



Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific**Seventy-fourth session**

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Item 3 of the provisional agenda*

Review of issues pertinent to the subsidiary structure of the Commission, including the work of the regional institutions**Programme performance report for the biennium 2016–2017****Note by the secretariat***Summary*

The present report provides an account of the programme performance of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) for the biennium 2016–2017, as assessed against the expected accomplishments set out for each subprogramme in the strategic framework for the period 2016–2017. The programme performance report consists of highlights of programme achievements and results, by subprogramme, for the biennium 2016–2017. The assessment is supported by information collected from the end users of the secretariat's products and services through surveys, interviews and evaluations or other reviews.

The present report was reviewed by the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission at its 375th session.

The Commission may wish to review the present report and comment on the overall performance of ESCAP and its nine subprogrammes. Based on the lessons learned, the Commission may also wish to provide the secretariat with guidance on future implementation modalities that would improve the effectiveness of ESCAP.

* ESCAP/74/L.1/Rev.1.

I. Highlights of programme achievements in the biennium 2016–2017

1. To address regional challenges and support the balanced integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) continued to act as the most inclusive intergovernmental platform in the region and to promote innovative solutions, and the sharing of knowledge and good practices. To support the implementation of, follow-up to and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, ESCAP provided research, analysis and technical cooperation needed for developing and implementing, among others, evidence-based policies on macroeconomics and financing for development, trade and investment, technology and innovation, transport and connectivity, the environment, natural resources management and urban development, social dimensions, statistics and energy. In the period 2016–2017, ESCAP supported its member States in identifying regional priorities and formulating positions and partnerships to advance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in an integrated and balanced manner through its normative, analytical and capacity-building work. During the biennium, the annual Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development was confirmed as the regional mechanism for the follow-up to and review of the 2030 Agenda, and a regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific was endorsed by the member States. Member States renewed their commitment to regional economic cooperation and integration through the Ministerial Declaration on Enhancing Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration to Support the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific.

Challenges and lessons learned

2. Attainment of internationally agreed development goals is often hampered by weaknesses in institutional frameworks and capacities as well as varying levels of development of the member States, which affect their ability to effectively design and implement evidence-based policies. To address these challenges, mechanisms to expand regional economic cooperation and integration, policy coordination and multisectoral approaches need to be further strengthened. The implementation of the 2030 Agenda requires versatile expertise and an integrated institutional set-up at the regional, subregional and national levels. The diversity of the technical and institutional capacities of the member States is reflected in the implementation of the global and regionally agreed frameworks and action plans. A key factor in providing assistance is the integrated delivery of the intergovernmental, analytical and capacity-building work of ESCAP in cooperation with development partners.

II. Results achieved in the biennium 2016–2017¹

A. Executive direction and management

Objective of the Organization: To ensure full implementation of legislative mandates and compliance with United Nations policies and procedures with respect to the management of the programme of work and of staff and financial resources of ESCAP

Expected accomplishment: (a) Programme of work is effectively managed

Statement of accomplishments: At the end of the biennium, 99 per cent of legislative outputs had been delivered within established timelines (biennial target – 93 per cent). The result of this work is the provision of a platform for policymakers from member States and associate members to discuss policies on emerging and critical regional issues that could inform global discussions and to translate global discussions to the regional context. These regional and subregional dialogues were strengthened through well-researched, evidence-based analysis and followed up by capacity-building in the area of economic and social development, in pursuit of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Expected accomplishment: (b) Identification of critical and emerging issues relevant to the region's development agenda

Statement of accomplishments: At its seventy-second and seventy-third sessions, the Commission adopted a total of 76 decisions and 21 resolutions that will have long-reaching impact. Specifically, the adoption of Commission resolution 72/6 on committing to the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific and of Commission resolution 73/9 on the regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific specified the mandates set by the member States to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Overall, at the end of the biennium, 230 recommendations (biennial target – 110) had been made by intergovernmental bodies on emerging issues requiring attention.

Expected accomplishment: (c) Enhanced policy coherence in coordination among United Nations agencies in the Asia-Pacific region

Statement of accomplishments: In the period 2016–2017, policy coherence and coordination among United Nations agencies and development partners was enhanced with the reformulation of the thematic working groups of the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism. New terms of reference were developed, in which joint work on projects and policy development were aligned with the 2030 Agenda, for the thematic working group on resource efficient growth, the thematic working group on sustainable societies, the thematic working group on inclusive development and poverty eradication, the thematic working group on disaster risk reduction and resilience, the thematic working group on gender equality and the empowerment of women, the thematic working group on education 2030+, and for the new thematic working

¹ The expected accomplishments, indicators of achievement and outputs mentioned in the present section are listed in the programme budget (A/70/6 (Sect. 19)) approved by the General Assembly at its seventieth session in its resolutions 70/249 A–C and in the report of the Secretary-General on consolidated changes to the biennial programme plan as reflected in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016–2017 (A/71/85) approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 71/6.

group on statistics. Sixty-three joint outputs (analytical reports and regional meetings) were delivered (biennial target – 30). For example, the thematic working group on gender equality and the empowerment of women, co-chaired by ESCAP and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) conducted analytical work on financing and investment mechanisms for gender equality and on women's economic empowerment in the changing world of work. Policy recommendations from the regional forums organized by the thematic working group, supported the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific and informed the sixtieth and sixty-first sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women. Key achievements of the Regional Coordination Mechanism were the endorsement of the Plan of Action to Implement the Joint Declaration on Comprehensive Partnership between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the United Nations (2016–2020), the ASEAN-United Nations Joint Strategic Plan of Action on Disaster Management and the ASEAN-United Nations Action Plan on Environment and Climate Change (2016–2020).

Expected accomplishment: (d) Enhanced visibility of the role of ESCAP in the promotion of equitable and inclusive economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific

Statement of accomplishments: As of 31 December 2017, there were 643 citations of overall ESCAP activities and policies in key media outlets of Asia and the Pacific (biennial target – 160) as well as 488 citations related to 29 op-eds written by the Executive Secretary, in top tier and regional and national outlets (biennial target – 50).

Expected accomplishment: (e) Timely submission of manuscripts to Conference and Documentation Services Section

Statement of accomplishments: As at the end of the biennium, 52.6 per cent of pre-session documents were submitted by the 10-week deadline (biennial target – 100 per cent). The low implementation rate is attributable to internal consultations on the preparation of documents, as the Commission and its subsidiary bodies needed to align their priorities according to the new mandates emanating from the 2030 Agenda. ESCAP implemented various measures in order to meet the biennial target, resulting in an improved implementation rate from 40 per cent at the end of the second quarter, to 50.7 per cent at the end of the third quarter, and to 52.6 per cent at the end of the biennium. More significantly, the implementation rate moved up from 35.13 per cent for the seventy-second session of the Commission in 2016 to 81.39 per cent for the seventy-third session in 2017.

B. Subprogramme 1. Macroeconomic policy, poverty reduction and financing for development

Objective of the Organization: To enhance regional economic cooperation and foster forward-looking macroeconomic policymaking for inclusive and sustainable development, especially in support of poverty reduction and attainment of internationally agreed development goals, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Expected accomplishment: (a) Enhanced understanding among policymakers and other target groups of policies that promote economic growth, reduce poverty and narrow development gaps in the region

Statement of accomplishments: Expert group meetings held during the biennium generated a great amount of technical debate and positive feedback on the materials prepared by ESCAP. The number of review articles and references by Governments, academia and the media related to the *Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific* and the *Asia-Pacific Countries with Special Needs Development Reports* was 767 (biennial target – 850). It should be kept in mind that only references in English media outlets are counted, and that references to the *Asia-Pacific Development Journal* are not monitored. Most importantly, this result was achieved despite the more than 30 per cent reduction of locations where the publications were launched in 2016–2017, relative to the previous biennium. The coverage included top-tier global media outlets such as the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), Bloomberg, Cable News Network (CNN), Financial Times and Reuters as well as national media in and outside the region.

Expected accomplishment: (b) Enhanced regional voice in global development forums and strengthened economic and financial cooperation to foster inclusive, equitable, sustainable and resilient development

Statement of accomplishments: ESCAP organized two High-Level Follow-up Dialogues on Financing for Development in Asia and the Pacific in 2016–2017. The aim of the two Dialogues was to enhance understanding among member States on how the outcomes of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development could be implemented in the region in support of the 2030 Agenda, and the participants in the Dialogues identified policy areas for regional cooperation. The outcome documents of the Dialogues were submitted to the Commission at its seventy-second session by the Government of the Republic of Korea and at its seventy-third session by Government of Sri Lanka. The Second Ministerial Conference on Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific discussed how the region could effectively pursue regional economic cooperation and integration to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and resulted in its Ministerial Declaration (biennial target – 3 outcome documents and resolutions).

Expected accomplishment: (c) Improved capacity of member States, particularly countries with special needs, to design and implement development policies for achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other internationally agreed development goals, including gender equality

Statement of accomplishments: Most of the countries in the region, including countries with special needs, have incorporated the Sustainable Development Goals into their development strategies. A strong sense of commitment to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals was expressed by Governments in their efforts to implement the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024, the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020 (Istanbul Programme of Action) and the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway in 2016. Overall, 86 per cent of participants in ESCAP activities (biennial target – 85 per cent) indicated that the activities to promote

capacity development for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda had enabled them to design and implement sound economic development policies for achieving internationally agreed development goals and to increase their understanding of the challenges in closing infrastructure gaps in least developed countries and in financing the investment required.

Expected accomplishment: (d) Improved capacity of member States to formulate and implement rural development policies and measures that promote sustainable agriculture and food security for the equitable benefit of women and men, girls and boys

Statement of accomplishments: In 2016 and 2017, the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture continued to conduct analytical research, capacity-building events and policy dialogue as well as various activities for knowledge-sharing and networking. These different activities resulted in awareness-raising on innovative and emerging policy options and contributed to the improvement in institutional capacities for evidence-based policymaking of member States for sustainable agriculture, including policies and measures for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, and methodologies for monitoring progress. Other topics covered included enhancement of agricultural resilience to natural disasters and climate change, market-based instruments to promote sustainable agriculture, participatory rural appraisal and stakeholder engagement in local strategy setting. Ninety-five per cent of the surveyed participants indicated that they have used knowledge and skills obtained from ESCAP activities to promote sustainable agriculture and food security (biennial target – 85 per cent).

C. Subprogramme 2. Trade and investment

Objective of the Organization: To support the contribution of trade, investment, enterprise development, innovation and technology transfer to inclusive and sustainable development in the Asia-Pacific region.

Expected accomplishment: (a) Enhanced knowledge among ESCAP member States of trends, emerging issues and evidence-based policy options in the area of trade and investment and related fields of enterprise development, innovation and technology development and transfer, for inclusive and sustainable development

Statement of accomplishments: ESCAP outputs on trade and investment generated significant interest in policy-related literature and media outlets and among policymakers, with 61 articles and references (biennial target – 35) and 2,582 downloads (biennial target – 40,000). The gap between the number of actual downloads and the biennial target, which could not be revised to a more realistic target of 1,700, is due to the introduction, with the launch of the new ESCAP website, of a set of statistical tools that differentiate human searches and downloads from robot and search engine activities. Key analytical tools included the *Asia-Pacific Trade and Investment Report*, in which the question of how to enhance the role of trade and investment as a means of implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals was reviewed, the Studies in Trade, Investment and Innovation series, the Trade, Investment and Innovation Working Paper series, the ESCAP Trade Insights series and ESCAP-World Bank Trade Cost Database series. In addition, the Asia-Pacific Research and Training Network on Trade continued to advance analytical work necessary to improve the preparation of well-informed policies and the understanding of policy options in trade policy areas, while the United Nations

Network of Experts for Paperless Trade and Transport in Asia and the Pacific continued to enhance knowledge on cross-border paperless trade and trade facilitation in general.

Expected accomplishment: (b) Strengthened regional cooperation mechanisms in trade, investment, enterprise development, innovation and technology transfer for inclusive and sustainable development

Statement of accomplishments: ESCAP member States adopted the Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific at the seventy-second session of the Commission. The fourth session of the Ministerial Council of the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement was held in January 2017, and a new protocol was signed featuring revised national lists of tariff concessions and the Rules of Origin for the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement. Thirty-seven ESCAP member States found useful regional cooperation mechanisms, fostered by ESCAP, on trade, investment and enterprise development (biennial target – 20). Forty-two member States found useful regional cooperation mechanisms, promoted by the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology and the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization, to foster innovation and to develop and transfer technology (biennial target – 10). Under the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement, the average margin of preferences was 32.5 per cent (biennial target – 35 per cent) and the number of products receiving preferences was 10,677 (biennial target – 10,000).

Expected accomplishment: (c) Increased capacity of ESCAP member States to formulate and implement policies on trade, investment, innovation, enterprise development and technology transfer for inclusive and sustainable development, including those that are gender-responsive

Statement of accomplishments: ESCAP trained more than 1,900 participants in more than 50 capacity-building events in trade and investment policymaking. On average, 91.2 per cent of the participants (biennial target – 85 per cent) indicated that their capacity to create or implement policies on trade, investment and enterprise development had increased. In addition, 96.7 per cent of participants (biennial target – 80 per cent) in activities organized by the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology and the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization indicated that their capacity to create and/or implement policies that foster innovation and technology transfer, including in the area of agricultural mechanization, had increased. Analytical outputs, including those supported by ESCAP as part of the Asia-Pacific Research and Training Network on Trade and the United Nations Network of Experts for Paperless Trade and Transport in Asia and the Pacific, contributed to building capacity for more effective design and implementation of policies and international agreements.

D. Subprogramme 3. Transport

Objective of the Organization: To enhance regional cooperation and integration in transport for inclusive and sustainable development

Expected accomplishment: (a) Increased capacity of ESCAP member States to develop and implement transport policies and programmes that support inclusive, equitable and sustainable development and are gender-responsive

Statement of accomplishments: ESCAP activities in sustainable urban transport development, smart transport, road safety and rural transport led to the creation and implementation of 95 reported policy initiatives in member States, including the planning and development of urban public transport systems, measures to improve road safety, including infrastructure safety and safety of vulnerable road users, and the improvement of rural access (biennial target – 95). Other achievements included the adoption of the updated Regional Road Safety Goals and Targets for Asia and the Pacific 2016–2020 in line with the Sustainable Development Goals and targets, the pilot application of a sustainable urban transport index, the development of policy frameworks for deployment and use of intelligent transport systems in urban areas and the initiative to develop regulatory framework guidelines for the use of intelligent transport systems in the region and for the development of sustainable rural access. Two volumes of the Transport and Communications Bulletin for Asia and the Pacific were issued on sustainable rural transport access and the Sustainable Development Goals, which included research papers and case studies on rural access.

Expected accomplishment: (b) Increased capacity of ESCAP member States to plan, develop and implement international intermodal transport linkages, including the Asian Highway network, the Trans-Asian Railway network, inter-island shipping and dry ports of international importance

Statement of accomplishments: ESCAP continued working on the Asian Highway and the Trans-Asian Railway networks and the dry ports of international importance to create the conditions necessary for a region-wide integrated intermodal transport and logistics system. The Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports entered into force in 2016 and the regional framework for the planning, design, development and operation of dry ports of international importance, was adopted by the Working Group on Dry Ports at its second meeting in November 2017. Member countries revised the routes of the Trans-Asian Railway and the Asian Highway networks through the Working Group on the Trans-Asian Railway Network and the Working Group on the Asian Highway. In its resolution 72/5 of 19 May 2016 on strengthening regional cooperation on transport connectivity for sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific, the Commission recognized the need to connect the economies of small island developing States. In the period 2016–2017, the number of national projects and programmes to upgrade regional transport infrastructure was 83 (biennial target – 73) and the number of ESCAP member signatories and parties to global, regional and subregional agreements was 82 (biennial target – 75).

Expected accomplishment: (c) Increased capacity of ESCAP member States and the private sector to initiate and implement measures to improve the efficiency of international transport operations and logistics

Statement of accomplishments: ESCAP continued to assist member States in improving the efficiency of international transport operations and logistics and developing operational transport connectivity. The Ministerial Conference on Transport, held in Moscow from 5 to 9 December 2016, resulted in the signing of the Intergovernmental Agreement on International Road Transport along the Asian Highway Network by China, Mongolia and the Russian Federation, the adoption of four transport facilitation models (the Model Subregional Agreement on Transport Facilitation, the Model Bilateral Agreement on International Road Transport, the Model Multilateral Permit for International Road Transport and the Standard Model of Logistics Information

Systems) and the agreement to work towards the establishment of an interregional coordination committee on transport between Asia and Europe. Additionally, the number of measures to remove bottlenecks and facilitate efficient movements of people and goods and means of transport along transport routes and at border crossings reached 34 in 2017 (biennial target – 34), while 18 countries implemented measures to improve logistics performance (biennial target – 18).

E. Subprogramme 4. Environment and development

Objective of the Organization: Improved policies for integrating environment into development, management of water resources and urban development

Expected accomplishment: (a) Enhanced understanding by local and national government officials and other stakeholders of means of aligning environment and development policymaking and water resources management and urban development policies, including their gender dimensions, with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals

Statement of accomplishments: The analytical work of ESCAP provided an important basis for policy-oriented work at national and regional levels to support the implementation of international development agendas, including the 2030 Agenda, the New Urban Agenda and the Paris Agreement. At least 10 references to ESCAP publications, policy briefs, projects and activities have been tracked in policy documents, declarations and statements (biennial target – 10), which included *Asia-Pacific Sustainable Development Goals Outlook*, and *Eradicating Poverty and Promoting Prosperity in a Changing Asia-Pacific*, as well as the *United Nations World Water Development Reports* of 2016 entitled “Water and Jobs” and 2017 entitled “Wastewater: The Untapped Resource” to which ESCAP contributed.

Expected accomplishment: (b) Improved capacity of local and national governments and major stakeholders to operationalize environment and development policymaking and water resources management and urban development policies, including their gender dimensions, in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the sustainable development goals

Statement of accomplishments: ESCAP implemented a series of capacity development events and field projects, which resulted in 11 initiatives developed by Governments and major stakeholders to operationalize environment and development policymaking, water resources management and urban development policies (biennial target – 10). These included initiatives on integrated approaches to planning with regard to Sustainable Development Goal 6 on water and sanitation, scaling-up and sharing lessons on the establishment of integrated resource recovery centres, and the development of nationally appropriate mitigation actions for sustainable waste management, as well as a rapid response facility to facilitate the development of voluntary national reports on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Goals. It also included the development of a methodology to compile national sustainability outlooks, and ESCAP has directly supported the Government of Mongolia to develop the sustainability outlook for Mongolia.

Expected accomplishment: (c) Enhanced regional cooperation frameworks and networks of local and national governments and major stakeholders with respect to environment and development policymaking and water resources management and urban development policies, including their gender dimensions

Statement of accomplishments: ESCAP pursued 10 initiatives (biennial target – 10) to establish or strengthen regional cooperation frameworks and networks related to environment and development policymaking, water resources management and urban development policies, including their gender dimensions. At the Fourth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development, the regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific was adopted. ESCAP successfully established the Urban SDG Knowledge Platform for sharing best practices and fostering city-to-city cooperation among local governments in the region. The International Forum on Urban Policy for the Sustainable Development Goals, co-organized by ESCAP, reaffirmed cities' commitment to implement the 2030 Agenda, guided by key principles, including regional cooperation. Additionally, a national Sustainable Development Goals focal point system was established in 2016. The seventh Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific, in its Ministerial Declaration, identified priority areas and provided specific proposals to enhance regional cooperation on environment and development.

F. Subprogramme 5. Information and communications technology and disaster risk reduction and management

Objective of the Organization: To enhance the contribution of information and communications technology (ICT) connectivity, space applications, and disaster risk reduction and management strategies to the achievement of inclusive, sustainable and resilient development in Asia and the Pacific

Expected accomplishment: (a) Strengthened regional cooperation in ICT connectivity, space applications and disaster risk reduction and management for inclusive and sustainable development

Statement of accomplishments: The Commission's work during 2016–2017 strengthened regional cooperation in ICT connectivity, space applications and disaster risk reduction and management. In particular, the Master Plan for the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway and the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway Regional Cooperation Framework Document were adopted by member States in 2016, with the aim of guiding work on promoting regional broadband connectivity until 2018. In addition, member States supported the Commission's proposal to establish the Asia-Pacific disaster resilience network with the aim of facilitating a coordinated approach to building disaster resilience in the region. Twenty-eight member States indicated that they benefited from ESCAP-promoted regional cooperation mechanisms devoted to ICT connectivity, space applications and disaster risk reduction and management in 2016–2017 (biennial target – 15).

Expected accomplishment: (b) Improved knowledge and awareness of member States of effective strategies and policies in ICT connectivity, space applications and disaster risk reduction and management, including their gender dimensions, for inclusive, equitable, sustainable and resilient development

Statement of accomplishments: As a result of the Commission's work during 2016–2017, 88 per cent of member States indicated that they were more aware and knowledgeable of strategies and policies related to ICT, space applications and disaster risk reduction and management, including their gender dimensions (biennial target – 75 per cent). The *Asia-Pacific Disaster Report 2017* aimed to increase the knowledge and awareness of risks in the region, especially for high-risk low-capacity countries, and of potential policy tools to mitigate them. In particular, policymakers were made aware of new risks from geographical shifts in transboundary hazards, such as tropical cyclones, droughts and floods. "State of ICT in Asia and the Pacific 2016" also aimed to raise awareness of challenges in and policy options for ICT, as measured by the extent of citation and downloads: 2,854 downloads were registered for ESCAP publications on ICT, space applications and disaster risk reduction and management (biennial target – 800).

Expected accomplishment: (c) Strengthened capacity of member States to apply ICT, space applications and disaster risk reduction and management strategies for inclusive, equitable, sustainable and resilient development

Statement of accomplishments: The activities of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development have expanded to strengthen the capacities of not only government officials, students and youth but also of women entrepreneurs. In cooperation with implementation partners from governments and civil society, the Centre's programmes have been integrated through contextualization in the capacity-building programmes of member States. The Centre also supported member States in building national expertise so that its training programmes could reach beneficiaries at the national and community levels. Ninety-one per cent of participants in the Centre's activities indicated that they were better able to apply ICT for socioeconomic development (biennial target – 85 per cent). The number of initiatives that reflected or incorporated training modules and/or curricula developed by the Centre reached 476 during the biennium (biennial target – 205).

G. Subprogramme 6. Social development

Objective of the Organization: To strengthen regional cooperation in building a socially inclusive society that protects, empowers and ensures equality for all social groups in Asia and the Pacific

Expected accomplishment: (a) Enhanced knowledge, capacity and regional cooperation to address population and development trends, including their gender dimensions, in Asia and the Pacific

Statement of accomplishments: The Commission's calls for action in its analytical and advocacy products to address disparity and invest for achieving equity influenced legislative reform and commitments to more inclusive and sustainable development. Four initiatives were undertaken by member States, based on regional frameworks, to promote population and development policies and programmes, including their gender dimensions (biennial target – 4). Ninety-five per cent of respondents indicated that their knowledge was enhanced through the Commission's analytical products on population and development trends and policies, including their gender dimensions (biennial target – 80 per cent). Through the Commission's intergovernmental platform, the region articulated its perspective on and priorities for the upcoming

negotiations on the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration and for achieving the internationally agreed commitments on ageing. As a result of the Commission's work, 90 per cent of participants indicated that their knowledge and skills were enhanced on population ageing, migration and development (biennial target – 80 per cent).

Expected accomplishment: (b) Enhanced knowledge, capacity and regional cooperation to strengthen social protection systems, including the health and gender dimensions, in Asia and the Pacific

Statement of accomplishments: Through its analytical work and technical assistance to member States, ESCAP enhanced capacity, knowledge and regional cooperation towards extending inclusive social protection systems. Ninety-two per cent of respondents indicated that their knowledge was enhanced through the analytical products of ESCAP on social protection policies and good practices, including health and gender dimensions (biennial target – 80 per cent). Eighty-nine per cent of participants indicated that their knowledge and skills were enhanced through ESCAP meetings and workshops on social protection systems and HIV prevention, treatment, care and support services, including their gender dimensions (biennial target – 80 per cent). Beyond the increased knowledge, the work resulted in four initiatives by ESCAP member States and stakeholders to strengthen social protection systems and increase access to medicines, diagnostics and vaccines (biennial target – 3).

Expected accomplishment: (c) Enhanced knowledge, capacity and regional cooperation to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in Asia and the Pacific

Statement of accomplishments: Through the provision of an intergovernmental platform, analytical work and technical assistance, ESCAP has enhanced regional cooperation as well as strengthened the knowledge and capacity of government entities to mainstream gender in national development agendas. Ninety-five per cent of respondents indicated that the Commission's analytical products had enhanced their knowledge on transformative financing for gender equality, e-government for women's empowerment, women's economic empowerment in the changing world of work, fostering women's entrepreneurship in ASEAN, and gender-responsive budgeting (biennial target – 80 per cent). Further, 99 per cent of participants in ESCAP meetings and workshops on gender equality and women's empowerment indicated that their knowledge and skills were enhanced (biennial target – 80 per cent). Three initiatives were undertaken by member States, based upon the Commission's frameworks, to fully integrate gender dimensions into national policy, planning and budgetary processes, with a view to realize gender equality and sustainable development (biennial target – 3).

Expected accomplishment: (d) Enhanced knowledge, capacity and regional cooperation to promote the rights of persons with disabilities in Asia and the Pacific

Statement of accomplishments: The Commission's work on disability resulted in six initiatives by member States to strengthen regional and subregional frameworks to promote the rights of persons with disabilities, including domestic laws and policies, mainstreaming disability into national and subregional action plans and the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, among others (biennial target – 4). Through

its support to the Working Group on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022, provision of advisory services, dissemination of best practices and analytical products, technical capacity development and mainstreaming of disability, and conducting the midpoint review of the Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real” for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific, ESCAP enhanced the knowledge and technical capacity of member States. Ninety-four per cent of respondents (biennial target – 80 per cent) and 90 per cent of participants (biennial target – 80 per cent) indicated that their knowledge and skills related to disability issues were enhanced through the Commission’s analytical and capacity-building work.

H. Subprogramme 7. Statistics

Objective of the Organization: To improve the availability, quality, relevance and use of statistics in support of effective policies for inclusive and sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific

Expected accomplishment: (a) Enhanced awareness of member States of effective strategy and policy options for inclusive and sustainable development, including gender equality, in Asia and the Pacific, through increased availability of relevant statistical products and services

Statement of accomplishments: The Commission’s statistical products and services, including the ESCAP Statistical database and *Statistical Yearbook for Asia and the Pacific*, provided critical insights on the baseline status of and progress in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals for enhanced awareness of effective strategy and policy options for inclusive and sustainable development. These products also guided the development of work plans and national strategies for the development of statistics through improved understanding of the current data availability, gaps and capacity needs. As a result of these activities, 95 per cent of surveyed participants indicated that their awareness of effective strategy and policy options for inclusive and sustainable development, including gender equality in Asia and the Pacific, increased (biennial target – 65 per cent). Online statistical products saw a marked increase from the beginning of the biennium baseline of 5,000 downloads per month to approximately 7,450 (biennial target – 7,000).

Expected accomplishment: (b) Increased capacity of member States in Asia and the Pacific to produce, disseminate and use statistics in accordance with internationally agreed standards and good practices in support of progress towards inclusive and sustainable development, including gender equality, in Asia and the Pacific

Statement of accomplishments: Guided by the collective vision and framework for action, regional capacity-building initiatives in the areas of economic statistics, population and social statistics, civil registration and vital statistics, gender statistics, environment statistics, disaster-related statistics and modernization were adjusted and realigned to contribute directly to the 2030 Agenda. Ninety-five per cent of participants (biennial target – 70 per cent) in ESCAP activities indicated that their ability to produce, disseminate or use statistics in accordance with internationally agreed standards and good practices had improved. Seventy-nine per cent of the participants (biennial target – 70 per cent) in training courses delivered by the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific indicated that they were better able to produce, disseminate or use data and statistics in accordance with internationally agreed standards and good practices.

I. Subprogramme 8. Subregional activities for development

Component 1

Subregional activities for development in the Pacific

Objective of the Organization: To strengthen regional cooperation and integration in line with the development priorities of the Pacific subregion in order to accelerate progress towards attainment of internationally agreed development goals and to achieve inclusive and sustainable development

Expected accomplishment: (a) Strengthened capacity of Pacific island countries and territories to plan and implement policies in support of balanced integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, including gender considerations

Statement of accomplishments: In the Pacific, ESCAP supported the linkage of national sustainable development priorities to fiscal frameworks and contributed to a broader understanding of development financing. This included the adoption of the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting for national accounts in several countries. ESCAP played a pivotal role in establishing a framework for addressing the impacts of climate change on human mobility, including labour mobility. ESCAP promoted the rights of persons with disabilities across the Pacific, including through work towards a regional model law to facilitate national implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Twelve member States (biennial target – 12) indicated that they found ESCAP activities relevant and useful in support of balanced integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, including gender considerations. Seven national planning documents (biennial target – 4) reflected a better integration of the dimensions of sustainable development, particularly gender equality.

Expected accomplishment: (b) Increased effectiveness of Pacific regional arrangements to address the regional and subregional dimensions of sustainable development, including through knowledge-sharing and South-South cooperation

Statement of accomplishments: The number of South-South cooperation initiatives in the Pacific facilitated with or through ESCAP increased to 22 (biennial target – 12), in particular under the Pacific Sustainable Development Goals Task Force and with regard to regional cooperation on climate change migration. In addition, 80 per cent of national decision makers (biennial target – 80 per cent) found ESCAP knowledge-sharing outputs relevant and useful in supporting effective participation in subregional and regional sustainable development forums and processes. ESCAP, by leading the United Nations' support to the development of the Pacific Sustainable Development Goals road map, directly contributed to the increased effectiveness of regional arrangements in support of the Goals and the implementation of the Samoa Pathway. Pacific leaders agreed on regional indicators which will significantly increase the coherence and accountability of the programming of subregional organizations and United Nations entities.

Component 2

Subregional activities for development in East and North-East Asia

Objective of the Organization: To strengthen regional cooperation and integration in line with the development priorities of the East and North-East

Asian subregion in order to accelerate progress towards attainment of internationally agreed development goals and to achieve inclusive and sustainable development

Expected accomplishment: (a) Increased engagement of policymakers of ESCAP member States in East and North-East Asia in regional cooperation as an approach for addressing key development challenges, including those of green economy (in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication), nature and marine conservation, transboundary air pollution, inclusive development through leveraging the skills and knowledge of older persons, women, youth and persons with disabilities, trade and transport facilitation, disaster risk reduction and disaster risk management, addressing the gender dimensions in all areas and for the achievement of internationally agreed development goals

Statement of accomplishments: ESCAP made significant progress in engaging policymakers of member States in East and North-East Asia in regional cooperation as an approach for addressing key development challenges. With regard to the green economy, member States, through the North-East Asian Subregional Programme for Environmental Cooperation, agreed on the Strategic Plan 2016–2020 for cooperation in several areas, including air pollution, marine protected areas, nature conservation and low-carbon cities. In support of trade facilitation, ESCAP has provided a regular platform of joint assessment and dialogue for Governments and stakeholders. Overall, 248 participants (biennial target – 40) engaged in discussions on addressing key development challenges. Eighty-five per cent of participants (biennial target – 70 per cent) indicated that ESCAP activities improved their understanding of regional cooperation as an approach for pursuing the development priorities of the subregion, including addressing their gender dimensions.

Expected accomplishment: (b) Strengthened knowledge sharing and partnerships among ESCAP member States, civil society and other relevant development partners in East and North-East Asia to address priority issues with a particular focus on green economy (in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication), nature and marine conservation, transboundary air pollution, inclusive development through leveraging the skills and knowledge of older persons, women, youth and persons with disabilities, trade and transport facilitation, disaster risk reduction and disaster risk management, addressing the gender dimensions in all areas and for the achievement of internationally agreed development goals

Statement of accomplishments: ESCAP made significant progress in strengthening knowledge-sharing and partnerships among member States, civil society and other relevant development partners in East and North-East Asia. With a view to enhancing transport connectivity, ESCAP provided a platform for subregional stakeholders to discuss ways of coordinating the various national initiatives and to share knowledge on sustainable transport programmes. ESCAP also engaged new partners for enhancing knowledge-sharing on development cooperation in North-East Asia. Eighty-five per cent of participants (biennial target – 70 per cent) indicated that ESCAP activities increased their access to knowledge and information relevant to addressing priority issues in East and North-East Asia, including their gender dimensions. Eight partner institutions from East and North-East Asia (biennial target – 4)

collaborated in knowledge-sharing and partnership-building activities facilitated by ESCAP.

Component 3

Subregional activities for development in North and Central Asia

Objective of the Organization: To strengthen regional cooperation and integration in line with the development priorities of the North and Central Asian subregion in order to accelerate progress towards the attainment of internationally agreed development goals and to achieve inclusive and sustainable development

Expected accomplishment: (a) Enhanced capacity of ESCAP member States in North and Central Asia to formulate and implement inclusive, equitable and sustainable development policies and programmes that address the development priorities of the subregion and are gender-responsive

Statement of accomplishments: ESCAP enhanced the policymaking and coordination capacities of its member States in North and Central Asia by organizing subregional capacity-building seminars, as well as through its analytical work on migration issues, statistics, ICT connectivity and disaster risk reduction, financial inclusion for economic diversification, and inequality, among others. In 2016, the Governing Council of the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia adopted the Ganja Declaration on Strengthening Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals through Enhanced Cooperation, with the aim of strategically repositioning the Special Programme as a platform for promoting policy coordination and coherence among its member countries for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Overall, 85 per cent of participants (biennial target – 85 per cent) indicated that ESCAP initiatives enhanced their capacity to formulate and implement inclusive, equitable and sustainable development policies and programmes that address the development priorities of the subregion and are gender-responsive.

Expected accomplishment: (b) Strengthened knowledge-sharing and partnerships among ESCAP member States in North and Central Asia, regional organizations, civil society and other relevant development partners to address priority issues for inclusive, equitable and sustainable development and achievement of internationally agreed development goals

Statement of accomplishments: ESCAP, in cooperation with the Economic Commission for Europe, organized the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia Economic Forum on “Enhanced Implementation of Sustainable Development Goals through Cooperation” as well as the eleventh session of the Governing Council of the Special Programme in Ganja, Azerbaijan. The meetings convened more than 80 participants, including high-level government representatives. The Council adopted several decisions and the Ganja Declaration based on the recommendations from the Economic Forum. Eighty-three per cent of ESCAP member States in North and Central Asia indicated that collaboration in addressing key subregional priority areas to support the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including the Sustainable Development Goals, increased (biennial target – 80 per cent). In addition,

10 partner institutions (biennial target – 8) from ESCAP member States participated in knowledge-sharing activities facilitated by ESCAP.

Component 4

Subregional activities for development in South and South-West Asia

Objective of the Organization: To strengthen regional cooperation and integration in line with the development priorities of the South and South-West Asian subregion in order to accelerate progress towards the attainment of internationally agreed development goals and to achieve inclusive and sustainable development

Expected accomplishment: (a) Enhanced understanding and capacity of policymakers of ESCAP member States in South and South-West Asia to formulate and implement policies to foster regional cooperation to address key development priorities and achieve internationally agreed development goals, including those relating to gender equality and empowerment, and with special reference to countries with special needs

Statement of accomplishments: Making the most of multiple high-impact intergovernmental platforms and building on its analytical work, ESCAP highlighted the critical nature of the Sustainable Development Goals for the subregion and the need to maximize spillovers between interrelated goals, improve policy coherence and coordination, and nurture stronger partnerships and deeper regional cooperation and integration. It emphasized forward-looking policy recommendations and supported member States in articulating the subregion's specific priorities and implementation challenges and integrating them into major regional forums. More than 85 per cent of participants (biennial target – 75 per cent) indicated an improved understanding and capacity on regional cooperation as an approach for pursuing the development priorities of the subregion, including addressing their gender dimensions. Fifteen references (biennial target – 10) to policy measures to foster regional cooperation in policy statements were made by member States from the subregion.

Expected accomplishment: (b) Strengthened knowledge-sharing and partnerships among member States, regional organizations, civil society and other relevant development partners to address key development priorities and close development gaps through regional cooperation in South and South-West Asia in support of the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including the gender dimension

Statement of accomplishments: ESCAP articulated key messages about top development priorities and challenges for the subregion to support the comprehensive implementation of the 2030 Agenda and ensured that subregional perspectives and analyses were included in ESCAP publications. More than 84 per cent of participants (biennial target – 70 per cent) indicated that the events organized by ESCAP had increased their access to knowledge and information relevant to their engagement in regional cooperation. More than 180 references and citations in media and downloads (biennial target – 120) mentioned ESCAP key outputs, proposals and activities in South and South-West Asia.

Component 5

Subregional activities for development in South-East Asia

Objective of the Organization: To strengthen regional cooperation and integration in line with the development priorities of the South-East Asian subregion in order to accelerate progress towards the attainment of internationally agreed development goals and to achieve inclusive and sustainable development

Expected accomplishment: (a) Enhanced capacity of ESCAP member States in South-East Asia to formulate and implement inclusive, equitable and sustainable development policies and programmes that address their key development challenges, with particular focus on least developed and landlocked developing countries, within the framework of Association of Southeast Asian Nations-United Nations partnership

Statement of accomplishments: Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Viet Nam continued to integrate into the ASEAN Economic Community and reduce development gaps for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. These countries are also in the process of integrating the Goals into their national policies, with the full involvement of the private sector and other stakeholders. Eighty-three per cent of participants in ESCAP activities in the subregion (biennial target – 70 per cent) indicated enhanced capacity to create and implement inclusive, equitable and sustainable development policies and programmes that address their key development challenges, including gender inequality and poverty.

Expected accomplishment: (b) Strengthened partnerships and knowledge sharing among member States, regional organizations, civil society and other relevant development partners in South-East Asia in priority areas in support of the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including gender equality

Statement of accomplishments: ESCAP supported and facilitated collaborative initiatives between member States, civil society and other development partners, including in areas such as Sustainable Development Goal modelling and the synergies between the Goals and the Istanbul Programme of Action and the Vienna Programme of Action. ESCAP provided support to help policymakers overcome institutional constraints in order to facilitate cross-sectoral collaboration, which is a basic tenet for the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including the Sustainable Development Goals. Overall, ESCAP successfully facilitated six collaborative initiatives (biennial target – 6) involving member States and other stakeholders to address priority areas of the subregion.

J. Subprogramme 9. Energy

Objective of the Organization: To enhance energy security and the sustainable use of energy through improved regional cooperation in the attainment of internationally agreed development goals, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Expected accomplishment: (a) Enhanced understanding by national government officials and other stakeholders of policy options and strategies to improve energy security and the sustainable use of energy

Statement of accomplishments: With a view to enhance the understanding of national government officials and other stakeholders of policy options and strategies to improve energy security and the sustainable use of energy, ESCAP organized various activities, including multi-stakeholder dialogues, to support the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 7 through, for instance, the Pro-Poor Public-Private Partnership for rural development to expand access to energy services. Seventy-two review articles and references to ESCAP publications, related materials and activities were made in policy-related literature and key media outlets (biennial target – 30), including *Towards a Sustainable Future: Energy Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific* and *2016 Regional Trends Report: Energy for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific*. The Asia Pacific Energy Portal was launched to provide member States with a strong informational foundation for evidence-based policymaking and has received more than 17,000 unique visits (biennial target – 120).

Expected accomplishment: (b) Enhanced regional cooperation frameworks and networks of national Governments and major stakeholders with respect to policies and strategies on energy security and the sustainable use of energy, including their gender dimensions

Statement of accomplishments: ESCAP collaborated with Governments and international organizations on the development of initiatives to foster the capacity of member States to enable the transition to a sustainable energy system through regional cooperation. Such regional cooperation initiatives provided opportunities to identify sound policy responses based on each country's own challenges. In 2016, the efforts of ESCAP resulted in eight such initiatives (biennial target – 5), including the initiative on Enhancing Energy Access in Asia and the Pacific: Key Challenges and G20 Voluntary Collaboration Plan, the Baku Call for Action to Achieve Energy-related Sustainable Development Goals and Contribute to the Paris Climate Agreement, the memorandum of understanding with the Global Energy Interconnection Development and Cooperation Organization, and the report of the Energy Access Forum, held during the Singapore International Energy Week, on powering development in the Asia-Pacific region. Member States of ESCAP will be able to further capitalize on these initiatives to strengthen their capacity to make transitions towards a sustainable energy system.