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**Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)**

Committee on Social Development  
Tenth session  
Rabat, 8-9 September 2015

Item 6 of the provisional agenda

**Proposed programme of work for the biennium 2016-2017  
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 2016-2017 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 2016-2017.

The Committee on Social Development is invited to review the outputs listed in the proposed programme of work, and discuss the extent to which they meet the priorities of ESCWA member States 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 States 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 2016-2017 in the field of social development were formulated on the basis of subprogramme 2 on social development, of the strategic framework for the biennium 2016-2017, which was adopted by ESCWA at its twenty-eighth session (Tunis, 15-18 September 2014). The responsibility for the implementation of subprogramme 2 lies with the Social Development Division (SDD) at ESCWA.

### I. ACTION REQUIRED OF 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 Arab 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 also taking 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 2016-2017

3. The objective of subprogramme 2 is to enhance the capacity of member States to adopt and implement rights-based social policies that promote social justice and lead to equitable, inclusive and participatory socioeconomic development.

#### B. EXPECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND INDICATORS OF ACHIEVEMENT

Expected accomplishments	Indicators of achievement
<p>(a) Member States develop rights-based social policies and programmes that promote social cohesion, social inclusion, social protection and the provision of adequate social services for all</p> <p><i>Strategic pillar: inclusive development</i> <i>Priority area: social justice</i></p>	<p>(a) (i) Number of policies, programmes and measures formulated or enhanced to improve social protection or expand the provision of social services</p> <p>(ii) Number of policies, programmes and measures formulated or enhanced to ensure the social integration of vulnerable groups</p>
<p>(b) Member States engage in a regional consensus-building process on international migration towards the formulation and implementation of policies that maximize the development impact of international migration and foster intraregional coordination and cooperation</p>	<p>(b) (i) Number of instances where ESCWA facilitated or promoted policy dialogue on international migration between Governments of member States</p>

Expected accomplishments	Indicators of achievement
<i>Strategic pillar: regional integration</i> <i>Priority area: policy coherence</i>	(ii) Number of policies reflecting awareness of the regional development opportunities and challenges of international migration
(c) Member States adopt a participatory approach to social policy formulation and implementation through consensus building, the empowerment of civil society and the engagement of civic groups and other stakeholders in advocating the values and tools necessary to achieving a just society	(c) (i) Number of instances in which representatives of governments, civil society organizations and other stakeholders engage in substantive policy dialogue with the support of ESCWA
<i>Strategic pillar: good governance and resilience</i> <i>Priority area: participation and citizenship</i>	(ii) Number of governmental and non-governmental institutions making use of the knowledge and tools generated by ESCWA on participatory development and civic engagement, in their development initiatives

### C. STRATEGY\*

19.37 The Social Development Division is responsible for the implementation of subprogramme 2. During the biennium 2016-2017, ESCWA will build on the experience gained during the previous bienniums to advocate the principles of social justice as a guiding framework for public policymaking. Specific attention will be paid to: promoting and implementing policies that foster social inclusion and social protection including social welfare and social security and address the social dimensions of poverty; mainstreaming key population and human development issues into policymaking, including youth development and international migration; upholding participatory development and civic engagement; and addressing the social dimension of the post-2015 development agenda.

19.38 The adoption of equitable, inclusive and consensus-based development policies is central to achieving social justice. In the ESCWA region, however, social policies have been geared towards assistance rather than development, and most have failed to address the specific needs of vulnerable groups such as youth, migrants, persons with disabilities, informal workers and the poor. At the same time, little attention has been devoted to the opportunities presented by age-structural changes witnessed across the region. These policy deficits are exacerbated by the absence or weakness of participatory frameworks to fully engage civil society in the decision-making process.

19.39 As a result, despite regional progress on a number of human development indicators, inequality, vulnerability and social exclusion have increased and have played a considerable role in triggering the popular movements that some Arab countries witnessed during this decade.

19.40 To address those development deficits, the Division will undertake normative analysis to support social policy reform through regional consultations and technical cooperation activities, including advisory services, capacity-building workshops and field projects. ESCWA will continue to act as a regional platform for the exchange of experiences, good practices and lessons learned on key social development areas within and beyond the Arab region. Partnerships and cooperation will be further strengthened with other regional

\* The paragraphs under Strategy are numbered from 19-37 to 19-40, where 19 refers to programme 19 on economic and social development in Western Asia, of the strategic framework of the United Nations for the biennium 2016-2017, and 37 to 40 are the consecutive numbers in that document which contains all the United Nations programmes. This numbering is maintained for the Strategy in the ESCWA programme of work documents as well as in the programme of work for each of the seven subprogrammes.

commissions, United Nations entities, regional and international organizations and civil society organizations.

#### D. EXTERNAL FACTORS

4. Subprogramme 2 will achieve its objective and expected accomplishments provided that: (a) member States will remain committed to achieving the internationally agreed development goals related to social development in the post-2015 world; (b) member States will remain committed to promoting social justice through equitable, inclusive and participatory socioeconomic development; (c) national stakeholders engage in dialogue and build consensus on key policy areas; (d) national stakeholders provide the data and information necessary for ESCWA to conduct its analytical work; (e) extrabudgetary resources are commensurate with planned activities; and (f) all member States are able to participate in activities leading to the achievement of the expected accomplishments.

#### E. OUTPUTS

5. During the biennium 2016-2017, the following outputs are expected to be delivered under subprogramme 2:

(a) *Servicing intergovernmental and expert bodies*

(i) *Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (twenty-ninth session)*

Parliamentary documentation: Report of the Committee on Social Development on its tenth session (2016, expected accomplishments (a), (b) and (c)).

(ii) *Committee on Social Development*

- a. Servicing the meetings of the eleventh session of the Committee on Social Development (2017, expected accomplishments (a), (b) and (c));
- b. Parliamentary documentation:
  - i. Inclusive social development (2017, expected accomplishment (a));
  - ii. Population and development issues (2017, expected accomplishment (a));
  - iii. Key issues to promote participation and citizenship in the Arab region (2017, expected accomplishment (c)).

(iii) *Ad hoc expert group meetings*

- a. Housing and housing policy (2017, expected accomplishment (a));
- b. Disability in the Arab region (2016, expected accomplishment (a));
- c. Population and development (2017, expected accomplishment (a));
- d. The Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing: Achievements and Future Prospects (2016, expected accomplishment (a));
- e. International migration and development in the Arab region (2017, expected accomplishment (b));
- f. Outline of Social Development Report No.2 (2016, expected accomplishment (c));

- g. Policy dialogue and launching of the Social Development Report No. 2 (2017, expected accomplishment (c));
  - h. Civil society dialogues series: exploring new frontiers (2016 and 2017, expected accomplishment (c)).
- (b) *Other substantive activities (regular budget)*
- (i) *Recurrent publications*
    - a. Population and Development Report VIII: Population and Sustainable Development in the Arab Region 2030- Beyond Population Growth (2017, expected accomplishment (a));
    - b. Social Development Report No. 2 (2017, expected accomplishment (c)).
  - (ii) *Non-recurrent publications*
    - a. Disability in the Arab Region (2017, expected accomplishment (a));
    - b. Situation Report on International Migration and Development in the Arab Region (2017, expected accomplishment (b)).
  - (iii) *Technical material*
    - a. Policy brief No. 5 on improving accountability and transparency to promote social justice (2016, expected accomplishment (a));
    - b. Social policy brief on international migration and development in the Arab region (2016, expected accomplishment (b));
    - c. Regional review report of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (2016, expected accomplishment (a));
    - d. Intergenerational justice (2016, expected accomplishment (a));
    - e. Disability-inclusive development in the Arab region (2016, expected accomplishment (a));
    - f. Governance of social inclusion (2016, expected accomplishment (a));
    - g. Social policy brief on youth (2017, expected accomplishment (a));
    - h. Policy brief No. 6 on gender inequality and social justice (2017, expected accomplishment (a));
    - i. Demographic profile of the Arab region (2017, expected accomplishment (a));
    - j. Housing and housing policy in Arab countries (2017, expected accomplishment (a));
    - k. Public low-income housing in the Arab region (2017, expected accomplishment (a));
    - l. Population and development: the International Conference on Population and Development in the new global development agenda (2017, expected accomplishment (a)).
  - (iv) *Booklets, fact sheets, wall charts, information kits and newsletters*
    - a. National demographic profiles for 22 Arab countries (2017, expected accomplishment (a));
    - b. Pamphlet on the Commission for Social Development (2016, expected accomplishment (a));

- c. Pamphlet on the Commission on Population and Development (2016, expected accomplishment (a));
  - d. Social development bulletin (2 in 2016 and 2 in 2017, expected accomplishment (a)).
- (v) *Contribution to joint outputs*
- a. Social inclusion and poverty: persons with disabilities (2017, expected accomplishments (a), (b) and (c));
  - b. Old age and poverty (2017, expected accomplishments (a), (b) and (c));
  - c. Poverty, equality, and social justice (2017, expected accomplishments (a), (b) and (c));
- (vi) *Special events*
- a. Launch of the Population and Development Report VII (2016, expected accomplishment (a));
  - b. International Day of Persons with Disabilities (2016, expected accomplishment (a));
  - c. World Day of Social Justice (2017, expected accomplishment (a)).
- (c) *Technical cooperation (extrabudgetary)*
- (i) *Workshop*
    - Training of trainers on the manual “Partnership in Democratic Governance” (2017, expected accomplishment (c)).
  - (ii) *Field projects*
    - a. Promoting equality: Strengthening the capacity of selected developing countries to design and implement equality-oriented public policies and programmes (Development Account (DA) project, continuing from 2015) (2016 and 2017, expected accomplishment (a));
    - b. Strengthening national capacities for integrated, sustainable and inclusive population and development policies in the Arab region (DA project); (2016-2017, expected accomplishment (a));
    - c. Strengthening the capacity of governments in the ESCAP, ECA and ESCWA regions to respond to the needs of youth in formulating inclusive and sustainable development policies (DA project) (2016-2017, expected accomplishment (a));
    - d. Regional initiative on international migration and development (2016-2017, expected accomplishment (b));
    - e. Regional or subregional community of practice for operationalizing ESCWA participatory approach in public policy processes (2016-2017, expected accomplishment (c)).

Annex

**LEGISLATIVE MANDATES**

*General Assembly resolutions*

- |        |  |
|--------|--|
| 64/154 | Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol thereto  |
| 65/234 | Follow-up to the International Conference on Population and Development beyond 2014  |
| 65/312 | Outcome document of the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on Youth: Dialogue and Mutual Understanding   |
| 66/121 | Policies and programmes involving youth  |
| 66/122 | Promoting social integration through social inclusion  |
| 66/124 | High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the realization of the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals for persons with disabilities |
| 66/125 | Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly  |
| 67/139 | Towards a comprehensive and integral international legal instrument to promote and protect the rights and dignity of older persons   |
| 67/140 | Realizing the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals for persons with disabilities towards 2015 and beyond                                |
| 67/141 | Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly  |
| 67/142 | Preparations for and observance of the twentieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family   |
| 68/4   | Declaration of the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development  |
| 69/144 | Celebrating the twentieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family  |
| 69/146 | Follow-up to the Second World Assembly on Ageing   |
| 69/183 | Human rights and extreme poverty   |
| 69/197 | Protection of migrants   |
| 69/202 | The role of the United Nations in promoting a new global human order   |
| 69/229 | International migration and development  |
| 69/234 | Second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008-2017)  |



*Economic and Social Council resolutions*

2010/12	Promoting social integration
2010/14	Future implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002
2011/5	The role of the United Nations system in implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to gender equality and the empowerment of women
2011/27	Further promotion of equalization of opportunities by, for and with persons with disabilities and mainstreaming disability issues in the development agenda
2011/28	Modalities for the second review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002
2013/28	Mainstreaming disability in the development agenda: towards 2015 and beyond

*Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia resolutions and declaration*

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
304 (XXVII)	The role of participation and social justice in achieving sustainable development
Tunis Declaration on Social Justice in the Arab Region (adopted by the Commission at its twenty-eighth session)	

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