



**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL
COUNCIL**

Distr.
LIMITED
E/ESCWA/SDD/2011/IG.1/5
7 January 2011
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

Committee on Social Development
Eighth session
Beirut, 24-25 March 2011

Item 6 of the provisional agenda

**PROPOSED PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR THE BIENNIUM 2012-2013
IN THE FIELD OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

Summary

The proposed programme of work of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) for the biennium 2012-2013 in the field of social development presents a set of activities and outputs related to the implementation of the expected accomplishments envisaged under subprogramme 2 on social development, of the strategic framework for the biennium 2012-2013.

The Committee on Social Development is invited to review the activities listed in the proposed programme of work, and discuss the extent to which they meet the priorities of ESCWA member countries and their relevance to the expected accomplishments in the field of social development under subprogramme 2. The Committee is also invited to discuss ways to concretely measure the indicators of achievement in order to accurately monitor progress achieved in member countries as a result of implementing the proposed outputs.

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Introduction

1. The activities comprised in the proposed programme of work of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) for the biennium 2012-2013 in the field of social development were formulated on the basis of subprogramme 2 on social development, of the strategic framework for the biennium 2012-2013, which was adopted by ESCWA at its twenty-sixth session (Beirut, 17-20 May 2010).¹ The responsibility for the implementation of subprogramme 2 lies with the Social Development Division (SDD) at ESCWA.

I. REQUIRED ACTION BY THE COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

2. The Committee on Social Development is invited to review the proposed outputs and provide its guidance to the secretariat based on the following two criteria: (a) the extent to which the proposed outputs respond to the needs of intended beneficiaries, namely ministries and authorities in the ESCWA region in charge of social development issues; and (b) the extent to which those outputs contribute to the realization of the expected accomplishments of subprogramme 2, while taking also into account the outcome of the deliberations that take place at the present session.

II. SUBPROGRAMME 2: SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

A. OBJECTIVE OF SUBPROGRAMME 2 FOR THE BIENNIUM 2012-2013

3. The objective of subprogramme 2 is to enhance the capacity of member countries to adopt social policies and institutional mechanisms that promote an equitable and inclusive process of social development, taking into consideration regional specificities. The responsibility for implementing subprogramme 2 lies with the Social Development Division at ESCWA.

B. EXPECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND INDICATORS OF ACHIEVEMENT

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat	Indicators of achievement
(a) Strengthened national capacity to develop a rights-based social policy that promotes social integration, including for vulnerable groups	(a) (i) Increased number of national institutions that generate knowledge and information on vulnerability and vulnerable groups, with ESCWA assistance (ii) Increased number of evidence-based policies and programmes on social integration initiated by member countries, with ESCWA assistance
(b) Enhanced capacity of member countries to address the integration of various socio-demographic groups, in particular youth, the elderly and labour migrants, in the process of development	(b) (i) Total number of countries responding, with ESCWA assistance, to the World Programme of Action for Youth (ii) Increased number of measures and policy provisions adopted by member countries to integrate ageing and labour mobility priorities in development plans and programmes

¹ ESCWA, *Management issues: Revised draft strategic framework for the biennium 2012-2013*, E/ESCWA/26/7. Available at: <http://documents.un.org>.

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat	Indicators of achievement
(c) Enhanced partnership between Governments and civil society organizations in designing, implementing and monitoring development policies, including social policies, and related programmes and projects	(c) (i) Increased number of advisory processes, networks and agreements on the approaches to participatory social development, local development, and related capacity-building programmes, supported by ESCWA (ii) Increased number of instances in which civil society organizations and other institutions are consulted in the process of design, implementation and monitoring of policies by Governments, with ESCWA assistance

C. STRATEGY

4. The subprogramme will build on the experience gained in previous biennia and will continue to advocate equity, social justice, inclusion and participation as the guiding social development principles.

5. During the biennium 2012-2013, particular attention will be paid to promoting: (a) an integrated approach to social policy; (b) social integration at the national and local levels; (c) youth development; and (d) participatory development.

6. Social development requires the creation of an enabling environment for people to develop their full potential, expand their development choices and lead productive lives according to their needs and interests. Fundamental to enlarging these choices is building human capabilities: the range of things that people can do or be in life. The most basic capabilities for human development are to lead long and healthy lives, be knowledgeable, have access to opportunities and resources needed for a decent standard of living and be able to participate in the life of the community. Without these, many choices are simply not available, and many opportunities in life remain inaccessible.

7. Countries that have achieved higher social development dividends and equitable social well-being for all ultimately achieved those targets by creating synergy between economic and social objectives in a way that social development goals became an integral part of national development strategies. The integrated social policy framework rests on three pillars: a clear policy vision; a shared consensus; and coordinated implementation. The policy vision entails both a conviction in the need for social equity and the political will to implement integrated social policy. A shared consensus requires institutional space and mechanisms to promote the dialogue and checks and balances that are vital to ensuring citizens' participation in equitable development. The coordinated provision of social services involves a comprehensive approach to how people are involved with, receive and benefit from social services. In this regard, civil society organizations can play a critical role in terms of monitoring the impact of public and social policies on different social groups, including vulnerable groups.

8. Having documented and disseminated knowledge about social development approaches, tools and institutional mechanisms, the subprogramme will seek to build the capacity of member countries to mainstream social equity concerns in their public policymaking, including identifying mechanisms to finance social development. Particular efforts will be made to support member countries in formulating, implementing and monitoring social policies and strategies designed to ensure a more equitable process of human development. The subprogramme will also continue to assist member countries in the implementation of internationally agreed plans of action and recommendations, including the Millennium Development Goals.

9. In order to achieve the expected accomplishments, the subprogramme will undertake both normative and technical cooperation activities. The normative activities will include research and analysis on social and demographic issues, the preparation of substantive reports and the organization of expert group meetings. Technical cooperation activities will include the provision of advisory services, capacity development workshops and field projects. Partnerships will be further strengthened with other regional commissions, United Nations entities, international and regional organizations and civil society groups. In the process, the subprogramme will also act as a regional platform for the exchange of experiences, good practices and lessons learned in the field of social development, and for increased interaction between Western Asia and other regions of the world.

D. EXTERNAL FACTORS

10. The subprogramme is expected to achieve its expected accomplishments on the assumption that: (a) member countries remain committed to achieving the internationally agreed development goals and continue to support activities that promote comprehensive social development; (b) extra budgetary financial resources are commensurate with planned activities; and (c) there is a minimum level of political stability and a secure working environment.

E. OUTPUTS

11. During the biennium 2012-2013, the following final outputs will be delivered:

(a) *Servicing of intergovernmental and expert bodies*

(i) *ESCWA*

a. Parliamentary documentation:

- Report of the Committee on Social Development on its ninth session (2012) (expected accomplishments (a), (b) and (c)).

(ii) *Committee on Social Development*

a. Substantive servicing of four meetings of the ninth session of the Committee on Social Development (2012, expected accomplishments (a), (b) and (c));

b. Parliamentary documentation:

- (i) Social integration policies in the ESCWA region (2012, expected accomplishment (a));
- (ii) Planning for the aged in the ESCWA region within the context of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA) (2012, expected accomplishment (b));
- (iii) Good practices in adopting ESCWA participatory approach in selected member countries (2012, expected accomplishment (c)).

(iii) *Ad hoc expert groups*

a. Policy implications of age structural changes in the ESCWA region (2012, expected accomplishment (b));

- b. Challenges faced by urban vulnerable groups in the ESCWA region (2012, expected accomplishment (a));
 - c. Arab forum on the role of civil society institutions in the provision of social services (RB/XB) (2012, expected accomplishment (a));
 - d. Social development participation mechanisms in the ESCWA region (2013, expected accomplishment (c));
 - e. Review of the Social Policy Report No. 5: Roles and responsibilities of public, private and civil actors in social policy (2013, expected accomplishment (a)).
- (b) *Other substantive activities (regular budget)*
- (i) *Recurrent publications*
 - a. Population and Development Report, No. 6: Socio-economic implications of age-structural transformation in the ESCWA region (2013, expected accomplishment (b));
 - b. Integrated Social Policy Report, No. 5: Roles and responsibilities of public, private and civil actors in social policy (2013, expected accomplishment (a)).
 - (ii) *Non-recurrent publications*
 - Comparative analysis of regional and international experiences with institutional change favouring civil society participation in the public policy process (2012, expected accomplishment (c)).
 - (iii) *Booklets, fact sheets, wall charts, information kits*
 - a. Pamphlets on the special themes of the fiftieth and fifty-first sessions of the Commission on Social Development (2012-2013, expected accomplishments (a), (b) and (c));
 - b. Pamphlet to the forty-fifth and forty-sixth Commission on Population and Development on the work of ESCWA in the area of population and development (2012-2013, expected accomplishment (b));
 - c. Pamphlet on the work of ESCWA in the area of social integration (2012, expected accomplishment (a));
 - d. Social Development Bulletins on:
 - Strategies to promote social integration (2012, expected accomplishment (a));
 - Impact of democracy on public accountability (2012, expected accomplishment (c));
 - Youth employability in the ESCWA region: Challenges and opportunities (2013, expected accomplishment (b));
 - Urban development challenges in the ESCWA region (2013, expected accomplishment (a));
 - Information kit on effective indicators for measuring public-civic participation (2013, expected accomplishment (c)).

- (iv) *Technical material*
- a. Paper on the role of the private sector in the provision of social services (2012, expected accomplishment (a));
 - b. Social Policy Briefs on:
 - Mainstreaming ageing into development policies (2012, expected accomplishment (b));
 - Labour policies in the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) (2013, expected accomplishment (b)).
 - c. E-seminars on:
 - Democracy and participation (2012) (expected accomplishment (c));
 - Participation and conflict prevention (2013) (expected accomplishment (c)).
 - d. Report on social development participation mechanisms in the ESCWA region (2013, expected accomplishment (c));
 - e. E-discussions on the outline of the Social Policy Report No. 5 (2013, expected accomplishment (a));
 - f. The demographic profiles of the Arab countries (2013, expected accomplishment (b));
 - g. Maintenance and updating of the Social Development Division homepage (1 in 2012 and 1 in 2013, expected accomplishments (a), (b) and (c));
 - h. Maintenance and updating of the Population and Information Network (POPIN) website (1 in 2012 and 1 in 2013, expected accomplishment (b));
 - i. Maintenance and updating of the ESCWA portal on Participatory Development in Western Asia (1 in 2012 and 1 in 2013, expected accomplishment (c));
 - j. Working Paper Series (2012-2013, expected accomplishments (a), (b) and (c)).
- (v) *Interagency meetings and contribution to joint outputs*
- Substantive contribution to the ESCWA flagship publication Survey of Economic and Social Development in the ESCWA Region (2012-2013, expected accomplishments (a), (b) and (c)).
- (c) *Technical cooperation (extrabudgetary)*
- (i) *Advisory services*
 - At the request of Member Countries, provide guidance and promote greater awareness on participatory development and local development mechanisms and instruments (RB/XB) (2012-2013, expected accomplishment (c)).
 - (ii) *Training courses, seminars and workshops*
 - Workshop on pro-poor development approaches in the ESCWA region (RB/XB) (2012, expected accomplishment (a)).

(iii) *Field projects*

- a. Strengthening social protection in Asia and the Pacific (Development Account) (2012, expected accomplishment (a));
- b. Strengthening capacities of policymakers in the ESCWA region to formulate national youth policies and plans of action: Responding to the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY) (Development Account) (2012, expected accomplishment (b));
- c. Regional initiative on youth employment (RB/XB) (2012-2013, expected accomplishment (b));
- d. Operationalizing ESCWA participatory approach in public policy processes in ESCWA member countries (RB/XB) (2012-2013, expected accomplishment (c)).

(d) *Conference services, administration oversight*

Discretionary self-assessment of sub-programme 2 (2012, expected accomplishments (a), (b) and (c)).

Annex**LEGISLATIVE MANDATES****Subprogramme 2. Social development***General Assembly resolutions*

63/225	International migration and development
64/130	Policies and programmes involving youth
64/131	Realizing the Millennium Development Goals for persons with disabilities
64/132	Follow-up to the Second World Assembly on Ageing
64/133	Follow-up to the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family and beyond
64/134	Proclamation of 2010 as International Year of Youth: Dialogue and Mutual Understanding
64/135	Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly
64/154	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol thereto
64/166	Protection of migrants
64/207	Implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

Economic and Social Council resolutions

2006/4	Sustained economic growth for social development, including the eradication of poverty and hunger
2006/15	Promoting youth employment
2006/16	Comprehensive and integral international convention to protect and promote the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities
2006/18	Future organization of the work of the Commission on Social Development
2007/2	The role of the United Nations system in providing full and productive employment and decent work for all
2008/18	Promoting full employment and decent work for all
2008/20	Further promotion of equalization of opportunities by, for and with persons with disabilities and protection of their human rights
2010/12	Promoting social integration

2010/14 Future implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002

ESCWA resolutions

285 (XXV) Integrated social policy

295 (XXVI) Guiding Declaration of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on giving greater attention to Youth Policies: An Opportunity for Development

298 (XXVI) Social development
