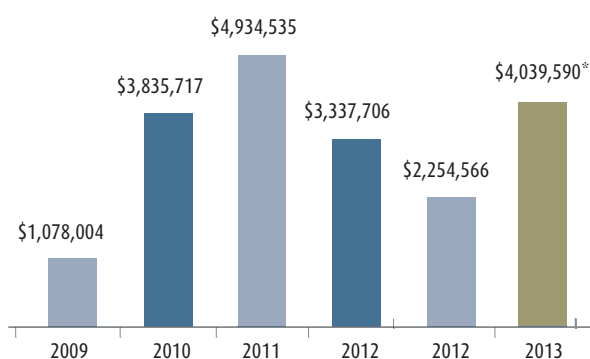


FIGURE 12. VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS BY DONOR TYPE, 2009-2013 (US\$)

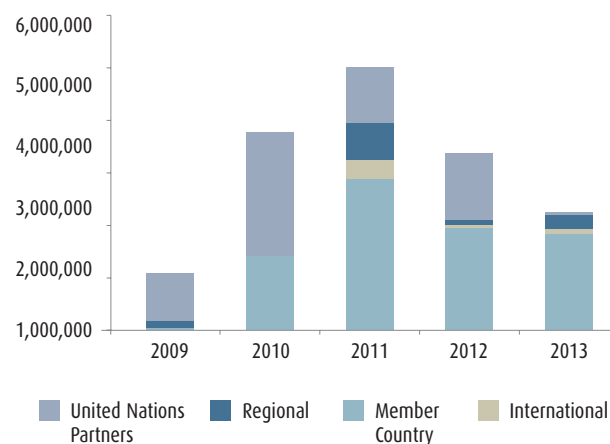


TABLE 3. EXTRABUDGETARY PROJECTS ACTIVE IN 2013

PROJECT	Start Date	Budget (US\$)	Status
Strengthening expertise and networking on foreign direct investment in Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, and Qatar	1 June 2005	296,523.00	Completed
International Comparison Program (ICP) for Western Asia.	21 June 2010	280,373.80	Completed
Assessment of the Impact of Climate Change on Water Resources and Socio-Economic Vulnerability in the Arab region	1 December 2010	3,418,859.10	In progress
Operations of the ESCWA Technology Centre for Development (ETC) in Amman, Jordan	1 January 2011	117,287.90	In progress
Promotion of the digital Arabic content industry through incubation - Phase III	31 May 2011	61,946.90	In progress
Strengthening regional cooperation in the area of population and development including national and regional capacity-building preparation for ICPD@20	1 July 2011	197,910.40	In progress
Substantive work programme of ESCWA Technology Centre for Development (ETC)	1 July 2011	340,142.40	In progress
Democratic transformation and prospects for the future in the Arab region	1 August 2011	738,338.70	Completed
Operationalizing ESCWA participatory approach in public policy process in ESCWA countries	1 August 2011	106,194.70	In progress
Establishing regional mechanism for improved monitoring and reporting on access to water supply and sanitation services in the Arab region (MDG+ Initiative)	1 December 2011	898,885.00	In progress
Adaptation of climate change in the water sector in the MENA region	1 May 2012	111,040.30	In progress
Policies to empower women in the Arab Region: Combating gender based violence	1 June 2012	43,723.90	Completed
Regional Workshop on Training Manual: Use of Census Data for Gender Analysis	1 August 2012	25,000.00	Completed
Social, economic and political reform in post conflict Syria: reconstruction and reconciliation	7 September 2012	67,160.00	Completed
High-level meetings on challenges of economic and social transition in the Arab region	25 October 2012	223,930.70	Completed
International Comparison Program for Western Asia (12-13 round)	1 December 2012	397,196.30	In progress
Syria Watch Brief	26 December 2012	19,250.00	Completed
Iraq Public Sector Modernisation Programme – Phase II	1 January 2013	633,278.50	In progress
Support membership in the Global Trade Analysis Project (GTAP)	1 February 2013	43,805.30	In progress
National Agenda for the Future of Syria	26 June 2013	464,531.00	In progress
Capacity workshop on assessing the current situation of the electricity sector in Yemen to induce strengthened sustainability and reduced environmental impact	30 August 2013	21,077.00	In progress
Regional advocacy and dissemination of the Arab Millennium Development Goals Report 2013	1 November 2013	51,100.00	In progress
GRAND TOTAL		8,557,554.80	

2013 ANNUAL REPORT: A NEW APPROACH TO SHOWCASING OUR IMPACT

ESCWA follows a strategic framework that guides its work and provides focus to its activities. It is centred around three pillars, which are divided into 12 sub-themes. This report is built along the same structure, highlighting the variety and cross-cutting nature of ESCWA activities.

TABLE 4. THE ESCWA STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Regional integration	Equitable growth and sustainability	Good governance and resilience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and technology management • Sustainable infrastructure • Socioeconomic coordination • Food, water and energy security • Gender-sensitive policies and legislation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equity, inclusion and employment • Competitive knowledge-based economies • Sustainable natural resource management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation and citizenship • Socioeconomic impacts of conflict and occupation • Institutional development • Resilience to natural and human-made crisis
Statistics for evidence-based policymaking		
Advancement of women and gender mainstreaming		

In the subsequent chapters, the Commission's activities in 2013 will be described in the light of the sub-themes listed in table 4. Some topics may appear in more than one chapter, as the Commission works on a variety of topics from multiple angles. Each chapter begins with a brief table of contents describing the themes it covers.

The final section of the report is devoted to the wide range of strategic partnerships entered into by ESCWA with stakeholders in Governments, regional organizations, non-governmental organizations, academia, the private sector as well as United Nations entities and intergovernmental organizations.

The report concludes with a list of key publications.



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REGIONAL INTEGRATION

ONE OF THE OVERARCHING GOALS OF ESCWA, AND THE FIRST PILLAR OF ITS STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK, IS TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE PROSPERITY OF MEN AND WOMEN IN THE ARAB REGION THROUGH STRENGTHENING REGIONAL INTEGRATION IN ALL AREAS, PARTICULARLY THE FOLLOWING:



◆ Food, water and energy security	24
◆ Knowledge and technology management	26
◆ Gender-sensitive plans and policies	27
◆ Socioeconomic coordination	28
◆ Sustainable infrastructure	30

The ideal of an integrated Arab region has been pursued for decades. Indeed, Arab countries have a shared language, culture and history, as well as a longstanding tradition of cooperation and collaboration. They are also highly diverse in their economic and demographic characteristics, and in their capacity to tackle the challenges they face, including migration and displacement, high unemployment especially affecting youth, an increasingly urbanized population, and shortages of arable land, food and water. In the past three years, these issues have been exacerbated by the political and economic turmoil that has threatened to destabilize the region and has jeopardized its peace and security. In this context, regional integration is more relevant than ever, as solutions to these tremendous challenges must be agreed upon at the regional level.

FOOD, WATER AND ENERGY SECURITY

The first of five target areas for regional integration is the nexus of food, water and energy security. Coordination between Arab countries towards securing these essential preconditions for economic and social development is a central aim of ESCWA.

Energy

Energy is essential to all economic activities, especially in the Arab region where it contributes significantly to the gross domestic product (GDP) of most countries. Energy serves as an input for production processes, as a consumer commodity and as a source of government revenue (through dividends, corporate taxes and concession rights and so on). However, to achieve sustainable development, counteracting the adverse impact on the environment and the depletion of energy resources, it is essential to improve energy efficiency, disconnect natural resource use and environmental impact from economic growth and enhance access to data on energy.

During 2013, ESCWA focused on strengthening the **statistical capacity** of its Member States and building their capacity to formulate and adopt policies to promote **green production** and enhance energy efficiency and renewable energy for improved energy security and sustainable resource use and management. This work was conducted within the context of the initiative, Sustainable Energy for All, launched by the Secretary-General of the United Nations in September 2011.

First, ESCWA implemented a project on energy statistics for the Arab region and convened three



Photo credit: Florence Pintus

meetings in 2013 in coordination with the International Energy Agency (IEA) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA). Further, study visits were offered to participants from the Sudan and Yemen to train on monthly oil data compilation and reporting to the Joint Oil Data Initiative (JODI) Secretariat at the International Energy Forum Secretariat (IEFS). Participants from Iraq also visited the IEA headquarters in Paris to train on energy statistics and balance.

Second, ESCWA held a workshop to build the capacity of regional stakeholders to promote the exchange of experience and lessons learned on oil and gas pricing parameters, influencing energy efficiency and renewable energy activities. The workshop was attended by government officials from ministries of energy, oil, and electricity in ESCWA Member States, representatives from the League of Arab States and from the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR). This workshop enabled participants to understand the economics of oil and gas from a supply and demand perspective as well as the different factors and actors involved in determining cost and pricing. It further allowed participants to understand the effects of pricing on the prospects of actions related to renewable energy and energy efficiency, and the connection between oil and gas market pricing and climate change. The workshop identified priority areas in which technical capacity-building programmes are needed.

Finally, ESCWA promoted policies and initiatives for the use of **renewable energy** resources for integrated rural development planning and implementation.

This was discussed in a regional conference on “Renewable Energy and Sustainable Development in Rural Areas of the ESCWA Region”, which resulted in recommendations on expanding the use of renewable energy in rural areas, and the need to implement a road map to boost renewable energy and energy efficiency projects, while taking into account the legal and regulatory situations in each country. Also, ESCWA equipped a training/educational facility in Lebanon to promote locally available renewable energy resources, such as energy from residues and waste, small hydro, solar and wind, with models of selected renewable energy applications. This facility will enhance the capacity of Member States to develop effective policies and programmes to scale up the use of renewable energy, improve access to renewable energy services in rural areas, and contribute to the overall energy security of the region.

Water and food security

In an era of increasing water scarcity and growing concerns about **water security, food security, energy security and climate change** in the Arab region, ESCWA partnered with the German Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources (BGR) on activities related to the integrated management of **shared water resources**.

During 2013, this cooperation promoted the application of integrated approaches to water resource management with a special emphasis on shared water resources. Together, ESCWA and BGR produced the “Inventory of Shared Water Resources in Western Asia” while comprehensively assessing the state of transboundary surface and groundwater resources in the region, thus establishing a sound scientific basis to inform discussion and foster dialogue. The Inventory was first launched globally at a seminar on Shared Water Resources Management in the Arab Region co-convened by ESCWA, BGR and the League of Arab States during World Water Week 2013 in Stockholm. The event provided a forum to discuss recent developments in regional cooperation on shared water resources, including the activities of the Arab Ministerial Water Council. It further served as a platform to showcase the updated knowledge base of the Inventory to support further cooperation in the Arab region. The regional launch took place on United Nations Day (24 October) in tandem with a conference on the water, food, and energy nexus that ESCWA co-convened with the Hariri Foundation for Sustainable Human Development.

The launch events ensured the widespread dissemination of the Inventory and helped to raise awareness regarding the number of surface and

THE DUBAI DOCUMENT AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS)

The outcome document of the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) included a road map for international and regional action on sustainable development and management of environmental resources.

By leading the “Arab Regional Implementation Meeting for the twentieth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-20)”, ESCWA supported Member States to adopt unanimously a set of recommendations in the form of the “Dubai Document”, which guided Arab negotiators in subsequent meetings related to CSD-20, the High-Level Political Forum and the Open Working Group on SDGs. Consequently, ESCWA led regional consultation meetings on SDGs, and as a result Arab countries prepared and adopted a matrix of key benchmarks at global, regional and national levels, to be used while discussing conceptual issues which will form the basis for the upcoming SDGs.

The “Dubai Document” represents an agreement of Arab countries present at the meeting to work on integrating the three pillars of sustainable development in a balanced manner and make every effort to achieve sustainable development in accordance with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, emphasized the concept of the right to development for all people and groups which should be in accordance with national priorities and lead to the provision of a decent and generous standard of living for all, and welcomed the initiatives and national strategies in the field of green growth/green development in the region.

Later in 2013, ESCWA organized the “Arab Consultative Meeting on SDGs” to define regional priorities and goals related to sustainable development and above all, involve the Arab region in the global process to formulate the new development goals, and to review the outcomes from the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations and the meetings of the Open Working Group on SDGs. It also provided a platform to discuss a regional perspective on SDGs in line with Arab regional priorities and progress made towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The meeting revealed the need for ESCWA and its partners to develop, based on the outcomes of 2013 consultative processes, a regional proposal on SDGs reflecting Arab perspectives.

groundwater resources that are shared between countries in Western Asia.

Finally, the MDG+ Initiative established a regional mechanism to monitor access to water services in the Arab region. Under the auspices of the Arab Ministerial Water Council of the League of Arab States, in cooperation with regional partners, and with funding provided by the Swedish International Development

Cooperation Agency (SIDA), ESCWA implemented regional and national workshops supporting the collection of national MDG+ Initiative indicators. As a result, 17 Arab countries are actively reporting on accessibility, affordability, reliability and quality of water supply and sanitation services through this regional initiative.

KNOWLEDGE AND TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT

The second area of regional integration, knowledge and technology management, is an essential driver and facilitator of development and productivity for many sectors of the economy.

Information and communication technology (ICT) plays an increasingly important role in development processes, leading countries in the Arab region to place ICT at the core of their development policies. The rates of adoption and use of ICTs in the Arab region have grown in recent years, with higher penetration rates recorded in 2012 at 105.1 per cent for mobile phone subscribers, 34.8 per cent for Internet users, and 15.9 per cent for mobile broadband Internet subscribers. Further, the ICT sector is receiving more attention in the region as Governments and various stakeholders discuss building an information society and regional integration in the digital world. Indeed, as shown by their ICT initiatives, Arab countries are keen to use ICT as a platform for social and economic development. However, more efforts are needed to

enhance access to information and knowledge in the Arab region. Although variations between Arab countries exist, many struggle with inadequate ICT infrastructure, low broadband Internet penetration rates, unaffordable access, and legislative weakness in guaranteeing access to information.

In 2013, ESCWA hosted a workshop on “e-Government Best Practices” in Amman, which was attended by 14 Member States, and which resulted in a proposal to form a **Council of e-Government Directors** in 2014. Further, in partnership with the Centre for Information, Training, Documentation, and Studies in Communication Technologies (CIFODE'COM) in Tunis, ESCWA organized the Capacity-Building Workshop on “Measuring the Use and Impact of ICT”, with a focus on generating measurably comparable indicators on the interregional and intraregional levels. The workshop contributed to raise awareness and train participants on **ICT measurement models of the use and impact of e-services** (such as e-government and e-commerce) on their social and economic development.

At the global level, the World Summit on Information Society (WSIS) process, which started in Geneva in 2003, has evolved towards leaning more on ESCWA to serve the United Nations global agenda vis-à-vis its Member States. As part of the evolution of the WSIS process, some thematic areas relevant to the Arab region have received more emphasis, such as Internet governance, smart governments, accessibility and privacy, cybersecurity and cyber safety, e-democracy and e-participation, among others.

Throughout 2013, ESCWA continued to enhance and harmonize legal and regulatory frameworks required for the transformation of the Arab region towards a **knowledge based economy**. ESCWA is leading the work of the Executive Bureau for Joint Coordination through the **Arab Internet Governance Forum (IGF)** process. In 2013, the Bureau published the “Reference Framework for the Arab IGF Structure and Components: 2012-2015”, and ESCWA is managing the membership of the Arab Multi-stakeholder Advisory Group (AMAG) to engage a wider participation of stakeholders and new members from the region in the Arab IGF process. As an umbrella organization for the Arab IGF, together with the League of Arab States, ESCWA organized the second annual meeting of the Arab IGF to promote dialogue and cooperation in the Arab region towards harmonizing and reaching common understandings in the area of Internet governance. Among the 800 participants were 14 Arab ministers, and experts representing governments, the private sector, civil society organizations, academia, the technical community, and regional and international organizations.

DR. NAGWA EL-SHENAWI

Undersecretary for Information and Strategic Planning, Ministry of communication and Information technology in Egypt

“Let me congratulate you for the tremendous efforts exerted by your team over the past year in the areas of ICT measurements and ICT impact. The studies that you and the team conducted in these areas were very useful for me and the whole information centre team at the Egyptian Ministry of communication and Information Technology. As well as the events that had been held by ICT division team were very successful not only in the topics presented but also in selection of the experts who impressed us with their knowledge and experience”.

GENDER-SENSITIVE PLANS AND POLICIES

The third axis of regional integration concerns gender-sensitive policy development. Policy legislation and gender mainstreaming, sex-disaggregated data and gender-based violence are the three major subcomponents of the Commission's work in this area.

Recognizing the region's political transitions as an opportune moment to formulate inclusive, gender-sensitive national plans and policies within joint regional frameworks, ESCWA continues to respond to regional trends and national demands on issues of gender equality and the empowerment of women. ESCWA's capacity-building initiatives and efforts to disseminate good practices have resulted in an increased number of countries taking concrete steps toward the elimination of discrimination against women.

Gender-sensitive policies and legislation, and gender mainstreaming

Notably, ESCWA held an expert group meeting on the assessment of gender mainstreaming initiatives in governmental institutions for National Women's Machineries, the entities within Governments that are entrusted with women's issues. Experts discussed **approaches to gender mainstreaming in their respective governmental institutions**. The experiences of Egypt, Morocco and Palestine in developing gender-responsive budgets provided an especially useful opportunity for knowledge transfer and regional cooperation. Furthermore, through its advisory services, ESCWA assisted Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates to mainstream gender in their respective national development strategies and action plans in order to eliminate gender discrimination and inequalities. These efforts contributed to an analytical study, entitled "Review of the Status of Gender Mainstreaming in Government Institutions in ESCWA Member States", which examines initiatives of mainstreaming gender perspectives in governmental institutions and prevailing gender mainstreaming approaches across the Arab region, specifically through the operational frameworks of established National Women's Machineries.

Additionally, ESCWA held a series of training workshops on the implementation of the Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), gender concepts, gender mainstreaming tools and techniques and international instruments in Bahrain, Lebanon and Palestine. One such workshop

was held to strengthen the capacity of ESCWA Member States with respect to **legislation governing violence against women**, and participants were drawn from the legal departments of National Women's Machineries of Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, the Syrian Arab Republic, the United Arab Emirates, Tunisia and Yemen. The aim of the workshop was to influence the formulation of new legislation and the revision of existing legislation on violence against women, efforts that are currently being undertaken in most Arab countries.

Sex-disaggregated data

As part of its efforts to address the lack of **sex-disaggregated and thematic data on women's issues**, ESCWA completed the framework for an Observatory for Women in the Arab Region, in partnership with the Islamic Development Bank and the Hariri Foundation for Human and Social Development. The observatory is initially piloted in Lebanon with the overall goal of creating a comprehensive evidence-based Gender Index. The Observatory sheds light on the gender gap in different sectors and areas, thus providing a reliable and accessible tool for policymakers, government officials, civil society organizations and other stakeholders for policy formulation and to integrate a gender perspective into national and regional initiatives.

Finally, ESCWA also developed a register of gender statistics for the Arab region, a catalogue of statistics and gender-related activities and outputs implemented by Arab countries and the Statistics Division of ESCWA. The catalogue aims to promote **good practices in compiling and disseminating gender statistics** and give incentives to countries to exert further efforts towards improving gender statistics at the national level. The catalogue serves as a strategic tool for ESCWA and provides valuable information on the development stage of gender statistics at the country and regional levels.

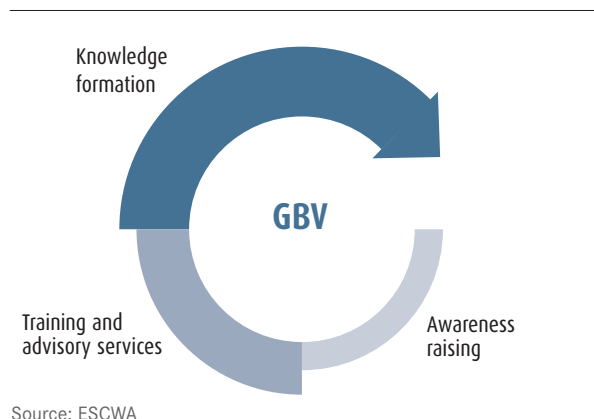
Gender-based violence

Conflict and insecurity in many Member States have heightened concerns about an increase in **gender-based violence (GBV)**, particularly violence against women, including sexual harassment in public spaces or the rape of displaced women and girls. Protection from GBV is an essential human right. As has been proven by various studies and international experiences, unless women's rights are sustained and enhanced, truly equitable and sustainable growth in the region, a strategic priority of ESCWA, will be virtually impossible to achieve.

Moreover, there has been concerted focus and action at the regional and national levels to address GBV, and in particular violence against women. Intense efforts of civil society and United Nations entities, including ESCWA, have raised awareness and influenced policymakers to combat GBV through national policies and legislation. The “Protection from Abuse” Law was enacted in Saudi Arabia in August 2013, outlawing domestic violence and all forms of abuse against women, children and domestic workers. In Morocco, the Parliament overturned a judicial provision that allowed rapists to escape prosecution by marrying their victims. Likewise, in Lebanon, a parliamentary committee unanimously approved a draft law for the protection of women and families from domestic violence. Moreover, in conflict and post-conflict settings, many international and local organizations have lobbied for improved service provision to refugees and internally displaced people. These efforts and successes in the region demonstrate how cooperation on regional frameworks and sharing of good practices in line with relevant international conventions, resolutions and conferences support sustainable development objectives while contributing to regional integration.

As GBV in its various forms remains a critical challenge worldwide, and an impediment to achieving equality in the Arab region, Member States have sought the assistance of ESCWA to formulate and implement relevant policies and programmes. The approach of ESCWA in this regard is three-fold, as illustrated in figure 13.

FIGURE 13. THE APPROACH OF ESCWA TO GBV



Source: ESCWA

Firstly, a comprehensive body of research was completed at ESCWA in 2013, addressing different types of GBV, such as domestic violence and trafficking of women and children, while analysing the issues from various interconnected perspectives, including legislation, policies, service provision and international monitoring instruments. In the process of developing these studies, ESCWA closely engaged Member States, experts and civil society, providing opportunities for

close cooperation across organizational and country borders, thereby encouraging regional integration and providing joint forums for knowledge formation and sharing.

At another level, findings from the normative work of ESCWA on GBV have fed into trainings and advisory services to enable Member States to prepare national plans and programme to fight all forms of GBV and to remove structural foundations of gender-based discrimination which undermine both good governance and equality. One such example is the recent initiative to develop a database on national legislations on violence against women in the region, in close consultation with 14 Member States, followed by training on using the database to formulate action-oriented measures.

A third ESCWA initiative on GBV focused on raising awareness among relevant stakeholders on the main priorities of its normative work, channelled through policy briefs and high-level events. On International Women's Day, ESCWA hosted diplomats, senior officials, experts, and civil society representatives for a round table discussion on different aspects of GBV in the context of international conventions and human rights frameworks. The appeal condemning violence against women, initiated by the Executive Secretary of ESCWA and signed by 58 prominent Arab figures, was launched at this event. In addition, ESCWA recently held the sixth session of the Committee on Women which resulted in the unanimous adoption of the Kuwait Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, in which ESCWA Member States collectively condemned all forms of violence against women and declared their commitment to enhance joint and individual efforts to monitor, address and combat GBV. The session also issued the Kuwaiti Initiative, spearheaded by the leader of the Women Affairs Committee of Kuwait, which aims to galvanize regional efforts and commit resources to combat violence against women and empower them, including in conflict settings.

SOCIOECONOMIC COORDINATION

The fourth priority of ESCWA in support of regional integration is socioeconomic coordination, and the major components of the Commission's work on this topic are aid for trade, intraregional trade and transport, and investment laws and bilateral investments.

ESCWA promotes and enhances economic and financial integration processes within the Arab region and with other regions, and strengthens South-South cooperation to encourage its Member States

to participate in global supply chains. In 2013, the Commission assisted its Member States to understand and implement regional and multilateral trade agreements for better integration in regional and global economies.

Aid for trade (AfT)

It is widely acknowledged that an open trade regime can only foster competitiveness and trade integration when accompanied by a range of complementary policies, including policies to reduce technical barriers to trade and facilitate Arab intraregional trade and trade with key partners. Arab countries can leverage diverse forms of development finance to promote trade and development through AfT and some countries are developing AfT projects to enhance intra-Arab trade. They aim to enhance their participation in the global trade system by preparing and implementing bankable projects that will positively impact trade patterns in the region.

To assist its Member States in leveraging diverse forms of development finance, ESCWA held a series of activities throughout 2013. First, ESCWA organized a workshop for delegations from five Arab countries (Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia and Yemen) that aimed to share knowledge and information on how different countries are developing AfT projects to enhance intra-Arab trade and improve participation in the global trade system. Participants created AfT project proposals. Following the revision of AfT projects developed during the first workshop, an expert group meeting was held to discuss the development of appropriate monitoring and evaluation systems, including regionally agreed indicators for AfT projects, which will ultimately improve the formulation of selected AfT projects.

Intraregional trade and transport

Tackling trade costs and enhancing soft and hard trade-related infrastructure as well as improving productive capacities in the Arab region to boost intraregional trade are some of the priorities ESCWA advanced in 2013 to promote growth and contribute to regional integration. Further, the Commission continuously updated its assessment of Arab economies and provided policy advice to its Member States through research, publication, technical cooperation and advisory services.

Following a multilayer approach, ESCWA organized a series of workshops on relevant topics. First, a regional training was organized to foster dialogue in the Arab region on the methods of measurement and policy priorities for reducing costs, and building the technical

REGIONAL PREPARATORY MEETING FOR THE 9TH WTO MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

One of the most important achievements of ESCWA in 2013 was the Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Arab Group in advance of the ninth World Trade Organization (WTO) Ministerial Conference (MC9). This meeting was organized in cooperation with representatives of the Arab Member States of WTO, the Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND), and with the technical support of the South Centre. The possible positions of Arab countries vis-à-vis the various issues to be covered by the MC9 were discussed in this meeting by 36 high officials of Arab Ministries of Trade, who expressed their related concerns, priorities, interests and needs. The discussion covered topics including agriculture, food security, trade facilitation, special and differential treatment for developing countries, accession to WTO, as well as the expansion of an Information Technology Agreement. The meeting also addressed non-agricultural market access and provided in-depth analysis to assist Arab countries in determining what serves their interest most. The meeting concluded by issuing a set of action-oriented recommendations and a forward-looking post-conference agenda for implementation to guide the participation of Arab countries in the negotiations during the ministerial conference.



Photo credit: Anton Balazh - Fotolia.com

capacity of nationals dealing with behind the border trade facilitation. High officials from Arab Ministries of Trade, Transport and Finance as well as directorates of custom, experts from international organizations and representatives of international business associations

and chambers of commerce also participated in the discussion. Further, a workshop on raising transport sustainability awareness presented many case studies on measuring carbon dioxide in the transport sector and discussed various economic models applied to pollution analysis. Moreover, a training workshop on the use of “For Future Inland Transport Systems” (ForFITS), a web-based tool for a uniform and transparent evaluation of the carbon dioxide footprint of land transport, was conducted in partnership with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) for experts from Arab ministries of health, environment, and transport from the Arab region as well as experts from international organizations.

Finally, to address non-tariff barriers to regional trade and suggest ways to removing them, a transport and trade facilitation meeting was held for high officials from the ministries of finance, trade and transport of Egypt, Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Sudan, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen to discuss trade logistics, including customs procedures, technical investigations, transport, freight forwarding, technology and communications. The meeting developed policy recommendation to reduce technical barriers to trade in order to facilitate intraregional Arab trade and trade with key partners beyond the region.

Investment laws and bilateral investment

In 2013, ESCWA brought Jordan, the Sudan, Tunisia and Yemen together to exchange experience and thoroughly discuss their **new investment laws** before they were launched. The Commission provided these countries with technical assistance to review their investment laws and policies to enable them to undertake revisions to attract greater investment and boost economic activity. ESCWA assisted them in identifying key challenges and developing practical reforms.

ESCWA also provided technical assistance to support Member States in their negotiations of **bilateral investment treaties** and to help resolve disputes between foreign investors and Governments through a series of 10 workshops on the topic held in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, the Sudan, Tunisia and Yemen. Notably, the workshop on “Avoiding Investor/State Disputes: The Role of Ombudsman”, in cooperation with the General Authority for Investment in Egypt (GAFI) and the Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency (KOTRA), presented the Korean experience in setting a framework to avoid investor/State disputes and discussed the potential to replicate that framework in Egypt, at a time when Egypt is facing several disputes with foreign investors.

SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE

The fifth and final component of regional integration concerns sustainable infrastructure, particularly supply chains, public-private partnerships and ICT infrastructure.

Supply chains

International **supply chain performance** depends highly on the ability to allow relevant stakeholders including trading partners and governmental organizations, to have access to information regarding all supply chain processes in a timely and transparent manner. More importantly, it is crucial to have proper ICT systems in place as they provide vital support to international supply chains by reducing the number of documents, time and cost, and improving trade competitiveness. However, most ESCWA Member States suffer from poor supply chain systems which prevent them from participating effectively in regional and global trading systems. Most ESCWA Member States are not using appropriate ICT systems and technologies that support supply chains, which in turn has a negative impact on delivering both exports and imports in a timely and cost-effective manner.

To address this, ESCWA held a workshop for high officials from ministries of finance and trade from Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Saudi Arabia, the Sudan and Tunisia on global supply chains and the Trade Facilitation Implementation Guide. The workshop also analysed policy options in regional and global value chains. The aim of the workshop was to enhance trade competitiveness through proper links to international markets and encourage the efficient and timely use of information exchange systems that can fast track shipments and reduce trade costs, and thereby support the entire global economy.

Public-private partnerships

The Commission continued its efforts to strengthen the capacity of Member States in the area of **international investment policy**, by assisting them to raise financial resources from domestic, as well as foreign sources, to increase the level of investment and enhance productivity, create new jobs and achieve sustainable economic growth. To this end, ESCWA organized an event to discuss infrastructure investments and public-private partnerships for public and private sector representatives involved in developing and financing infrastructure projects, together with relevant international financial institutions working in that field in Canada, Egypt, France, Iraq, Lebanon, Mauritania,

Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Switzerland, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom and Yemen. This event resulted in the “**Rabat Declaration**”, which outlined the need for the involvement of the public sector in developing infrastructure in the Arab region, as well as the role of ESCWA in assisting its Member States. Endorsing this Declaration, the participants encouraged ESCWA to further pursue its initiative on public-private partnerships, in close collaboration with ECE, and support governments in the Arab region to develop such partnerships and unlock infrastructure investments.

ICT infrastructure

In 2013, ESCWA analysed cross-cutting aspects of ICT for development in the Arab region, covering topics such as **e-services, innovation and entrepreneurship**. The Commission hosted a meeting for representatives of the public and private sectors to outline priority areas in the region and discuss the affordability and accessibility of ICT infrastructure and information, and the impact of e-services in innovation, Government, education, learning and health. The role of ICT, particularly social media, in empowering youth, marginalized groups and women was also discussed. Participants formulated strategic recommendations to leverage ICT for socioeconomic growth in the region.



Photo credit: Maya Kruchancova - Fotolia.com - edited by Ghazal Lababidi

EQUITABLE GROWTH AND SUSTAINABILITY

THE SECOND THEMATIC PILLAR SHAPING THE COMMISSION'S WORK IS EQUITABLE GROWTH AND SUSTAINABILITY. ESCWA AIMS TO SUPPORT ITS MEMBER STATES IN ACHIEVING INCLUSIVE, EQUITABLE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, AND TO ACCELERATE THEIR ATTAINMENT OF THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS THROUGH APPROPRIATE MACROECONOMIC AND SOCIAL POLICIES WITH ADEQUATE FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT. TO ACHIEVE THESE GOALS, ESCWA FRAMES ITS WORK INTO A THREE-FOLD APPROACH:



◆ Competitive knowledge-based economies	34
◆ Equity, inclusion and employment	35
◆ Sustainable natural resource management	40

ESCWA articulates relevant socioeconomic policy at global, regional and national levels in order to promote economic growth in the region that is more equitable and sustainable through timely and continuous analysis of Arab economies.

Within its mandate to support social development in the countries of the Arab region and to promote cooperation, ESCWA focused on responding to sociopolitical developments in the region which call for a more inclusive, just and participatory development, and point to shortcomings in welfare systems, and the need for greater inclusion of youth, aging populations and the disabled. By promoting participation and social justice, ESCWA hopes to contribute to the ongoing global debate on the post-2015 United Nations development agenda.

COMPETITIVE KNOWLEDGE-BASED ECONOMIES

First among the areas of focus in fostering equitable growth and sustainability are competitive, knowledge-based economies.

ESCWA played a leading role in measuring the impact of e-services on socioeconomic development and proposed policy guidance which would **encourage innovation** led by citizens and small and medium enterprises (SMEs). A resulting measurement framework along with proposed policy initiatives, are positioned to exploit the transformation potential of ICT and deepen the socioeconomic impact of e-services, both made possible by technological advances and the increasing pervasiveness of ICT in the region. The recommendations drafted by ESCWA constitute an appropriate policy framework for the Arab region to enhance the impact of ICT on social and economic development.

First, ESCWA organized the Arab Forum on the ICT Sector, which included an event on investment, research, development and innovation and a conference on ICT investment and finance in the Arab region. The forum sought to strengthen financing mechanisms and encourage business initiatives in the sector and to emphasize its key role in sustainable development. During this event, participants reviewed an ESCWA study entitled “Competitiveness of the ICT Sector in the Arab Region: Innovation and Investment Imperatives”. As a result of the forum, a pilot project was initiated to profile the status of the ICT sector in Lebanon.

Second, the Commission continued to advise Member States that are drafting **new cyber laws**, updating existing laws or identifying the gaps and requirements. Those efforts began after the publication of the Cyber

Legislation Directives two years ago. During 2013, ESCWA offered advisory services to the Governments of Iraq and Yemen to review their cyber legislation. Additionally, in collaboration with the Arab Lawyers Union, ESCWA held a capacity-building workshop for the Bar Associations of Jordan and Palestine during 2013. Further, ESCWA prepared a study on enhancing cyber legislation in Bahrain and contributed to a capacity-building workshop for high-level officials on cyber legislation and cybercrime for the e-Government Authority of Bahrain.

ESCWA advised Member States on developing national e-government and e-learning strategies, and enhancing an enabling environment for e-services. In Yemen, ESCWA supported the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation in drafting the e-Government technical committee report and suggested future steps for developing the national e-Government strategy. In the Sudan, ESCWA recommended possible tracks for a national e-learning strategy to the National Information Centre of the Ministry of Science and Communications, and reviewed the status of national public infrastructure projects.

Additionally, ESCWA played an important role in promoting **digital Arabic content** industry in the region and encouraged the creation of SMEs and start-ups by organizing of a number of awareness-raising workshops that showed the importance of digital Arabic content for economic growth, and presented suitable business models for start-ups and SMEs in that field. In Lebanon, Palestine and Yemen, ESCWA organized competitions for digital Arabic content, and established a network of experts and organizations working on such content to stimulate cooperation between various stakeholders. ESCWA launched a number of partnerships in the region with the International Telecommunication Union and selected incubators to organize workshops and competitions that aim to generate new jobs for young people in the Arab region. Seven teams of young people in Lebanon, Palestine and Yemen are currently hosted by local incubators that are helping them to create their own start-ups.

Finally, ESCWA began to implement a project entitled “Academy of ICT Essentials for Government Leaders in the ESCWA Region” to create awareness and build the capacity of decision makers to use **ICT for sustainable development** and to give them the skills to plan, manage and fund development projects. Initially, a survey of more than 1,400 government leaders and officials in Arab countries was undertaken on their ICT capacity-building needs to identify the topics that will be featured in training modules. Based on the results of the survey, the priority topics include the following: e-government strategies and applications; ICT for development policy, process and governance; and the linkage between ICT applications and meaningful development.

ESCWA Technology Centre

The global agenda on science, technology and innovation has evolved in the past decade and in response ESCWA established the ESCWA Technology Centre (ETC) in 2012, to regionalize these themes. The aim of the Centre is to assist Arab region in attaining **technological parity** with other regions of the world.

During 2013, ETC provided technical advisory services to Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Qatar and Saudi Arabia, and reviewed innovation plans within the region as requested by ESCWA Member States. The Centre also facilitated the review of **intellectual property contracts** between national institutions in Jordan, Lebanon and Qatar. It assisted in organizing a commercialization tour to match local technology-related SMEs with regional investors, which successfully resulted in the initiation of several business transactions at the regional level.

The League of Arab States, the Arab Industrial Development and Mining Organization (AIDMO), the Islamic Educational, Scientific, and the Cultural Organization (ISESCO) and ETC co-organized the Industrial Competitiveness through Innovation Forum that was held in Kuwait, with a specific focus on **industrial sectors requiring research and development** to survive in increasingly globalized markets. From this forum, agreements were established for joint sponsored research projects between AIDMO and KISR.

Finally, in collaboration with the Marseille Center for Mediterranean Integration, the European Investment Bank and the World Bank, ETC organized and hosted the regional workshop on national **innovation systems** for participants in charge of national policies for higher education and research, and industry associations. Participants shared good practices of national innovation systems and representatives of Libya and Palestine expressed interest in receiving support from ETC to improve the infrastructure of their systems. Further, ETC conducted a workshop at Sidi Mohammed Bin Abdullah University in Fez, Morocco, which highlighted the importance of technology transfer between the university and relevant stakeholders from all sectors. After the workshop, it was decided to establish a research and technology transfer office at the University, and ETC was requested to assist in establishing it.

EQUITY, INCLUSION AND EMPLOYMENT

The theme of equity, inclusion and employment is another dimension of the work of ESCWA to promote equitable growth and sustainability.

Social Protection

The social uprisings over the past three years in various Arab countries have led to or exacerbated a series of social crises across the region. Welfare systems in many Arab countries are largely unable to integrate the whole population, regardless of cohort, income group or region, into the labour market and to provide adequate and inclusive social protection schemes. That has led to more inequality, poverty and exclusion.

In order to respond to the need for new social instruments and approaches to further equity and inclusion, ESCWA published a study of the role of **traditional social policy institutions**, specifically “Zakat” funds and “Waqf”, that assessed their functionality, scope and prospects of providing social protection. Additionally, ESCWA monitored and documented social policy interventions undertaken by Arab Governments in response to social pressures.

Further, ESCWA conducted a consultative process to raise awareness on the creation on **labour-intensive programmes** as tools for social protection, including public works programmes, labour based programmes and employment guarantee schemes. National experts from Egypt, Iraq, Morocco, Palestine, the Sudan and Tunisia took part in the consultative process, in addition to participants from various ministries and international organizations. The goal of this endeavour was to stimulate collaboration between actors in the ESCWA region. Also, ESCWA held consultations on microinsurance, including microfinance and commercial insurance, to raise awareness on this tool as a means to extend social protection, with a focus on Lebanon and the informal rural sector.

Employment

The **middle class** as a group is an important category of interest, since they are the drivers of economic activity, compose the bulk of the working class, are actively engaged in political activities and are vital to the economic, social and political development of a country. Policies bolstering the middle class have benefits not only for economic growth, but may be more cost-effective at long-term poverty reduction than policies which focus solely on the poor. Moreover, studying the middle class in the Arab region is essential to understand and provide guidance during the transition that many Arab countries are currently undergoing. As a result, ESCWA published a technical paper which presents a new methodology of measuring the middle class in the Arab region using household surveys. It proposes to define the middle class based on the consumption patterns of those households above the upper poverty line and below the ninetieth percentile in income distribution. This approach was

presented at an event on the Economics of the Middle Class in the Arab Region for experts from Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and the United Arab Emirates.

Finally, ESCWA held a meeting focused on **worker's remittances** for officials from Arab ministries of finance, which highlighted the financing opportunities in the region and reviewed successful examples from England, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia, which have worked to enhance the role of overseas workers in financing development. Participants concluded that central banks should reduce deposit reserve requirements imposed on commercial banks engaged in lending activities with the SMEs, measures should be taken to reduce informal transfers of workers' remittances and encourage formal money transfers. Remittances should be directed towards investments in development programmes through a set of measures encompassing national policies and economic incentives and appropriate development programmes, and overall support should be given for the development of tools and techniques for evaluating the credit-worthiness of SMEs.

Equity and inclusion

After years of development progress, accessibility and quality of public social services continue to suffer significantly, failing to meet people's expectations. Policy remedies need to be put in place to secure more jobs and employment opportunities for the populations of the region and to ensure that adequate and inclusive social protection schemes are put in place. The Arab region is undergoing a demographic transition both in size and structure, in which the population shares of youth, working-age adults and older persons are increasing. This process, usually known as the "demographic window of opportunity", can either boost the long-term equitable and sustainable growth of Arab countries or pose a challenge if necessary policy measures are not in place.

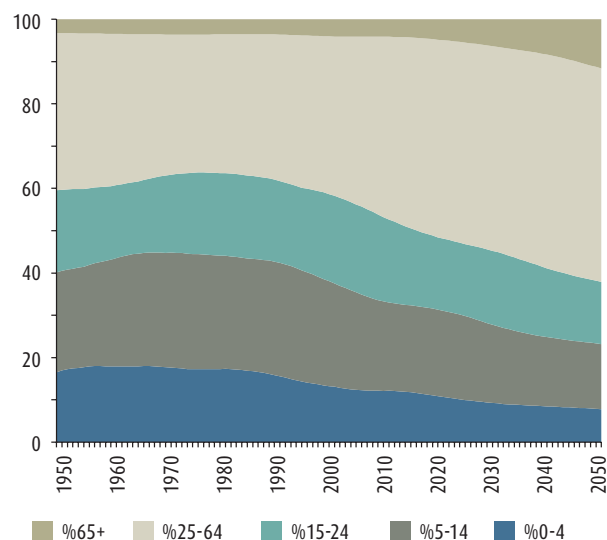
In 2013, ESCWA undertook a series of activities concerning the inclusion of **people with disabilities**. First, it evaluated the achievements of the Arab Decade on Disability (2004-2013) with the aim of developing a new regional framework to support the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). A study of the existing institutional and legislative set-up for disability in Arab countries was undertaken jointly with the League of Arab States to define the baseline of services and institutions available in the region. Also, ESCWA worked with 11 Member States during a regional conference to discuss the results of the study, share experiences and good practices from national implementation plans of the Arab Decade and CRPD and propose the way forward for continued efforts to protect and

CAIRO DECLARATION ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

In the context of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Beyond 2014, ESCWA organized an event to provide a platform for high-level discussions of demographic trends and their relationship to development in the Arab region, with the overall goal of reaching a common regional position to feed into global discussions. Over 300 people participated in the event, including representatives of the Governments of Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Somalia, the Sudan, Tunisia and Yemen, and representatives of civil society organizations from across the Arab region and international organizations. Participants endorsed the Cairo Declaration on Population and Development as the regional consensus on priorities to feed into ICPD in 2014.

Note: The Cairo Declaration is available at http://arabstates.unfpa.org/webdav/site/as/shared/docs/2013_Cairo_Declaration_Arabic.pdf

FIGURE 14. POPULATION OF THE ARAB REGION BY BROAD AGE GROUPS, 1950-2050



Source: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, World Population Prospects: The 2012 Revision (medium variant data). Available from <http://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/index.htm>.

promote the rights of persons with disabilities in Arab countries. An outcome document was adopted, which called for the elaboration of a new regional strategy to further support national signature, ratification and implementation of CRPD.

In preparation for the 20-year review of the implementation of the International Conference on Population and Development Plan of Action and the second High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, ESCWA held a Regional Consultative Meeting on International **Migration and Development**

in collaboration with the League of Arab States, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Ministry officials from Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen attended the meeting, in addition to representatives of civil society and international organizations, to review migration trends and developments in the region and potential opportunities and challenges. As an outcome of that meeting, participants adopted the Final Declaration¹ was adopted that articulated the Arab position ahead of the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development.

International migration statistics show the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of migrants and their countries of origin which in turn enables policymakers to develop better national plans. Therefore, ESCWA undertook a methodological study on measurement issues in international migration statistics in Arab countries, and held a meeting to discuss it. This meeting contributed to identifying needs for capacity-building in areas such as data gathering and harmonization, and the analysis of international migration statistics. Meeting participants discussed the means to facilitate the production of high-quality international migration statistics for a variety of users, including policymakers, civil society organizations and academics. Participants representing both regional and international institutions concerned with international migration statistics, called for the development, in the Arabic language, of databases on migration to take stock of existing policies and immigration laws and to list international migration experts, institutions and research centres in the Arab region. They also called for the establishment of a permanent unit within ESCWA to review statistical work on international migration and provide technical assistance to Member States on the use of concepts and mechanisms adopted for comparison and benchmark purposes.

In recognition of the importance of the **youth population** in the Arab region and the growing interest of Governments in empowering them, ESCWA implemented a project to strengthen the capacity of policymakers to formulate national youth policies and plans of action. ESCWA provided direct assistance to Iraq, Palestine, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen, while also providing technical material to all Member States on good practices in this field. Training materials were created to monitor and evaluate the national youth strategy in Iraq. In Tunisia, a vision document for the national youth policy was drafted, and in Yemen a national youth development agenda was set.

Further, ESCWA hosted a series of workshops for government representatives and civil society actors, including one to rethink youth employment policies,

CAPACITY-BUILDING ON CENSUS DATA

A census is a rare (once in 10 years), full-scale enumeration of residents, households and dwellings and generates the foundational information that is then used to inform cross-cutting statistical exercises.

As part of its mission to facilitate regional cooperation, integration and the production of high-quality population statistics to a variety of users, including policymakers, civil society organizations and academics, ESCWA prepared an e-publication¹ to provide an up-to-date register of censuses and surveys implemented in all the Arab countries. It provides consolidated information on the types and periodicity of surveys and censuses conducted in the region. It is maintained and further developed and updated on a yearly basis upon receipt of new information, comments and feedback from the Arab countries.

In 2013, ESCWA held an event on the Evaluation of Population Census Data in the Arab Countries with the participation of regional and international population census experts to discuss an ESCWA methodological study on the quality of demographic data from population censuses in the region with a focus on age and sex reporting. At the conclusion of the meeting, experts recommended that statistical offices give special attention to the quality of data in statistical work and called on ESCWA to assist in spreading statistical awareness of data quality, by building the relevant statistical capacity in its Member States and forming relevant technical groups. The meeting helped to identify needs for capacity-building in specific areas to evaluate population census data in the Arab region.

1. The e-publication is available from <http://www.escwa.un.org/sites/arcs13/>.

MR. JAMAL BENNI HAMAD

Managing Director, Department of Youth and Culture, General Authority of Youth and Sports Welfare, Dubai.

“Our management’s experience with ESCWA was a fruitful one. It began in 2009 in a workshop on youth-related national reporting which clarified the relevant reporting methods and tools. Soon after, the first United Arab Emirates National Youth Report was issued, quickly becoming a reference document for government institutions as well as external users. In addition, the department also participated in a workshop hosted by the Ministry of Youth and Sports in Dubai in 2013 on mechanisms for development of national policies. ESCWA has contributed significantly to the planning process/capacities in our organization, and its support has become an imperative in setting national priorities for young people. Thank you for your efforts and your support”

1. Available at <http://css.escwa.org.lb/sdd/1-3/3173.pdf>

where the experiences of Jordan, Iraq, Palestine, Tunisia and Yemen were shared, followed by a workshop on youth in the context of the post-2015 development agenda, which highlighted youth unemployment and empowerment as priority areas for policymakers beyond 2015. A capacity-development workshop on Palestinian youth policy took place in addition to a consultative workshop on the national youth policy in Iraq. These workshops raised awareness within Member States on the World Programme of Action for Youth, increased the capacity of policymakers to design national youth policies and enhanced the technical knowledge of participating officials on youth development programming, particularly in the areas of youth unemployment and youth within national development policy.

ESCWA has aimed to raise awareness of the need for pro-poor policies and strategies to bridge the urban divide and create more inclusive cities. The Commission hosted a workshop on pro-poor urban development strategies in the Arab region for representatives of concerned ministries and local authorities in Algeria, Bahrain, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen, as well as regional and specialized agencies. The workshop highlighted the role local authorities, municipalities and other social actors can play to **bridge the urban divide**. Opportunities for further collaboration between ESCWA and regional actors were also discussed.

The Urban Poverty Index is an important measurement tool that can be used to monitor progress towards the achievement of the first Millennium Development Goal (eradicate extreme poverty and hunger) at the

subnational level, for municipalities and civil society organizations involved in local development planning. In collaboration with the Arab Urban Development Institute (AUDI), ESCWA measured poverty at the city level by implementing three pilot surveys in Tripoli (Lebanon), Tunis and Nouakchott (Mauritania) and by organizing a series of regional and national workshops on the implementation of the Urban Poverty Index methodology. These activities resulted in a formal request to implement the programme in Khartoum, and ESCWA will respond in cooperation with national partners. ESCWA will continue its work with AUDI in the development of this methodology for Arab cities, and advocate for the use of the Urban Poverty Index.

Promoting data-driven and evidenced-based policies and decision-making to attain the Millennium Development Goals

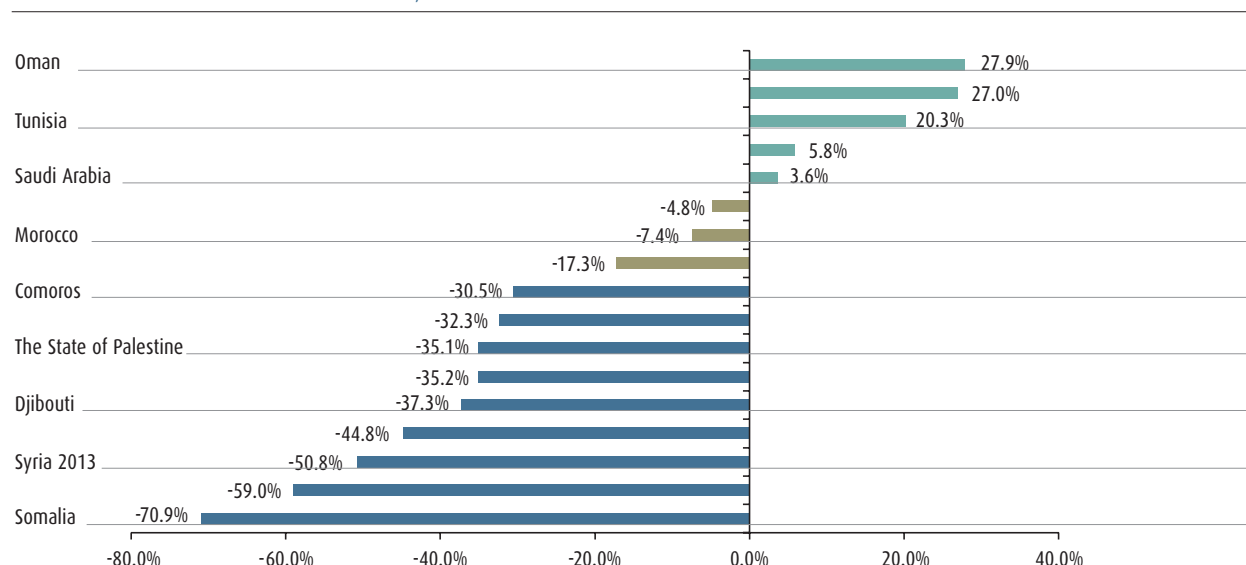
In 2013, the Commission increased knowledge and built capacity among stakeholders in the region on the issues that should be taken into account in designing and implementing suitable macroeconomic policies and strategies for sustainable economic growth,

MANAL SWEIDAN

Head of Gender Statistics Division, Department of Statistics, Jordan

"I really would like to congratulate you on this wonderful accomplishment (Handbook on the Arab MDG Gender Framework) which will facilitate the understanding of Gender issues. This Handbook will be beneficial to our professional development, and to the work of our office."

FIGURE 15. AVERAGE MDG ACHIEVEMENT INDEX, SELECTED ARAB COUNTRIES



Source: Arab Millennium Development Goals Report, 2013.

employment creation and poverty alleviation in line with achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). ESCWA sought to strengthen national data production for development indicators and reporting in Arab countries, decrease discrepancies between national and international data and enhance coordination and data dissemination to improve data coverage for socioeconomic and development indicators.²

First, the Executive Secretary of ESCWA, Ms. Rima Khalaf, launched the 2013 Arab Millennium Development Goals Report during the opening of the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly, along with the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, Mr. Nabil Al-Arabi, and the Chair of the United Nations Development Group for Arab States, Ms. Sima Bahous, and in the presence of Arab and foreign political and diplomatic figures and media representatives. This report had previously been endorsed by the thirty-second Arab Social Ministerial Council of the League of Arab States. Subregional launches of the report followed during September 2013.

Second, ESCWA contributed to improving the production and dissemination of quality socioeconomic statistics and indicators, including MDG indicators and sex-disaggregated data and gender-sensitive indicators, thereby facilitating the ability of national and international decision makers and civil society representatives to develop evidence-based policies. The Commission produced the Arab Gender Issues and Indicators Handbook to facilitate the production of comparable statistics on women's issues in the Arab region.³

Also, ESCWA developed a dashboard to provide a regional picture on the latest status of MDG indicators in 22 Arab countries.⁴ The dashboard shows progress achieved over the years for selected indicators in addition to profiles for each country on development indicators including MDGs, youth indicators and gender issues. This dashboard ultimately aims to make statistics on Arab countries more visible and promoting their use among the public.

Further, ESCWA organized practical workshops to localize MDGs in the Sudanese states South Darfur White Nile, Kassala and Khoutoum in order to enhance the skills of civil society experts and government officials in reviewing the country's progress towards the attainment of MDGs at the national and state level and to identify policies and interventions required in order to achieve these goals.

In 2009, the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) adopted the 2008 System of National Accounts (SNA).⁵ Since then, ESCWA has considered it a main component of its work and has provided extensive technical assistance to Member States.

In 2013, ESCWA organized a high-level meeting and a national workshop for Jordan to promote reliable economic statistics for informed economic and financial policies and transparent governance. Also, a regional implementation strategy was presented by ESCWA for the development of national strategies for Iraq, Jordan and Palestine. ESCWA also focused on the implementation of SNA and supported economic statistics along with the recommended economic classifications. This constituted a major cornerstone in developing comparable economic data to interpret the real developments and trends in economic growth at the national, regional and international levels.

Moreover, the Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the Arab Region 2012-2013 provides technical references on sustainable economic growth in the region. In preparing the Survey, ESCWA reached out to a wide range of stakeholders in the Arab region, namely government officials, technical advisors, academics and experts, and the geographic scope of analysis was expanded to cover 22 Arab countries.

In addition, the International Comparison Program (ICP) has become the largest worldwide statistical initiative, and ESCWA serves as the Regional Coordination Office for Western Asia. The Program produces internationally comparable price and volume measures for GDP and its component expenditures. The measures are based on purchasing power parities, which constitute an important component of the ICP output.

MICHEL MOUYELO-KATOULA

Global Manager, International Comparison Program,
World Bank

"Leveraging on its successful implementation of the previous round of the International Comparison Program (ICP) for the reference year 2005, ESCWA has been effectively and successfully coordinating the regional component of the 2011 round. Using it as a capacity building framework in the critical areas of price statistics and national accounts, as well as a platform for strengthening synergies and cross-sharing best practices, ESCWA has ensured that the resulting purchasing power parities (PPPs) are based on comprehensive data sets of greatest quality, in keeping with the ICP technical requirements. These PPPs will feed into the World Bank's estimation of the real share of Western Asian countries in the world economy."

2. Available on ESCWA's e-Publications portal: <http://data.escwa-stat.org>

3. Available at <http://www.escwa.un.org/divisions/projects/gisinhandbook/index.asp?goal=0>

4. Available at <http://dashboard.escwa-stat.org>

5. SNA is a well-recognized structured system for compiling and presenting macroeconomic statistics.

During 2013, preliminary figures of purchasing power parity were produced with the aim of having final figures by early 2014. Four workshops and several technical assistance missions were conducted to validate the data of quarterly/annual prices and National Accounts 2011 Model Report on Expenditure Statistics, and to present the ICP preliminary results for Western Asia. These results will provide a spatial comparison of economies, macroeconomic indicators and cost of living in different countries. Further, real GDP aggregates will allow for a comparison of socioeconomic well-being between countries.

Finally, in partnerships with the Rotary Club in Lebanon ESCWA developed a book based on the 2011 Arab MDG Report to explain the goals to secondary and university students.⁶ The Institute of Social Sciences of the Lebanese University adopted the book as part of their curriculum, and the book was shared with teachers of social sciences and economics in public schools in coordination with the Ministry of Higher Education in Lebanon.

SUSTAINABLE NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Sustainable natural resource management constitutes the third and final component of the Commission's approach to equitable growth and sustainability.

Current social and political tensions and the interrelated and complex challenges facing the Arab region have wide-ranging consequences. Concerted efforts are required to strengthen the interlinkages between the economic, social and environmental pillars of sustainable development at the national and regional levels. These regional challenges include the rise in demand for water and energy services; rising unemployment, particularly among young people; unsustainable production and consumption patterns; the need to ensure water, energy and food security; the disparity between urban and rural development; unsustainable transport systems; and climate change and its impact on water resources, desertification and land management.

Hence, ESCWA has focused its work on strengthening the ability of Member States to face those challenges. In 2013, the Commission organized a senior exchange visit between the Ministry of Environmental Affairs in Palestine and the Ministry of Equipment and Environment in Tunisia. This visit addressed the linkages between **environmental governance and management** and thus strengthened bilateral exchanges and capacity-development and cooperation projects between the two nations. In collaboration

POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA: BRINGING REGIONAL PRIORITIES TO INTERNATIONAL DEBATES

During 2013, ESCWA contributed to the ongoing global and regional debates on the post-2015 United Nations development agenda. A regional perspective on the development agenda beyond 2015 was highly advocated and promoted. ESCWA acted on both the regional and international levels to articulate that perspective, particularly through its contribution to the report to the Secretary-General entitled *Realizing the Future We Want for All* and follow-up activities.

ESCWA also took a leading role in the production of a joint regional commissions' publication entitled *A Regional Perspective on the Post-2015 Development Agenda*, which was presented to the United Nations Chief Executives Board and the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Agenda. The publication findings, which contributed regional messages to the global debate on perspectives, needs and means of implementation, were also presented to the Economic and Social Council and the ninth session of the ESCWA Committee on Social Development (Amman, Jordan 2013).

Regional consultations were also held under the umbrella of the Regional Coordination Mechanism (RCM) and with a coalition of civil society organizations to further explore regional approaches to and priorities for the post-2015 agenda and formulate regional positions on the prospective agenda.

TERRY MCKINLEY

Professor of Development Studies and Director of the Centre for Development Policy and Research, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London

"The 2013 report authored by the five United Nations regional commissions, 'A Regional Perspective on the Post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda', makes a seminal contribution to the discussion of a Post-2015 global development agenda [...]. The Regional Commissions' joint 2013 report has played a key role in helping development practitioners understand more clearly that such new challenges will often manifest themselves in very different ways at the regional and subregional levels. Thus, the strategic responses to such development challenges will have to be different at these levels. Consistent with this understanding, the 2013 report is invaluable in underlining the essential role that organizations such as the Regional Commissions can play in addressing such regional and subregional diversity, and thus mediating, in effect, between the global and national levels."

6. Available in Arabic from <http://css.escwa.org.lb/ecri/docs/EscwaBook.pdf>.

with the KISR, ESCWA organized a national workshop on aquifer storage and recovery, where it provided advisory services in the field of environment and water and explored the possibility of further joint cooperation on a pilot project for aquifer storage and recovery in Kuwait. Those efforts strengthened policy dialogue on sustainable development issues and on appropriate responses to opportunities and constraints for sustainable management of natural resources.

Targeting rural areas in Oman, ESCWA organized a workshop on sustainable natural resource management for government officials, and representatives of rural local authorities, the banking sector, universities and non-governmental organizations. It focused on the role of the Government, public-private partnerships, SMEs and civil society organizations in promoting renewable energy applications and increasing public awareness. It outlined the requirements to promote renewable energy use in order to develop rural areas and mitigate climate change in developing countries.

Further, ESCWA partnered with the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to organize a **green jobs** training for the Arab region targeting representatives of Government, trade unions, private companies and non-governmental organizations and with the aim of building their skills to formulate and adopt policies and measures to support the green economy and to create green jobs for equitable and sustainable socioeconomic growth.

As the burning of fossil fuels has been linked to climate change brought about by anthropogenic carbon dioxide emissions, it is imperative to reduce the risks to the environment caused by fossil fuels. In the Arab region, interest in **Carbon Capture, Utilization and Storage** (CCUS) stems from the use of carbon dioxide for enhanced oil recovery. Member States of the Gulf Cooperation Council are committed to reducing their carbon footprint and are investing in clean technology transfer and development to accelerate CCUS deployment in the region. Accordingly, ESCWA organized an event for participants from ministries responsible for energy to discuss technical topics such as CCUS and enhanced hydrocarbon recovery, carbon dioxide capture technologies, CCUS infrastructure and the status of research and development in CCUS.

Finally, the Commission organized training courses on **low carbon green growth** in Tunisia and Lebanon attended by government officials and representatives of academia, civil society, private businesses and other United Nations institutions. The course topics included sustainable consumption and production, sustainable infrastructure, green tax and budget reform, greening of business, investment in natural capital, eco- and resource efficiency and low carbon economics. ESCWA introduced the online training of trainers course on low carbon green growth which was developed in collaboration with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. In addition, ESCWA responded to a request from Ministry of Electricity and Energy in Yemen for assistance in implementing assessment programmes on electrical load distribution, to improve the distribution of electrical energy to underserved households, with a particular focus on sustaining natural resources (oil) through conservation and energy efficiency. A training of trainers programme was developed to build the capacity of Yemeni officials to implement the assessment themselves and to interpret the results. ESCWA will continue its support to Yemen to produce the final assessment report and, if needed, to plan the implementation of ensuing recommendations.

BRINGING TOGETHER THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS FOR A GREENER ECONOMY

Supporting the development of green economy in the Arab region was one of the key focus areas of ESCWA in 2013. The Organization secured hosting agreements for national Green Help Desks with the Royal Scientific Society of Jordan, the Ministry of Environment and Equipment of Tunisia, the Centre for Environment and Development for the Arab Region (CEDARE) in Egypt, the Public Authority for the Development of Small and Medium Enterprises in Oman, and the Association of Lebanese Industrialists. Green Help Desks support small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the production of green goods and services as well as “greening” their business processes.

In doing so, ESCWA aimed to support capacity-building and information sharing among all national stakeholders to promote green production, with a special focus on those sectors that represent an added value in each Member State. An impressive number of SMEs have already approached the Green Help Desks and received consultations free of charge.



Photo credit: Bastos - Fotolia.com - edited by Ghazal Lababidi

GOOD GOVERNANCE AND RESILIENCE

THE THEME OF GOOD GOVERNANCE AND RESILIENCE CONSTITUTES THE THIRD PILLAR OF THE COMMISSION'S WORK. ESCWA SEEKS TO STRENGTHEN THE CAPACITY OF ITS MEMBER STATES TO BUILD ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN GOVERNMENTS AND PEOPLE BASED ON CITIZENSHIP, WHILE FOSTERING ROBUST SOCIOECONOMIC RESILIENCE TO CRISES AND SHOCKS, AND TO THE DEVELOPMENT DEFICITS THAT MAY RESULT FROM INSTABILITY. TO ACHIEVE THIS, ESCWA FRAMES ITS WORK INTO A FOUR-FOLD APPROACH:



◆ Institutional development	44
◆ Participation and citizenship	46
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At the regional level, ESCWA aims to provide its member countries with the necessary technical knowledge and skills to enhance their capacities to implement participatory and rights-based approaches to policymaking. In this context, ESCWA offered a platform for dialogue, consensus building, partnerships and exchange of experiences between Governments and civil society organizations on issues related to the challenges of political transition.

INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The first focus area in promoting good governance and resilience is institutional development. ESCWA is building the capacity of public institutions in its Member States by enhancing their ability to formulate development policies and to measure and monitor socioeconomic variables in an effective and transparent manner. ESCWA fosters dialogue between different actors of society, promotes respect for human rights, and encourages citizen engagement and the development of local levels of governments. These actions ultimately promote democratic values, citizen involvement and socioeconomic resilience.

Through its publications and its participation in regional initiatives, ESCWA contributed to raise awareness on the importance of challenges related to political transition and identify policy options. Specifically, ESCWA tackled such topics as security sector reform, decentralisation and the short- and medium-term opportunities to return to the path of socioeconomic development in a transitional context. The paper entitled “An Overview of the Arab Security Sector Amidst Political Transition: A Reflection of Legacies, Functions and Perceptions” studied the **role of the security sector** in the political and economic dimensions of Arab countries, particularly in a context of reform, to enhance human security and governance. This is part of the Commission’s ongoing commitment to support countries in transition in the Arab region in terms of promoting good governance practices to lay down the necessary conditions for robust socioeconomic development and resilience.

Further, through the implementation of the inter-agency Iraq Public Sector Modernization (IPSM) programme, ESCWA, in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), has contributed to the following: developing policy and building institutions at the centre of government; piloting reform in the key sectors of health, education and water and sanitation; supporting system-wide reform for gender mainstreaming, e governance, national statistics and development management; and supporting decentralised service delivery and local governance initiatives. These topics were approached

through capacity-building, functional review of different schemes of service delivery, study missions for national and subnational public sector officials, and strategic planning workshops, among others. One of the greatest achievements of this programme was the adoption of Law 21 in August 2013 (see case study on page 46).

Additionally, ESCWA was able to assist the Kurdistan Institute for Public Administration (KIPA) and the National Centre for Management Development and Information Technology (NCMDIT) in areas related to public **administration, governance and strategic planning**, working closely with officials from both institutes on the establishment a common planning and training programme between the institutions, to position them as the leading agencies in the planning and management development platform serving all ministries in both the national and the Kurdistan region governments. The two agencies agreed upon strategic plans, established annual training plans and calendars and developed an outreach and communication strategy with relevant implementation mechanisms. The overall impact of the programme is that KIPA and NCMDIT have begun to provide training to ministries and agencies in the Government of Iraq, where good practices in governance and public administration are disseminated throughout the State apparatus. The agencies are expected to function in the long term as drivers of reform and to bring a culture of change to national planning activities.

Official from the National Centre for Management Development and Information Technology, Iraq

“ESCWA’s training programmes have enabled us to perform as a capable public institution where NCMDIT can perform its roles, enhance its strategic planning, and deliver services to the public sector and citizens efficiently and effectively.”

Also in Iraq, ESCWA led a workshop on **human development reporting** at a national level, targeting mainly international and civil society organizations and government officials from the Ministry of Planning, to discuss the draft of the Human Development Report for Iraq.

During 2013, ESCWA held the thematic ceremony on gender based violence (GBV) to launch three publications that recommend legislation and national action plans to combat GBV, and that discuss approaches to bridge policy and practice. ESCWA held an event on International Women’s Day entitled “Eliminating all forms of violence against women” (see case study on page 45).

ESCWA organized a workshop for Palestinian government officials on **development policy formulation** in Palestine, which focused on approaches and techniques to formulate development policy. The experiences of other countries were shared with the aim of enhancing the knowledge, ability and skills of Palestinian civil servants in policy formulation. Further, ESCWA held a workshop to create awareness and strengthen the formulation of right-based national social policies for Lebanese public servants, which focused on **project cycle management** principles and tools leading to the formulation of project proposals, assessments and funding strategies.

Further, ESCWA collaborated with the Ministry of Economy and Planning in Saudi Arabia through the implementation of a technical support project to develop quantitative key performance indicators for the Operational Plan of State Actors in the context of the tenth National Development Plan. ESCWA prepared computable general equilibrium models to enhance the capacity of the Ministry to prepare development plans and supported the preparation of a media strategy and

guidelines and a framework for the establishment of a communication unit within the Ministry.

Moreover, in collaboration with the Arab Administrative Development Organization (ARADO), ESCWA organized an event on the state of governance and public administration in Arab countries, in which topics essential to support democratic values, develop citizen participation and ultimately build socioeconomic resilience, were discussed, including institution-building, rule of law, anti-corruption measures, security sector reform, civil society participation, and indicator building. ESCWA presented analysis and options that could lead to policy actions, as well as methods to measure and monitor progress in this area. Over 160 participants included representatives of civil society organizations and government officials from Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Oman, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen. This activity reinforced the partnership between ESCWA and ARADO in monitoring and studying good governance practices for the region.

CASE STUDY

APPEAL CONDEMNING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

On 8 March 2013, on the occasion of International Women's Day, ESCWA contributed to the international discussion of gender-based violence (GBV) with an appeal condemning violence against women. This appeal was initiated by the Executive Secretary of ESCWA, Ms. Rima Khalaf, and was signed by 58 prominent Arab figures from different backgrounds, who maintained that there "is no acceptable justification to denying any individual the right to a safe and decent life". It saluted "the courage and determination of Arab women to fight all types of violence against them" and called for enshrining "the right to physical integrity and respect for human dignity as a fundamental principle of law, in political, social and cultural life". The appeal was widely circulated in various media outlets, and was especially well-received in ESCWA Member States undergoing political transition.

The immense interest in the Appeal illustrates the widespread impact and policy influence of the Commission. This fact was demonstrated even further at the sixth session of the Committee on Women, held in Kuwait in December 2013. The meeting culminated in the unanimous adoption of the Kuwait Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, in which all 17 ESCWA Member States condemned all forms of violence against women, regarding it as a violation of the most basic human rights. They declared their commitment, with the support of ESCWA, to monitor



Photo credit: kmiragaya - Fotolia.com

and address violence against women in an effort to protect women and girls. In doing so, Member States commended ESCWA for its role in addressing the issue from a multidisciplinary perspective that takes into account the specificities and challenges of the region.

CASE STUDY

LAW 21 IN IRAQ

ESCWA, in partnership with UNDP and the Institute on Governance (IOG), provided technical assistance to the Government of Iraq that led to the adoption of Law 21 in August 2013.¹ This law is considered a cornerstone and a key legislative blueprint for decentralisation and public modernization in Iraq. The assistance was carried out in accordance with the commitment of ESCWA to the United Nations IPSM programme, which provides the Government of Iraq with strategic directions and guidance for the development of the Senior Executive Service² as part of a broader public service reform initiative.

The Government of Iraq and the Parliament identified Law 21 as a key entry point for decentralisation and the modernisation efforts of the public sector and the revision of it became a key legislative objective. Government officials received training and learned from the experiences of other countries, in particular the Canadian model of “fiscal federalism” and “asymmetrical federalism”. The example of Canada, along with the legislative and non-legislative enabling framework and tools were identified by ESCWA, UNDP and the Government of Iraq as highly relevant to the

context of the federal-regional-provincial dynamics in Iraq.

ESCWA also assisted the Iraqi parliament members and other stakeholders within the Government in finalizing the drafting of Law 21. To that end, IOG participated in the parliamentary committee workshop designed to finalize the drafting of the amendments to that law. Furthermore, IOG met with stakeholders and discussed the amendments, the essential instruments required for the implementation of the law, and the necessary relationships to ensure its successful passage and its efficient operation.

As Iraq continues its journey towards democratisation and decentralisation, transformation of its public service is critical to achieve the desired objectives as enshrined in the Strategic Government Programme of Iraq, and the road map will be based upon it. The IPSM partnership has shown that the public service leadership cadre in Iraq is critical to the success of this transformation. The Senior Executive Service is a key instrument to accelerate the transformation through the development of the public service leadership cadre.

1. The Government and Parliament of Iraq identified Law 21 (Law of Governorates not incorporated into a region, 2008) as a key entry point for decentralization and modernization efforts. The revision of this law increases the power of Provincial Councils and Governors, whereas the local governments are now able to manage their affairs, including the management of financial and human resources, more independently from the central administration. This includes appointing senior officials, monitoring staff performance and being autonomous to hold them accountable. Certain powers will be gradually transferred from seven line Ministries to the provincial level, with a number of security powers being delegated to governors. It is envisioned that this new act will enable local authorities to take greater administrative responsibility and provide better public services to their constituents. The Law of Governorates itself applies to only 14 of 18 provinces in Iraq. The 2005 Constitution of Iraq recognized three provinces in the north of the country as being incorporated into the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). Law 21 has, therefore, never applied to those three provinces. It also does not presently apply to Kirkuk (Ta'meem) province because of an unresolved constitutional question of whether all or part of that province will be incorporated into the KRG.

2. The Senior Executive Service is composed of an elite cadre of top-level management executives in civil service who have been carefully selected, mentored, trained and developed. These individuals are typically selected because of their demonstrated potential as leaders, technical competencies and abilities, personal integrity and ethical values, and desire to learn and develop their potential in the service of the Government.

PARTICIPATION AND CITIZENSHIP

The Commission promotes good governance and resilience through encouraging participation and citizenship. It aims to ensure that all people participate equally in decision-making process that affect them.

During 2013, ESCWA demonstrated that women's empowerment remains at the core of its priorities, especially in the light of the challenges of political changes and transitions. The current political situation in the region provides an opportunity to **mainstream gender-related priorities** in newly adopted or revised

national constitutions and budgets, and to protect women's rights in line with international standards and conventions. In Libya, a new electoral law helped to ensure that 33 women were elected to the 200-member General National Congress in the first free elections in decades.

Yet in other countries, such as Tunisia, newly proposed constitutions have received much attention due to their potential to compromise women's rights. Heavy protests and national debates succeeded in overturning proposed articles that contradict the principles of gender equality and the empowerment of women.

In Egypt, women held 12 per cent of parliamentary seats in 2010, but following the uprisings and initial leadership changes, the number dropped to less than 2 per cent. Such a reversal in women's rights in times of transition undermines good governance and national resilience.

To enhance the position of women in decision-making processes, ESCWA organized an event on Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), an internationally-agreed resolution on the rights of women. The event aimed to identify gaps in the implementation of the four pillars of the resolution: prevention, participation, protection and provision of relief and recovery. It engaged National Women's Machineries and international partners to give inputs to an upcoming study on regional gaps in the implementation of the resolution. The event also discussed good practices and challenges in seven target countries (Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Palestine, Tunisia and Yemen).

In partnership with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), ESCWA organized an event on **participation in the context of the post-2015 development agenda**, to discuss the role of innovation and ICT in public governance to promote social inclusive development, e-government, citizen engagement and participatory governance. During the event, participants discussed a citizen engagement self-assessment questionnaire for government and explored its applicability to the Arab context, which resulted in an exchange of ideas, experiences and lessons learned on participatory governance and citizen engagement in development management.

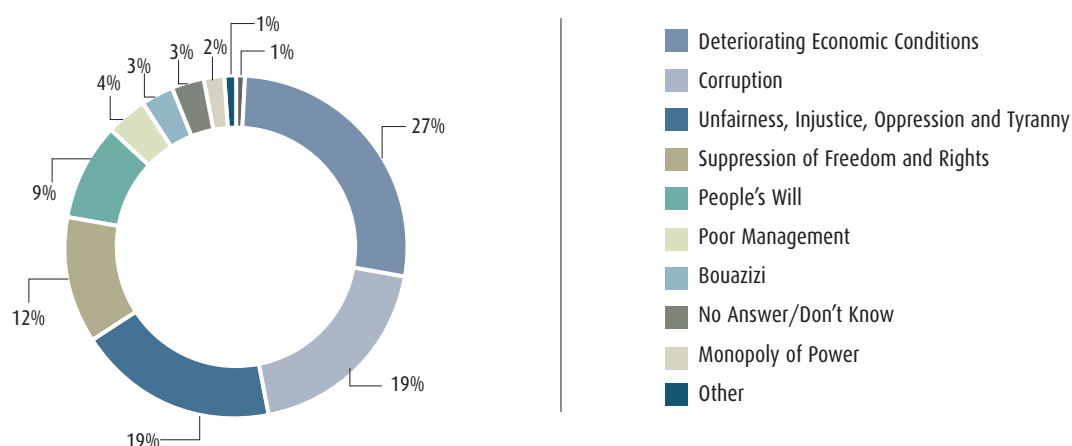
To promote **effective management of the transition period**, ESCWA organized five discussion sessions in 2013, entitled "Civil Society Dialogues: Exploring New Frontiers". The discussions focused on the changing role of civil society activism in Arab countries

in recent years and the challenges of transitional times. Similarly, ESCWA held a workshop to discuss its manual on "Capacity-Building for Partnership in Democratic Governance" to reinforce capabilities and skills for inclusive participatory decision-making. Representatives of civil society organizations in Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Palestine, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia and Yemen participated in those events.

Additionally, the efforts ESCWA exerted to enhance the participation of civil society in policymaking processes have led to the establishment of a joint committee of government and civil society organizations in Iraq to mainstream the participatory development approach of ESCWA in national policies. This achievement was reinforced by the adoption of its participatory approach in seven workshops and seminars on public policymaking and implementation replicated by previous beneficiaries of ESCWA trainings in both Yemen and Iraq to build capacity to participate in reform, systems transformation and conflict resolution processes and develop good governance competencies.

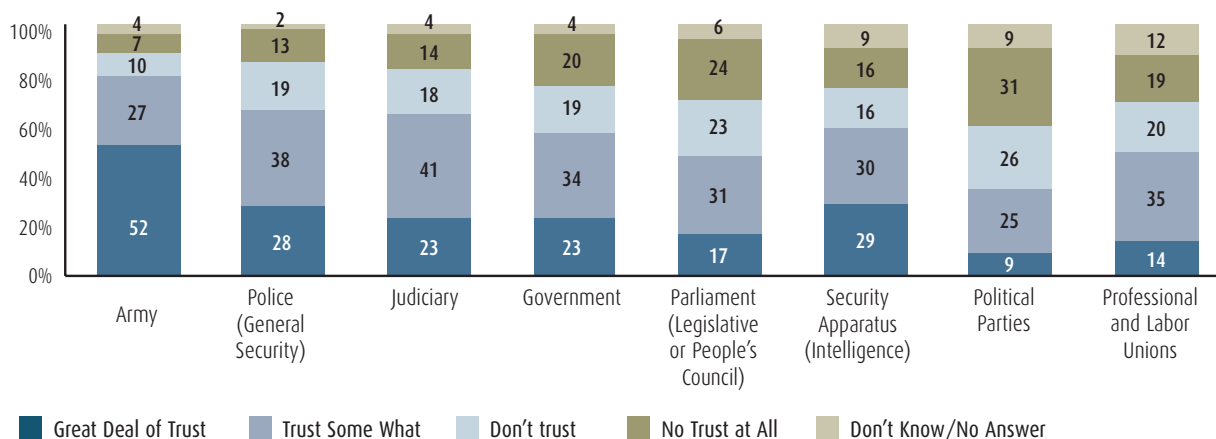
Finally, ESCWA launched the publication, "Promises of Spring: Citizenship and Civic Engagement in Democratic Transitions", and organized an event to discuss ongoing developments in a number of transition countries including Bahrain, Egypt, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen. The dialogue provided a general assessment of the transition processes and future directions, and ways to operationalize key recommendations of the publication. During the event, participants, including high-level eminent persons, politicians, civil society actors and activists and representatives of academia, discussed the potential future trajectories from the perspective of those who participated in the uprisings. Some interesting data from the publication is shown in figures 16 and 17.

FIGURE 16. REASONS INVOKED FOR THE TUNISIAN UPRISING



Source: Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies, 2012.

FIGURE 17. TRUST OF ARAB CITIZENS IN GOVERNMENTS AND KEY PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS, 2012-2013



Source: Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies, 2013.

MR. GILBERT DOUMIT

Founder and Managing Partner of Beyond Reform and Development Group - Yale World Fellow

"What characterizes ESCWA is that it is constantly looking for ways to adapt to changes taking place in the region ESCWA's adoption of a participatory approach, and its continuous communication with governmental and civil society stakeholders, enhances its ability to interact with its environment and adapt its programs to the needs and expectations of beneficiaries and decision makers."

SOCIOECONOMIC IMPACTS OF CONFLICT AND OCCUPATION

Conflict, occupation and their socioeconomic impacts constitute the third axis of ESCWA's work on good governance and resilience. The socioeconomic and political dynamics of the Arab region continue to be influenced by the Israeli occupation of Palestine, manifested in the never-ending build-up of settlements, movement restrictions, separation wall in the West Bank and siege of the Gaza Strip. The political transformations taking place in a number of Arab countries have also had a heavy imprint on the region. In some instances, mass social movements that called for bread, freedom and dignity, and that were peaceful, were marred by geopolitics and violence.

This state of affairs resulted in three trends: a) a transformation through dialogue and other processes towards more accountable, participatory and

transparent governance system; b) a transformation afflicted with political or ideological polarization and c) a transformation marred by conflict. The intensity of the last two trends varies from one Arab country to another, but the Syrian crisis stands out. The Syrian crisis has been described as one of the most severe human-made humanitarian disasters of the twenty-first century and has not only decimated the country's economy and undermined its social fabric but also affected neighbouring countries, particularly Lebanon and Jordan. Socioeconomic and security systems are under strain and the population increase as a result of the influx of Syrian refugees has been significant: approximately 25 per cent in Lebanon and 15 per cent in Jordan.

Furthermore, the Arab region continues to be challenged by the easy flow of arms, fraying of borders, growing number of displaced persons, and a rise of non-state actors and terrorism, to mention a few. In Iraq, continued instability has resulted in an almost daily death toll. Libya is working to strengthen state institutions to live up to the political and socioeconomic aspirations of its citizens. Regional political polarization has hindered the political transformation in these countries.

Yet in spite of these challenges, Yemen concluded its National Dialogue with most political parties became signatories. Moreover, Tunisian political actors and representatives of civil society agreed to what has been described as a triumph of consensus politics which produced one of the most liberal constitutions in an Arab nation.

Throughout this period, ESCWA supported the efforts of its Member States to overcome the difficulties of transition. It focused on governance, in particular local governance amidst transition, as well as security

sector reform. Through capacity-building programmes, ESCWA aims to support civil servants by mainstreaming good governance practices to strengthen national institutions. ESCWA also continues to promote peaceful co-existence through civic values and life skills.

In the light of the crisis in the Syrian Arab Republic, and in response to its mandate to promote democracy and development in the region, ESCWA has initiated a project entitled “The National Agenda for the Future of Syria”, in partnership with Syrian national institutions, civil society and the private sector and collaborates with international organizations, the United Nations country team and United Nations coordination mechanisms and international partners. The aims of the project are to support Syrian stakeholders to envision a comprehensive National Agenda on the policy alternatives for the most pressing social, economic and political challenges the country will face during the post-conflict transition; to develop networks and partnerships between Syrian stakeholders and regional and international partners to facilitate and advocate for post-conflict transition; and to strengthen the capacity of Syrian stakeholders from all walks of life to actively and effectively participate in post-conflict transition in their country.

In 2013, ESCWA observed the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People with an official ceremony and cultural activities at the United Nations House in Beirut. The events raised awareness about **the plight of the Palestinian People** and their inalienable rights, the socioeconomic and political consequences of the Israeli occupation of Palestine. Approximately 400 people attended the events, which included exhibitions by a young Palestinian photographer and another for Palestinian non-governmental organizations in Lebanon, as well as performance by a young Palestinian artist. The events were widely covered by the media and support the efforts of Palestinian institutions and civil society in this domain.

Following the popular uprisings in **Egypt**, the Ministry of Planning called upon ESCWA to prepare a policy document Socioeconomic Ramifications of the Political Stalemate, especially the economic and social dimensions of the crisis. The resulting paper provides an assessment of the situation after the revolution and proposes different policy options for the short term, and that Egypt a long term vision for inclusive development.

ESCWA helped the Ministry of Economy in **Lebanon** to formulate an economic model to help determine the effects of an increase in the salaries and wages of the public sector and to analyse the impact of the Syrian conflict on the economy. That effort contributed to the preparation of a World Bank report on the matter.



Mr. Najib Mikati, Prime Minister of Lebanon, Mr. Rami Hamdallah, Prime Minister of Palestine and Ms. Rima Khalaf, Executive Secretary of ESCWA during a cultural fair held at the United Nations House in observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.
Photo Credit: Ahmad Azakir

MS. NADIA AL-SAQQAF

Editor-in-chief of the Yemen Times.

“ESCWA training manual on building capacities for partnership in democratic governance comes right on time! It is a valuable instrument that could be used across the region and adopted for practical use by most civil society organizations including media... This manual is inspired by today’s events and will extend to the future beyond the transitional phase. A future made by all, in an inclusive, participatory and responsible way...”

Also, ESCWA provided technical support to six consultative workshops in cooperation with the Lebanese-Palestinian Dialogue Committee (LPDC), which is affiliated with the office of the Prime Minister in Lebanon. Representatives of the Embassy of Palestine in Beirut, the Palestine Liberation Organization and all Palestinian factions attended the workshops, along with officials from the Lebanese ministries of interior, defence, justice, and social affairs, and representatives of political parties, civil society and international organizations. Participants in the consultative workshops discussed the status of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and the function of the Committee. The main outcome was a new draft law to establish a Higher Council for Palestinian Refugees as a permanent body under the office of the Prime Minister of Lebanon. ESCWA plans to establish a national observatory for refugee issues and is preparing a national survey.

Together with the Common Space Initiative, a non-governmental organization that advocates for national dialogue, ESCWA is leading the Lebanese-Palestinian Forum. Civil society organization and political parties met in this forum to discuss the rights, living conditions and political and diplomatic issues of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. A comprehensive document ensued on the rights of Palestinians to work and benefit from social insurance and included a common position of the members of the forum vis-à-vis the main issues under discussion. Through these activities, ESCWA contributes to build resilience to the ramifications of occupation in Palestine.

RESILIENCE TO NATURAL AND HUMAN-MADE CRISES

The fourth and final component of good governance and resilience is resilience to natural and human-made crises.

To monitor resilience to natural disasters, ESCWA organized the fifth meeting of the Regional Initiative for the Assessment of the Impact of Climate Change on Water Resources and Socio-Economic Vulnerability in the Arab Region (RICCAR). During the meeting, ESCWA reported on the findings of **the regional climate modelling impact assessment**. The assessment was generated by the Swedish Meteorological and Hydrological Institute and partner institutions and examined projected impacts of climate change on freshwater resources in the Arab region. The meeting participants suggested ways to focus the analysis of the regional climate modelling outputs, and commented on the vulnerability assessment methodology and the scope of the regional knowledge hub. They proposed mechanisms for improving access to disaster loss databases and climate services in the region. Further, two new working groups have been established to support the preparation of the vulnerability assessment and the set-up of a regional knowledge hub, and their progress was reported at the meeting. Finally, the initiative welcomed two new partners, the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, and three research centres, which brought the number of institutions contributing to the initiative to fourteen.

ESCWA prepared a fact sheet entitled “Green Technologies in the Energy Sector for Climate Change Mitigation in the ESCWA Region”. It presents an overview of the advantages and challenges of adopting **green technologies**, and of marketing renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies including solar, wind and biomass. It also addresses

requirements to promote green technologies in the electrical energy sector.

ESCWA is also supporting a project on “Strengthening National Capacities to Manage Water Scarcity and Drought in West Asia and North Africa”. Pilot projects were planned in Jordan, Morocco, Palestine, Tunisia and Yemen to build capacity on the development of national drought plans and needed mechanisms for implementation. The first joint assessment mission between DESA and ESCWA took place in late 2013 to define the gaps and needs for Jordan to build their capacities to manage drought and cope with the severe water scarcity.

Finally, in collaboration with the League of Arab States, ESCWA held a regional training workshop on negotiations of multilateral environmental agreements on climate change for representatives of Arab countries. The workshop provided opportunities to exchange experiences on issues related to the climate change negotiations under the **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change** (UNFCCC). Participants reviewed basic skills for negotiations of multilateral environmental agreements.

H.E. MR. NICOLAS NAHAS

Minister of Economy and Trade, Lebanon

“We would like to extend our sincere thanks and appreciation for the kind cooperation we received from ESCWA in the past year. The teams at ESCWA were able to assist in the enrichment of various projects being carried out by Ministry of Economy and Trade, including the formulation of an economic model to help determine the effects of an increase in the salaries and wages of the public sector on the Lebanese economy, analysis of the Syrian conflict, which contributed to the preparation of a World Bank report on the matter, and the provision of economic statistics and publications to help enhance MoET’s economic analyses. Looking forward to further cooperation in 2014.”



PARTNERSHIPS

AS A KEY ACTOR IN THE COMPLEX AND INTERCONNECTED SPHERE OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, ESCWA IS COMMITTED TO DEVELOPING A NETWORK OF STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS WITH STAKEHOLDERS IN GOVERNMENT, ACADEMIA, THE PRIVATE SECTOR AS WELL AS THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM AND REGIONAL, NON-GOVERNMENTAL AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS.

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THE IMPORTANCE OF BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

In January 2013, in response to a 2012 job audit and an assessment of ESCWA support functions that was undertaken by its senior management, a new section was established to provide strategic and substantive guidance and support to the organization in terms of developing partnerships, mobilizing resources, enhancing the standing of ESCWA as a knowledge organization in the region and advancing its role as a policy advocate.

The client-oriented Strategic Directions and Partnerships Section (SDPS) supports ESCWA to strengthen the organization's comparative edge within the region. The Section facilitates outreach to new and existing partners and donors, proposes new directions for interdisciplinary research, and encourages the production of policy oriented tools and outputs.

As a result of its efforts in 2013, ESCWA now has a defined, strategic approach to mobilize funds and reach out to partners: it aims to broaden its donor base, develop longer-term and larger-scale projects, improve internal coordination of outreach efforts and strengthen the brand of the Commission as a regional centre of excellence and expertise. The organization has already witnessed increased interest among partners ranging from traditional donor countries such as Germany, Finland, Norway and Sweden; to Member States including Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates; as well as international and regional foundations.

Moreover, ESCWA has forged important partnerships with different types of organizations to extend the reach of its work and ensure a more sustainable impact in the region.

Governmental partners

With the support of the **Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency** (SIDA), ESCWA implemented two regional initiatives mandated and endorsed by the Arab Ministerial Water Council to promote regional cooperation to assess, manage and monitor water resources in the Arab region.

With the support of the government of **Germany**, through the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, BGR and GIZ, ESCWA promoted the application of integrated approaches to water resources management, with a special emphasis on the management of shared water resources.

Further, Germany is supporting ESCWA on the National Agenda for the Future of Syria project, which

A CLOSE PARTNERSHIP: ESCWA AND THE LEAGUE OF ARAB STATES

The League of Arab States continued to be one of the main regional partners of ESCWA, and in 2013, the two institutions renewed their Memorandum of Understanding, which encompasses activities that will sustain and strengthen their cooperation.

The two organizations worked together on issues ranging from the Arab Internet Governance Forum to the Arab Social and Economic Summit. Key highlights of the year include the fourth issue of the Arab MDG Report, a groundbreaking study which presents disability-related statistics and information on institutions and laws related to disability for the first time. The two organizations also collaborated on the Regional Conference on Population and Development in the Arab States and all the preparatory work related to it. Together with the Arab Administrative Development Organization (ARADO), ESCWA promoted participatory governance methods and public sector reform to enhance the governance reform agenda in the region.

In an effort to strengthen its impact in promoting renewable energy and energy efficiency in the Arab region, ESCWA forged a tripartite partnership with the Regional Center for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (RCREEE) and the Ministerial Council for Electricity of the League of Arab States in order coordinate capacity-building, policy dialogues, partnerships and awareness raising efforts.

seeks to produce a comprehensive national agenda on policy alternatives for the most pressing social, economic and political challenges the country is facing. The project also aims to develop networks and partnerships between Syrian stakeholders and regional and international partners to actively and effectively participate in post-conflict transition. Similarly, the support of the Government of **Norway** was essential to the considerable progress of the project in 2013.

Regional organizations and non-governmental organizations

Issues related to governance and participatory approaches were also at the core of several partnerships between ESCWA and regional and non-governmental organizations. With the support of the **Arab Gulf Programme for Development** (AGFUND), ESCWA promoted a participatory approach in public policy processes in the Arab region by implementing a workshop and publishing a manual on Capacity-Building for Partnership in Democratic Governance. The project triggered policy recommendations on participatory processes and civic engagement, facilitated national as well as regional platforms for dialogue and consensus-

building on development issues, and supported knowledge and experience-sharing networks between government and civil society entities.

A partnership with the **Arab Thought Foundation** helped ESCWA reach out to a broad Arab audience and even a global audience to disseminate findings and receive input on the development of advocacy materials and policy briefs on participatory approaches.

Through a partnership with the **Dar Al-Khibrah Organization**, ESCWA developed technical advice and training materials on community-based development, participatory development and partnership in democratic governance. It was also able to expand the reach of its work in Iraq.

A partnership with the **Arab Towns Organization** (ATO) was a key factor in ensuring the success of many activities and initiatives undertaken at the regional level. The partnership yielded a workshop on pro-poor urban development strategies in the Arab region, and secured the support of local authorities and elected municipal councils and non-governmental organizations.

The **Hariri Foundation for Human and Sustainable Development** partnered with ESCWA for the establishment of an Observatory for Women in the Arab Region, and also works closely on piloting the work of the Observatory in Lebanon.

Together with the **Arab Urban Development Institute**, ESCWA worked on an innovative initiative to design and implement the Urban Poverty Index, a simple, multidimensional, household-based poverty measure at the city and local level for the use of local authorities and urban observatories. Various entities including from the **Islamic Development Bank** have requested ESCWA to extend the index to other sites.

Academia and the private sector

Together with the **Science and Technology Centre at Aden University in Yemen**, the **Palestine Information and Communications Technology Incubator** (PICTI), **Berytech in Lebanon** and **iPARK** in Jordan, ESCWA launched the digital Arabic content competition for 2013 to promote Arabic language content on the Internet. This initiative produced a wealth of innovative ideas for digital Arabic content projects and products and raised awareness among entrepreneurs and university graduates on the opportunities offered by the digital Arabic content industry and market at the regional and global levels.

Through a partnership with **Rotary Clubs of Lebanon**, ESCWA developed a manual on MDGs and the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015 for universities and secondary schools in Lebanon.

THE REGIONAL COORDINATION MECHANISM (RCM): COORDINATING REGIONAL UNITED NATIONS POLICY

The United Nations Economic and Social Council established the Regional Coordination Mechanism (RCM) to improve coordination within the United Nations system by promoting information sharing, maximizing collective action, and ensuring thematic and policy coherence. Membership of RCM in the Arab region includes the League of Arab States and all regional bureaus of United Nations agencies working in the region. Multilateral institutions such as the World Bank and IMF, and regional financial institutions are also called on to take part in RCM meetings. Five Working Groups have been established to coordinate thematic initiatives as follows: MDGs, Climate Change, Food Security, International Migration, and Statistics.

In 2013, ESCWA convened two RCM meetings. The first took place in March 2013 in Beirut, with a focus on coordination ahead of the regional and global deliberations on the post-2015 development agenda. On the side lines of the RCM, ESCWA organized a regional consultative meeting of civil society organizations to involve them in the preparation process. The meeting resulted in a declaration that was endorsed by the RCM ahead of the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

In November 2013, the RCM convened again, and for the first time ever, the meeting was hosted by the League of Arab States at their Cairo headquarters. This meeting focused on United Nations support to the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit scheduled to be held in January 2015. The meeting included subsidiary bodies of the League of Arab States as observers, and resulted in concrete proposals and recommendations for the coordinated support of the United Nations to the League in general and to the Summit in particular. The meeting participants also coordinated regional efforts on the post-2015 development agenda, and reviewed the progress of the five Working Groups.

United Nations and intergovernmental organizations

The **International Organization for Migration** (IOM), the **United Nations Population Fund** (UNFPA) and the **Economic Commission for Africa** (ECA) were key partners for ESCWA in ensuring the success of the Regional Conference on Population and Development in the Arab States.

Together with the **United Nations Conference on Trade and Development** (UNCTAD) and the **Economic Commission for Europe** (ECE), ESCWA worked to strengthen the capacity of Arab countries to negotiate bilateral investment treaties. The partnership allowed ESCWA to offer services to more countries and to bring

expertise to the Arab region. Cooperation with the International Centre of Excellence on Public-Private Partnerships will enhance the capacity of ESCWA to assist countries in the Arab region in creating and implementing sustainable public-private partnerships.

The **International Labour Organization (ILO)** was a key partner and co-sponsor on a number of ESCWA initiatives such as a study on the labour intensive works programme in Yemen and the microinsurance landscape study, both of which explored instruments to extend social protection to the informal sector. In addition, ESCWA and ILO organized the Arab Forum on the welfare mix in Arab countries.

In Iraq, ESCWA has worked closely with the **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** on supporting public sector service delivery to spur the modernisation of the public sector and bring about concrete and tangible benefits for the population as a whole.

The **Arab States Regional Office of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women)** is a key partner for ESCWA in all its gender-related work. In 2013, UN-Women contributed to an ESCWA study on Combating Domestic Violence against Girls and Women, as well as other work on violence against women.

The **World Bank** helped ESCWA to implement the regional component of the International Comparison Programme for West Asia, which aims to calculate purchasing power parities and provide capacity-building for price statistics and national accounts. The **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** and in particular its Middle East Regional Technical Assistance Centre (METAC) provided important support to ESCWA for the implementation of the System of National Accounts 2008.

The **Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIK)**, the Statistical Office of the European Union (Eurostat) and **Euro-Mediterranean Statistical Cooperation (MEDSTAT III)** were also key partners in supporting the efforts of ESCWA to improve the statistical capacity of its Member States.

Looking ahead, ESCWA will continue expanding its donor base and extrabudgetary portfolio of new and innovative projects. At the same time, it will seek to strengthen its engagement with partners, in particular to explore research partnerships with key stakeholders. Finally, ESCWA will seek to expand its ability to advocate for specific policy changes in the region.

ESCWA IN THE COMMUNITY

To bring the work of the Commission closer to its most immediate community, ESCWA sought to strengthen ties with a variety of partners in Lebanon.



Photo credit: ESCWA

ESCWA January 2013 refugee fundraising drive

With the aim of contributing to humanitarian relief efforts to support Syrian refugees in and around Lebanon, staff at the United Nations House undertook a fundraising drive in early 2013 which raised funds and took in clothing and other donations as well. At that time, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) advised that the most pressing need of refugees in Lebanon was for shoes. Thus, the donated money was used to purchase shoes: 236 pairs for children; 105 pairs for women; and 65 pairs for men. The shoe suppliers generously donated an extra 50 pairs of children's shoes. The donated clothes were distributed to 200 children, 45 women and 100 men. UNHCR expressed sincere gratitude for the generosity of staff at the United Nations House and their families. The shoes, clothes and other donations were distributed to refugees dwelling in the Bekaa Valley of Lebanon.⁷

Beirut International Arab Book Fair

As part of its efforts to promote the work and role of the United Nations in Lebanon, the region and the world, ESCWA and other United Nations agencies participated in the Beirut International Arab Book Fair for the fifth consecutive year. A large variety of United Nations publications and recent reports on programmes, activities and achievements were

7. A video of this effort is available at <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?v=763743725562&set=vb.294601200650673&type=2&theater>

displayed and distributed. The publications covered a range of relevant topics showcasing the global work of the United Nations. At the United Nations booth, ESCWA staff members were on hand to help visitors select publications and reply to their questions. The staff also held a panel discussions with book fair attendees. Some 1,800 visitors attended the book fair, which received wide media attention.

2013 World Environment Day celebrations

In partnership with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the British Embassy in Lebanon and the non-governmental organization Food Establishments Recycling Nutrients (FERN), ESCWA organized a series of events to promote the World Environment Day. The events included a press conference at the United Nations House, awareness raising at the “Souk El Tayeb” farmers market and other promotional events in Beirut.

The main theme of World Environment Day 2013 was “Think, Eat and Save”, an important call to ensure that food is not wasted with a special focus on how to reduce the global food footprint. Indeed, raising awareness in the field of food security will help the Arab region to strive for food sustainability for the future generations.



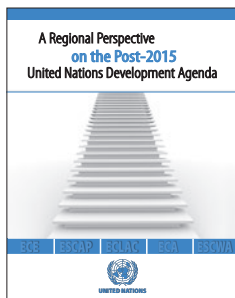
Photo credit: Giorgio Tarraf



FEATURED PUBLICATIONS

For a complete listing of the 2013 ESCWA publications, please visit
www.escwa.un.org

Regional integration

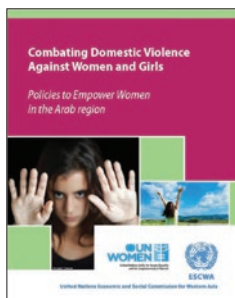


A REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE POST-2015 UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

Produced jointly by the United Nations regional commissions, the report underlines the need to adapt global goals to regional and national contexts. It emphasizes the need for a nuanced approach that addresses regional specificities within the post-2015 development agenda. The report identifies several regional priorities and the following key messages to inform the global debate: employment generation must be at the centre of the post-2015 agenda; more effective approaches are needed to tackle inequality; a more comprehensive approach to environmental sustainability must be incorporated into the agenda; and democratic governance must be effectively incorporated into the agenda.

Publication Symbol: E/ESCWA/OES/2013/2

Available from <http://www.escwa.un.org/information/pubaction.asp?PubID=1388>



COMBATING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS: POLICIES TO EMPOWER WOMEN IN THE ARAB REGION

Violence against women and girls remains a global phenomenon that is not confined to any particular geographical region, society, culture, age group or socioeconomic stratum. This study examines violence against women and girls in 18 Arab countries covered by the mandates of ESCWA and UN-Women, with particular focus on violence in the domestic sphere. The study finds that diverse national discourses have implications on the perception of the role and status of Arab women and how violence against women may be combated. With few exceptions, Arab countries fail calculate the cost of neglecting to combat violence against women. In this regard, the study generates evidence-based policy recommendations for Arab countries to assist them in scaling up their commitment to combat violence against women and to promote gender equality and enhance women's empowerment in Arab societies.

Publication Symbol: E/ESCWA/ECW/2013/4

Available from <http://www.escwa.un.org/information/pubaction.asp?PubID=1437>

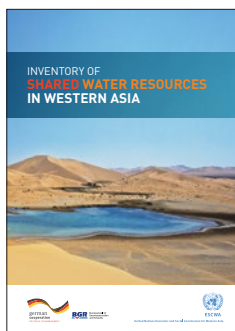


COMPETITIVENESS OF THE ICT SECTOR IN THE ARAB REGION: INNOVATION AND INVESTMENT IMPERATIVES

This publication contains an analysis of the role of ICT in fostering the competitiveness of national economies and highlights policy measures that could be adopted to improve the competitiveness of the ICT sector in the Arab region. It also discussed the impact that a competitive ICT sector can exert on growth and productivity and assesses whether Arab countries can undertake viable and valuable initiatives to stimulate investment and innovation, the two imperatives in this enabling field of the economy. It explores policy measures that could be adopted to improve the competitiveness of the ICT sector in the Arab region, and offers recommendations to Governments and multiple stakeholders in this regard.

Publication Symbol: E/ESCWA/ICTD/2013/4

Available from <http://www.escwa.un.org/information/pubaction.asp?PubID=1374>

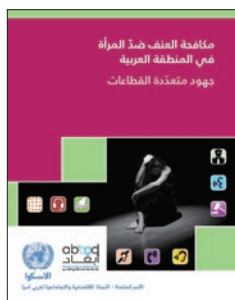


INVENTORY OF SHARED WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT IN WESTERN ASIA

This publication, the first effort led by the United Nations to comprehensively identify and assess the state of transboundary surface and groundwater resources in Western Asia, was prepared by ESCWA and the German Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources (BGR) in close consultation with ESCWA Member States and regional and international experts. The Inventory follows a standardized structure, with 9 surface water chapters and 17 groundwater chapters that address hydrology, hydrogeology, water resources development and use, international water agreements and transboundary water management efforts. Boasting 60 new maps and over 200 figures, tables and boxes with recent, comprehensive data series, this 600 page publication provides an up-to-date view of the state and evolution of shared water resources in Western Asia. The publication was launched globally at Stockholm World Water Week (September) and regionally in Beirut on United Nations Day (October),

Publication Symbol: E/ESCWA/SDPD/2013/inventory

Available from <http://www.escwa.un.org/information/pubaction.asp?PubID=1362> or on dedicated website: www.waterinventory.org

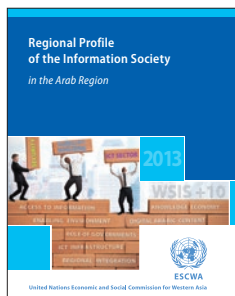


MULTISECTORAL EFFORTS TO COMBAT VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN THE ESCWA REGION

ESCWA Member States have been urged to pay special attention to the issue of violence against women and give high priority to comprehensive measures to address the issue in all its forms. In this regard, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women has called upon countries to implement multisectoral efforts to combat violence against women and provide support to victims. This study explores prevention, protection and rehabilitation services in ESCWA Member States, focusing on coverage, outreach and type of services provided. It also examines the dynamics of referral systems for survivors of violence.

Publication Symbol: E/ESCWA/ECW/2013/3

Available from <http://www.escwa.un.org/arabic/information/pubaction.asp?PubID=1311>

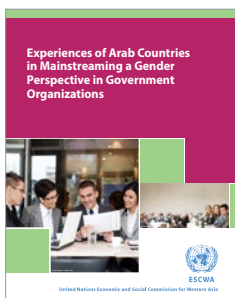


REGIONAL PROFILE OF THE INFORMATION SOCIETY IN THE ARAB REGION 2013

The sixth edition of the Regional Profile publication that examines and measures the progress made in building information societies in the Arab region. The publication allows for a comparison of the current status of information society development between countries, in order to promote opportunities for cooperation and regional integration. Information and communication technology (ICT) has grown in prominence across the Arab region, with dramatic increases seen in ICT adoption and use rates, fuelled by greater penetration of fixed and wireless broadband technologies. Consequently the focus has started to shift towards boosting confidence and security in the use of ICTs, and building the ICT sector.

Publication Symbol: E/ESCWA/ICTD/2013/6

Available from <http://www.escwa.un.org/information/pubaction.asp?PubID=1492>

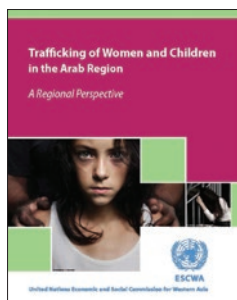


REVIEW OF THE STATUS OF GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS IN ESCWA MEMBER STATES

The study examines prevailing gender mainstreaming approaches in the ESCWA region through the prisms of established national machineries for the advancement of women. In doing so, it highlights good practices supportive of women's empowerment and gender equality within the socioeconomic and political context of the region. The study also identifies gaps and challenges undermining the development of effective gender mainstreaming strategies. The findings of the study form the basis for policy recommendations geared toward supporting regional efforts to mainstream gender perspectives in public policies and programmes.

Publication Symbol: E/ESCWA/ECW/2013/5

Available from <http://www.escwa.un.org/arabic/information/pubaction.asp?PubID=1362>

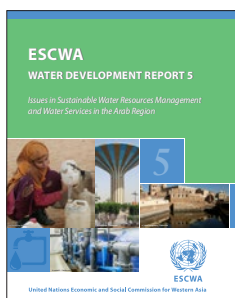


TRAFFICKING OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN THE ARAB REGION: A REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Trafficking in persons is a complex phenomenon, influenced by social, economic and cultural conditions at the individual and national levels. This study examines trafficking in persons within and between ESCWA Member States, focusing on the primary victims: women and children. The study explores the root causes underlying trafficking in the region and assesses State responses to this problem in relation to international protocols and conventions as well as national laws. Through this analysis, the study finds that anti-trafficking laws in the region are generally congruent with international instruments, with varying degrees of implementation and capacity-building efforts from one country to another.

Publication Symbol: E/ESCWA/ECW/2013/2

Available from <http://www.escwa.un.org/information/pubaction.asp?PubID=1396>



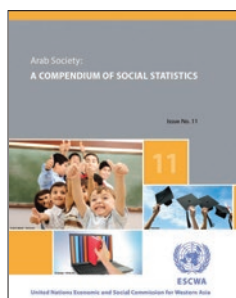
WATER DEVELOPMENT REPORT NO. 5: ISSUES IN SUSTAINABLE WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AND WATER SERVICES

The report highlights regional developments in the area of water supply and sanitation, with a focus on the intergovernmental mechanism for monitoring water supply and sanitation services in the Arab region (MDG+ Initiative). The publication also reviews the processes and progress related to regional follow-up on MDGs and regional preparations for the post-2015 development agenda within the context of the water sector, and addresses global and regional perspectives on securing access to drinking water and sanitation as fundamental human rights. This publication aims to support the process of formulating sustainable development goals and targets as they relate to access to water and sanitation services.

Publication Symbol: E/ESCWA/SDPD/2013/4

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Equitable growth and sustainability

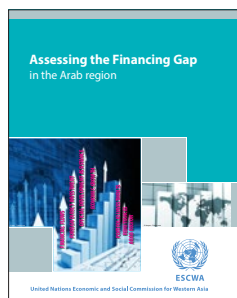


ARAB SOCIETY: A COMPENDIUM OF SOCIAL STATISTICS

This publication provides a general view of society in the Arab region and the changes it has encountered over time. The first part of the 2013 issue of the Compendium focuses on education, and the second part discusses additional areas of social concern by topic. The printed publication is complemented by detailed data drawn from national sources, available only online.

Publication Symbol: E/ESCWA/SD/2013/13

Available from <http://www.escwa.un.org/information/pubaction.asp?PubID=1518>

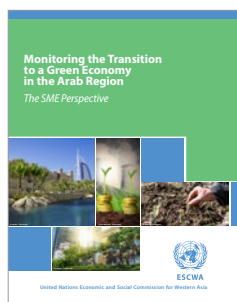


ASSESSING THE FINANCING GAP IN THE ARAB REGION

This study presents the key methodological considerations involved in calculating financing gaps, and then uses the balance of payments constrained growth model to estimate the gap in 2009 for selected Arab countries. In 2009 the selected countries combined would have needed an additional US\$54.5-US\$57.9 billion to achieve 7 per cent economic growth. The results are quite heterogeneous across countries; not all of the selected countries had a gap, although others such as Egypt had large financing deficits. Given the global financial crisis and ongoing transitions that have affected the region since 2009, the financing gap is likely to be much larger today. The paper also discusses some of the policy options that leaders in the Arab region have at their disposal to fill the gap.

Publication Symbol: E/ESCWA/EDGD/2013/5.

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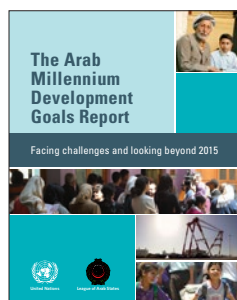


MONITORING THE TRANSITION TO A GREEN ECONOMY IN THE ARAB REGION: THE SME PERSPECTIVE

The study reflects on progress in the Arab region in the adoption and implementation of green economy policies and on their achievements in different sectors. It also identifies challenges and highlights potential opportunities for countries in the region to green their economies. The publication is intended as a policy tool for Arab Governments to monitor green activities. It outlines a range of green economy policy options for Governments, including options for supporting green SMEs as well as for enhancing monitoring capacity. A bottom-up approach was used in the preparation of the study: ESCWA connected with entrepreneurs, interviewed them, listened to their stories and gathered key information from them on the main challenges they face and drivers that could assist them.

Publication Symbol: E/ESCWA/SDPD/2013/1

Available from <http://www.escwa.un.org/information/pubaction.asp?PubID=1356>



THE ARAB MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS REPORT 2013: FACING CHALLENGES AND LOOKING BEYOND 2015

This report assesses the progress made by the Arab region in the achievement of MDGs. It shows that the Arab region has made impressive progress towards many of the Goals, particularly in education. However, there are still major deficits in targets related to hunger, infant and maternal mortality, and access to water. There are also major inequalities between and within Arab countries. The report argues that the core of the post-2015 development framework must promote good governance, drive and embody inclusive development, and develop means to monitor poverty and inequality suited to the Arab region. The 2013 Arab MDG Report was downloaded from the ESCWA website more than any other publication during the months of October-December 2013.

Publication Symbol: E/ESCWA/EDGD/2013/1

Available from http://www.escwa.un.org/information/publications/edit/upload/E_ESCWA_EDGD_2013_1_E.pdf

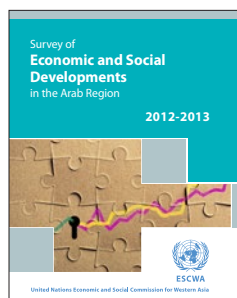


THE DEVELOPMENT POLICY IMPLICATIONS OF AGE-STRUCTURAL TRANSITIONS IN ARAB COUNTRIES

The publication examines the development impact of the profound social and economic changes brought about by shifts in age structures in Arab countries. These demographic trends have resulted in today's youth bulge in Arab countries, and will lead to further transformations in the future. The report highlights the social and economic policy areas in which these transitions are having an impact and suggests that Arab Governments must integrate present and future demographic changes into development strategies. This will require Arab countries to rethink their approaches to development to serve the needs and develop the potential of each age group, and ensure at the same time that the adopted policies are flexible enough to respond to age structure as it changes.

Publication Symbol: E/ESCWA/SDD/2013/2

Available from <http://www.escwa.un.org/information/pubaction.asp?PubID=1504>



THE SURVEY OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENTS IN THE ARAB REGION 2012-2013

The Survey assesses the trend of economic and social development in the global as well as regional context. The assessment shows that the economies in the Arab region exhibited further polarization between GCC countries and other Arab countries. The lack of confidence in intraregional business transactions resulted in the segmentation of economies in the region and amplified the seriousness of unemployment. The Survey provides an in-depth analysis of the issue and directs the discussion on short-term responses for policymakers.

Publication Symbol: E/ESCWA/EDGD/2013/3

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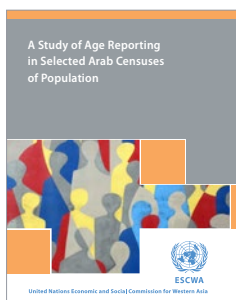


TOWARDS A NEW WELFARE MIX? RETHINKING THE ROLE OF THE STATE, THE MARKET AND CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE PROVISION OF SOCIAL PROTECTION AND SOCIAL SERVICES

The 'welfare mix', meaning the distribution of responsibilities between the State, the market and civil society, shapes the equity and the equality of citizens' access to social protection and social services. The fifth report on Integrated Social Policy looks at the provision of social services and social protection in the Arab region from a rights-based perspective on equality, equity of access, coverage and sustainability of social services. The report finds that several Arab Governments must re-think their current welfare mix to guarantee that all citizens enjoy the rights to social security and protection.

Publication Symbol: E/ESCWA/SDD/2013/1

Available from http://www.escwa.un.org/information/publications/edit/upload/E_ESCWA_SDD_13_1_E.pdf



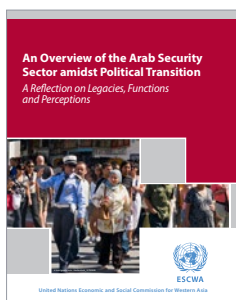
STUDY OF AGE REPORTING IN SOME RECENT ARAB CENSUSES

The study assesses the accuracy of age-sex reporting and patterns of digit preference in recent population censuses in selected Arab countries, at both the national and subnational levels. Using micro data files from recent population censuses in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Morocco, Palestine and the Sudan, the study shows that age misstatement (heaping) continues to be a problem in Arab censuses, and is more severe for women than for men. District-level analysis of census data shows that literacy is the best predictor of age heaping followed by household wealth.

Publication Symbol: E/ESCWA/SD/2013/5

Available from <http://www.escwa.un.org/information/pubaction.asp?PubID=1457>

Good governance and resilience

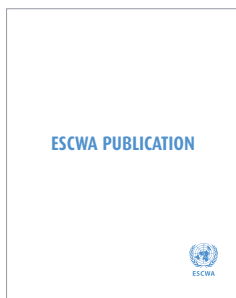


AN OVERVIEW OF THE ARAB SECURITY SECTOR AMIDST POLITICAL TRANSITION: A REFLECTION OF LEGACIES, FUNCTIONS AND PERCEPTIONS

Arab uprisings have redefined the role of security institutions, as this new period of revolution has been sparked by citizen protests rather than military officers, and where citizens have demanded the end of autocratic unjust rule. A road map to meet these aspirations for change must be examined. Recognizing there is no panacea for all Arab countries, this paper attempts to isolate one variable of that road map, the security sector, and place it in the context of reform toward good governance, stability and development.

Publication Symbol: E/ESCWA/ECRI/2013/2

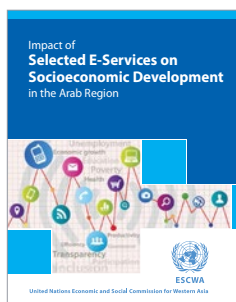
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ARAB GOVERNANCE REPORT

Based on country-specific political dynamics that reflect historical, cultural, geopolitical and socioeconomic characteristics, political transformations in the Arab region may take very different trajectories. The study attempts to elucidate the concept of democratic governance and specifies a new sets of indicators for Arab countries in transition. It provides an analysis of the challenges of governance-based agendas in the transition process, to initiate a debate on whether a governance-based regional platform would help Arab countries in transition, and if so, what characteristics would be most useful and how to make it a reality.

Publication Symbol: E/ESCWA/ECRI/2013/4

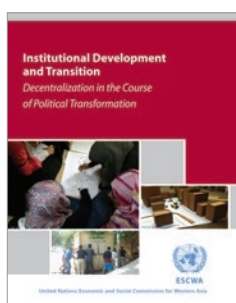


IMPACT OF SELECTED E-SERVICES ON SOCIOECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE ARAB REGION

The publication assesses the availability, maturity and status of e-government, e-commerce and mobile applications in the Arab region through available indicators and frameworks to measure the impact of e-services on socioeconomic development. The study concludes with a recommended framework and suggests policy initiatives dedicated to transforming traditional government services for greater development impact, strengthening accountability and governance, improving public services, and enabling more inclusive private delivery of such services.

Publication Symbol: E/ESCWA/ICTD/2013/2

Available from <http://www.escwa.un.org/information/pubaction.asp?PubID=1390>

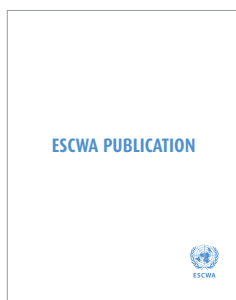


INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSITION: DECENTRALISATION IN THE COURSE OF POLITICAL TRANSFORMATION.

The paper contends that a leading cause of poverty, unemployment and inequality is the governance deficit. Limited freedoms, transparency and accountability in public affairs are among the common ills that have defined and gravely undermined the governance systems in the region. Furthermore, the lack of Arab citizen participation in decision-making has exacerbated frustration and undermined development. The Arab awakening has changed all that. The challenge that decision makers and the public now face is to transform Arab popular movements into reform and democracy, securing the sustained participation of an engaged citizenry in deciding their public affairs. The report argues that this should begin at the community level.

Publication Symbol: E/ESCWA/ECRI/2013/3

Available from <http://www.escwa.un.org/information/pubaction.asp?PubID=1496>

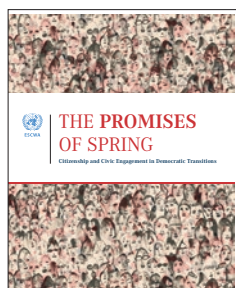


SHORT- AND MEDIUM-TERM ECONOMIC CHALLENGES OF THE ARAB TRANSITION: A REVIEW

The report attempts to take stock of the economic challenges characterizing the Arab region and each of the countries currently undergoing transition, with a view to understanding the constraints that authorities now face and the resources available to them at this pivotal yet precarious juncture in the history of the region.

Publication Symbol: E/ESCWA/ECRI/2013/1

Available from <http://www.escwa.un.org/information/pubaction.asp?PubID=1433>



THE PROMISES OF SPRING: CITIZENSHIP AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IN DEMOCRATIC TRANSITIONS

The publication presents an analytical perspective of the Arab uprisings, their possible triggers and potential trajectories. It considers citizenship as an essential tool in the struggle against inequality and exclusion and in widening the concept of politics itself. It focuses on three crucial entry points for maintaining social cohesion and supporting political transitions, namely building consensus around definitions of the "civic" nature of the State in new constitutions; addressing social justice and inequities; and promoting transitional justice mechanisms. It also sheds light on the dynamic role of civil society in affecting change during transitions. The study assesses possible trajectories for post-uprising countries and recommends that governments and civil society organizations promote participation and civic engagement in all its dimensions, especially during times of transition.

Publication Symbol: E/ESCWA/SDD/2013/3

Available from <http://www.escwa.un.org/information/publication.asp?PubID=1572>

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AFT	AID FOR TRADE
ARADO	ARAB ADMINISTRATIVE DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION
BGR	FEDERAL INSTITUTE FOR GEOSCIENCES AND NATURAL RESOURCES (GERMANY)
BMZ	FEDERAL MINISTRY FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT (GERMANY)
CCUS	CARBON CAPTURE, UTILIZATION AND STORAGE
CRPD	CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES
CSD-20	TWENTIETH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
DA	DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNT
DESA	UNITED NATIONS DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS
ECA	ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA
ECE	ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE
ECLAC	ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN
ESCAP	ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC
ESCWA	ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR WESTERN ASIA
ETC	ESCWA TECHNOLOGY CENTRE FOR DEVELOPMENT
FAO	FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION
GBV	GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE
GAFI	GENERAL AUTHORITY FOR INVESTMENT (EGYPT)
GCC	GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL
GDP	GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT
GIZ	GERMAN AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION
ICP	INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON PROGRAM
ICPD	INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT
ICT	INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY
ILO	INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION
IMF	INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND
IOG	INSTITUTE ON GOVERNANCE
IPSM	IRAQ PUBLIC SECTOR MODERNISATION
KIPA	KURDISTAN INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
KISR	KUWAIT INSTITUTE FOR SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH
KOTRA	KOREA TRADE-INVESTMENT PROMOTION AGENCY
MC9	WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION NINTH MINISTERIAL MEETING
MDGS	MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS
MENA	MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA REGION
NCMDIT	NATIONAL CENTRE FOR MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
RCM	REGIONAL COORDINATION MECHANISM
RPTC	REGULAR PROGRAMME OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION
SIDA	SWEDISH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AGENCY
SMES	SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES
UNDP	UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
UNEP	UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME
UNFPA	UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND
UN-WOMEN	UNITED NATIONS ENTITY FOR GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN
WTO	WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION



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