

**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL
COUNCIL**

Distr.
LIMITED
E/ESCWA/24/6(Part III)
25 April 2006
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

Twenty-fourth session
Beirut, 8-11 May 2006

Item 8 (c) of the provisional agenda

MANAGEMENT ISSUES**DRAFT STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR THE BIENNIUM 2008-2009****Summary**

At its twenty-third session, the Commission decided to hold its biennial session in even years starting in 2006 to be in harmony with the submission and approval of the biennial strategic framework. As a result of the mandate review called for by member States of the United Nations in the 2005 World Summit, the United Nations Headquarters postponed for eight months the issuance of global instructions for the preparation of the strategic framework for the biennium 2008-2009. These instructions were finally issued on 4 April 2006 and requested all departments, including the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), to complete and submit their components of the draft framework to Headquarters by 30 April 2006. Moreover, the instructions requested all relevant intergovernmental bodies to review their respective components and provide comments to the Secretary-General prior to consideration by the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) at its resumed forty-sixth session in late August/early September 2006.

The Commission is therefore invited to review the draft strategic framework of Programme 18 on economic and social development in Western Asia for the biennium 2008-2009; to provide comments on the overall programme orientation, programme focus areas and strategies contained therein; and to endorse the framework. The Commission is informed that the draft strategic framework could require further adjustments to reflect new mandates arising from the twenty-fourth session of the Commission. The Commission will be informed, through the Advisory Committee of Ambassadors, of any subsequent changes introduced to the draft strategic framework by such global bodies as CPC and the General Assembly.

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Introduction

1. At its twenty-third session (Damascus, 9-12 May 2005), the Commission decided to hold its biennial session in even years starting in 2006 to be in harmony with the submission and approval of the biennial strategic framework. The draft strategic framework for the biennium 2008-2009 is hereby submitted to the Commission for its consideration.
2. The heads of State and Government who attended the 2005 World Summit (New York, 14-16 September 2005) reaffirmed their commitment to the United Nations Millennium Declaration and highlighted the need for multilateral solutions to challenges in the areas of development, peace and collective security, human rights and the rule of law, and strengthening of the United Nations. In order to strengthen and update the work of the United Nations, they requested the Secretary-General to facilitate the review by the General Assembly of mandates older than five years.¹ ESCWA participated in the preparatory work for a global mandate review, which was carried out by the Secretariat from November 2005 to February 2006.
3. In parallel to that exercise and in the light of the 2005 World Summit Outcome, ESCWA participated in the joint programme and priority assessment of the work of the 19 United Nations entities that form the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs (EC-ESA). With a view to establishing a common approach at the regional level, the Executive Secretaries of the five regional commissions re-examined and agreed on the role, functions and comparative advantages of the regional commissions in supporting the national development efforts aimed at pursuing the key global agreements. They reaffirmed the important role of the regional commissions in bringing regional and transboundary perspectives into national assessments and policymaking; in facilitating coherence and coordination of the work of the United Nations entities at the regional level; and in providing support to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and its functional commissions. Additionally, they identified such common areas of work as environment and sustainable development, population and social development, economic analysis, trade, transport, statistics, gender and information and communication technology (ICT) for development.
4. In January 2006, the secretariat solicited advice from a group of 20 regional experts on how it could better serve the member countries by refocusing programme priorities in response to their expressed needs. This collective advice contributed towards the preparation of the draft strategic framework for the biennium 2008-2009.
5. Pending the General Assembly's consideration of the report of the Secretary-General on the mandate review,² the United Nations Headquarters delayed for eight months the issuance of global instructions for the preparation of the strategic framework for the biennium 2008-2009. These instructions were finally issued on 4 April 2006 and requested all departments, including ESCWA, to complete and submit their components of the draft framework to Headquarters by 30 April 2006. Moreover, the instructions requested all relevant intergovernmental bodies to review their respective components and provide comments to the Secretary-General prior to consideration by the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) at its resumed forty-sixth session in late August/early September 2006.
6. This document comprises the following: (a) main changes in programme focus areas in the light of the 2005 World Summit Outcome and subsequent review; and (b) draft strategic framework for the biennium 2008-2009, which consists of the following: (i) programme orientation; (ii) strategic framework of the seven subprogrammes; and (iii) legislative mandates that guide the programme of work of ESCWA.
7. The Commission is therefore invited to review the draft strategic framework of Programme 18 on economic and social development in Western Asia for the biennium 2008-2009; to provide comments on the overall programme orientation, programme focus areas and strategies contained therein; and to endorse the framework. The Commission is informed that the draft strategic framework could require further adjustments to reflect new mandates arising from the twenty-fourth session of the Commission. The Commission will be informed, through the Advisory Committee of Ambassadors, of any subsequent changes introduced to the draft strategic framework by such global bodies as CPC and the General Assembly.

¹ General Assembly resolution 60/1 of 16 September 2005 on the 2005 World Summit Outcome, para. 163 (b).

² Report of the Secretary-General, "Investing in the United Nations: for a stronger Organization worldwide" (7 March 2006).

I. MAIN CHANGES IN PROGRAMME FOCUS AREAS IN THE LIGHT OF THE 2005 WORLD SUMMIT OUTCOME AND SUBSEQUENT REVIEW

8. Through the mandate review by the General Assembly and the priority and programme review by EC-ESA, the secretariat identified the following gaps and areas that require a more coherent approach in the programme of work of ESCWA:

(a) The potential role of ESCWA in promoting economic and social dimensions of conflict prevention and post-conflict recovery with a view to making a contribution to the work of the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission;

(b) Areas that were not addressed in the programme of work for the biennium 2006-2007, including youth and productive employment opportunities, international migration and development;

(c) The promotion of socially inclusive macroeconomic policies, the importance of which was highlighted by member Governments during the twenty-third session of the Commission.³

9. The issues related to financing for development, which encompass, among others, domestic resource mobilization and foreign direct investment (FDI), are currently dealt with by two separate subprogrammes within the programme of ESCWA.

10. Based on these findings and on its accumulated knowledge and experience, the secretariat proposes the draft strategic framework for the biennium 2008-2009, with the aim of realigning the programme of work of ESCWA to the 2005 World Summit Outcome.

11. Moreover, the decision by the Commission pertaining to the establishment of an ESCWA technology centre will impact on the draft strategic framework for the biennium 2008-2009.⁴ If such a centre is established by the Commission, the work of the subprogramme on information and communication technology will require modification to widen its scope to include policies and programmes related to technologies other than ICTs.

II. DRAFT STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR THE BIENNIUM 2008-2009

A. PROGRAMME ORIENTATION

12. Conflicts continue to set back the economic and social development of the ESCWA region, and to affect adversely the life of people living in the region. Moreover, the economic performance of the countries of the region is influenced by political instability and the lack of adequate structural reforms. While many countries in the region actively participate in multilateral trade negotiations in order to benefit from international trade, most ESCWA members are still lagging behind countries in other regions in terms of attracting both domestic investment and FDI. The prevalence of technology in the region remains below the international average, particularly ICTs that represent a powerful enabler of development. Additionally, the region lacks sound social policies aimed at ensuring that the rights of the poor and other vulnerable groups, including women and youth, are protected and that attractive development opportunities are created. Equally, economic and social reforms are hampered by poor governance.

13. Moreover, the countries of the region continue to experience some of the highest unemployment rates in the world, especially among the youth, who are under increased pressure to compete in a globalizing labour market and who represent a significant group among the global migrants. Migration, both towards and away from ESCWA member countries, is a regional issue that needs to be addressed within the framework of international treaties on human rights and taking into account regional economic considerations.

³ Adoption of the Damascus Declaration on the Realization of the Millennium Development Goals on 12 May 2005.

⁴ The Commission will consider the issue of an ESCWA technology centre at its twenty-fourth session under item 7 (b) of the provisional agenda.

14. While the region has largely been successful in making the secondary and tertiary education systems far more accessible to both sexes equally, women have not gained equal rights and opportunities with regard to economic and political participation. Among the vulnerable groups in the region, those who suffer most live in the least developed countries or in conflict-stricken countries and territories.

15. The region has the second highest population growth rate in the world, after Africa, thereby creating growing demand for food, water and energy; and for adequate infrastructure to provide basic shelter, education, health care and other social services and productive employment opportunities. Consequently, countries of the region must coordinate efforts and mobilize more resources for the provision of regional public goods, including water management, environmental sustainability, social safety net, coordination and harmonization in trade policies and procedures, transport infrastructure, and conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

16. Additionally, there persists a strong need to improve the institutional capacity aimed at producing timely, reliable and comparable statistics for policy and programme formulation, and for monitoring the progress made towards the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

17. The regional MDG review, which was carried out in 2005 by ESCWA and 13 United Nations entities and which covered the entire Arab region, revealed varying degrees of progress towards the MDGs both among countries and between goals. While the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) made considerable progress towards achieving MDGs and are expected to surpass the targets set within the MDG framework, it is unlikely that the ESCWA region as a whole or the wider Arab region will succeed in eradicating poverty and hunger by 2015. Within that context, the least developed country and the conflict-stricken countries and territories will require increased resource allocations and concerted efforts if they are to meet the targets within the set timeframe.

18. In the Damascus Declaration adopted by the Commission at its twenty-third session, member Governments affirmed the importance of increasing economic growth and of linking that growth to the formulation of strategies aimed at eradicating poverty and unemployment and at achieving social integration, with a view to realizing internationally agreed development goals, including MDGs. Additionally, they requested coordinated support from all United Nations organizations in order to meet regional needs and to focus on the progress of the region towards the realization of those goals.

19. The programme of work of ESCWA is guided by the mandates of the Commission and its subsidiary legislative bodies within the overarching mandates of the General Assembly and ECOSOC. The programme benefited from the EC-ESA review of programme and priorities and from the mandate review, which were undertaken as part of the reform of the United Nations called for in the 2005 World Summit. In January 2006, a group of high-level experts from the region debated the future role of ESCWA for the next five years, and re-examined the programme theme and four region-specific priority areas in the light of the new global mandates arising from the 2005 World Summit.

20. This programme assessment highlighted the importance of monitoring the effects of conflicts on the economic and social development of the region. Moreover, it posited that regional integration that is being promoted by ESCWA could serve as a catalyst towards wider Arab integration through strategic partnerships with subregional and regional organizations, especially the League of Arab States (LAS) and GCC. In addition to reaffirming the importance of regional integration, these experts underscored the four programme priority areas that had been determined by the Commission in 2002, with emphasis on sharpening the focus on such priorities.

21. The overall objective of ESCWA in the strategic framework for the biennium 2008-2009 is to promote economic and social development policies and programmes that are consistent and coherent with the commitments of major United Nations conferences and summits aimed at achieving internationally agreed development goals, including MDGs.

22. ESCWA will pursue that stated objective by promoting regional integration in order to foster economic and social integration at the subregional and regional levels, and to enhance solidarity in the international political arena and global economy. The programme will focus on the four regional priority areas, namely:

(a) Managing water and energy with due attention to environmental considerations, with a view to ensuring sustainable development;

(b) Promoting integrated social policies that protect the rights of the poor, women, youth and other vulnerable groups who are often denied access to productive employment and social safety nets;

(c) Stimulating economic development and integration in the increasingly globalizing world, with special focus on trade, transport, domestic resource mobilization and FDI;

(d) Accelerating the introduction and development of technology, especially ICTs, aimed at developing human resources.

23. Throughout these programme areas, the emphasis will be placed on the following: (a) effective participation and involvement of women and their advancement; (b) special consideration for people living in conflict-stricken countries and territories; and (c) developing statistical capacities.

24. Building on its accumulated knowledge and multidisciplinary expertise, ESCWA will carry out analytical and normative work that will be supported by the provision of technical cooperation, thereby ensuring that those policies, programmes and methodologies that have been recommended by ESCWA are practical and can be implemented. Additionally, ESCWA will facilitate multilateral dialogue, knowledge sharing and networking on the outcome of the work of the Commission and on national, regional and global development issues.

25. Moreover, ESCWA will continue to provide a regional platform for member countries for the formulation and implementation of regional initiatives, agreements and programmes. Past examples of such regional initiatives include the Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq; the Agreement on International Railways in the Arab Mashreq; the Memorandum of Understanding on Maritime Transport Cooperation in the Arab Mashreq; the Regional Plan of Action for Building the Information Society; and the Arab Integrated Water Resources Management Network (AWARENET).

26. The strategies of ESCWA will be closely aligned with the national priorities of member countries with a view to establishing mutual accountability between Governments and the Commission for any interventions undertaken.

27. Regional support provided by ESCWA is expected to contribute towards the following:

(a) Increased national capacity to formulate and implement economic and social policies and programmes that are pro-poor and inclusive, and to tackle transboundary issues, thereby establishing clear national-regional linkages;

(b) Provision of joint responses to address multifaceted problems encountered by the countries of the region through the coordinated efforts and consolidated resources of United Nations entities, thereby demonstrating the strength of the United Nations system;

(c) Enhanced work of the functional commissions of ECOSOC and support to the Council itself for the review and assessment of progress made in implementing the outcomes of United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields, thereby ensuring global-regional linkages;

(d) Increased knowledge sharing and South-South cooperation among countries in the region and with countries in other regions, thereby promoting regional and interregional cooperation.

28. The programme will be harmonized through regular interactions with other EC-ESA entities and with entities of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG). Within the context of the latter, such interactions will be achieved through the Regional Coordination Group, which is led by ESCWA. Moreover, ESCWA will enhance its collaboration with the Subregional Office for North Africa of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) to ensure synergies in thematic and operational work, and to bring its expertise to the countries of the North African subregion, which share a common language and cultural values with those of the ESCWA region.

B. STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK OF THE SEVEN SUBPROGRAMMES

Subprogramme 1. Integrated management of natural resources for sustainable development

Objective: To improve the sustainable management of natural resources in the region, with particular emphasis on water, energy and the production sectors taking into account environmental considerations

Expected accomplishments

Indicators of achievement

- | | | | |
|-----|--|---------|---|
| (a) | Enhanced capacity of member countries to formulate, adopt and implement policies and measures to improve the sustainable management of natural resources, with particular emphasis on achieving MDGs | (a) (i) | Increase in the number of policies and measures adopted by countries of the region for achieving MDGs, particularly Goals 1 and 7

<i>Performance measures:</i>

2004-2005: 15 policies/measures
Estimate 2006-2007: 20 policies/measures
Target 2008-2009: 26 policies/measures |
| | | (ii) | Increase in the number of countries developing, adopting and/or implementing policies and measures to improve the sustainable management of energy and water resources

<i>Performance measures:</i>

2004-2005: 5 countries
Estimate 2006-2007: 9 countries
Target 2008-2009: 15 countries |
| (b) | Enhanced capacity of member countries to apply best practices and methods for improving sustainable rural development and increasing competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) using environmentally-sound technology | (b) (i) | Increase in the number of countries applying best practices and methods to promote sustainable rural development

<i>Performance measures:</i>

2004-2005: 2 countries
Estimate 2006-2007: 4 countries
Target 2008-2009: 6 countries |
| | | (ii) | Increase in the number of measures, best practices and/or initiatives adopted to enhance the competitiveness of SMEs, using environmentally-sound technology |

Expected accomplishments

Indicators of achievement

Performance measures:

2004-2005: 4 measures/best practices/initiatives

Estimate 2006-2007: 8 measures/best practices/initiatives

Target 2008-2009: 10 measures/best practices/initiatives

(c) Improved regional and interregional cooperation among member countries on energy and water issues, including the prevention of disputes related to water and environment

(c) (i) Increase in the number of countries requesting ESCWA to enhance their negotiation skills for the joint management of shared water resources

Performance measures:

2004-2005: 3 countries

Estimate 2006-2007: 6 countries

Target 2008-2009: 8 countries

(ii) Increase in the number of regional/interregional projects and actions undertaken by countries through regional cooperation mechanisms on water and energy

Performance measures:

2004-2005: 4 projects/actions

Estimate 2006-2007: 6 projects/actions

Target 2008-2009: 8 projects/actions

External factors: The subprogramme can achieve the expected accomplishments on the assumption that: (a) member countries are willing to adopt and apply sustainable development policies advocated by world summits and by global and regional conferences; (b) there are no significant shortfalls in funding; and (c) political stability is improved, thereby allowing for a better cooperative environment among member countries in the region as well as a more effective implementation of technical cooperation.

(a) *Problems to be addressed*

29. The move towards achieving sustainable development of natural resources in the ESCWA region is hindered by different challenges, particularly relevant to water, land and energy resources. The main challenges of water resources are chronic water scarcity leading to environmental degradation; deteriorating water quality; unsustainable water utilization, especially in agriculture; and disputes with regard to rights to shared water resources. Fertile land resources represent a very modest five per cent of the total land area of the region, with limited potential for expanding such fertile land. Moreover, serious land degradation is a major threat for rural development in the region owing to overgrazing, wind and water erosion, and inefficient use of water resources.

30. Equally, while the region enjoys an abundance of fossil and renewable energy resources, the energy production and consumption patterns are unsustainable and have an adverse impact on the environment. Rural and urban poor areas have no or limited access to energy and sanitation services, which hinder the development opportunities in these areas. The production sectors suffer from unsustainable management of their assets, weak competitiveness and limited access to adequate technology. SMEs, which are among the

primary sources of employment and income, are particularly vulnerable to these challenges. Moreover, the cost of environmental management has not yet been fully taken into consideration in the production process.

(b) *Strategy*

31. The subprogramme will concentrate on facilitating the formulation and implementation of sustainable development strategies, policies and programmes in the light of relevant global mandates arising from the 2005 World Summit, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and MDGs, particularly Goal 1 on eradicating extreme poverty and hunger and Goal 7 on ensuring environmental sustainability. Within that context, the overarching objective is to improve access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation for a wider section of the region's population.

32. The subprogramme will continue to advocate sustainable production and consumption patterns of water and energy resources and serve as a forum for promoting policy dialogue as a means of enhancing synergy among the countries of the region on sustainable development priority issues, of facilitating regional cooperation, particularly in the management of shared water resources, and of developing energy networks and enhancing negotiation skills to prevent water and environment-related disputes. Additionally, the subprogramme will continue to support national and regional capacity-building, especially in the field of integrated management of water resources, energy efficiency, renewable energy, and technology applications; and to assist member countries in building capacity for sustainable rural development.

33. This will be achieved by undertaking research and analytical studies, convening meetings and seminars, disseminating best practices, and building capacity through workshops and advisory services on priority issues related to the sustainable development of water, energy, environment and production sectors.

34. Moreover, the subprogramme will further develop its partnership with LAS; promote existing ESCWA regional mechanisms on energy and water; facilitate the establishment of coordination mechanisms for monitoring and reporting on environmental issues; and assist member countries to strengthen the capacity of SMEs in order to take advantage of new management practices and to harness technologies that can enhance their competitiveness and productivity in a sustainable manner.

Subprogramme 2. Integrated social policies

Objective: To strengthen national capacity to achieve inclusive, equitable and sustainable social development in a globalized environment

Expected accomplishments	Indicators of achievement
(a) Strengthened capacity of member countries to promote and formulate national integrated social development policies towards achieving social equity, poverty reduction and sustainable population	(a) (i) Increase in the number of national Government offices/civil society organizations that initiated, with ESCWA assistance, advocacy and awareness raising activities to promote the development of integrated social development policies <i>Performance measures:</i> 2004-2005: 8 Government offices/civil society organizations Estimate 2006-2007: 12 Government offices/civil society organizations Target 2008-2009: 24 Government offices/civil society organizations

Expected accomplishments

Indicators of achievement

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>(b) Increased capacity of member countries to develop and operationalize intersectoral social development plans, programmes and/or projects that address specific needs of such vulnerable groups, including youth, migrant workers, persons with disabilities and the rural and urban poor</p> | <p>(ii) Increase in the number of countries that initiated, with ESCWA assistance, the formulation of integrated social development policies</p> <p><i>Performance measures:</i></p> <p>2004-2005: 1 country
Estimate 2006-2007: 4 countries
Target 2008-2009: 7 countries</p> <p>(iii) Increase in the number of sectoral development policies, plans and/or programmes initiated, with ESCWA assistance, with special emphasis on youth and migration</p> <p><i>Performance measures:</i></p> <p>2004-2005: 14 policies/plans/programmes
Estimate 2006-2007: 21 policies/plans/programmes
Target 2008-2009: 27 policies/plans/programmes</p> <p>(b) Increase in the number of intersectoral social development plans, programmes and/or projects that target the capacity building in response to the needs of vulnerable groups, with ESCWA's assistance</p> <p><i>Performance measures:</i></p> <p>2004-2005: 10 plans/programmes/projects
Estimate 2006-2007: 14 plans/programmes/projects
Target 2008-2009: 24 plans/programmes/projects</p> |
|--|--|

External factors: The subprogramme can achieve the expected accomplishments on the assumption that: (a) member countries are willing to accord priority to social development issues; (b) there are no significant shortfalls in funding; and (c) the political situation in the region does not further deteriorate.

(a) *Problems to be addressed*

35. The ESCWA region is facing high population growth, with the ratio of youth to the general population among the highest in the world. High unemployment rates, especially among the youth, have resulted in widening disparities in income distribution between the rich and the poor. Moreover, the region continues to suffer from inadequate social safety nets, lack of security of tenure and unbalanced provision of basic social services. Consequently, the high youth unemployment rates will provide a fertile ground for social unrest if

these pressing issues are not tackled adequately and rapidly. Moreover, the political instability in the region has caused, among others, growing numbers of victims and people disabled as a result of conflicts, displaced portions of populations in conflict-stricken areas and increasing numbers of migrant workers.

36. The response of member countries to these challenges has been largely inadequate and timid. National social policies are fragmented and seldom harmonized; and the human capital of the region needs to be developed further and used in order to achieve both its growth potential and the MDGs. Towards that end, there must be a greater interaction with civil society and the local community in terms of tailor-made, suitable and targeted social policies.

(b) *Strategy*

37. The subprogramme provides a neutral forum for promoting policy dialogue, networking and replication of best practices among member countries. It will continue to advocate and enhance the capacity of member countries to formulate coherent and integrated social policies, including appropriate population and migration policies, national urban policies, and policies that target vulnerable groups, particularly youth. The subprogramme will assist member countries to implement plans of action of relevant global conferences, with a focus on the MDGs.

38. Increased attention will be provided in the biennium 2008-2009 on intersectoral social development programmes and on projects that address specific needs of such vulnerable groups as youth, migrant workers, persons with disabilities and the rural and urban poor, thereby enabling the region to benefit from the huge potential of such groups and to move towards greater social equity.

39. To achieve the expected accomplishments, the subprogramme will undertake analytical work, conduct meetings and carry out technical cooperation activities, including training workshops and programmes, field projects and advisory services on priority social issues. Additionally, it will promote and advocate partnerships between stakeholders, especially at the local and national levels, in order to enhance the participatory approach, thereby drawing suitable social policies that take into consideration the needs and requirements of all segments of the population. This approach has been proven to improve the chances of success of such policies.

40. Partnerships will be forged with other related United Nations entities, including the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (HABITAT); with such regional organizations as LAS and its relevant subsidiary bodies; and with civil society, including local communities and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Subprogramme 3. Economic development and integration

Objective: To strengthen the capacity of member countries to design and implement sound economic policies and strategies for sustainable economic growth and poverty alleviation and for regional integration in the globalizing world

Expected accomplishments

Indicators of achievement

- | | |
|---|--|
| (a) Increased knowledge among stakeholders in the region of the issues that need to be taken into account in designing and implementing suitable macroeconomic policies and strategies for sustainable economic growth, employment creation and poverty alleviation in line with MDGs | (a) (i) Increase in the number of stakeholders in the region acknowledging that they benefited from ESCWA macroeconomic analysis, policy recommendations and forecasts |
|---|--|

Expected accomplishments

Indicators of achievement

Performance measures:

2004-2005: 36 per cent of the targeted sample and other receipts of feedbacks

Estimate 2006-2007: 43 per cent of the targeted sample and other receipts of feedbacks

Target 2008-2009: 50 per cent of the targeted sample and other receipts of feedbacks

- (ii) Increase in the number of requests for technical assistance to promote and implement macroeconomic policy and financing for development measures, based on ESCWA work

Performance measures:

2004-2005: Not available

Estimate 2006-2007: 4 requests

Target 2008-2009: 7 requests

- (b) Enhanced capacity of member countries to negotiate and implement subregional, regional and multilateral trade and investment agreements designed to promote interregional and intraregional trade and investment flows

- (b) (i) Increase in the number of countries accepting and/or adopting trade negotiation proposals and facilitation schemes/measures suggested by ESCWA

Performance measures:

2004-2005: 2 countries

Estimate 2006-2007: 4 countries

Target 2008-2009: 6 countries

- (ii) Increase in the number of countries, negotiating and implementing trade agreements designed to promote interregional and intraregional trade flows, with ESCWA support

Performance measures:

2004-2005: 2 countries

Estimate 2006-2007: 4 countries

Target 2008-2009: 7 countries

Expected accomplishments

Indicators of achievement

- (c) Strengthened capacity of member countries to formulate and implement policies and programmes for improving transport infrastructure and logistics within the framework of the Integrated Transport System in the Arab Mashreq (ITSAM)
- (iii) Increase in the number of countries negotiating and implementing investment agreements designed to promote interregional and intraregional investment flows as well as integrating the Monterrey Consensus into their economic strategies and policies, with ESCWA support
- Performance measures:*
- 2004-2005: 7 countries
Estimate 2006-2007: 10 countries
Target 2008-2009: 13 countries
- (c) (i) Increase in the percentage of the length of ITSAM road network which meets the requirements of the Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq
- Performance measures:*
- 2004-2005: 25 per cent
Estimate 2006-2007: 50 per cent
Target 2008-2009: 70 per cent
- (ii) Increase in the number of policy measures adopted by member countries in relation to the implementation of ITSAM
- Performance measures:*
- 2004-2005: 4 policy measures
Estimate 2006-2007: 16 policy measures
Target 2008-2009: 26 policy measures

External factors: The subprogramme can achieve the expected accomplishments on the assumption that: (a) member countries are willing to increase their subregional and regional cooperation and integration; (b) there are no significant shortfalls in funding; (c) the political situation in the region does not further deteriorate; and (d) up-to-date and reliable economic and transport statistics are made available.

(a) *Problems to be addressed*

41. Given that the economy of the region is more dependent on the external sector, namely, the oil and gas markets, it remains highly vulnerable to external shocks. The continuing political instability subdues the growth potential and adversely affects investment. Moreover, the region is not creating sufficient employment opportunities, especially for youth, which is manifested by high unemployment rates. Additionally, the more diversified economies, the least developed countries and conflict-stricken countries and territories continue to register chronic trade deficits, accumulate burdensome external debt and are represented among the lowest recipients of FDI.

42. Despite the relative progress achieved in the past few years, regional economic cooperation and integration lag behind the level that has been achieved by other regions of the world. There is a need to reform trade policies, improve trade performance and achieve a better integration into the world economy.

Equally, the region lags behind in terms of mobilizing financial resources for development, both domestic and foreign investment resources. Moreover, inadequate transport infrastructure and complex border-crossing procedures hinder the smooth movement of goods and people; and the region suffers from a severe lack of road safety with alarmingly high rates of traffic accidents.

(b) *Strategy*

43. The MDGs, the Monterrey Consensus on Financing for Development, the Doha Development Agenda and relevant General Assembly and ESCWA resolutions provide the legislative authority for this subprogramme.

44. Given that the economic growth of the region is closely tied to the performance of the oil sector, which is characterized by high fluctuations and low trickle-down effects to the rest of the economy, and to the low absorption of labour, the subprogramme will address issues of economic diversification in relation to policies that foster growth. Consequently, it will focus on providing in-depth analyses, including on the social impact of economic development, and on disseminating forecasts of economic growth in order to assist member countries to adopt corrective policies aimed at promoting a more balanced socio-economic development and growth, and at achieving relevant MDGs in the region.

45. The subprogramme provides the forum for member countries to discuss key regional issues and reach common understanding. It will continue to advocate the need for strengthening regional economic cooperation and integration as the means of widening the regional market to increase competitiveness, reduce risks and uncertainties, and facilitate integration in the global economy.

46. Support will be provided to member countries in implementing the recommendations of the Monterrey Consensus on Financing for Development, with emphasis on integrated approach and work towards achieving the goals of the Consensus. This includes increasing the capacity of member countries to formulate and implement appropriate domestic resource mobilization strategies, sound investment policies, improved foreign-debt management schemes and more effective trade policies.

47. There is a clear need to enhance the capacity of the region to formulate and implement trade policies in a coherent manner and to ensure that development is incorporated in the trade agenda. This necessitates building the capacities of trade officials involved in trade negotiations and trade facilitation measures, particularly through ICT applications.

48. Additionally, ESCWA will continue its pioneering work on ITSAM, including the implementation and monitoring of the international transport agreements, and the harmonization and simplification of border-crossing and transit procedures. Moreover, an action plan on road safety in member countries will be developed.

49. The subprogramme will achieve its expected accomplishments through analytical studies, expert group meetings and technical cooperation activities comprising capacity-building workshops, advisory services, networking and knowledge sharing, and field projects. Attention will be provided to outreach and to increase the interaction between officials in the region through networking arrangements, which facilitates the exchange of experiences and lessons learned and enhances dialogue.

50. This will be achieved by further strengthening partnership with relevant United Nations organizations, including the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the World Trade Organization (WTO), DESA and the other regional commissions; with regional organizations, particularly LAS and GCC and their subsidiary bodies; and with NGOs, chambers of commerce and other relevant private sector enterprises.

Subprogramme 4. Information and communication technology for regional integration

Objective: To build an inclusive people-centred and development-oriented information society in accordance with internationally agreed development goals and objectives

Expected accomplishments	Indicators of achievement
(a) Increased implementation of the Regional Plan of Action for Building the Information Society, particularly in relation to the ICT sector	(a) (i) Increase in the number of countries implementing policies and plans of action to enhance the ICT sector <i>Performance measures:</i> 2004-2005: 4 countries Estimate 2006-2007: 6 countries Target 2008-2009: 8 countries (ii) Increase in the number of core ICT indicators measured by all member countries <i>Performance measures:</i> 2004-2005: No indicators Estimate 2006-2007: 5 indicators Target 2008-2009: 20 indicators
(b) Enhanced capacity of ESCWA member countries to provide e-services in Arabic, targeting socio-economic development	(b) (i) Increase in the number of ICT applications deployed by countries to provide e-services, with ESCWA assistance <i>Performance measures:</i> 2004-2005: No ICT applications Estimate 2006-2007: 3 ICT applications Target 2008-2009: 6 ICT applications (ii) Increase in the number of ICT field projects initiated or promoted by ESCWA and targeting Government services and local community development <i>Performance measures:</i> 2004-2005: 4 ICT field projects Estimate 2006-2007: 7 ICT field projects Target 2008-2009: 10 ICT field projects

External factors: The subprogramme can achieve the expected accomplishments on the assumption that: (a) there are no significant shortfalls in funding; and (b) the political stability is sufficient to facilitate a cooperative environment among member countries in the region and to enable an effective implementation of technical cooperation.

(a) *Problems to be addressed*

51. Western Asia suffers from a widening digital divide at two levels, namely: (a) internally, both between the countries of the GCC and other ESCWA member countries and between cities and rural areas; and (b) externally, between the region and other regions of the world, with most regional ICT indicators currently lower than global averages. Furthermore, ESCWA member countries are largely consumers rather than producers of ICT, which is manifested by very modest exports of ICT products by a limited number of countries in the region. The Internet and various e-applications and e-services are mostly the realm of the elite and do not target socio-economic development, particularly development at the community level.

52. While unemployment, particularly among youth and women, is on the increase, which is leading to widespread poverty in the region, most member countries have low ICT readiness and applications owing to a weak enabling environment, thereby missing opportunities for investment in the ICT sector and its development. Additionally, the digital Arabic content is insufficient and further widens the existing gaps, which in turn adversely influences the use of ICTs. Equally, inadequate ICT measurement and collection of information society indicators complicate the formulation, implementation and follow-up of policies and strategies.

(b) *Strategy*

53. In the light of the Tunis Agenda of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) and efforts already made in implementing the ESCWA Regional Plan of Action for Building the Information Society, the subprogramme will strive to adapt the Tunis Agenda to serve the region and to fine-tune plans of action in order to build an inclusive, people-centred information society that is based on productive national ICT sectors.

54. The subprogramme will carry out analytical studies, meetings and advisory services to support this endeavour and will act as catalyst for member countries in order to trigger changes in policymaking and continue to develop a comprehensive set of ICT indicators that can help strategic decision-making in identifying priority areas of policy action. Additionally, it will assess and revise plans of action, monitor progress, evaluate impacts and provide a benchmark of national development with other countries, with a view to improving productivity and competitiveness of the ICT sector in the region.

55. Moreover, pilot field projects will be implemented in selected ESCWA member countries aimed at enhancing national capacity and at taking advantage of the digital opportunities pertaining to socio-economic development in the region. These projects will incorporate a social dimension through the active involvement of local communities, with focus on youth employment and empowerment of women, thereby building an information society centred on human capital.

56. The subprogramme will also place special emphasis on harnessing the development of ICT thematic applications, including e-government and digital Arabic content, with the aim of building on ICT as an agent of change to empower people and improve the quality of life.

57. Furthermore, the subprogramme will seek to build on accomplishments of past years in terms of activating partnerships for implementing ICT projects by enhancing regional collaboration and partnerships in activities that can lead to an inclusive people-centred information society and that can contribute to fund-raising efforts aimed at harnessing ICTs for socio-economic development. Towards that end, the subprogramme will promote the establishment of mechanisms aimed at exchanging information and sharing knowledge among regional players and with counterparts outside the region. The subprogramme will also strive for more effective results through close coordination and joint efforts with other ESCWA subprogrammes, and with international and regional organizations.

Subprogramme 5. Statistics for evidence-based policymaking

Objective: To enhance the capacity of member countries to produce and disseminate timely, accurate and comparable socio-economic statistics and indicators to be used by national and international decision-makers and civil society for evidence-based policymaking

Expected accomplishments	Indicators of achievement
(a) Strengthened capacity of member countries to improve the national institutional framework for official statistics	(a) (i) Increase in the number of countries taking measures to improve their national institutional framework for official statistics <i>Performance measures:</i> 2004-2005: No countries Estimate 2006-2007: 2 countries Target 2008-2009: 4 countries (ii) Increase in the number of countries committed to implementing the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics of the United Nations Statistics Division <i>Performance measures:</i> 2004-2005: No countries Estimate 2006-2007: No countries Target 2008-2009: 6 countries
(b) Strengthened capacity of member countries to participate effectively in the 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses, household surveys and other surveys as a statistical requisite for the attainment of MDGs by 2015	(b) (i) Increase in the number of countries taking concrete measures, with ESCWA assistance, to participate effectively in the 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses <i>Performance measures:</i> 2004-2005: No countries Estimate 2006-2007: 3 countries Target 2008-2009: 13 countries (ii) Increase in the number of countries that provide the ESCWA repository of data with at least 60 per cent of the core set of development indicators, including the MDGs and gender dimension <i>Performance measures:</i> 2004-2005: 3 countries Estimate 2006-2007: 5 countries Target 2008-2009: 7 countries

External factors: The subprogramme can achieve the expected accomplishments on the assumption that: (a) member countries are willing to commit and provide political support to improve their national institutional frameworks for official statistics; (b) there are no significant shortfalls in funding; and (c) the political situation in the region does not further deteriorate.

(a) *Problems to be addressed*

58. There is a need to improve the statistics produced by many member countries in the region. Shortcomings include insufficiency, irregularity, unreliability and incomparability of data, which hinder evidence-based policymaking with regard to implementing, monitoring and evaluating the impact of policies. In addition, data produced from different sources at the national level are not based on internationally agreed standards and suffer from discrepancies and relevancy.

59. Consequently, both producer-producer and user-producer dialogue must be strengthened in order to meet the increasing demand for statistics and indicators at the national and international levels. This is particularly vital in the areas of implementing the 1993 System of National Accounts (SNA 93), conducting regular specialized household surveys, and developing and maintaining national repositories for data.

60. Moreover, most of the statistical systems in the region have not committed to implementing the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics of the United Nations Statistics Division. Statistical systems in the region are far from adequate owing to the lack of national strategies on statistical development; and there are gaps that need to be addressed in the national statistical data that are available. The 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses provides an important opportunity for member countries to collect and process data in new areas that are of importance. Additionally, undertaking regular national surveys, including household surveys, needs to become an important source of data.

(b) *Strategy*

61. The subprogramme plays a central role in promoting international statistical standards and providing a regional statistical forum. It aims to strengthen the capacity of the national statistical systems of the region in order to produce and disseminate, in a timely manner and in keeping with international standards and best practices, the statistical information and development indicators needed to design and monitor evidence-based economic and social policies for national decision-makers and civil society.

62. The subprogramme will focus on strengthening the statistical systems in member countries to be in line with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics of the United Nations Statistics Division. This will be achieved by monitoring the implementation and adherence to those Principles; and by promoting and providing support to the formulation of national statistical development strategies aimed at improving national statistical institutional frameworks and at achieving national development goals, including the MDGs.

63. Recognizing that this biennium will be crucial for member Governments to prepare for the 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses, the subprogramme will give special focus to building the capacity of member countries for the implementation of the recommendations for the 2010 Round, and for preparing and undertaking household, labour force and other related surveys in order to collect vital data needed for policymakers, the private sector and civil society. Additionally, the subprogramme will continue to provide due attention to SNA 93, trade and sectoral statistics; and to support member countries in terms of improving existing gaps in coverage, transparency and quality of statistics and metadata in compliance with agreed international standards.

64. Given the added value of ESCWA in reflecting the specificity of the region, the objective of the subprogramme will be achieved by organizing relevant meetings and workshops, promoting networking and knowledge-sharing, implementing technical cooperation projects, and providing advisory services and expertise to national statistical offices. More efforts will be made to increase the added value in its statistical publications by making greater use of estimation, thereby filling gaps in statistics and improving the quality of data.

65. The subprogramme will implement its work in partnership with the United Nations Statistics Division of DESA and other regional commissions, with such regional organizations as LAS and GCC, and with other statistical departments, through joint meetings, publications, data compilation and sharing in order to ensure coherence and to exploit synergy at the regional and national levels.

Subprogramme 6. Advancement of women

Objective: To foster greater participation of women in public life for equality between women and men by contributing towards reducing gender imbalances, empowering women and increasing the gender dimension in the programme of work of ESCWA

Expected accomplishments	Indicators of achievement
(a) Strengthened capacity of national mechanisms and civil society institutions for the empowerment and advancement of women to address gender imbalances and mainstream a gender perspective, with special emphasis on the participation of women in legislative and executive authorities	(a) (i) Increase in the number of countries applying policy options for the empowerment and advancement of women <i>Performance measures:</i> 2004-2005: 5 countries Estimate 2006-2007: 7 countries Target 2008-2009: 10 countries (ii) Increase in the number of measures taken by countries to increase the participation of women in policy and decision-making <i>Performance measures:</i> 2004-2005: 2 measures Estimate 2006-2007: 4 measures Target 2008-2009: 6 measures
(b) Increased gender dimension in the programme of work of ESCWA	(b) Increase in the number of outputs containing an articulated gender component <i>Performance measures:</i> 2004-2005: 2 per cent of total outputs Estimate 2006-2007: 10 per cent of total outputs Target 2008-2009: 20 per cent of total outputs

External factors: The subprogramme can achieve the expected accomplishments on the assumption that: (a) member countries provide timely response requests for relevant information by ESCWA; (b) the political will exists in ESCWA member countries to promote gender mainstreaming and the empowerment of women; (c) member countries take measures to align their commitments to the outcomes of international conventions and conferences with existing laws, regulations and practices; and (d) the political situation in the region does not further deteriorate.

(a) *Problems to be addressed*

66. Despite progress made in countries of the ESCWA region towards the advancement of women both in qualitative and quantitative terms, the participation of women in the political, economic and social spheres remains limited owing to weak political commitment to empowerment of women and gender equality. In particular, the participation of Arab women in national parliaments and Governments is very low compared to their counterparts in other regions of the world. The participation of women is often impeded by a host of institutional, legal, social and cultural discriminatory practices, and stereotyping that prevents them from enjoying their full rights.

67. These constraints are further compounded by armed conflict, civil strife and lack of stability, which are of special relevance to the ESCWA region and which particularly impact women. Additionally, the advancement of women is thwarted by the absence or inadequacy of functional mechanisms aimed at formulating gender-responsive policies, strategies and measures, or at enforcing existing ones. Limited know-how, shortage of trained personnel and inadequate funding contribute towards slowing the progress in the advancement of women and in gender mainstreaming.

(b) *Strategy*

68. Taking into account the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Beijing +10 and its Platform for Action, and the Beirut Declaration on Arab Women Ten Years After Beijing adopted by the Commission at its twenty-third session, the subprogramme will focus on policy advocacy and capacity-building aimed at increasing the number of women in national parliaments and at the executive level as a means for enhancing the ratio of women in decision-making. This has proved to be an effective interim measure for addressing gender-related issues in a number of countries. Greater attention will be given to promoting partnerships between Governments and grassroots organizations in order to increase outreach and to sustain follow-up action, evaluation and promotion of issues related to the empowerment of women, women's rights and gender mainstreaming. This will include harnessing various media tools to raise awareness of the rights of Arab women and to rectify the flawed perception that distorts their image.

69. The subprogramme will seek synergies in its programme of work by building consensus, promoting common regional positions with regard to international agendas and undertaking joint activities with the following: relevant regional Arab organizations, particularly LAS and its subsidiary bodies, the Arab Women Organization (AWO) and the Center of Arab Women for Training and Research (CAWTAR); and with other United Nations entities, especially the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), other regional commissions and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

70. Building on previous successful, albeit limited, endeavours to support women in conflict-stricken areas, the subprogramme will accord due attention towards identifying the needs of these women and building their capacities, particularly in the light of new mandates addressing the issue of women in such conflict-stricken areas and the role of women in peacebuilding. This issue commands special attention in the ESCWA region, which is characterized by instability.

71. Moreover, in line with the recommendations of the Secretary-General with regard to strengthening the capabilities of the United Nations system in the area of gender and in the light of General Assembly and ECOSOC resolutions, particularly the 2005 World Summit Outcome and the MDGs, the subprogramme will play a pivotal and catalytic role in mainstreaming a gender perspective within the ESCWA secretariat; and with the cooperation of the organizational units, the subprogramme will set a comprehensive strategy for increasing the gender dimension of the programme of work of ESCWA.

72. The subprogramme will achieve its expected accomplishments through its normative and analytical work, the organization of meetings and training workshops, networking and knowledge sharing, and the provision of advisory services on the empowerment of women and gender-related issues. Additionally, it will support member countries in bridging the gap between their commitments to international conventions and conferences and the realization thereof, which is often constrained by the absence or inadequacy of existing institutional mechanisms, laws and practices. To that end, the subprogramme will facilitate networking both among and between Governments and civil society institutions by sharing and replicating good practices; and will provide a forum for the exchange of such experiences and good practices at the regional and international levels.

Subprogramme 7. Conflict mitigation and development

Objective: To reduce conflicts and instability and their impact on socio-economic and political development in Western Asia

Expected accomplishments	Indicators of achievement
(a) Increased understanding by member countries of the impact of conflicts on socio-economic development in the region	(a) Increase in the number of public and civil society entities that acknowledge benefiting from ESCWA work identifying the socio-economic and political causes of instability and conflict <i>Performance measures:</i> 2004-2005: No public/civil society entities Estimate 2006-2007: 2 public/civil society entities Target 2008-2009: 4 public/civil society entities
(b) Enhanced capacity of member countries to identify, assess, predict and respond to socio-economic and political issues and challenges posed by conflicts and instability in the region	(b) (i) Increase in the number of tools and techniques adopted in assessing the root causes of conflicts and instability <i>Performance measures:</i> 2004-2005: No tools/techniques Estimate 2006-2007: 2 tools/techniques Target 2008-2009: 4 tools/techniques (ii) Increase in the number of public and civil society entities implementing, in partnerships with ESCWA and other entities, projects/programmes that address the socio-economic and political issues and challenges arising from conflicts and instability <i>Performance measures:</i> 2004-2005: No public/civil society entities Estimate 2006-2007: 2 public/civil society entities Target 2008-2009: 6 public/civil society entities

External factors: The subprogramme can achieve the expected accomplishments on the assumption that: (a) there is continuing access to direct beneficiaries; (b) the political will exists in ESCWA member countries to address collectively the root causes of conflicts and instability; and (c) there are no significant shortfalls in funding.

(a) *Problems to be addressed*

73. The continuing political tension and conflicts in the region show little sign of abating in the near future. These conflicts are transboundary in nature whereby the impact is felt across several States neighbouring a conflict-stricken country or territory, and even across the entire region. Such unstable conditions have led to further and substantial increases in poverty levels in the afflicted region where many of the MDG targets will not be achieved. This highlights the need for greater understanding of the causes underlying conflicts and instability in order to enable member countries to take appropriate measures aimed at containing them and at reducing their impact on development.

74. Consequently, this entails pursuing sustainable development goals in the midst of conflicts. Moreover, such conflicts and occupations have had adverse effects on political reform efforts in the region. As such, regional instability makes traditional models of development difficult to pursue and can overshadow even the best-laid development plans.

(b) *Strategy*

75. In order to achieve its objective and expected accomplishments, the subprogramme will focus on the following four areas:

(a) *Analyses and policy formulation aimed at mitigating conflicts:* The subprogramme will monitor and analyse socio-economic and political events with a view to providing mitigation measures and deepening the understanding of the repercussions of crises and the impact of instability on socio-economic growth in the region. It will also formulate mechanisms to assist in reducing instability in Western Asia and disseminate lessons learned;

(b) *Capacity-building:* A key part of the strategy will be the promotion of such good governance practices as improving the quality and effectiveness of public administration, human rights, the rule of law and economic decision-making. Such policy recommendations will be supported by training and capacity-building for public and civil society entities to induce policy reform in accordance with international standards of excellence;

(c) *Mainstreaming conflict prevention:* The subprogramme will be a catalyst in incorporating the socio-economic development needs of conflict-stricken countries and territories into the work of substantive divisions in order to formulate and implement policies and programmes that cater to the needs of these countries and territories, and that seek to reduce the destabilizing regional impact of conflicts;

(d) *Forging partnerships:* Another key component of the strategy will be the development of partnerships to help member countries to achieve national development targets. Based on past experience, partnerships operate at several levels, thereby bringing together members of civil society, the private sector, Government institutions, and United Nations and international organizations operating in the region. By strengthening such partnerships, the subprogramme will be able to mobilize resources aimed at supporting peacebuilding efforts in the region.

76. The subprogramme will collaborate with the Peacebuilding Support Office, which assists the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission; and will work closely with the newly established Human Rights Council, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) and the Office of the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process (UNSCO).

LEGISLATIVE MANDATES

General mandates

General Assembly resolutions

A/RES/59/8	Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference
A/RES/59/9	Cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States
A/RES/59/244	Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries
A/RES/59/250	Triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system
A/RES/60/1	2005 World Summit Outcome
A/RES/60/157	The right to development
A/RES/60/204	Role of the United Nations in promoting development in the context of globalization and interdependence
A/RES/60/212	South-South cooperation
A/RES/60/215	Towards global partnerships

ECOSOC resolutions

2004/48	Coordinated and integrated United Nations system approach to promoting rural development in developing countries, with due consideration to least developed countries, for poverty eradication and sustainable development
2004/65	Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010
2005/12	The need to harmonize and improve United Nations informatics systems for optimal utilization and accessibility by all States
2005/31	Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system
2005/48	Role of the Economic and Social Council in the integrated and coordinated implementation of the outcomes of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits
2005/50	The Damascus Declaration and the role of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia in the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration

ESCWA resolutions

258 (XXIII)	Strengthening technical cooperation in the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
260 (XXIII)	Development and regional cooperation under unstable conditions

- 261 (XXIII) Strengthening the cooperation between ESCWA and the League of Arab States in the field of economic and social development
- 263 (XXIII) Promoting partnership and resource mobilization
- 268 (XXIII) Adoption of the final reports of the subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

Subprogramme 1. Integrated management of natural resources for sustainable development

General Assembly resolutions

- A/RES/59/228 Activities undertaken during the International Year of Freshwater, 2003, preparations for the International Decade for Action, "Water for Life", 2005-2015, and further efforts to achieve the sustainable development of water resources
- A/RES/59/235 Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa

ESCWA resolution

- 244 (XXII) Cooperation between ESCWA member countries with respect to shared water resources and the Arab Network for the Integrated Management of Water Resources

Subprogramme 2. Integrated social policies

General Assembly resolutions

- A/RES/60/130 Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly
- A/RES/60/131 Implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons: realizing the Millennium Development Goals for persons with disabilities
- A/RES/60/133 Follow-up to the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family and beyond
- A/RES/60/135 Follow-up to the Second World Assembly on Ageing
- A/RES/60/203 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)
- A/RES/60/227 International migration and development

ECOSOC resolutions

- 2005/9 Further promotion of equalization of opportunities by, for and with persons with disabilities and protection of their human rights

- 2005/10 Comprehensive and integral international convention to protect and promote the rights and dignity of persons with disability
- 2005/11 Future organization and methods of work of the Commission for Social Development
- 2005/47 Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)

ESCWA resolution

- 259 (XXIII) Social policies

Subprogramme 3. Economic development and integration

General Assembly resolutions

- A/RES/59/223 External debt crisis and development
- A/RES/60/5 Improving global road safety

ECOSOC resolutions

- 2004/64 International Conference on Financing for Development
- 2005/44 Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010

ESCWA resolutions

- 243 (XXIII) Adoption of the Agreement on International Railways in the Arab Mashreq
- 256 (XXIII) Adoption of the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the Field of Maritime Transport in the Arab Mashreq
- 257 (XXIII) Selection of the routes to be given priority in implementation of the Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq
- 265 (XXIII) Regional cooperation in the field of road traffic safety

Subprogramme 4. Information and communication technology for regional integration

General Assembly resolutions

- A/RES/59/220 World Summit on the Information Society
- A/RES/60/205 Science and technology for development

ECOSOC resolution

- 2004/68 Science and technology for development

ESCWA resolution

- 245 (XXII) The ESCWA initiative for activating the role of science, technology and technological innovation in achieving the Millennium Goals

Subprogramme 5. Statistics for evidence-based policymaking

General Assembly resolution

- A/RES/60/2 Policies and programmes involving youth

ECOSOC resolution

- 2005/13 2010 World Population and Housing Census Programme

ESCWA resolutions

- 247 (XXII) The development of statistical work in the ESCWA region
262 (XXIII) Support for the capacities of member countries in the field of statistics and the International Comparison Programme

Subprogramme 6. Advancement of women

General Assembly resolutions

- A/RES/59/167 Elimination of all forms of violence against women, including crimes identified in the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century"
A/RES/59/248 World Survey on the role of women in development
A/RES/60/136 In-depth study on all forms of violence against women
A/RES/60/138 Improvement of the situation of women in rural areas
A/RES/60/139 Violence against women migrant workers
A/RES/60/140 Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly
A/RES/60/210 Women in development

ECOSOC resolutions

- 2004/11 Agreed conclusions of the Commission on the Status of Women on the role of men and boys in achieving gender equality
2004/12 Agreed conclusions of the Commission on the Status of Women on women's equal participation in conflict prevention, management and resolution and in post-conflict peace-building
2005/43 Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women

ESCWA resolution

264 (XXIII) Implementation of the Beirut Declaration on Arab Women Ten Years After
Beijing: Call for Peace

Subprogramme 7. Conflict mitigation and development

General Assembly resolutions

A/RES/59/179 The right of the Palestinian people to self-determination

A/RES/60/126 Assistance to the Palestinian people

A/RES/60/183 Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian
Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied
Syrian Golan over their natural resources

ECOSOC resolutions

2005/3 Public administration and development

2005/51 Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living
conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory,
including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Security Council resolution

S/RES/1645(2005) Post-conflict peacebuilding

ESCWA resolution

260 (XXIII) Development and regional cooperation under unstable conditions
