



Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

Committee on Social Development
Fourteenth session
Beirut, 8 June 2023



Item 4 of the provisional agenda

**Implementation of activities under the ESCWA programme plan
and of recommendations made by the Committee
on Social Development at its thirteenth session**

Summary

The Committee on Social Development of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) held its thirteenth session virtually on 22 and 23 September 2021. It adopted a set of recommendations, some directed to member States and others to the ESCWA secretariat. The present document sets out the activities conducted by ESCWA between September 2021 and June 2023 in support of member States, and in accordance with recommendations made by the Committee to the ESCWA secretariat under subprogramme 2.

The Committee is invited to take note of these activities and discuss the way forward.

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Introduction

1. The Committee on Social Development of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) held its thirteenth session virtually on 22 and 23 September 2021. It adopted a set of recommendations, some directed to member States and others to the ESCWA secretariat. The present document sets out the activities conducted by ESCWA between September 2021 and June 2023 in support of member States, and in accordance with recommendations made by the Committee to the ESCWA secretariat under subprogramme 2.
2. Subprogramme 2 aims to achieve equitable and inclusive social development and reduce inequality, poverty and unemployment, in line with the principle of leaving no one behind. It covers the following topics: social justice, poverty reduction, social protection, improving employment opportunities, promoting gender equality, inclusion of persons with disabilities, the rights of older persons, migrant rights, and helping countries implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
3. Pursuant to recommendations made by the Committee on Social Development at its thirteenth session to support member States in developing comprehensive social policies linking national social and economic visions, ESCWA has assisted member States in developing evidence-based policies that leave no one behind. These efforts have been supported by a set of policy tools to assist Arab decision makers in designing and implementing coherent and effective policies.
4. ESCWA has forged partnerships with United Nations agencies, regional organizations, civil society organizations and academic institutes to ensure concerted efforts at the regional level. Partners include the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women). ESCWA also enhanced its work with active international, regional and academic institutions, such as the League of Arab States and the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI), and with international and regional civil society organizations to implement many of its activities.

I. Progress on reducing inequality

5. Inequality is a growing burden facing the Arab region, which threatens to impede economic growth and increase poverty, thus exacerbating the vulnerability of many people. In recognition of this challenge, ESCWA, in collaboration with the Grand Challenge on Inequality and Exclusion of the Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies, held the [Arab Forum for Equality](#) in Amman on 30 and 31 May 2022. The Forum's theme was "Towards inclusive youth employment in the Arab region", given that youth unemployment is both a catalyst for, and contributor to, entrenched inequality in the Arab region. The Forum discussions were supported by a publication entitled *[Inequality in the Arab Region: A Ticking Time Bomb](#)*. The publication presents the multidimensional nature of inequality, which is pervasive in the region, and provides practical policy solutions that may help Arab countries tangibly reduce inequality, particularly the pertinent challenge of youth unemployment.
6. At the Forum, ESCWA, in partnership with the Union of Arab Banks, the Union of Arab Chambers, Pharco, Elie Saab International, and the Sawiris Foundation for Social Development, launched *[Josour](#)*, a programme that connects the private sector across the Arab region with young people searching for employment-related opportunities, including internships, upskilling and reskilling trainings, and networking between young people and the private sector to reduce the information gap affecting labour market demand and supply.
7. ESCWA prepared a study on personal wealth inequality in the Arab region entitled "[Greater concentration and relative erosion of wealth in the Arab region: the legacy of COVID-19?](#)", with an associated

policy brief entitled “[Rising wealth inequality in the Arab region amid COVID-19](#)”. The study highlights the gradual increase in wealth inequality in much of the Arab region over the past decade, which accelerated during the COVID-19 pandemic.

8. On 14 July 2022, ESCWA organized an online policy dialogue on the theme “[Poverty, inequality and integrated social policies](#)” on the sidelines of the 2022 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. The policy dialogue was followed by a policy brief entitled “[Key policy directions in the Arab region for ensuring the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#)”, which provides concrete policy recommendations on building forward better while leaving no one behind.

9. Lebanon stands out as a country where inequality is rising sharply owing to the ongoing economic crisis. ESCWA published a policy brief entitled “[Inequality in Lebanon: an ever-growing gap](#)”, which sets out the findings from a recent ESCWA poll on inequality in the country.

10. In response to the devastating earthquake that hit the Syrian Arab Republic in February 2023, ESCWA prepared a policy brief entitled “[Post-quake Syrian Arab Republic: A wake-up call and a time for action](#)” highlighting the disparate impact of the earthquake on already vulnerable groups and the fragile national economy.

II. Progress on social justice

11. ESCWA continued to pursue initiatives to reduce inequality in the Arab region, particularly through integrated social policies.

12. Mainstreaming social justice in wage policies will promote social justice across the region. ESCWA has therefore been supporting the Governments of Lebanon, the State of Palestine, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen to ensure that wage policies leave no one behind, using the Social Justice Policy Gap Assessment Tool (PGAT). This resulted in three national reports that determine the compatibility of wage policies with the principles of social justice and with reform recommendations in Lebanon, the State of Palestine and Yemen, namely the “[National report on the compatibility of the wage policy with the principles of social justice in Lebanon](#)”, the “[National report on the compatibility of wage policy with the principles of social justice in the State of Palestine](#)”, and the “[National report on the compatibility of wage policy with the principles of social justice in Yemen](#)”.

13. Analysis of wage policies was done in close partnership with the Governments of those countries. Workshops were organized in Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic to assess the extent to which existing wage policies integrated social justice principles, using PGAT. For Lebanon, ESCWA organized a workshop with the Ministry of Labour in Beirut on 7 and 8 March 2022 on the theme “[Social Justice Policy Gap Assessment Tool: wage policy in Lebanon](#)”. For the Syrian Arab Republic, ESCWA partnered with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour to organize a national workshop on the theme “[Social Justice Policy Gap Assessment Tool: assessing wage policy in the Syrian Arab Republic](#)”, held in Damascus from 14 to 16 June 2022.

14. For Yemen, ESCWA organized a workshop on the theme “[Mainstreaming social justice principles in public policies in Yemen](#)”, held in Cairo from 1 to 3 March 2022. The workshop was held in collaboration with the Yemeni Ministry of Legal Affairs and Human Rights, and examined the principles of social justice and how to mainstream them in policy formulation.

III. Progress in poverty reduction

15. ESCWA continued to assess the extent of both income and multidimensional poverty in the Arab region, primarily by estimating the degree of multidimensional poverty at the regional level. In collaboration with the League of Arab States, UNICEF and OPHI, ESCWA developed the flagship Second Arab Multidimensional

Poverty Report, which highlights the scale of multidimensional poverty of households and children in the region, and offers practical policy solutions to eradicate all forms of poverty. A plenary [expert group meeting](#) with partners took place in Amman on 27 October 2021, and the report was launched in Doha in January 2023 at the Ministerial Council Meeting of the League of Arab States.

16. At the national level, ESCWA conducted a study in Lebanon examining the multidimensional facets of poverty for the period of 2019–2021, entitled “[Multidimensional poverty in Lebanon: A proposed measurement framework, and an assessment of the socioeconomic crisis](#)”, and prepared an associated policy brief entitled “[Multidimensional poverty in Lebanon \(2019–2021\): Painful reality and uncertain prospects](#)”. The analysis was presented to the Lebanese Government, who was also invited to the expert group meeting in Amman.

17. At the monetary poverty level, ESCWA advanced regional measurements and projections on income poverty in accordance with comparable poverty lines through three technical reports, namely “[Obstructed poverty reduction: growth-passthrough analysis](#)”, “[Counting the world’s poor: back to Engel’s law](#)”, and “[Estimating growth in household income from national accounts: parametric and non-parametric models](#)”. The reports highlight the challenge of achieving SDG 1 by 2030 in the Arab region and globally.

18. ESCWA also examined the degree of monetary poverty within Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, and issued a technical report entitled “Poverty in the GCC countries: 2010–2021” and an associated policy brief entitled “Policy reforms needed to lift over three million GCC nationals out of poverty” (forthcoming). ESCWA analysis shows that poverty in several GCC countries is significant, and reveals high income inequality.

19. To support Arab countries in assessing their degree of monetary poverty, and to estimate the best policy mix to reduce poverty, ESCWA developed the Money-Metric Poverty Assist Tool (MPAT), which enables policymakers to make national and regional income poverty estimates, and to project how different policy scenarios impact income poverty.

20. To disseminate the above knowledge products and policymaking tools, and to exchange knowledge on how to accurately measure poverty, ESCWA held two expert group meetings, namely “[Multidimensional Poverty Index: simulation and optimization](#)” held online on 10 February 2022, and “[Policymaking tools and measuring money-metric poverty](#)” held in Amman on 20 and 21 June 2022.

IV. Progress in social protection

21. ESCWA continues to support the development of inclusive social protection systems across the Arab region. To that end, ESCWA published the 2022 *Annual Digest of Social Protection Reforms in the Arab Region* (forthcoming), which provides country summaries on social protection trends, including reforms or policy changes in social insurance, social assistance, and active labour market policies across 22 Arab countries. The publication provides a platform for Arab countries to review social protection reform trajectories, and thus cross-country learning and inspiration.

22. To further support knowledge exchange between Arab countries on social protection, ESCWA developed a trilingual social protection glossary (forthcoming), which provides clear and practical definitions of key social protection terms in Arabic, French and English. The glossary aims to foster a unified understanding of the main concepts of inclusive social protection systems.

V. Progress in the labour market

23. Recognizing that youth unemployment is a critical risk facing the Arab region, which undermines poverty alleviation and increases inequalities, ESCWA launched the [ESCWA Skills Monitor](#) at the 2022 Arab Forum for Equality. The Skills Monitor helps policymakers to better understand regional and national labour

market dynamics and demand, and to support the transition of young people to employment through evidence-based policies and strategies that build upon the skills demanded by labour markets.

24. After analysing 1.2 million jobs in 20 Arab countries, ESCWA produced a regional report entitled “[The Arab region may be missing the Fourth Industrial Revolution: Arab skills are still stuck in the past](#)”. Using Skills Monitor results, ESCWA analysed whether the type of skills and jobs demanded in the Arab region addressed the needs of the Fourth Industrial Revolution and the new era of economic development. ESCWA also investigated the type of skills and jobs demanded in the Arab region, their interconnectedness, and opportunities for reskilling and upskilling. The report’s results were presented and the future of work was discussed with policymakers at an [expert group meeting](#) held virtually on 22 October 2021.

25. Capitalizing on the Skills Monitor, ESCWA prepared national skills profiles for Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, which outlined the demand for national skills and the availability of digital and diverse skills in a country. Arab middle-income countries emerged as most likely to have both a diverse skillset and demand for digital skills related to the Fourth Industrial Revolution, namely data analysis, machine learning, cloud computing, artificial intelligence, blockchain, creativity, problem-solving, and analytical reasoning. The national skills profiles have been shared with the respective Governments, and ESCWA is now collaborating with those Governments to develop evidence-based employment policies.

VI. Progress in women’s economic empowerment and the care economy

26. Not only are young people in the region at higher risk of unemployment, but women in the region are also more likely to be excluded from labour markets. The high burden of unpaid care work frequently limits female labour force participation, resulting in women having to leave the labour force or take on more flexible and frequently informal work. To ensure women’s full participation in the labour market, ESCWA has been leading efforts to strengthen the care economy.

27. In partnership with the League of Arab States and UN-Women, ESCWA organized a regional workshop on the theme “[Women’s economic empowerment and care economies and policies](#)”, held in Beirut on 27 and 28 June 2022. The workshop drew lessons from how gender equality was integrated in COVID-19 national response plans in the Arab region, with a particular focus on care-related issues and policies. Through training activities and peer exchanges, the workshop aimed to support policymakers in enacting legal and policy changes to advance care services, thereby promoting women’s economic empowerment.

VII. Progress in the field of persons with disabilities

28. ESCWA continued to assist member States’ in mapping national policy frameworks on persons with disabilities, and in supporting reform efforts and the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the built environment and online.

29. To assess national reform efforts, ESCWA analysed national strategies and policies, and mapped general and thematic disability policies on digital inclusion, independent living, and inclusive education. The results were published in a policy brief entitled “[Mapping national disability strategies in the Arab region](#)”.

30. ESCWA conducted a study to assess the top challenges in implementing the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the Arab region. The results were published in a policy brief entitled “[Challenges in the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the Arab region](#)”. Cultural views and negative stereotypes; a lack of frameworks for and guides on the implementation of the Convention; gaps in legislation, policies, programmes and services; a lack of human and financial resources

and data; weak stakeholder involvement; and a poor security situation were all identified as challenges, and recommendations were provided based on international best practices.

31. ESCWA proposed a shift in disability inclusion initiatives from a medical diagnostic approach to a social one. This entails moving from an approach based on disability treatment to Community-based Inclusive Development (CBID) that is part of a social model. This shift in approach was published by ESCWA in a report entitled “Community-based Inclusive Development in the Arab region” (forthcoming).

32. ESCWA has determined that physical and digital accessibility to the built environment and to work places are critical to the inclusion of persons with disabilities. A policy brief entitled “[Innovative solutions to ensure physical accessibility in the Arab region](#)” explores how to make built environments in the region more accessible to persons with disabilities, and provides examples of low-cost good practices.

33. ESCWA developed the [Arab Digital Inclusion Platform](#) that promotes digital inclusion across the Arab region. In partnership with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), ESCWA held the first annual conference entitled [Accessible Arab Region: ICT for All](#) virtually on 2 December 2021. The conference was the first of its kind in the Arab region, and brought together various stakeholders to highlight how technology promises a better quality of life, greater social and economic opportunities, self-empowerment, and independent living for persons with disabilities. The sessions focused on sharing experiences and good practices on eliminating barriers to accessing information and communication technology (ICT).

34. The [Second Accessible Arab Region: ICT for All](#) was organized by ESCWA and ITU, and held virtually on 13 December 2022. The second conference built on the first to further strengthen the digital inclusion of persons with disability, including through initiatives that promote policy implementation, and strategies and resources that ensure the inclusion of persons with disabilities in digital transformation efforts.

35. To commemorate the 2022 International Day of Persons with Disabilities, ESCWA launched an advocacy campaign focusing on the social inclusion of persons with disabilities. “[International Day of Persons with Disabilities: online advocacy campaign](#)” includes a series of videos to raise awareness on disability-inclusive language and communication, the etiquette of offering help to persons with disabilities, respecting designated areas and spaces, and breaking negative stereotypes and misconceptions.

VIII. Progress on migration

36. ESCWA continued to analyse migration trends in the Arab region, and the protection of migrants and their human rights. The flagship report entitled [Situation Report on International Migration 2021: Building Forward Better for Migrants and Refugees in the Arab Region](#), produced in partnership with IOM and UNHCR, and in collaboration with 11 other United Nations agencies, presents the latest analysis of regional migration trends, highlights promising practices by Arab countries to empower migrants and refugees, particularly in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and offers concrete recommendations to protect and empower migrants and refugees. The flagship report was complemented by a [policy brief](#) to highlight the report’s key conclusions and recommendations.

37. The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) was approved by 20 Arab States in 2018 in Marrakesh, Morocco. Arab States committed to periodic regional reviews of the Compact’s implementation (starting from 2020), whose results would be used to inform the first International Migration Review Forum that is expected to be held in 2026. Following the regional review conducted in February 2021 (as reported in a document entitled “[Implementation of activities under the ESCWA programme of work and of recommendations made by the Committee on Social Development at its twelfth session](#)”), many activities and reports were undertaken by ESCWA pursuant to the recommendations, including the publication of the regional review’s “[Outcome document](#)” in March 2022; a report entitled “[The Arab regional GCM review report: progress, priorities, challenges and future prospects](#)”, in collaboration with IOM, the League of Arab States and the United Nations Network on Migration in the Arab Region in May 2022; and a brochure entitled

“[Working together for the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration: Arab regional review](#)”, in collaboration with IOM and the League of Arab States in May 2022. The regional review compiled the results of national reviews to highlight regional trends, and challenges and priorities in the field of migration, while the brochure provided policymakers with insights into the GCM process, migration trends and resultant policy recommendations to ensure safe, orderly and regular migration.

38. The first global International Migration Review Forum (IMRF) was held in May 2022. ESCWA organized a series of regional events to build momentum ahead of, and during, the Forum. In preparation for IMRF, and to brief stakeholders, ESCWA, in partnership with the United Nations Network on Migration for the Arab Region, organized a [Dialogue on the International Migration Review Forum](#) online on 10 February 2022. At IMRF, ESCWA organized two inter-regional events to build cross-regional collaboration and ensure safe, orderly and regular migration. On 19 May 2022, the United Nations regional commissions, including ESCWA, organized an online side event on the theme “[Accelerating Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration implementation](#)” to reflect on gaps, challenges and opportunities in implementing GCM across their respective regions. Moreover, ESCWA, IOM and the Economic Commission for Africa organized a virtual side event on the theme “[Global Compact for Migration: collaboration between Africa and the Arab region](#)” to support the implementation of GCM between the Governments of Kenya, Malawi and Morocco.

39. Building upon the results of the first regional GCM review and of the first IMRF, ESCWA highlighted the key role climate change plays in driving migration, recognized that migration exacerbates resource degradation, and stressed the need for a coherent United Nations approach to migration. Consequently, ESCWA, IOM, the League of Arab States and ILO, in collaboration with the Issue Based Coalition on Migration in the Arab Region, and with support from the Regional United Nations Network on Migration, held an online [regional consultation](#) on the climate change and migration nexus in the Arab region on 24 and 25 October 2022, followed by a [report](#) summarising the discussion.

40. To promote greater United Nations coherence when addressing migration, ESCWA, IOM, the League of Arab States and ILO, in collaboration with the Issue Based Coalition on Migration in the Arab Region, and with support from the Regional United Nations Network on Migration, held a webinar on the theme “[Coalition on migration in the Arab region: technical dialogue with RCOs](#)” on 20 September 2022. The dialogue was supported by a [summary report](#) and a policy brief entitled “Addressing migration issues in the Arab region: briefing for resident coordinators” (forthcoming) to identify key areas of engagement for resident coordinators.

IX. Progress on older persons’ issues

41. The Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA), adopted in 2002, remains the most comprehensive and specialized international framework for guiding global, regional and national efforts to empower and protect older persons. In 2020, ESCWA launched the [fourth regional review of MIPAA](#). The review process included a series of capacity-building workshops for government representatives, and consultative dialogues with stakeholders and parliamentarians to ensure a whole-of-society approach.

42. [Algeria, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, the State of Palestine, Saudi Arabia, the Syrian Arab republic, Tunisia and Yemen](#) participated in the fourth MIPAA regional review process. The [first workshop](#) of the fourth MIPAA regional review was held online on 8 April 2021, and presented the draft guiding template prepared by ESCWA to assist countries in drafting their national review reports. The [second workshop](#) was held on 27 September 2021 to assess progress by countries in preparing their national MIPAA reports. ESCWA then consolidated the findings from the national MIPAA review reports into a regional review report entitled “[Ageing in ESCWA member States: Fourth review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing](#)”, which highlights the need to cater to a rapidly ageing population and provides policy recommendations related to legislation, pension reform, employment, literacy, health care, and care homes.

43. To raise awareness of the fourth MIPAA regional review, ESCWA and the UNFPA Regional Office for Arab States organized two regional consultations: an online [multi-stakeholder dialogue on the fourth MIPAA regional review](#) held on 10 May 2022, and an online [parliamentarians dialogue on MIPAA](#) held on 19 May 2022.

44. The regional review process culminated in a [fourth regional review of MIPAA conference](#), held in Beirut on 1 and 2 June 2022, organized by ESCWA and the UNFPA Regional Office for Arab States. The conference was followed by an [outcome document](#) detailing the key messages agreed at the conference, and from earlier dialogues held with parliamentarians and stakeholders, which informed the Secretary-General's report to the [sixty-first session of the Commission for Social Development](#) held in February 2023. The regional results of the fourth MIPAA review for the Arab region were presented at a [high-level panel discussion](#) by the representative of Jordan, and are outlined in a pamphlet published by ESCWA entitled "[Ageing in the Arab region: fourth review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing: findings from the fourth Arab regional review](#)". At the sixty-first session of the Commission for Social Development, ESCWA organized a side event on the theme "[Leaving no one behind: adopting an age-sensitive lens to policymaking](#)", held online on 13 February 2023.

45. In a similar vein to MIPAA, the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), first held in Cairo in 1994, highlights the interlinkages between population and sustainable development, and the role of population policies in empowering individuals and improving their lives. Under ICPD, countries have committed to undertaking a review every five years to monitor progress, identify emerging trends, and highlight challenges and enabling factors. In October 2022, ESCWA, UNFPA and the League of Arab States launched the [International Conference on Population and Development: sixth regional review 10 years after the Cairo Declaration](#). The review process includes undertaking a series of national reports, capacity-building workshops and multi-stakeholder dialogues, and will culminate in a regional conference and flagship publication in 2023. Key messages emanating from the conference will inform the Secretary-General's report to the fifty-seventh session of the Commission on Population and Development convening in April 2024. The [first workshop](#) was held online on 26 October 2022 to build consensus on the methodology of the review and the proposed timeframe, and to present the guiding template that was developed to assist countries in preparing their national review reports. A [second workshop](#) was held online on 2 February 2023, to assess progress made by Arab countries in the collection of data and information required for the national reports. The second workshop also served as a platform for knowledge exchange between participants from 14 Arab countries.

46. Beyond MIPAA and ICPD, ESCWA continued to deliver on its mandate to advance ageing issues at the regional and national levels, by producing policy-related knowledge products, convening regional and subregional meetings, and providing technical assistance to member States.

47. ESCWA issued the [Population and Development Report Issue No. 9: Building Forward Better for Older Persons in the Arab Region](#), which focuses on the care ecosystem for older persons, in particular social protection and long-term care. The report also includes an overview of the latest demographic trends in the Arab region, and a roadmap to protect and empower older persons and ensure that all people in the region can age with dignity. The report was complemented by an [executive summary](#) that highlights its key conclusions and recommendations, and three policy briefs entitled "[Ageing trends and socioeconomic status of older persons in the Arab region](#)", "[Social protection for older persons in the Arab region](#)", and "[Long-term care for older persons in the Arab region](#)".

48. To support policymakers in mainstreaming ageing into national policies and strategies, ESCWA developed the "[Mainstreaming ageing in policymaking in Arab countries: policy toolkit](#)". The tool seeks to build knowledge among policymakers on how to include older persons, and provides guiding questions to ensure that ageing issues are mainstreamed in policies related to social protection, income security, health, ageing in place, social inclusion, an enabling environment, and protection from discrimination and abuse. The toolkit was subsequently developed into an interactive [tool for policy development](#), which was launched in June 2022 and is currently available in Arabic.

49. To commemorate the International Day for Older Persons, which was held on the theme “Resilience of older persons in a changing world” on 1 October 2022, ESCWA launched an online social media campaign and an online panel discussion entitled “[Older persons in the Arab World: protection and empowerment](#)”, which was held on 3 October 2022 in collaboration with the Regional Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. The event highlighted the rights of older persons, especially women, under international human rights frameworks.

X. Implementation of recommendations made by the Committee on Social Development at its thirteenth session

50. At its thirteenth session, the Committee on Social Development made several recommendations to member states and to the ESCWA secretariat. The following section sets out those recommendations and the actions taken to implement them.

Recommendation

Support member States in developing comprehensive social policies linking national social and economic visions, using the ESCWA framework for social policy integration.

Action taken

ESCWA held the [Arab Forum for Equality](#) in Amman on 30 and 31 May 2022, and published [Inequality in the Arab Region: A Ticking Time Bomb](#).

ESCWA organized an online policy dialogue on the theme “[Poverty, Inequality and integrated social policies](#)” on the sidelines of the 2022 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, which complemented a policy brief entitled “[Key policy directions in the Arab region for ensuring the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#)”.

ESCWA published the “[National report on the compatibility of the wage policy with the principles of social justice in Lebanon](#)”, the “[National report on the compatibility of wage policy with the principles of social justice in the State of Palestine](#)”, and the “[National report on the compatibility of wage policy with the principles of social justice in Yemen](#)”.

Recommendation

Prioritize providing technical support to member States through capacity-building and support in the development of national policies, strategies and programmes using the nexus approach to the following areas: inclusion of persons with disabilities, ensuring the rights of older persons and migrants, improving access to the labour market, developing social protection systems, mainstreaming the principles of social justice, combating poverty and promoting urban development.

Action taken

ESCWA published two technical reports entitled “[Obstructed poverty reduction: growth-passthrough analysis](#)” and “[Counting the world’s poor: back to Engel’s law](#)”.

ESCWA prepared a study on the distribution of personal wealth in the ESCWA region entitled “[Greater concentration and relative erosion of wealth in the Arab region: the legacy of COVID-19?](#)” and an associated policy brief entitled “[Rising wealth inequality in the Arab region amid COVID-19](#)”.

ESCWA published the [Situation Report on International Migration 2021: Building Forward Better for Migrants and Refugees in the Arab Region](#), and an associated policy brief.

ESCWA launched the [fourth regional review of MIPAA](#); supported national MIPAA reviews in [Algeria, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, the State of Palestine, Saudi Arabia, the Syrian Arab republic, Tunisia and Yemen](#); published a regional report entitled “[Ageing in ESCWA member States: fourth review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing](#)”; and held a [conference on the fourth regional review of MIPAA](#) in Beirut on 1 and 2 June 2022.

ESCWA issued the *[Population and Development Report Issue No. 9: Building Forward Better for Older Persons in the Arab Region](#)*.

For further information on technical support to Governments, please refer to the document on “Technical cooperation activities” submitted to the current session of the Committee on Social Development under agenda item 5.

Recommendation

Strengthen the activities of the Intersessional Group of Experts on Disability and develop its work in line with regional priorities in integrating persons with disabilities, with particular attention to the intersection of issues faced by persons with disabilities with those faced by other vulnerable social groups such as older persons and women.

Action taken

ESCWA held the “[Intersessional Group of Experts on Disability: sixth annual meeting](#)” virtually on 29 November 2021.

ESCWA held the “[Intersessional Group of Experts on Disability: seventh annual meeting](#)” in Beirut on 18 and 19 October 2022.

For further information on the activities of the Group of Experts on Disability, please refer to the document on “Activities of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Disability” submitted to the current session of the Committee on Social Development under agenda item 6.

Recommendation

Strengthen the activities of the Expert Group on Social Protection Reform, particularly with regard to leveraging successful experiences in countries in the region and the global South generally.

Action taken

ESCWA organized the following four meetings at which the Expert Group on Social Protection Reform (EGSPR) discussed social protection priorities and reforms: a preparatory/technical meeting (online, 21 October 2021) for the Arab Ministerial Forum 2021 on the theme “[The future of social protection in the Arab region: building a vision for a post-COVID-19 reality](#)” (online, 30 November 2021); the fifth EGSPR meeting on the theme “[Reforming social protection systems in Arab countries](#)” (online, 19 January 2022); the [sixth EGSPR meeting](#) (Amman, 31 May 2022); and the seventh EGSPR meeting on the theme “[Food security: extending social insurance to persons in non-standard forms of work](#)” (online, 4 November 2022).

For further information on EGSPR activities, refer the document on “Activities of the Expert Group on Social Protection Reform” submitted to the current session of the Committee on Social Development under agenda item 7.

Recommendation

Link activities aimed at developing social protection systems to economic recovery efforts from the COVID-19 pandemic in particular, and policies aimed at increasing employment and economic growth in general.

Action taken

ESCWA prepared the 2022 Annual Digest of Social Protection Reforms in the Arab Region (forthcoming) and a trilingual social protection glossary (forthcoming).

Recommendation

Continue to support member States in measuring multidimensional poverty and developing policies to reduce it and address its different dimensions.

Action taken

ESCWA prepared a technical paper entitled “[Multidimensional poverty in Lebanon: A proposed measurement framework, and an assessment of the socioeconomic crisis](#)”, and associated policy briefs entitled “[Multidimensional poverty in Lebanon \(2019–2021\): painful reality and uncertain prospects](#)” and “[Inequality in Lebanon: an ever-growing gap](#)”.

Recommendation

Assist member States wishing to use the policy tools developed by ESCWA through national training workshops and technical support to adapt these tools to national conditions and needs, particularly for the least developed countries and countries affected by conflicts and emergencies.

Action taken

ESCWA organized workshops in Lebanon ([Social Justice Policy Gap Assessment Tool: wage policy in Lebanon](#)), the Syrian Arab Republic ([Social Justice Policy Gap Assessment Tool: assessing wage policy in the Syrian Arab Republic](#)), and Yemen ([Mainstreaming social justice principles in public policies in Yemen](#)) to assist member States in using PGAT.

ESCWA organized two expert group meetings on the themes “[Multidimensional Poverty Index: simulation and optimization](#)” held online on 10 February 2022, and “[Policymaking tools and measuring money-metric poverty](#)” held in Amman on 20 and 21 June 2022.

ESCWA developed the “[Mainstreaming ageing in policymaking in Arab countries: policy toolkit](#)”.

Recommendation

Support States in preparing for the future change in jobs and skills under the fourth industrial revolution using the ESCWA Job Monitor and develop it as needed and based on different national contexts.

Action taken

ESCWA launched the [ESCWA Skills Monitor](#) at the Arab Forum for Equality, which was complemented by a regional report entitled “[The Arab region may be missing the Fourth Industrial Revolution: Arab skills are still stuck in the past](#)”, and an expert group meeting on the theme “[The future of work in the Arab region: skills monitoring](#)” held in Beirut on 22 October 2021.

Recommendation

Continue to coordinate with the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States, the Arab Centre for Social Policy Studies and Multidimensional Poverty, United Nations organizations and regional organizations on issues of common concern.

Action taken

ESCWA organized a plenary [expert group meeting](#) with partners on the Second Arab Multidimensional Poverty Report, held in Amman on 27 October 2021.

In partnership with the League of Arab States and UN-Women, ESCWA organized a regional workshop on “[Women’s economic empowerment and care economies and policies](#)”, held in Beirut on 27 and 28 June 2022.

In collaboration with IOM, the League of Arab States and the United Nations Network on Migration, ESCWA conducted a regional review of the implementation of GCM, and used the results to inform IMRF.

ESCWA, UNFPA and the League of Arab States launched the [International Conference on Population and Development: sixth regional review 10 years after the Cairo Declaration](#).
