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**PLANNED ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS FOR 2011  
IN THE FIELD OF STATISTICS**

**Summary**

The present document comprises the planned activities to be undertaken under ESCWA Subprogramme 5, Statistics for Evidence-based Policymaking. It is primarily based on the biennial work programme for 2010-2011 that was agreed at the eighth session of the ESCWA Statistical Committee in October 2008 (E/ESCWA/SD/2008/IG.1/8).

The aim of this document is to initiate a discussion leading to more specific and concrete annual work programmes. Following examples of other international organizations active in statistics, ESCWA would like to work closely with its member countries in managing its work. In addition, this document aims at presenting outputs according to statistical subject matter domains and in line with longer term goals in official statistics.

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## Introduction

1. This document presents planned activities and outputs for the year 2011 derived from the biennial work programme for 2010-2011 approved at the eighth session of the Statistical Committee. The biennial work programme was subsequently approved by the General Assembly of the United Nations.
2. By issuing this document ESCWA would like to create a tradition of a deeper involvement of member countries, and notably national statistical offices, in steering the statistical activities. In case of interest, the work programme should be discussed annually in the future, possibly through written and electronic procedures.

### I. ACTIONS REQUIRED BY THE COMMITTEE

3. The Committee is invited to review and provide guidance to the secretariat on the proposed activities and outputs. The members of the committee may wish to provide their views on the basis of emerging needs of official statistics in the Western Asia region. Taking into account that the biennial work programmes are being prepared several years in advance, the secretariat will formulate the biennial programme in general terms, and invite the Statistical Committee to discuss the concrete content of activities and outputs on an annual basis.
4. In addition to the above, the Committee may wish to address the scheduling of discussions of future work programmes in particular in years when the Statistical Committee does not meet in session. The currently available means of communication, including e-mail, audio and video-conferencing provide possible options.

### II. ESCWA STATISTICAL WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2011

#### A. STRATEGIC AND MANAGERIAL ISSUES OF OFFICIAL STATISTICS

**Strategic objective:** To promote progress in institutional building of official statistics in the Western Asia region in line with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and National Strategies for Development of Statistics. The ultimate goal is to provide official statistics for the region and countries in the region based on scientific knowledge and respecting principles of professional independence of statisticians. The ESCWA subprogramme on statistics should provide a forum for exchange of knowledge, experience, good practices and ideas between statistical offices in the region.

**Goals for 2011:** To continue the annual consultations prior to the United Nations Statistical Commission in New York, with a greater involvement of subject matter experts from national statistical offices. To organize a capacity-building programme on quality in official statistics. To strengthen the links between ESCWA and national statistical offices. To finalize and deploy the strategic vision for official statistics in the Western Asia Region.

1. *Strategic and managerial issues of interest to the Heads of national statistical offices*

**Meetings:**

- Fourth Meeting of the Working Group of the Statistical Committee (February);
- Meeting of the Bureau of the Statistical Committee (October);
- Expert Group Meeting on Data and Metadata Reporting and Dissemination (May);
- Workshop on quality of statistics organised in cooperation with AITRS and Statistics Canada (April).

**Publications:**

Statistics Newsletter (annual).

**Technical material:**

Maintenance and updating of the ESCWA home page on statistics and the web-based Virtual Library.

**Advisory services:**

Advisory services at the request of governments in the areas of institutional building of official statistics, Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and related areas.

**Data work:**

- Coordination of data collection within ESCWA, with involvement of national statistical offices;
- Progressive increase in coordinated data collection with United Nations departments and agencies.

*2. Management of the statistical infrastructure*

**Meetings:**

- Expert Group Meeting on Data and Metadata Reporting and Dissemination (May);
- Workshop on quality control organized in cooperation with the Arab Institute for Training and Research in Statistics (AITRS) and Statistics Canada (April).

**Publications:**

- Statistical Abstract of the ESCWA Region (annual);
- ESCWA Country Profiles/Statistics Pocketbook (annual).

**Technical material:**

- Maintenance and updating of ESCWA Statistical Information System (ESIS) and other databases;
- Maintenance and update of the e-glossary of statistical terms.

**Advisor services:**

UNDG-ESCWA joint regional training workshop on DevInfo (dates to be decided).

**Projects:**

Accelerated Data Programme in selected ESCWA countries (Yemen and Palestine).

**B. DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIAL STATISTICS**

**Strategic objective:** To improve population and vital statistics produced by national statistical offices. To improve the reliability of national data and estimates, and to encourage the usage of administrative registers and records for this purpose, with the ultimate goal of a close involvement of national statistical offices in the production of population estimates produced by member countries. To enhance gender statistics so that this data will meet

the needs of policymakers. To increase the capacity of national statistical offices in producing statistics on household income, expenditure and poverty. To promote the regular production of statistics on labour force and quality of employment.

**Goal for 2011:** To streamline activities towards improved population statistics, gender statistics and labour statistics.

1. *Population and vital statistics*

**Publications:**

Bulletin on Population and Vital Statistics.

**Projects:**

Cooperation with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) (subject to concluding a memorandum of understanding) on improving population and vital statistics in the region.

**Data work:**

- Collection of data and update of database on population and vital statistics;
- Collection of data and update of database on migration statistics (in cooperation with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)).

2. *Social statistics and indicators*

**Publications:**

Compendium of Social Statistics and Indicators.

**Data work:**

- Collection of data and update of database on health statistics;
- Collection of data and update of database on education statistics.

3. *Labour statistics*

**Meetings:**

Expert Group Meeting on Measuring Employment and its Social and Economic Implications in ESCWA Member Countries.

**Projects:**

Launching, in cooperation with the International Labour Organization, capacity-building activities in the area of labour statistics.

**Data work:**

Collection of data and update of database on labour statistics.

#### 4. Gender statistics

**Meetings:**

Expert Group Meeting on Gender Statistics.

**Publications:**

Gender in Figures in the ESCWA Region.

**Projects:**

Capacity-Building Programme on Engendering National Statistical Systems in the Western Asia and the Middle East and North Africa Region.

**Data work:**

Collection of data and update of database on gender statistics.

#### C. ECONOMIC STATISTICS

**Strategic objective:** To promote the full implementation of the System of National Accounts (SNA) by ESCWA member countries and, ultimately, a migration to the SNA 2008. To improve collection and harmonization of concepts for informal sector statistics. To increase consistency and harmonization of trade statistics data and improve quality of data in global databases like Comtrade. To revitalise activities in the field of industrial statistics, to assist member countries in the collection of data and the production of national industrial statistics.

**Goal 2011:** Execution of activities of the International Comparison Programme in the Western Asia region; deploying the strategy for implementation of the systems of national accounts.

**Publications:**

Study on Economic Statistics in the ESCWA Region: Sources and Methods.

**Data work:**

- Collection of data and update of database on price statistics;
- Collection of data and update of database on financial statistics;
- Collection of data and update of database on information and communication technologies indicators.

##### 1. *Implementation of the system of national accounts*

**Publications:**

Bulletin on National Accounts in the ESCWA Region.

**Projects:**

Global Implementation and Outreach for the System of National Accounts.

**Data work:**

Collection of data and update of database on macroeconomic statistics and national accounts.

*2. International comparison programme, 2011 round*

**Projects:**

Activities of the 2011 round of the International Comparison Programme in the Western Asia regions, under the guidance of the Regional Advisory Boards and the Executive Board.

**Data work:**

Collection of data for the calculation of the purchasing power parities.

*3. Trade statistics*

**Publications:**

External Trade Bulletin of the ESCWA Region.

**Data work:**

Collection of data and update of database on trade statistics.

*4. Industrial statistics*

**Publications:**

Bulletin on Industrial Statistics for the Arab countries.

**Data work:**

Collection of data and update of database on industrial statistics.

**D. ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY STATISTICS**

**Strategic objective:** To put in place a framework for environmental economic accounting for countries in the ESCWA region, to improve harmonization of data on the region in regional and global databases. To maintain activities in statistics on water resources and share achievements and results of ESCWA countries with other regions (ESCWA region is a leader with respect to water resources). To harmonize concepts and measurements for energy statistics, increase quality and coverage of disseminated data on energy.

**Goal for 2011:** To wrap up and disseminate results of the Development Account project on environment statistics and indicators. To engage in dialogues with MEDSTAT III on joint approach to activities in energy statistics.

**Publications:**

Compendium of Environment Statistics in the ESCWA region.

**Data work:**

- Collection of data and update of database on environment statistics;
- Collection of data and update of database on statistics on water resources;
- Collection of data and update of database on energy statistics (oil, gas, electricity and general energy).

**E. MEASURING DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIETAL PROGRESS**

**Strategic objective:** To make monitoring of progress an integral component of official statistics in the region. To keep abreast of new developments in measurement of societal progress. To use the framework of the Global Project on Progress of Societies in the analysis, localization and implementation of indices to measure societal progress.

**Goal for 2011:** To prepare a statistical report on progress toward implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). To carry out activities emanating from the memorandum of understanding signed by the OECD and ESCWA on cooperation in measuring progress of societies.

**Publications:**

- Monitoring the MDGs: A Statistical Report;
- Wall Chart on MDGs in the ESCWA Region.

**Projects:**

Strengthening Statistical and Inter-institutional capacities for Monitoring the MDGs and Reducing Indicators Discrepancies between National and International Sources.

**Data work:**

- Analysis of sources of discrepancies between national and international statistical data related to monitoring progress towards achievement of the goals of the Millennium Declaration of the United Nations;
- Assessment of the quality of available sources of statistical data;
- Collection of data and update of database on MDG indicators.

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