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**PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT ISSUES
AND POLICIES DIVISION FOR THE BIENNIUM 1998-1999**

Overview and summary of activities

1. This subprogramme will be implemented by the Social Development Issues and Policies Division.
2. The subprogramme aims to promote regional cooperation in harmonizing social policies and setting standards and regulations for improving the quality of life. Support will be provided to the member States to implement in an integrated approach the recommendations of the global conferences, namely, the International Conference on Population and Development, the World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women, and the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), in addition to the relevant recommendations of Agenda 21.
3. Within this framework and through multidisciplinary studies, surveys, meetings, technical assistance and human and institutional capacity-building, the activities on human development, eradication of poverty, governance and participation and the role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) will continue to be critical. In addition, the database on population, social development, gender and human settlements policies, which was developed during the 1996-1997 biennium, will be further refined and updated. The subprogramme also adopts a number of recurrent publications and information materials and services.
4. Improved documentation and substantive servicing of the ESCWA biennial Commission session and the second session of the Committee on Social Development will facilitate cooperation among member States for follow-up of the integrated recommendations of the global conferences. Inputs will also be provided through documentation of the Commission for Social Development, the Commission on Population and Development, the Commission on the Status of Women, the Economic and Social Council, and the General Assembly as mandated. Coordination will be further developed with the relevant bodies of the United Nations. Joint activities will continue to be expanded with the League of Arab States, its relevant specialized organizations and other international and regional organizations.
5. Departing from the 1996-1997 subprogramme, this subprogramme adopts the theme that runs through the whole 1998-1999 programme of work: coordination of policies and harmonization of norms and regulations. This theme is applied in the social sector through integrated recommendations of the various global conferences. The 1998-1999 programme of work will also see the finalization of an integrated information system of policies related to its main areas of concern.

Activities

1. Servicing of intergovernmental and expert bodies

(a) Substantive servicing of meetings

- (i) Substantive servicing of the second session of the Committee on Social Development (1999)

Reports:

- a. Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 in the area of social development;
- b. Activities undertaken in various areas of social development within the framework of the programme of work for the biennium 1996-1997;
- c. Follow-up of the implementation of the International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo, 1994); the World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen, 1995); the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995); and the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) (Istanbul, 1996);
- d. ESCWA medium-term plan for the period 2002-2005 in the area of social development;
- e. Report of the second session of the Committee on Social Development.

- (ii) Substantive servicing of the Arab conference on integrated follow-up of global conferences (1999)

Reports:

- a. Report on the regional preparatory meeting for the Arab conference on integrated follow-up of global conferences: follow-up of the International Conference on Population and Development;
- b. Report on the regional preparatory meeting for the Arab conference on integrated follow-up of global conferences: follow-up of World Summit for Social Development;
- c. Report on the regional preparatory meeting for the Arab conference on integrated follow-up of global conferences: follow-up of the Fourth World Conference on Women;
- d. Report on the regional preparatory meeting for the Arab conference on integrated follow-up of global conferences: follow-up of Habitat II.

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(b) Parliamentary documentation

- (i) Report to the Economic and Social Council on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli settlements on the Palestinian people in the occupied territories, including Jerusalem, occupied since 1967, and on the Arab population in the Syrian Golan (1998);
- (ii) Report to the Commission on the second session of the Committee on Social Development (1999);
- (iii) Report to the Economic and Social Council on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli settlements on the Palestinian people in the occupied territories including Jerusalem, occupied since 1967, and on the Arab population in the Syrian Golan (1999).

(c) Other services (ad hoc expert groups)

- (i) Regional preparatory meeting for the Arab conference on integrated follow-up of global conferences: follow-up of the International Conference on Population and Development (1998);
- (ii) Regional preparatory meeting for the Arab conference on integrated follow-up of global conferences: follow-up of the World Summit for Social Development (1998);
- (iii) Regional preparatory meeting for the Arab conference on integrated follow-up of global conferences: follow-up of the Fourth World Conference on Women (1998);
- (iv) Regional preparatory meeting for the Arab conference on integrated follow-up of global conferences: follow-up of Habitat II (1998);
- (v) Expert group meeting on migration and population policies in ESCWA member countries (1999);
- (vi) Urban management: follow-up on national strategies in ESCWA member States (1999).

2. Other substantive activities

(a) Mandated recurrent publications

- (i) News bulletin on human settlements in the Arab world (1998);
- (ii) Population Bulletin (No. 46) (1998);
- (iii) News bulletin on human settlements in the Arab world (1999);
- (iv) Demographic and related socio-economic data sheets (1999);
- (v) Population Bulletin (No. 47) (1999);

- (vi) Studies on Arab women and development series: gender and the role of NGOs: a case-study of the West Bank and Gaza before and after the peace accords (1999);
- (vii) News bulletin on human settlements in the Arab world (1999);
- (viii) Human settlements data sheets (1999).

(b) Mandated non-recurrent publications

- (i) Manifestations of and approaches to alleviating poverty in Western Asia: the role of income-generating activities in eradicating poverty and improving the standard of living in local communities (1998);
- (ii) Developmental role of the informal sector in community development: cases of Egypt and the Republic of Yemen (1998);
- (iii) The role of NGOs in local community development (1998);
- (iv) Critical assessment of local community development experiences in the Arab world (1998);
- (v) National population policies in ESCWA member countries (1998);
- (vi) Proceedings of the expert group meeting on eradicating poverty in Western Asia (1998);
- (vii) Urban governance and participation: problems and prospects (1998);
- (viii) Urban environmental changes and sustainable development in ESCWA member countries (1998);
- (ix) Towards a strategy for sustainable human development in the Arab world (1999);
- (x) Social impact of structural adjustment with special emphasis on unemployment (1999);
- (xi) Manifestations of and approaches to alleviating poverty in Western Asia: poverty and youth (1999);
- (xii) Manifestations of and approaches to alleviating poverty in Western Asia: operational microcredit lending facilities to poor women in rural and urban areas (1999);
- (xiii) Manifestations of and approaches to alleviating poverty in Western Asia: urban settlements and poverty (1999);
- (xiv) Report on the role of NGOs in integrated follow-up of global conferences (1999);
- (xv) Housing policy issues in ESCWA member States (1999).

(c) Discretionary non-recurrent publication

Manual on community development services (1998).

(d) Technical material (databases, software, etc.)

(i) Integrated information system on population policies in ESCWA countries (1998);

(ii) Population estimates and projections database (1998);

(iii) Database on social policies and measures in the area of human development in selected ESCWA countries (1998);

(iv) Database on social policies and measures in the area of gender and the family (1998);

(v) Database on social policies and measures in the area of human settlements (1998).

3. International cooperation and interagency coordination and liaison

(a) Participation in activities of the intergovernmental bodies

(i) Cooperation with the League of Arab States and its specialized organizations in following up activities related to the International Conference on Population and Development; the World Summit for Social Development; the Fourth World Conference on Women; and the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and on other social issues (1998);

(ii) Cooperation with the Arab Gulf Programme for United Nations Development Organizations (AGFUND) on follow-up activities related to the World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women, as well as other social and family issues (1998);

(iii) Cooperation with the Center of Arab Women for Training and Research (CAWTAR) on follow-up activities related to the Fourth World Conference on Women and other family issues (1998);

(iv) Cooperation with the Committee on Environment and Development in the Arab Region and Europe (CEDARE) on follow-up activities related to Habitat II (1998);

(v) Cooperation with the Regional Bureau of the Urban Management Programme on follow-up activities related to Habitat II (1998).

(b) Participation in activities of non-governmental organizations

Cooperation with non-governmental organizations in ESCWA countries on follow-up activities related to the Fourth World Conference on Women and on gender issues (1998).

(c) Participation in activities of the United Nations system

- (i) Coordination with the United Nations Population Fund on follow-up activities related to the International Conference on Population and Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women, as well as on population and gender issues (1998);
- (ii) Coordination with the United Nations Children's Fund on follow-up activities related to the International Conference on Population and Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women, as well as on population and gender issues (1998);
- (iii) Coordination with the United Nations Development Fund for Women on follow-up activities related to the International Conference on Population and Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women, as well as on population and gender issues (1998);
- (iv) Coordination with the World Health Organization on follow-up activities related to the International Conference on Population and Development and on population issues (1998);
- (v) Coordination with the United Nations Development Programme on follow-up activities related to the World Summit for Social Development and on human development issues (1998);
- (vi) Coordination with the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development on follow-up activities related to the World Summit for Social Development and on human development issues (1998);
- (vii) Coordination with the International Labour Organization on follow-up activities related to the World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women, as well as on human development and gender issues (1998);
- (viii) Coordination with United Nations Headquarters on follow-up activities related to the World Summit for Social Development and on human development issues (1998);
- (ix) Coordination with the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women on follow-up activities related to the Fourth World Conference on Women and on gender issues (1998);
- (x) Coordination with the United Nations Volunteer Programme on follow-up activities related to the Fourth World Conference on Women and on gender issues (1998);
- (xi) Coordination with the United Nations University/World Institute for Development Economics Research on follow-up activities related to the Fourth World Conference on Women and on gender issues (1998);
- (xii) Coordination with the World Bank on follow-up activities related to the Fourth World Conference on Women and on gender issues (1998);

- (xiii) Coordination with the Division for the Advancement of Women at United Nations Headquarters on follow-up activities related to the Fourth World Conference on Women and on gender issues (1998);
- (xiv) Participation in the annual meetings of the Commission on the Status of Women (1998);
- (xv) Coordination with the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) on follow-up activities related to Habitat II (1998);
- (xvi) Participation in the annual meetings of the Commission on Human Settlements (1998);
- (xvii) Coordination with the United Nations Environment Programme on follow-up activities related to Habitat II and on the implementation of joint programmes (1998).

4. Technical cooperation

(a) Group training

Training workshop on population policies and sustainable development in ESCWA countries: ESCWA Population Policies Information System (PPIS) in the Arab world. (XB) (1999).

(b) Field projects

Community development services (1998).

