



Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

Committee on Social Development
Fifteenth session
Cairo, 3 June 2024



Item 3 of the provisional agenda

Provisional agenda and annotations

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Annotations

1. Opening of the session

The fifteenth session of the Committee on Social Development will convene on Monday, 3 June 2024, at 9.30 a.m in Cairo. The representative of Kuwait, which chaired the fourteenth session of the Committee, will deliver a welcome speech, followed by an opening statement by the representative of the ESCWA secretariat.

2. Election of officers

Rule 18 of the rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia states: “Member States shall chair the sessions of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission on a rotating basis, in the Arabic alphabetical order employed by the United Nations. Unless the Commission decides otherwise, those bodies shall elect all their other officers”.^{*} The Committee shall elect two vice-chairs and a rapporteur from representatives of member States.

3. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

Rule 8 of the rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, which applies to subsidiary bodies, states: “At the beginning of each session, once the Chair has assumed his/her duties in accordance with rule 12, the Commission shall adopt the agenda for that session on the basis of the provisional agenda”. Pursuant to that rule, the Committee will adopt the provisional agenda and annotations for this session in document E/ESCWA/C.2/2024/L.1 and the organization of work in document E/ESCWA/C.2/2024/L.2, or as amended.

Follow-up issues

4. Implementation of activities under the ESCWA programme plan and of recommendations made by the Committee on Social Development at its fourteenth session (E/ESCWA/C.2/2024/3)

The Committee will review the activities implemented in the field of social development since its fourteenth session, held in Beirut on 8 June 2023, including activities under the ESCWA programme plan and those undertaken by the ESCWA secretariat pursuant to the recommendations issued by the Committee at its fourteenth session.

The Committee is invited to review these activities and provide guidance to the ESCWA secretariat on the way forward.

5. Technical cooperation activities (E/ESCWA/C.2/2024/4)

The Committee will consider technical cooperation activities carried out by the ESCWA secretariat since its fourteenth session in the field of social development upon member States’ requests, including advisory services, training workshops and capacity-building activities.

The Committee is invited to review these activities and discuss technical cooperation priorities and needs for the coming years.

^{*} ESCWA member States in the Arabic alphabetical order are as follows: Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Tunisia, Algeria, the Syrian Arab Republic, Djibouti, the Sudan, Somalia, Iraq, Oman, the State of Palestine, Qatar, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Egypt, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Mauritania and Yemen.

6. Activities of the Intersessional Group of Experts on Disability (E/ESCWA/C.2/2024/5)

The Committee will review the activities of the Intersessional Group of Experts on Disability (IGED), which was established in 2015, pursuant to a recommendation made by the Committee at its tenth session (Rabat, 8-9 September 2015), to follow up on disability issues between the sessions of the Committee, support member States in implementing the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and increase regional cooperation in that field.

The Committee is invited to review the activities and priorities of the Intersessional Group of Experts on Disability for 2025, and provide comments thereon to guide its work in the coming period.

7. Activities of the Expert Group on Social Protection Reform (E/ESCWA/C.2/2024/6)

The Committee will review the activities of the Expert Group on Social Protection Reform (EGSPR), which was established in 2019, pursuant to a recommendation made by the Committee at its twelfth session (Beirut, 8-9 October 2019). The Expert Group on Social Protection Reform aims to support regional coordination, cooperation and the exchange of experiences on social protection issues, including expanding social protection systems and improving their quality.

The Committee is invited to review the activities of the Expert Group on Social Protection Reform, take note of the progress made, and provide comments thereon to guide its work in the coming period.

Inequality in the Arab region

8. Reducing inequality in times of crisis (E/ESCWA/C.2/2024/7)

The Committee will discuss the challenge of high inequality in the Arab region, and how multiple and overlapping crises have accentuated the inequalities faced by some countries and population groups.

The Committee is invited to provide comments and recommendations to enrich the discussion.

9. Growth and inequality challenges and responses in the Arab region (E/ESCWA/C.2/2024/8)

The Committee will discuss how crises, including conflicts, have interrupted economic growth in the Arab region, and the impact this has had on economic inequality. It will also discuss how structural leakages have prevented growth from passing through to households, which has spurred an increase in poverty in the region.

The Committee is invited to provide comments and recommendations to enrich the discussion.

10. The squeezing of the middle class in the Arab region (E/ESCWA/C.2/2024/9)

The Committee will discuss how multiple and overlapping crises in the Arab region have squeezed the middle class, especially through limited formal employment opportunities and exclusion from some social protection programmes. The Committee will also discuss the growing vulnerability of the middle class, and policy solutions to include it in meaningful and productive employment.

The Committee is invited to provide comments and recommendations to enrich the discussion.

11. Date and venue of the sixteenth session of the Committee on Social Development

The Committee shall agree on the date and venue of its sixteenth session, to be held in 2025.

12. Other matters

This item will cover any other matters that the Committee may decide to discuss when adopting the agenda.

13. Adoption of recommendations made by the Committee on Social Development at its fifteenth session

The Committee will consider the draft recommendations for discussion and adoption.
