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Item 16 of the provisional agenda

Proposed programme plan for 2024**Summary**

The present document sets out the proposed programme plan for 2024 of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA). It is based on the format in which it will be submitted to the General Assembly of the United Nations in the coming months. It does not provide information on resource requirements, because only the Secretary-General of the United Nations can issue such information in his proposed programme budget, which is reviewed by the relevant United Nations intergovernmental bodies before approval by the General Assembly. The present proposal may therefore undergo amendments during that review process.

The Commission is invited to review the proposed programme plan for 2024 and make recommendations thereon.

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Proposed programme plan for 2024

Overall orientation

- 22.1 The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) is responsible for promoting inclusive and sustainable development in the Arab region. The mandate derives from the priorities established in relevant resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, including Economic and Social Council resolution 1818 (LV) establishing the Commission, and resolution 1985/69 amending its terms of reference to emphasize its social functions.
- 22.2 Achieving all facets of sustainable development requires concerted efforts, underpinned by universal principles and evidence-based analysis, allowing for enacting of short-, medium- and long-term solutions within national, regional and global trajectories. Although the Arab region holds all the human capital and resources vital for achieving shared prosperity and a dignified life for all its peoples, it is rife with conflict, occupation and serious social, economic and environmental challenges, which jeopardize its progress towards achieving the ambitious 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Within the mandates entrusted to it, ESCWA is uniquely positioned to support national and regional efforts in that regard, in particular through generation of evidence, convening dialogue around key development issues, policy advice, and building government capacity to deploy all tools available to support formulating and implementing policy frameworks required to achieve the set objectives. The Commission will continue to undertake these efforts in coordination with relevant stakeholders, ensuring a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach.

Strategy and external factors for 2024

- 22.3 In line with its mandate and to deliver on its commitment to member States, the Commission will focus on promoting, brokering and advocating for viable development solutions in the Arab region by championing a regional perspective through a global lens; on defining and tabling novel policy options; and on facilitating peer-to-peer exchanges. It will also focus on harnessing new ways of working, leveraging all available resources, and elevating its expertise to match and anticipate needs, so as to accelerate progress against key targets in various sustainable development areas, including natural resource and transboundary water management and sustainability under changing climate conditions; transition to cleaner energy sources and circular economy; multi-dimensional poverty reduction and social protection; equitable and inclusive social development, with particular consideration of the needs of persons in vulnerable situations (women, young people, older persons and persons with disabilities) and as part of the commitment to leaving no one behind; equitable economic growth and prosperity supported by improved regional integration and opportunities for trade and small and medium enterprises, and innovative financing for development solutions; information technology and statistics as a means to improve availability and accessibility of evidence, participation and inclusion; and enhancing governance, strengthening public institutions, and assessing and mitigating transboundary risks, including conflict.
- 22.4 ESCWA will ensure that diverse and specific development needs of Arab least developed and middle-income countries and of countries in conflict are appropriately considered and addressed, including by supporting the Arab least-developed countries in meeting the commitments of the Doha Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries (2022-2031).
- 22.5 As part of its concerted efforts to support member States in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, the Commission will continue to analyse trends and generate and disseminate knowledge, good practice and data related to the variety of sustainable development issues outlined in paragraph 22.3 and beyond. It will further enhance and consolidate its suite of interactive, artificial intelligence- and technology-based modelling tools, which will enable government officials,

- policymakers, practitioners, the private sector and civil societies to mine intelligent location-enabled data, and to simulate tailored-to-context policy options and their impact for informed decision-making.
- 22.6 ESCWA will continue to leverage its convening power to serve as a regional forum for setting norms and building consensus at the sub-, intra- and inter- regional levels, especially to promote durable solutions for transboundary issues that impede progress of individual member States towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. It will also promote South-South and triangular cooperation, and act as an active advocate for the needs and priorities of the Arab region at the global level.
- 22.7 The Commission will continue to consolidate its strategic partnerships at the global, interregional, regional, national and local levels to deliver results. At the core of this enhanced approach to partnerships is the understanding that no development intervention can succeed in a silo. Against this backdrop, further investments will be made in strategic engagement with intergovernmental organizations, such as the League of Arab States or the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD); international financial institutions, such as the Islamic Development Bank; academia and thinktanks, through the established Academic Network for Development Dialogue platform and beyond; civil society organizations; and the private sector, so as to create maximum synergy and coherence and to ensure that no one is left behind. In addition to maintaining its reliable traditional partner base, new opportunities and initiatives will be pursued with existing and potential partners to expand the range of services and support available to member States, in particular by securing access to innovation, new technologies, knowledge, data, expertise and financing.
- 22.8 With regard to inter-agency coordination and liaison, ESCWA will continue to play a lead role in the Arab region in implementing the Secretary-General's reform agenda, as approved by the General Assembly in its resolution [72/279](#). In this context, the Commission will further strengthen its collaboration and coordination with other United Nations and non-United Nations bodies and networks, as pertains to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. This includes collaboration and coordination of interventions with the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the World Trade Organization, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), among others. It will continue to work closely with the United Nations Development Coordination Office and offices of the United Nations resident coordinators, and through the regional collaborative platform in the Arab region to support common country assessments and to ensure greater complementarity and synergy of its own projects with those implemented by United Nations country teams as part of the United Nations sustainable development cooperation frameworks.
- 22.9 With regard to external factors, the overall plan for 2024 is based on the following planning assumptions:
- (a) National and regional development and political contexts allow the Commission to provide integrated policy support and technical support, and to build member States' capacity;
 - (b) ESCWA member States, and Member States in general, remain committed to sub-, inter- and intra-regional collaboration on transboundary issues;
 - (c) Development partners and key stakeholders, including civil society, academia and the private sector, remain engaged and interested in joint initiatives and projects in support of member States and sustainable development solutions.
- 22.10 ESCWA will also continue to integrate a gender perspective in its activities, deliverables and results, by supporting member States in developing inclusive gender-sensitive policy frameworks aimed at tackling a wide-range of social and economic issues, underpinned by recognition of women's empowerment and participation as key prerequisites to successful advancement of the 2030 Agenda, as outlined in result 3 under subprogramme 2 and result 2 under subprogramme 3. In

addition to generating the required evidence and ongoing advocacy, the Commission will continue to build the capacity of national actors and promote peer-to-peer learning on gender justice and inclusive development, as part of the global accountability framework for gender equality, in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 2013/16.

- 22.11 In line with the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy, the Commission will continue to intensify its efforts to advance the inclusion of the needs of persons with disabilities in its programmes, by working towards enhancing their access to employment opportunities and basic services. It will also continue to engage with government representatives through the Intersessional Group of Experts on Disability, as part of its efforts to foster policy discussions, peer-to-peer learning and cooperation to ensure greater inclusion.
- 22.12 ESCWA remains committed to advocacy to empower and address the unique concerns and needs of young people and older persons, as vital conditions for successful and inclusive socioeconomic development in the Arab region.

Evaluation activities

- 22.13 The proposed programme plan for 2024 is guided by thematic evaluations of the ESCWA e-learning portfolio and of the Commission's approaches to support and influence policymaking at the national and regional levels (phase II), completed in 2022.
- 22.14 The results and lessons of the above-mentioned evaluations have been taken into account in the programme plan for 2024. For example, the evaluation of the e-learning portfolio was enhanced to match the substantive demand by civil servants in member States and to optimize its modes of delivery. Phase II of the evaluation of ESCWA approaches to support and influence policymaking resulted in development and roll-out of hands-on behavioural guidance for all substantive staff members on how to approach knowledge production, capacity-building and consensus-building activities for more concrete policy results in the Arab region.
- 22.15 ESCWA has been working on addressing recommendations of the Office of Internal Oversight Services in connection with the evaluation of its subprogramme 3 on shared economic prosperity, especially those referring to enhanced communication with member States and partners on ongoing programmes and services.
- 22.16 The following evaluations are planned for 2024:
- (a) Thematic evaluation of ESCWA communication function;
 - (b) Thematic evaluation of one additional ESCWA area of work.

Programme of work

Subprogramme 1

Climate change and natural resource sustainability

Objective

- 22.17 The objective, to which this subprogramme contributes, is to advance climate action and integrated and sustainable policies in the areas of water, energy and food security.

Strategy

- 22.18 To contribute to the objective, the subprogramme will undertake the following:
- (a) Assess and analyse trends, challenges and opportunities; develop and provide science-based knowledge products and interactive data-driven platforms, aimed at improving government and stakeholder access to up-to-date information and innovative policy recommendations on a wide range of issues pertaining to transboundary management of water resources, among others; transition to cleaner energy, also as means of economic diversification; ensure sustainable production and consumption; and undertake climate action and climate adaptation, including innovative and accessible solutions for financing climate- and resilience-related interventions;
 - (b) Provide technical and policy advice and expertise and build national and local human and institutional capacities to identify and operationalize immediate, medium- and long-term solutions, and mainstream climate- and natural resource management-related considerations in national development plans and budgets;
 - (c) Convene intergovernmental and technical platforms to facilitate cross-sectoral dialogue and peer-to-peer exchanges between policymakers and practitioners, experts, civil society and other development partners from within and outside the Arab region to promote sub-, intra- and inter-regional cooperation and coordination; and foster consensus on priorities and actions towards the development of national, transboundary and regional normative frameworks in support of sustainable management of resources and food/crop production, energy transition and achieving “net-zero”, and improving resilience of individuals and livelihoods, all in the context of a rapidly deteriorating climate and required adaptation;
 - (d) Advocate the Arab perspective at the global level, including by supporting integrated regional reporting and monitoring of the progress against specific Sustainable Development Goal targets; and leverage existing and build new partnerships to deliver the strategy under subprogramme 1.
- 22.19 The above-mentioned work is expected to result in the following:
- (a) Improved knowledge of good practices and access to evidence and policy recommendations by policymakers and practitioners in member States to ensure sustainability of resources and livelihoods, while adapting to the changing climate;
 - (b) Enhanced capacity and commitment of member States to developing and operationalizing national policy frameworks related to climate action and adaptation, allowing for greater access to climate finance; surface and groundwater resource management; transition to sustainable energy and circular economy; and resilient food systems supported by sustainable agriculture;
 - (c) Strengthened sub- and intra-regional cooperation on issues outlined in paragraph 22.19(b), supported by inclusive networks and participatory coordination mechanisms and platforms.

Programme performance in 2022

Improved access to climate action financing

- 22.20 The current quality and quantity of available climate finance in the Arab region falls far short of its needs. To support member States in leveraging financial support for climate action, particularly for improved availability of water, energy and food under changing climate conditions, ESCWA hosted the first-ever Arab Regional Forum on Climate Initiatives to Finance Climate Action and the Sustainable Development Goals. The Forum enabled member States to engage with a wide range of donors and investors from the public and private sectors, articulate their financing needs, and seek feedback on planned projects. In addition, to assist with identifying opportunities for private sector investment, blended finance and bilateral support, the subprogramme supported seven Arab countries (Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Oman and Tunisia) in preparing 26 investable projects, based on country-driven priorities. The proposals focused on climate change adaptation in the areas of water supply and sanitation, flood control, irrigation management, agricultural resilience, forests and coastline management, and climate change mitigation through renewable energy, energy efficiency, transport and co-benefits. Furthermore, to foster understanding between national stakeholders, further inform climate finance dialogues and support access to and mobilization of climate finance for its member States, ESCWA published a policy brief highlighting climate finance flows and needs in the Arab region, and contributed to the development of the Arab States Climate Finance Access and Mobilization Strategy 2022-2030 and its annex entitled “Technical assessment of climate finance in the Arab States”.
- 22.21 Progress towards the objective is presented in the performance measure below (table 22.1).

Table 22.1

Performance measure

<i>2020 (actual)</i>	<i>2021 (actual)</i>	<i>2022 (actual)</i>
-	Technical assessment of climate finance in the Arab States is launched	Arab States Climate Finance Access and Mobilization Strategy 2022-2030 is developed Arab Regional Forum on Climate Initiatives to Finance Climate Action and the Sustainable Development Goals is established Seven member States (Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Oman and Tunisia) supported in developing and presenting 26 climate change finance projects to potential investors

Planned results for 2024

Result 1: Improved groundwater management in transboundary settings under the changing climate

Programme performance in 2022 and target for 2024

- 22.22 The work of the subprogramme contributed to five member States (Algeria, Jordan, Libya, the State of Palestine and Tunisia) recognizing the importance of transboundary groundwater for securing their medium- to long-term freshwater needs, which met the planned target.

- 22.23 In addition, the work of the subprogramme contributed to 12 member States (Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, the State of Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen) acknowledging and benefiting from the launch of a regional digital database on groundwater resources, which exceeded the planned target of 10 member States acknowledging and benefiting from the launch of a regional digital database on groundwater resources.
- 22.24 Progress towards the objective and target for 2023 is presented in the performance measure below (table 22.2).

Table 22.2

Performance measure

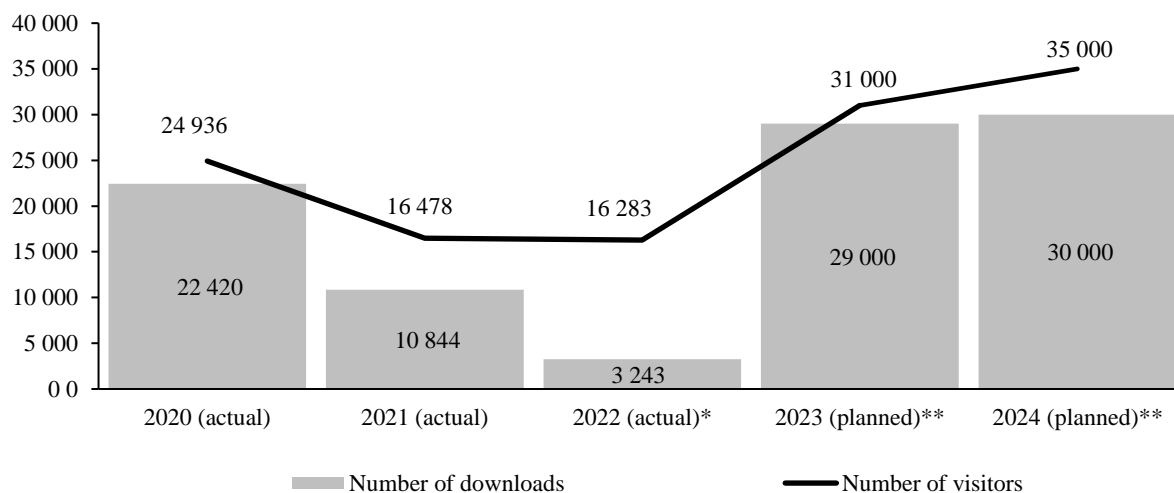
<i>2020 (actual)</i>	<i>2021 (actual)</i>	<i>2022 (actual)</i>	<i>2023 (planned)</i>	<i>2024 (planned)</i>
A diverse range of stakeholders benefited from webinars on groundwater-related topics, structured around shared priority concerns and addressing knowledge gaps	Two member States (Iraq and Mauritania) joined transboundary water cooperation arrangements	Five member States (Algeria, Jordan, Libya, the State of Palestine and Tunisia) recognized the importance of transboundary groundwater for securing their medium- to long-term freshwater needs	At least two member States develop arrangements to address transboundary groundwater challenges within the context of climate change	At least one additional member State develop arrangements to address transboundary groundwater challenges within the context of climate change
Regional guidelines for improved groundwater abstraction and management, vetted by at least five member States	Four member States (Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait and the State of Palestine) conducted an assessment of climate change impact on their groundwater resources	Twelve member States (Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, the State of Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen) acknowledged and benefited from the launch of a regional digital database on groundwater resources	At least five member States contribute data for the regional digital database on groundwater resources	At least three additional member States contribute data for the regional digital database on groundwater resources

Result 2: Increased use of regional knowledge platforms for informed climate action**Programme performance in 2022 and target for 2024**

- 22.25 The work of the subprogramme contributed to 16,238 visits to the regional knowledge platforms and 3,243 downloads, which did not meet the planned target of 28,500 visits to the regional knowledge platforms and 26,000 downloads.
- 22.26 Progress towards the objective and target for 2023 are presented in the performance measure below (figure 22.I).

Figure 22.I

Performance measure: number of visits to the regional knowledge platforms and number of downloads (annual)



* 2022 (actuals) are reflected as at 30 September 2022.

** 2023 and 2024 (planned) are rounded.

Proposed programme plan for 2024

Result 3: Transforming extractive industries in the Arab region to achieve a just and inclusive energy transition

22.27 Extractive industries have been the bedrock of economic development for many countries in the Arab region. However, in the context of rapidly changing climate and the urgent need to adapt, the sector's transformation is critical and, if approached strategically, can play a key role in achieving the 2030 Agenda. Recognizing the importance of the issue, in 2021, member States established the regional Group of Experts on Extractive Industries, a platform aimed at fostering regional consensus in the context of the global conversation on extractive industries.

Lessons learned and planned change

22.28 The lesson for the subprogramme was that a holistic approach that considers the distinct needs of resource-rich developing countries in the Arab region and, at the same time, enables greater long-term diversification and targeted support to vulnerable groups, including women, indigenous communities, young people, and those who will be initially displaced by the transition, is required to foster the desired transformation of the extractive industries sector in the region. In applying this lesson, the subprogramme will leverage the Group of Experts on Extractive Industries to foster inclusive multi-stakeholder policy dialogue and information exchange, and to ensure that regional and national initiatives support, enhance and fill gaps in ongoing efforts to transform extractive industries globally. Concurrently, the subprogramme will engage with member States to identify and utilize opportunities for capacity-building, foster partnerships, and coordinate interventions and resources in line with net-zero targets, enabling a just and inclusive energy transition.

22.29 Expected progress towards the objective is presented in the performance measure below (table 22.3).

Table 22.3

Performance measure

<i>2020 (actual)</i>	<i>2021 (actual)</i>	<i>2022 (actual)</i>	<i>2023 (planned)</i>	<i>2024 (planned)</i>
-	Regional Group of Experts on Extractive Industries is established	Extractive industries initiatives in the Arab region are mapped Strategic framework and road map for enabling the just transition of the energy sector, based on the circular carbon economy framework, is developed for one member State	ESCWA member States have access to a suite of knowledge-product resources on key pillars of the extractive industries sector (minerals, data, technology and innovation in the mining sector, just transition to sustainable systems, circular economy) ESCWA member States utilize the Group of Experts on Extractive Industries to exchange expertise and best practices, and to coordinate national actions at the regional level	ESCWA member States benefit from capacity-building in best practices for resource governance and revenue management, and circular carbon economy in support of national efforts to achieve a just transition to sustainable systems ESCWA member States continue to utilize the platform of the Regional Group of Experts on Extractive Industries to coordinate efforts and share knowledge and best practices

Subprogramme 2**Gender justice, population and inclusive development****Objective**

- 22.30 The objective, to which this subprogramme contributes, is to achieve equitable and inclusive social development, and to reduce inequality, poverty and unemployment in line with the principle of leaving no one behind.

Strategy

- 22.31 To contribute to the objective, the subprogramme will undertake the following:
- Provide policymakers and practitioners in member States with knowledge products and policy recommendations, underpinned by analysis of trends, challenges and opportunities and by international norms and standards, on a wide range of issues pertaining to social inclusion and protection, social and gender justice, reduction of multi-dimensional poverty and unemployment, and socioeconomic participation and empowerment of women, young people, older persons, persons with disabilities and other groups in vulnerable situations, as a key pillar of inclusive and sustainable development;
 - Provide technical and policy advice and expertise and build national and local, human and institutional capacities to assess existing policies and systems, to identify priorities and opportunities and operationalize agreed solutions, and to mainstream considerations related to greater inclusion and equal participation, protection and specific needs of vulnerable groups in national development plans and budgets;
 - Convene intergovernmental and technical platforms to foster consensus and facilitate dialogue and peer-to-peer exchanges between policymakers and practitioners, experts, civil society and

relevant development actors from within and outside the Arab region, aimed at promoting collaboration and coordination of actions at the national and regional levels for an accelerated achievement of relevant Sustainable Development Goals;

- (d) Enhance the existing methodology for analysing multi-dimensional poverty and the impact of shocks on inclusive development trajectories, and further develop interactive and intelligent data-driven tools to facilitate policymaking, especially with respect to unemployment and labour markets;
- (e) Advocate the principles of the 2030 Agenda, in particular the commitment to leaving no one behind, and leverage existing and build new partnerships in support of delivering on the above-mentioned strategy.

22.32 The above-mentioned work is expected to result in the following:

- (a) Improved understanding of structural and context-specific challenges and policy options, including global norms and standards, related to achieving equitable and inclusive social development and promoting social justice, and to reducing vulnerabilities and multi-dimensional poverty and unemployment;
- (b) Enhanced capacity and commitment of member States to formulate and implement national policy frameworks related to social protection and poverty alleviation, employment and labour markets, aimed at reducing structural inequalities and ensuring greater inclusion and socioeconomic empowerment and participation, while addressing the specific needs of women, young people, older persons, persons with disabilities, migrants and other vulnerable groups.

Programme performance in 2022

Improved national migration policies ensuring multi-stakeholder engagement

22.33 The Arab region remains a prominent place of origin and transit, and one of the top destinations for international migration and forced displacement. If well governed, migration could be a key accelerator for development in the region. The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, adopted by the vast majority of member States, offers a road map for better migration governance.

22.34 The Global Compact mandated the United Nations regional commissions to support the follow-up and review process to ensure progress towards achieving the set objectives. In this context, subprogramme 2 and its partners led the first regional review of the Global Compact (2020-2021), including the development of its methodology, which was endorsed by Member States, and the provision of technical support. The applied whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach, which brought together government officials, trade unions and migrant representatives, among others, allowed the identification of national challenges and potential ways forward to tackle migration issues. Subsequently, the subprogramme facilitated a regional dialogue and peer-to-peer exchanges to promote regional, intra-regional and cross-border collaboration between concerned countries. In 2022, together with partners, the subprogramme facilitated the articulation of common concerns and positions by ESCWA member States ahead of the International Migration Review Forum and an inter-regional dialogue between African and Arab countries in relation to existing migration corridors between the two regions, focused on identifying possible solutions and areas for collaboration. It also joined other regional commissions in exploring means to accelerate the implementation of the Global Compact at the regional level.

22.35 Progress towards the objective is presented in the performance measure below (table 22.4).

Table 22.4

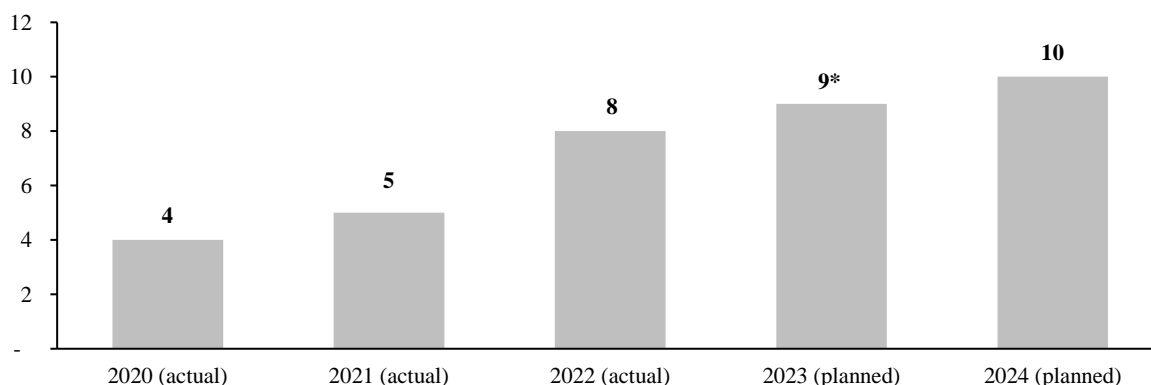
Performance measure

2020 (actual)	2021 (actual)	2022 (actual)
ESCWA member States agreed on a methodology for national reviews of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration	Eleven member States (Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Qatar, the Sudan, and Tunisia) completed their first national migration reviews First regional migration review completed	ESCWA member States develop common position ahead of the International Migration Review Forum Strengthened dialogue on migration between Africa and the Arab region is achieved

Planned results for 2024**Result 1: Accelerated coherent ageing policies in the Arab region****Programme performance in 2022 and planned target for 2024**

- 22.36 The work of the subprogramme contributed to three additional policies being developed in the Arab region (Iraq, the Sudan and the Syrian Arab Republic), which exceeded the planned target of two additional policies.
- 22.37 Progress towards the objective and target for 2024 are presented in the performance measure below (figure 22.II).

Figure 22.II

Performance measure: number of Arab countries with coherent ageing policies (Cumulative)

*2023 (planned) increased by 1 following the achievement of 2023 target by end of 2022.

Result 2: Increased effectiveness and efficiency of social protection systems in the Arab region**Programme performance in 2022 and planned target for 2024**

- 22.38 The work of the subprogramme contributed to civil servants and social assistance professionals from three member States (Egypt, Jordan and Mauritania) having been trained on the SPP-RAF tool to increase inclusiveness of social protection systems, which met the planned target.
- 22.39 In addition, the work of the subprogramme contributed to two member States (Egypt and Jordan) identifying enhancements required to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their social protection systems, which met the planned target.

22.40 Progress towards the objective and target for 2024 are presented in the performance measure below (table 22.5).

Table 22.5

Performance measure

<i>2020 (actual)</i>	<i>2021 (actual)</i>	<i>2022 (actual)</i>	<i>2023 (planned)</i>	<i>2024 (planned)</i>
During the COVID-19 pandemic, at least eight member States (Egypt, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, the State of Palestine, the Sudan and Tunisia) rapidly channelled additional assistance to households covered by social insurance and social assistance, and set up temporary emergency programmes directed at informal workers who were not covered by social assistance or social insurance	A total of 179 people (66 men and 113 women) from 17 member States trained on tools to increase inclusiveness of social protection systems One member State (Jordan) analysed the inclusiveness of its social protection systems	Civil servants and social assistance professionals from three member States (Egypt, Jordan and Mauritania) trained on the SPP-RAF tool to increase inclusiveness of social protection systems Two member States (Egypt and Jordan) identified enhancements required to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their social protection systems	Two additional member States identify enhancements required to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their social protection systems	Two more member States identify enhancements required to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their social protection systems

Proposed programme plan for 2024**Result 3: Improved access to employment opportunities, with particular focus on young people and persons with disabilities**

22.41 The COVID-19 pandemic further compounded the issue of unemployment in the Arab region, where, as of early 2020, more than 14 million individuals remain without jobs, putting additional pressure on policymakers to develop immediate, medium- and long-term solutions to address the stagnant labour force participation, and ensure sustainable and inclusive employment creation. To promote more equitable employment outcomes, the subprogramme examines underlying causes of the endemic lack of employment opportunities in Arab economies, while focusing on mismatch of skills as a key factor. In this context, the Commission developed an interactive tool, the ESCWA Skills Monitor, which tracks labour market needs and skill deficits in the region, and supports the development of targeted, national labour market policies, by providing information on required upskilling, reskilling and skills diversification.

Lessons learned and planned change

22.42 The lesson for the subprogramme was that early commensurate action by Governments, academic institutions and concerned individuals requires anticipatory analysis of changes in skill sets, dictated by the Fourth Industrial Revolution and unexpected shocks such as the COVID-19 pandemic. In applying the lesson, the subprogramme will further enhance the artificial intelligence-based Skills Monitor to enable Arab policymakers to monitor skills “in demand”, evaluate factors and shocks impacting the evolution of the job market, and design relevant policy frameworks. The tool, which will be enhanced to capture implicit and explicit gender bias in the job market, will also be made

available to Arab universities to support decision-making on curriculums offered to better prepare individuals for the requirements of the labour market.

22.43 Expected progress towards the objective is presented in the performance measure below (table 22.6).

Table 22.6

Performance measure

<i>2020 (actual)</i>	<i>2021 (actual)</i>	<i>2022 (actual)</i>	<i>2023 (planned)</i>	<i>2024 (planned)</i>
-	Prototype of the artificial intelligence-based skills-to-jobs matching portal is piloted by one member State (Qatar)	The artificial intelligence-based Skills Monitor, which allows working-age populations to identify job opportunities based on their skills, is rolled out in four member States (Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon and Qatar)	The Skills Monitor is enhanced to capture gender bias in the job market	At least 10 academic institutions in the Arab region utilize the Skills Monitor as part of their career-planning support to graduates

Subprogramme 3
Shared economic prosperity

Objective

22.44 The objective, to which this subprogramme contributes, is to achieve equitable economic growth, amplify regional interconnectedness and integration, and advance the effective implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development in support of the 2030 Agenda.

Strategy

22.45 To contribute to the objective, the subprogramme will undertake the following:

- (a) Assess and analyse trends, challenges and opportunities, and develop and provide knowledge products and interactive data-driven platforms and policy simulation models to improve governments and stakeholder access to evidence and innovative policy recommendations on issues such trade, logistics and transport, including opportunities for greater regional integration, economic diversification and macroeconomic stability, fiscal practices and frameworks as means of increasing resources available for investment in identified social priorities, and financing of development initiatives, including the development of integrated national financing frameworks, debt management and sustainability, and debt-swap for climate change action;
- (b) Provide technical and policy advice and expertise and build national and local human and institutional capacities to identify and operationalize immediate, medium- and long-term solutions, and deploy available modelling, forecasting and impact simulation tools in support of decision-making and policy-development processes against the backdrop of nationally determined development priorities, plans and budgets;
- (c) Convene intergovernmental and technical platforms to facilitate cross-sectoral dialogue and peer-to-peer exchanges between national policymakers and practitioners, representatives of

regional and intergovernmental bodies and of international financial institutions, experts, civil society, the private sector, and other development partners from within and outside the Arab region as a means of promoting greater collaboration and coordination at the national and regional levels, and of fostering consensus on priorities, actions and joint initiatives aimed at tackling structural economic challenges and boosting trade opportunities and economic diversification and prosperity, while enabling social investment and economic empowerment of individuals, including those in vulnerable situations, and securing funding for development initiatives;

- (d) Advocate the Arab perspective at the global level, and leverage partnerships in support of delivering on the strategy under subprogramme 3.

22.46 The above-mentioned work is expected to result in the following:

- (a) Improved member States' understanding of and access to evidence and policy options, including innovative solutions, as related to economic diversification and macroeconomic stability; fiscal policies; financing for development, including debt management and debt sustainability; trade; logistics and transport; and small and medium enterprises;
- (b) Greater human and institutional capacity among Arab Governments to utilize interactive policy simulation and modelling tools and platforms;
- (c) Enhanced capacity and commitment of member States to develop and enact national policy frameworks, promoting increased sub-, inter- and intra-regional connectivity, and contributing to sustainable economic growth and shared prosperity.

Programme performance in 2022

Enhanced capacity of Arab small and medium enterprises to utilize online channels

22.47 E-commerce has been growing exponentially in recent years, even more so as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, with e-commerce flourishing across many Arab countries. Yet, millions of small and medium enterprises in the region remained unable to tap into the online share of the market, owing to a lack of knowledge and of connectivity to e-payment systems and logistics networks, and scarcity of information on markets, amongst other issues. This, in turn, affected their income, growth and employment opportunities overall. As part of its plan to support small and medium enterprises in the region, the subprogramme launched a pilot programme, the e-Commercial Acceleration Programme, which supported 100 small and medium enterprises from across 15 ESCWA member States and across various sectors, such as agribusiness, retail and services, in the digitization process. Of them, 46 were women-owned businesses. The three training modules, developed in partnership with the International Trade Centre, focused on building capacity in commercial and promotion strategies for online merchandising, website development, marketplace analysis and other infrastructure necessary to conduct an online business.

22.48 Progress towards the objective is presented in the performance measure below (table 22.7).

Table 22.7

Performance measure

<i>2020 (actual)</i>	<i>2021 (actual)</i>	<i>2022 (actual)</i>
-	-	A total of 100 small and medium enterprises, including 46 women-owned businesses, from across 15 ESCWA member States and across various sectors, such as agribusiness, retail and services, supported in the digitization process for e-commerce readiness

Planned results for 2024**Result 1: Debt swap for improved resources for climate and development finance****Programme performance in 2022 and target for 2024**

- 22.49 The work of the subprogramme contributed to two member States (Egypt and Tunisia) embarking on a process to operationalize a debt-swap for climate finance initiative, which did not fully meet the planned target of one additional member State agreeing to set aside an amount of debt to swap for a climate or development finance initiative.
- 22.50 Progress towards the objective and target for 2024 are presented in the performance measure below (table 22.8).

Table 22.8

Performance measure

<i>2020 (actual)</i>	<i>2021 (actual)</i>	<i>2022 (actual)</i>	<i>2023 (planned)</i>	<i>2024 (planned)</i>
Three member States (Egypt, Jordan and Tunisia) expressed interest in operationalizing a debt-swap mechanism	One member State (Jordan) established a national taskforce to operationalize a debt swap for a climate or development finance initiative	Two member States (Egypt and Tunisia) embarked on the process to operationalize a debt-swap for climate finance initiative	One additional member State increases expenditure on climate or Sustainable Development Goal initiatives, utilizing funds from the debt swap	A regional platform that promotes peer-to-peer exchanges by member States on debt-swap for climate and development finance is established

Result 2: Improved effectiveness of economic policies from a gender perspective**Programme performance in 2022 and target for 2024**

- 22.51 The work of the subprogramme contributed to two member States (Morocco and United Arab Emirates) developing new policies to improve female economic participation, which met the planned target.
- 22.52 Progress towards the objective and target for 2024 are presented in the performance measure below (table 22.9).

Table 22.9

Performance measure

2020 (actual)	2021 (actual)	2022 (actual)	2023 (planned)	2024 (planned)
Global Gender Gap Index (GGGI) scoring by member States ranged between 0.494 and 0.655 compared with the Global Gender Gap score of 0.686	GGGI scoring by member States ranged between 0.492 and 0.716 compared with the Global Gender Gap score of 0.677	Two member States (Morocco and United Arab Emirates) developed new policies to improve female economic participation	Improved ranking of at least one of the two member States that developed new policies to advance female economic participation on the GGGI scoring	A regional platform that enables simulation of broader impact of gender policies on economies in ESCWA member States and that includes capacity-building and peer-to-peer exchange modules is launched

Proposed programme plan for 2024**Result 3: Improved accessibility and utilization of economic modelling in support of evidence-based policymaking**

22.53 Owing to its complexity, economic modelling is underutilized by Arab policymakers, in particular due to lack of skills and capacity to build and use economic models. As a result, some Governments do not use them while others rely on external consultancies to run basic simulations during preparation of national budgets and plans.

Lessons learned and planned change

22.54 The lesson for the subprogramme was that models built by external consultants, although vital for decision-making, have often been abandoned by member States owing to their complexity and insufficient capacity-building for their end users. The challenge was to create a tailored sustainable approach to economic modelling anchored in ownership by member States, and a related building of capacity at the national level to ensure its uptake, keeping in mind that a “one size fits all” solution would weaken its effectiveness and uptake. In applying the lesson, ESCWA developed an interactive user-friendly economic modelling tool that can be customized to specific contexts and needs. The model has already been piloted in three Arab countries: Jordan, the State of Palestine and Yemen. To further increase the use of economic modelling in policymaking across the Arab region, the subprogramme will continue to engage with civil servants in member States to adapt the methodology and design and deliver commensurate capacity-building programmes to meet the specific needs of countries. When rolled out, the models will enable on-demand interactive simulations of a set of economic, social and trade policies and their effects on growth, unemployment and specific sectoral policies.

22.55 Expected progress towards the objective is presented in the performance measure below (table 22.10).

Table 22.10

Performance measure

<i>2020 (actual)</i>	<i>2021 (actual)</i>	<i>2022 (actual)</i>	<i>2023 (planned)</i>	<i>2024 (planned)</i>
Desktop version of the computable general equilibrium (CGE) model for national use/application is developed for Tunisia	Pilot web-based CGE model is developed for Jordan	Two national CGE models are developed (State of Palestine and Yemen)	CGE models are launched in four additional member States	Three additional member States benefit from CGE modelling

Subprogramme 4**Statistics, the information society and technology****Objective**

- 22.56 The objective, to which this subprogramme contributes, is to strengthen the development of official statistical frameworks, improve the quality and availability of statistics, and advance the information society by accelerating the integration of technology and innovation for sustainable development in the Arab region.

Strategy

- 22.57 To contribute to the objective, the subprogramme will undertake the following:
- (a) Engage with national statistical offices in ESCWA member States on applications of global standards and practices and of new artificial intelligence-enabled and geospatial technologies to improve the production and analysis of independent statistics and smart data, big data and open data sources, in support of evidence-based decision-making and policymaking in the region;
 - (b) Provide policymakers and practitioners in member States with policy recommendations, underpinned by analysis of challenges and opportunities stemming from the emergence and increasing availability of new technologies and digital solutions, pertinent to digital governance, accessibility, and inclusion; digitization and digital transformation, also as a means of enabling economic diversification and inclusive and equitable social development; cybersecurity; and other topics related to official statistics, data production, information society and technology;
 - (c) Provide technical expertise and build national human and institutional capacities to utilize the available evidence, emerging and existing technologies and innovation as foundations for sustainable and implementable solutions, which will enable ESCWA member States to accelerate progress against their national development plans and priorities;
 - (d) Convene intergovernmental and technical platforms to foster consensus and facilitate dialogue and peer-to-peer exchanges between policymakers and practitioners, experts, civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders from within and outside the Arab region, to promote intra- and inter-regional cooperation and coordination of efforts and relevant policy frameworks;
 - (e) Advocate the Arab perspective through the global lens, including through supporting integrated regional monitoring and reporting on progress against Sustainable Development Goal targets; and leverage existing and build new partnerships in support of delivering on the strategy under subprogramme 4.

22.58 The above-mentioned work is expected to result in the following:

- (a) Enhanced capacity of member States to deploy modern technology and innovative artificial intelligence-driven solutions to enhance production and dissemination of official statistics and smart location-enabled data, compliant with international standards, in support of evidence-based policymaking;
- (b) Enhanced ability and commitment of member States to design and implement sound national and regional policy frameworks, catalysing synergies between science, technology and innovation, to promote digital transformation and governance, digital accessibility and inclusion, and enhanced citizen engagement in decision-making.

Programme performance in 2022

Enhanced response to future natural disasters through application of localized geospatial analysis

22.59 The increasing frequency and severity of climate-related disasters in the Arab region, mainly drought, floods and dust storms, add to existing challenges in achieving the 2030 Agenda. Moreover, significant gaps in disaster-related data exist in most member States. Integration of new technologies, such as satellite imagery and remote sensing, and social media platforms with official statistics to produce more timely, frequent and disaggregated disaster indicators, has a significant potential to prevent loss of life and livelihoods. In this context, the subprogramme teamed up with a leading satellite imagery and geospatial datasets analytics provider to build the capacity of the national statistical office of Egypt on the use of remote sensed data and data analytics, and their integration with different free datasets and official statistics to fill data gaps. Although the pilot focused on localized areas in one member State (the Nile Basin and coastal area of Egypt) and one type of natural disaster (floods), application of the flood estimation algorithms and flood localization tools can be applied by any other national statistical or disaster management authority in the region. The project's methodology also allows for it to be scaled up to encompass more types of natural hazards in support of more efficient management of responses to future calamities and even their prevention and mitigation of their impact on lives and livelihoods.

22.60 Progress towards the objective is presented in the performance measure below (table 22.11).

Table 22.11

Performance measure

<i>2020 (actual)</i>	<i>2021 (actual)</i>	<i>2022 (actual)</i>
Civil servants in the national statistical office of Egypt trained on using free remote sensed data and coding	Detailed geospatial assessments of past flood events in the Nile Basin and coastal area of Egypt conducted	Disaster management authority in one member State (Egypt) gained access to localized geospatial analysis, which will allow for improved responses to future natural disasters Regional platform based on satellite imagery and tools for floods mapping is made available to member States

Planned results 2024

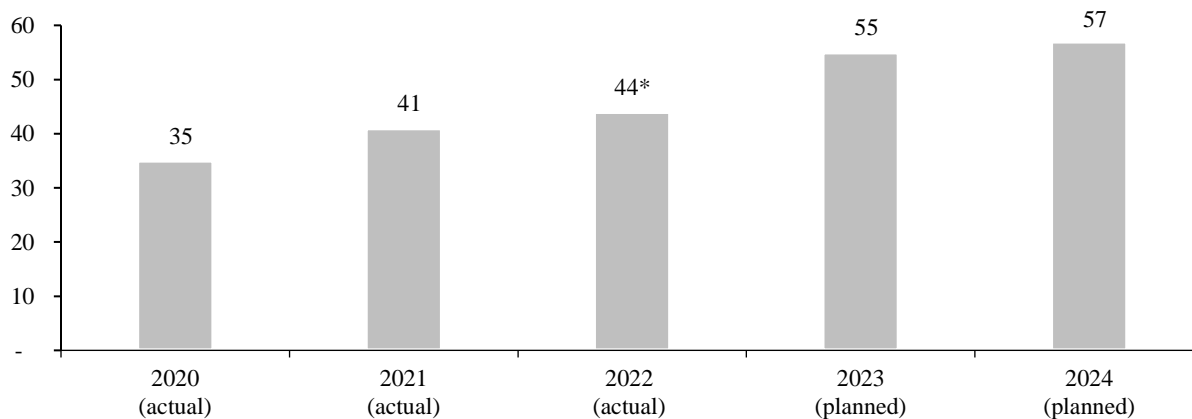
Result 1: Improved production and communication of data on the Sustainable Development Goals to leave no one behind

Programme performance in 2022 and target for 2024

- 22.61 The work of the subprogramme contributed to improving the percentage of Arab States with country data available in the official global database on the Sustainable Development Goals, including disaggregation of data, to 44 per cent in 2022, which did not meet the planned target of 50 per cent of country data available for Arab countries.
- 22.62 Progress towards the objective and target for 2024 are presented in the performance measure below (figure 22.III).

Figure 22.III

Performance measure: percentage of country data available for Arab countries in the official global database on the Sustainable Development Goals



*2022 (actual) as at 30 September 2022.

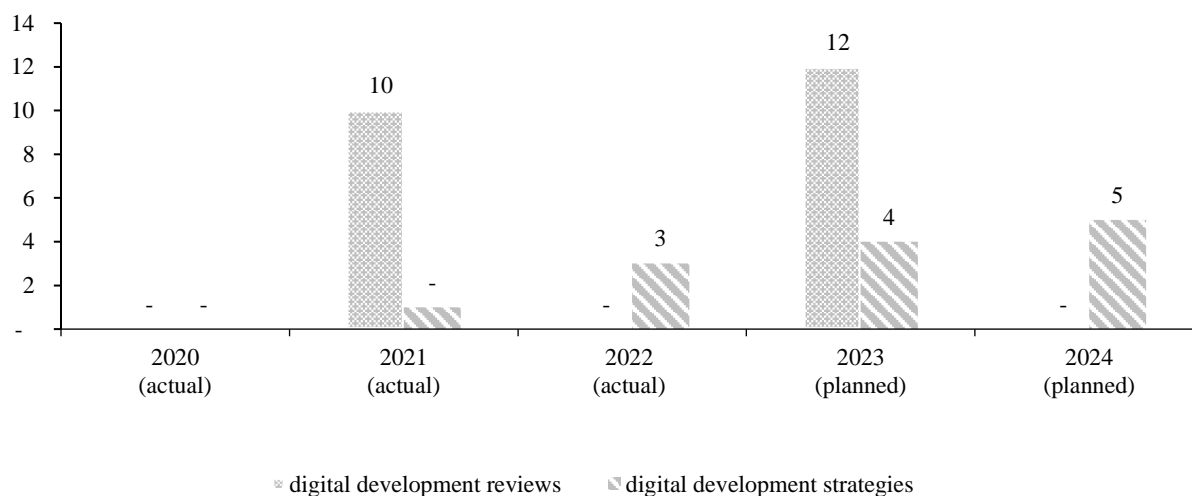
Result 2: Advancement of digital development assessments and strategies at the national and regional levels in the Arab region

Programme performance in 2022 and target for 2024

- 22.63 The work of the subprogramme contributed to three member States (Iraq, Mauritania and the State of Palestine) designing digital development strategies, which met the planned target.
- 22.64 Progress towards the objective and target for 2024 are presented in the performance measure below (figure 22.IV).

Figure 22.IV

Performance measure: number of ESCWA member States that undertook biannual national digital development reviews and designed digital development strategies (cumulative)



Proposed programme plan for 2024

Result 3: Enhanced availability of evidence leveraging artificial intelligence and geospatial capacities in support of policymaking in the Arab region

22.65 Policymaking and decision-making rely heavily on quality evidence, rendering the production, processing and dissemination of accurate, timely and relevant data, information and knowledge a vital prerequisite, underpinning national efforts towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The challenge is that decision makers are sometimes deprived of relevant data in certain critical areas, or bombarded with large quantities of data from multiple sources with different attributes and quality dimensions.

Lessons learned and planned change

22.66 The lesson for the subprogramme was that inconsistent data and a lack of awareness of alternative data sets have proven counterproductive, or even harmful, to policymaking processes, as has their unavailability. In addition, many new technologies in the field of data science, big data and machine learning provide an opportunity to address some of the traditional data challenges facing policymakers in developing evidence-based policies. In applying the lesson, the subprogramme will scale up the traditional data lifecycle through a data ecosystem, which will deploy artificial intelligence and geospatial capacities, among others, to enhance and harness evidence from local, national, regional and even global sources. The resulting regional data hub will support interactive generation of policy options by streamlining the different technology- and data-driven regional tools and platforms developed by ESCWA, within a unified and structured repository. The said ecosystem will promote and standardize data analytics approaches to deliver complementary modular knowledge and policy-support products, anchored in the highest-quality and most reliable evidence. This approach will allow member States to save time and resources currently required to mine for data in-house.

22.67 Expected progress towards the objective is presented in the performance measure below (table 22.12).

Table 22.12

Performance measure

<i>2020 (actual)</i>	<i>2021 (actual)</i>	<i>2022 (actual)</i>	<i>2023 (planned)</i>	<i>2024 (planned)</i>
The ESCWA data portal contains only statistical data from ESCWA and certain Arab national statistical offices	Eight digital interactive policy support tools launched	National, regional and global (statistical and non-statistical) datasets relating to ESCWA member States were captured/ingested and made available Initial artificial intelligence- and geospatial-based applications are developed for the ESCWA data ecosystem	Regional data management and analytics platform, supported by the ESCWA data ecosystem, is launched	At least five tools are developed or enhanced, leveraging artificial intelligence and geospatial capabilities of the ESCWA data ecosystem in support of evidence-based policymaking by member States

Subprogramme 5**2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goal coordination****Objective**

- 22.68 The objective, to which this subprogramme contributes, is to accelerate progress towards sustainable development in the Arab region, in line with the 2030 Agenda, and to advance intraregional collaboration and a multi-stakeholder approach to key regional and subregional sustainable development issues.

Strategy

- 22.69 To contribute to the objective, the subprogramme will undertake the following:
- (a) Advocate the principles of the 2030 Agenda, especially the commitment to leave no one behind and the rights-based approach to development; and leverage existing and build new and non-traditional partnerships with intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, international financial institutions; United Nations country teams and specific United Nations departments, agencies and funds, civil societies, academic institutions and thinktanks, and the private sector to promote a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach as a means of accelerating the progress against national priorities and targets, and towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals;
 - (b) Engage with relevant national and local authorities and stakeholders to support cross-sectoral cooperation and alignment of national development priorities and plans with both the 2030 Agenda and resources available for their implementation;
 - (c) Convene and ensure ongoing support to and follow-up of various platforms, within and in connection with the Arab Forum for Sustainable Development, to facilitate multi-stakeholder dialogue and peer-to-peer exchanges within and outside the Arab region, aimed at fostering consensus on national and regional sustainable development priorities and actions; and promoting sub-, inter- and intra-regional (South-South) and triangular collaboration and coordination;

- (d) Support and build individual and institutional capacities to conduct integrated monitoring and reporting, at the local, national and regional levels, of the progress against specific Sustainable Development Goal targets; compile and disseminate policy recommendations; and ensure that the Arab region's perspective is reflected through the global lens.

22.70 The above-mentioned work is expected to result in the following:

- (a) Enhanced commitment of policymakers and practitioners, regional intergovernmental organizations, international financial institutions, academia and thinktanks, civil society organizations, and the private sector in the Arab region and beyond to the principles of the 2030 Agenda and to a participatory whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to implementation of and follow-up on Sustainable Development Goal priorities and related actions;
- (b) Improved utilization by ESCWA member States and relevant stakeholders of available dialogue platforms as a means of promoting consensus, peer-to-peer learning, and coordination at the national (institutional and cross-institutional), sub-, intra- and inter-regional and global levels for accelerated achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

Programme performance in 2022

Improved coordination and alignment of planning and financing for accelerated achievement of the 2030 Agenda

22.71 Effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda requires aligning development priorities and targets with resources required for their achievement. While the former are usually determined by ministries of planning, securing the latter is the responsibility of ministries of finance, often leading to discrepancies of procedures and cycles. The subprogramme identified improved cooperation between these two national entities as a means for ESCWA member States to accelerate their progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. In this context, the subprogramme established a regional platform, within the Arab Forum for Sustainable Development framework, to promote dialogue and alignment on Sustainable Development Goal implementation between ministries of finance and ministries of planning. The Forum allowed the five participating member States (Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Yemen) to exchange good practices on the alignment of national budgets with national development plans and the Sustainable Development Goals. The following three priorities were identified as a result: the design and implementation of integrated national financing frameworks; more effective Sustainable Development Goal budgeting, such as national budgets geared to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals as opposed to shadow Sustainable Development Goal budgets; and greater coordination with and between international financial institutions. The platform also enabled peer-to-peer advocacy across the Arab region on the importance of the issue, highlighting the urgent need to link budgeting processes to national Sustainable Development Goal strategies.

22.72 Progress towards the objective is presented in the performance measure below (table 22.13).

Table 22.13

Performance measure

<i>2020 (actual)</i>	<i>2021 (actual)</i>	<i>2022 (actual)</i>
-	-	Ministries of planning and finance from five ESCWA member States (Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Yemen) benefitted from a newly established regional platform promoting inter-ministerial/ government-wide coordination on the Sustainable Development Goals

Planned results 2024**Result 1: Recovery and post-COVID-19 development planning integrates the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals****Programme performance in 2022 and target for 2024**

- 22.73 The work of the subprogramme contributed to one COVID-19 recovery plan in the Arab region (Jordan) integrating the 2030 Agenda to accelerate progress on the Sustainable Development Goals, and an assessment of the extent to which one ESCWA member State (the State of Palestine) has integrated the Sustainable Development Goals into its sectorial recovery plans and strategies, which met the planned target.
- 22.74 Progress towards the objective and target for 2024 are presented in the performance measure below (table 22.14).

Table 22.14

Performance measure

<i>2020 (actual)</i>	<i>2021 (actual)</i>	<i>2022 (actual)</i>	<i>2023 (planned)</i>	<i>2024 (planned)</i>
-	One member State (Egypt) integrated the 2030 Agenda to accelerate progress on the Sustainable Development Goals in its COVID-19 recovery plan	One COVID-19 recovery plan in the Arab region (Jordan) integrated the 2030 Agenda to accelerate progress on the Sustainable Development Goals and sectorial recovery plans, and strategies of one member State (State of Palestine) were assessed on the extent to which they integrated Sustainable Development Goals	Two additional national development plans aligned with the 2030 Agenda	One member State is supported to pursue an integrated approach to implementation in its national development plan

Result 2: Improved voluntary national review process through formalized intraregional and interregional peer learning

Programme performance in 2021 and target for 2024

- 22.75 The work of the subprogramme contributed to two member States (Oman and the Syrian Arab Republic) engaging in a twinning exercise (pilot voluntary national review (VNR) peer-learning initiative), which met the planned target.
- 22.76 Progress towards the objective and target for 2023 are presented in the performance measure below (table 22.15).

Table 22.15

Performance measure

<i>2020 (actual)</i>	<i>2021 (actual)</i>	<i>2022 (actual)</i>	<i>2023 (planned)</i>	<i>2024 (planned)</i>
Informal interaction between member States in workshops focusing on regional issues of concern	ESCWA member States benefit from the first peer-learning activity on methodological issues of reporting on the 2030 Agenda	Two member States (Oman and the Syrian Arab Republic) engaged in a twinning exercise (pilot VNR peer-learning initiative)	Two additional member States benefit from peer-learning approaches (twinning and VNR-based focus groups)	Two more member States benefit from VNR peer-learning approaches (twinning and issue-based focus groups)

Proposed programme plan for 2024

Result 3: Promoting a whole-of-society approach to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals through the integration of Sustainable Development Goal principles in university programmes in the Arab region

- 22.77 ESCWA has been supporting governmental and non-governmental stakeholders to partake in the implementation, follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda in Arab countries. However, for the region to achieve Sustainable Development Goal targets by 2030, a whole-of-society approach is needed where Governments, civil society organizations, the private sector and citizens contribute to sustainable development outcomes. Universities are uniquely placed to form future actors and equip them with the awareness, knowledge, skills and motivation to become part of Sustainable Development Goal solutions. However, academic institutions in Arab countries have remained somewhat distant from the 2030 Agenda, and only just a few have integrated the Sustainable Development Goals into their curriculums, research and partnerships.

Lessons learned and planned change

- 22.78 The lesson for the subprogramme was that engaging with academic institutions, including through the Academic Network for Development Dialogue, and promoting dialogue between the United Nations, academia and Sustainable Development Goal-focused research, was not sufficient; and that for the desired result to be achieved, mainstreaming of 2030 Agenda principles and the Sustainable Development Goals across academic curriculums or initiatives is required to allow member States to tap into the power of Sustainable Development Goal-engaged university graduates as vectors of positive change. In applying this lesson, the subprogramme will support university faculties in member States to incorporate Sustainable Development Goal principles into their academic programmes through the provision of frameworks, guidelines, examples and suggestions. The subprogramme will subsequently leverage its existing networks to support peer learning and the dissemination of good practice amongst universities in the Arab region.

22.79 Expected progress towards the objective is presented in the performance measure below (table 22.16).

Table 22.16

Performance measure

<i>2020 (actual)</i>	<i>2021 (actual)</i>	<i>2022 (actual)</i>	<i>2023 (planned)</i>	<i>2024 (planned)</i>
The Academic Network for Development Dialogue is established	Systematic dialogue between ESCWA and academia is established, promoting academic institutions participation in Sustainable Development Goal-related discussions	Academic institutions in the Arab region benefit from substantive support on Sustainable Development Goal-related issues	At least one university faculty in a member State is supported by incorporating Sustainable Development Goal principles into its programmes	At least two academic institutions in the Arab region benefit from peer learning and dissemination of good practice in integrating Sustainable Development Goal principles into their programmes

Subprogramme 6 Governance and conflict prevention

Objective

22.80 The objective, to which this subprogramme contributes, is to advance just, peaceful and inclusive societies, especially for people living under occupation or in conflict or post-conflict settings; to improve governance and strengthen effective, efficient and accountable public institutions; and to enhance service delivery.

Strategy

22.81 To contribute to the objective, the subprogramme will undertake the following:

- (a) Utilize available toolkits and methodologies to assess and analyse trends, challenges and opportunities related to human development, with particular focus on the impact of conflict and occupation on the capacity of member States to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, mitigate risks, enhance governance and institutional capacity to deliver basic services and respond to shocks, and competitiveness of the business environment; and continuously avail this knowledge, data and related policy recommendations to member States and relevant stakeholders and partners;
- (b) Provide technical expertise and build human and institutional capacities to identify and operationalise immediate, medium- and long-term solutions, aimed at lowering risks associated with emerging socioeconomic, environmental and governance challenges and potential shocks; enhancing transparency, accessibility and the efficiency of State-run services; and promoting more effective competition and consumer protection;
- (c) Facilitate dialogue and peer-to-peer exchanges between policymakers and practitioners, experts, civil society and other development partners from within and outside the Arab region to promote regional cooperation and coordination, and to foster consensus on priorities and actions required to minimize the impact of conflict and any risks and shocks on member States ability to advance their national development agendas;

- (d) Support the four least developed countries members of ESCWA, within the framework of the Doha Programme of Action or the Least Developed Countries (2022-2031), in enhancing their institutional capacity for achieving the 2030 Agenda and graduating from the least developed country category.
- 22.82 Enhance the capabilities of Palestinian institutions and other development stakeholders in the occupied Palestinian territory to mitigate the impact of the Israeli occupation on social and economic development, including decreasing the asymmetric dependency of the Palestinian economy and curbing de-development. The above-mentioned work is expected to result in the following:
- (a) Enhanced member State knowledge and understanding of development challenges and opportunities, including those related to conflict (its prevention and mitigating its impact on sustainable development) and occupation, recovery and transition from relief to sustainable development and peacebuilding, risks, sudden shocks, governance, and market competitiveness and consumer welfare;
- (b) Greater human and institutional capacity in member States, especially in the four least developed countries members of ESCWA, to develop, implement and monitor the effectiveness of evidence-based policy frameworks aimed at improving the accountability of public institutions and their delivery of basic services in a transparent, accessible and inclusive way; mitigating identified and anticipated (transboundary) risks; and improving competitiveness of the business environment.

Programme performance in 2022

Contextualized support to the four least developed countries members of ESCWA in the context of the Doha Programme of Action (2022-2031)

- 22.83 The four least developed countries members of ESCWA, namely Mauritania, Somalia, the Sudan and Yemen, did not graduate from their status within the previous decade, as per the Istanbul Action Plan (2011-2020) and continue facing serious challenges in achieving the 2030 Agenda. In the context of the formulation of the Doha Programme of Action (2022-2031), the subprogramme engaged with these countries to map out these challenges and promote an agreement on a common and most adequate way forward. As a result, the four ESCWA member States committed to prioritising the following: addressing the root causes of conflict; promoting inclusive and rapid socioeconomic development; and rebuilding more resilient national institutions and their capacity. In this context, the subprogramme provided public institutions in the four above-mentioned Arab least developed countries with guidance on implementing the humanitarian-development-peace nexus in conflict and fragile settings. In addition, the subprogramme facilitated an inclusive technical dialogue on a vision for recovery and development in Yemen, and piloted an institution-building and capacity-development e-platform for that country. Concurrently, the subprogramme supported the strengthening of partnerships among development entities working on building the capacity of public institutions in Arab least developed countries.
- 22.84 Progress towards the objective is presented in the performance measure below (table 22.17).

Table 22.17

Performance measure

<i>2020 (actual)</i>	<i>2021 (actual)</i>	<i>2022 (actual)</i>
Gaps and challenges that prevented Arab least developed countries from graduating from that status as per the Istanbul Plan of Action (2011-2020) are assessed	<p>Challenges particular to four least developed countries, namely Mauritania, Somalia, the Sudan and Yemen, were mapped out and informed the development of the Doha Plan of Action (2022-2031)</p> <p>The four least developed countries, namely Mauritania, Somalia, the Sudan and Yemen, defined foundational elements to achieve the commitments of the Doha Plan of Action</p>	<p>The four least developed countries, namely Mauritania, Somalia, the Sudan and Yemen, agreed to emphasize the need for recovery led by national institutions, operationalizing the triple nexus approach, as part of the Doha Plan of Action (2022-2031)</p> <p>Inclusive technical dialogue on a vision for recovery and development is supported in one Arab least developed country (Yemen)</p> <p>An institution-building and capacity-development e-platform is piloted in one Arab least developed country (Yemen)</p>

Planned results for 2024**Result 1: Enhanced integration of transboundary risk planning, management and prevention into national development plans and policies****Programme performance in 2022 and target for 2024**

- 22.85 The work of the subprogramme contributed to the integration by one additional member State (Lebanon) of the developed risk assessment tools that address transboundary conflict and non-conflict drivers of hazards and vulnerability into its national development strategy, which met the planned target.
- 22.86 In addition, the work of the subprogramme contributed to the launch of a regional technical dialogue platform, which enables peer exchanges among ESCWA member States on transboundary risk management, which met the planned target.
- 22.87 Progress towards the objective and target for 2024 are presented in the performance measure below (table 22.18).

Table 22.18

Performance measure

<i>2020 (actual)</i>	<i>2021 (actual)</i>	<i>2022 (actual)</i>	<i>2023 (planned)</i>	<i>2024 (planned)</i>
Arab countries gained access to contextualized (for the region) risk assessment tools, and gained a better understanding of qualitative risk assessment approaches	One member State (Jordan) integrated a developed risk assessment tool that addresses transboundary conflict and non-conflict drivers of hazards and vulnerability into its	One additional member State (Lebanon) integrated the developed risk assessment tools that address transboundary conflict and non-conflict drivers of hazards and vulnerability into its	Policies developed in the three member States in which the initiative is piloted take into consideration the effects of transboundary conflict and non-conflict drivers of	The contextualized (for the region) risk assessment tool is upgraded to include a regular regional risk monitor for assessing and communicating risks

2020 (actual)	2021 (actual)	2022 (actual)	2023 (planned)	2024 (planned)
	national COVID-19 response strategy	national development strategy	hazards and vulnerability	
		A regional technical dialogue platform was launched, and enabled peer exchanges among member States on transboundary risk management		

Result 2: Enhanced capacity of policymakers to determine development challenges at the national level

Programme performance in 2022 and target for 2024

- 22.88 The work of the subprogramme contributed to developing a toolkit that allows member States to assess the impact of improvements in specific dimensions and indicators on the overall performance of the global development challenges index, and a tool that allows member States to design and tailor their own national development challenges indices, which did not fully meet the planned target of four member States endorsing the measurement framework for the global development challenges index.
- 22.89 Progress towards the objective and target for 2024 are presented in the performance measure below (table 22.19).

Table 22.19

Performance measure

2020 (actual)	2021 (actual)	2022 (actual)	2023 (planned)	2024 (planned)
–	Countries use global indices, such as the Human Development Index, to evaluate the effectiveness of their national development plans	ESCWA member States gained access to a toolkit to assess the impact of improvements in specific dimensions and indicators on the overall performance on the global development challenges index, and a tool to design and tailor their own national development challenges indices	Three Arab countries develop national assessments and national human development challenges reports based on findings from the development challenges index	Improved capacity of civil servants in at least three member States on the use of national development challenges indices, and how to integrate these indices in national development planning processes

Proposed programme plan for 2024

Result 3: Improved competition and consumer protection policies in the Arab region

- 22.90 National and regional economic prosperity depends largely on the competitiveness of the business environment, which remains a challenge for many Arab countries. ESCWA has been working with its member States to enhance relevant policy frameworks to boost competition. In 2020, ESCWA convened the Joint Arab Competition Forum in partnership with UNCTAD and OECD, which

serves as a platform for member States to exchange knowledge, experiences and good practices in this regard. By 2022, all 20 ESCWA member States had attended the Forum. By the end of 2021, Kuwait, Oman and Saudi Arabia had implemented new competition legislation. In 2022, Oman expanded its competition authority, and Lebanon, with support from ESCWA, adopted its first-ever competition law.

Lessons learned and planned change

- 22.91 The lesson for the subprogramme was that although progress has been achieved with respect to national competition policy frameworks, legislation around consumer protection, a vital component of a sound and conducive economic environment, remained weak or non-existent across the region. In applying the lesson, ESCWA will support its member States in building capacity in this area, in particular by promoting the development of relevant national policy frameworks and legislation. Specifically, in 2023, ESCWA will conduct assessments of national and regional legislative frameworks on consumer protection. It is envisaged that a dedicated regional platform, aimed at enabling dialogue between member States, networking, and peer-to-peer exchanges of knowledge and good practices on consumer protection will be launched in the subsequent year.
- 22.92 Expected progress towards the objective is presented in the performance measure below (table 22.20).

Table 22.20

Performance measure

<i>2020 (actual)</i>	<i>2021 (actual)</i>	<i>2022 (actual)</i>	<i>2023 (planned)</i>	<i>2024 (planned)</i>
The Competition Forum for the Arab region is launched in partnership with OECD and UNCTAD	Second joint Competition Forum for the Arab Region is attended by 16 member States	All 20 ESCWA member States participated in the third Arab Competition Forum	ESCWA member States have access to assessments and analysis of national and regional legislative frameworks, and policy recommendations, on consumer protection	First regional platform on consumer protection, driving knowledge sharing, peer-to-peer learning and networking, is convened
One member State (Kuwait) implemented new competition law	Three member States (Kuwait, Oman and Saudi Arabia) implemented new legislation on competition	One member State (Lebanon) introduced first-ever competition legislation, and one additional member State (Kuwait) introduced further legislation on competition One member State (Oman) expanded its dedicated competition authority		
