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**DRAFT PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR THE BIENNIUM 2008-2009
IN THE FIELD OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

Summary

This document presents the draft programme of work for the biennium 2008-2009 in the field of social development, for consideration by member countries of the Committee on Social Development of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA). The programme is part of sub-programme 2, Integrated social policies, and of the ESCWA strategic framework for the biennium 2008-2009.

The Committee on Social Development counts on the effective participation of member countries and their support for the implementation of the proposed programme of work.

Introduction

This document contains proposals for the ESCWA programme of work in the field of social development for the biennium 2008-2009. The proposals are presented to the members of the Committee on Social Development, representing ESCWA member countries, for their information and consideration. The proposals were formulated as part of sub-programme 2, concerning integrated social policies, and the strategic framework for the biennium 2008-2009. Subprogramme 2 contains the ESCWA programme of work in the fields of social development and integrated social policy. The Social Development Division is responsible for the implementation of that subprogramme.

The Committee on Social Development is invited to discuss the components of the draft of programme of work and make any comments that it deems appropriate. Under the normal procedure, the programme is submitted to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Affairs of the Fifth Committee of the United Nations General Assembly to consider the proposals in the framework of the adoption of the ESCWA programme of work for the biennium 2008-2009 and the relevant financial implications. The Committee is requested to submit its recommendations on the proposed activities to the Secretariat and to the Government officials responsible for social development in the countries of the ESCWA region.

A. OBJECTIVE, EXPECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND INDICATORS OF ACHIEVEMENT

Objective: To strengthen national capacity to achieve comprehensive, equitable and sustainable social development for all groups in accordance with the cultural specificities of the region.	
Expected accomplishments	Indicators of achievement
(a) Strengthening the capacity of member countries to formulate and adopt integrated policies for social development aimed at achieving social equity, poverty reduction and sustainable population growth.	(a) (i) Increase in the number of Government agencies/civil society organizations that initiated, with the assistance of ESCWA, advocacy and awareness raising activities to promote the development of integrated social development policies; (ii) Increase in the number of countries that initiated, with the assistance of ESCWA, the formulation of integrated social development policies; (iii) Increase in the number of policies and plans and/or sectoral development projects, adopted with the assistance of ESCWA, with special emphasis on youth and migration.
(b) Increased capacity of member countries to formulate and implement plans and programmes and/or intersectoral social development projects that address the specific needs of vulnerable groups, including youth, migrant workers, persons with disabilities and the urban and rural poor.	(b) Increase in the number of plans and programmes and/or intersectoral social development projects, formulated with the assistance of ESCWA, to enhance capacities to respond to the needs of vulnerable groups.

B. STRATEGY

This subprogramme provides a neutral forum for promoting dialogue on general policies, networking and replicating best practices in member countries. The programme will continue to undertake advocacy activities and build the capacities of member countries to formulate coherent and integrated social policies,

including population and migration policies, urban issues and policies that target vulnerable groups, particularly youth. The subprogramme will assist member countries to implement the plans of action of relevant global conferences, with the emphasis on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

In the biennium 2008-2009, the subprogramme will devote increased attention to intersectoral social development programmes and projects addressing the specific needs of such vulnerable groups as youth, migrant workers, persons with disabilities, and the urban and rural poor, thereby enabling the region to benefit from the huge potential of such groups and to move towards greater social equity.

In order to achieve the expected accomplishments, the activities of the subprogramme will include the preparation of analytical studies, the convening of meetings and 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 and the formulation of suitable social policies that take into consideration the needs and requirements of all sectors of the population. That approach demonstrably improves the chances of success of such policies.

In the framework of this subprogramme, partnerships will be forged with other United Nations entities, including the United Nations Population Fund, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the International Labour Organization and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme; such regional organizations as the League of Arab States and its relevant subsidiary bodies; and civil society, including local communities and non-governmental organizations.

C. EXTERNAL FACTORS

The subprogramme will achieve its expected accomplishments in the following circumstances: (a) member countries are willing to accord priority to social development issues; (b) there are no significant shortfalls in funding; (c) there is no further deterioration of the political situation in the region.

4. OUTPUTS

In the biennium 2008-2009, the following outputs will be delivered:

Area 1. Servicing of intergovernmental and expert bodies	
(a) Committee on Social Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Providing technical services to the seventh session of the Committee on Social Development; (2) Parliamentary documentation: (a) Report on the seventh session of the Committee on Social Development; (b) Reports on emerging issues in the area of integrated social policies (3).
(b) Other services (ad hoc expert group meetings)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Expert group meeting on the promotion of social equality: integration of population groups in the ESCWA region; (2) Expert group meeting on social policies and equality in urban regions; (3) Expert group meeting on promotion of social partnership between Government and civil society institutions; (4) Expert group meeting on the local adaptation of urban social policies in the ESCWA region;

Area 1. Servicing of intergovernmental and expert bodies (continued)	
	<p>(5) Meeting to review and decide the outlines of Integrated Social Policies Report (No. 3);</p> <p>(6) The Arab forum for social policies (to be organized in cooperation with the League of Arab States and United Nations agencies at the seventh session of the Committee on Social Development).</p>
Area 2. Other substantive activities (regular budget)	
(a) Recurrent publications	<p>(1) Population and Development Report (No. 4): regional strategy for integration of issues concerning youth, ageing persons and the family into development planning;</p> <p>(2) Integrated Social Policies Report (No. 3);</p>
(b) Non-recurrent publications	<p>(1) Status and Prospects of the Arab City (No. 2): drawing up a social policy to support social integration;</p> <p>(2) Map of social inequality in the ESCWA region.</p>
(c) Booklets, fact sheets, wall charts and information kits	<p>(1) Fact sheets on equality and social development issues, sustained development and MDGs (4);</p> <p>(2) Social development bulletins (8);</p> <p>(3) Demographic profiles of the Arab countries (No. 3);</p> <p>(4) Publications on specific subjects for distribution at the 41st and 42nd sessions of the Commission on Population and Development.</p>
(d) Special occasions	<p>(1) Launching of a study on the map of social inequality in the ESCWA region;</p> <p>(2) A special occasion for youth (to be organized at a meeting of the Committee on Social Development).</p>
(e) Technical material (including data bases and programs)	<p>(1) Social Policy Report (6);</p> <p>(2) Guide to identifying and compiling social development indicators in the ESCWA region;</p> <p>(3) Guide to social partnership in support of the capacities of civil society institutions and the private sector to participate in the formulation, implementation and follow-up of social policy;</p> <p>(4) The role of information in promoting social development in the ESCWA region;</p>

Area 2. Other substantive activities (regular budget) (continued)	
	<p>(5) Regular maintenance and updating of the main ESCWA Internet page on social policies and social development;</p> <p>(6) Regular maintenance and updating of the United Nations Population Information Network website and the ESCWA home page on social policies and development.</p>
(f) Organizing meetings in coordination with United Nations agencies and participation in outputs.	<p>(1) Workshop to discuss conditions in ESCWA member countries regarding such specific issues as participation in the Fourth World Urban Forum;</p> <p>(2) Regional participation in the 46th and 47th sessions of the Commission for Social Development.</p>
Area 3. Technical cooperation (extrabudgetary)	
(a) Advisory services	Advisory services to promote the capacity of ESCWA member countries in the formulation and follow-up of development policies.
(b) Training programmes, seminars and workshops	Regional workshop on integrated social policy issues and social development indicators.
(c) Field projects	<p>(1) Regional campaign on Secure Housing and Land Tenure and Good Urban Governance;</p> <p>(2) Human development partnership in ESCWA member countries that have experienced conflicts;</p> <p>(3) International migration in the Middle East: comparative analyses and proposals for a network to exchange standard strategies;</p> <p>(4) Regional cooperation for the promotion of social integration, gender equality and health as part of the process of implementing MDGs.</p>