

**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL
COUNCIL**

Distr.
LIMITED
E/ESCWA/C2/2019/4
7 August 2019
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

Committee on Social Development
Twelfth session
Beirut, 8-9 October 2019



Item 5 of the provisional agenda

Technical cooperation activities**Summary**

The present document provides an overview of technical cooperation activities undertaken by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) under subprogramme 2 on social development since the eleventh session of the Committee on Social Development held in Khartoum, the Sudan, on 17-18 October 2017. These activities include advisory services, training workshops and capacity-building activities funded by the Regular Programme for Technical Cooperation as well as the United Nations Development Account.

Members of the Committee are invited to take note of implemented technical cooperation activities and the proposed areas of technical cooperation, and to comment thereon.

CONTENTS

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
Introduction	1-7	3
<i>Chapter</i>		
I. ADVISORY SERVICES.....	8	3
II. WORKSHOPS.....	9	5
III. CONCLUDING PROPOSALS	10-11	7

Introduction

1. The Regular Programme for Technical Cooperation (RPTC) plays an essential role in the implementation of the programme of work of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA). It highlights one of the roles of ESCWA as a repository of expertise that provides technical guidance to policymakers, in complement with its consensus-building and knowledge generation functions.
2. Technical cooperation activities are usually provided at the request of member States and designed to meet their specific needs. While maintaining the flexibility of such activities in addressing emerging issues, ESCWA has been recently coordinating with member States on the development of national frameworks for technical cooperation. Through bilateral multisectoral meetings with various ministries, the frameworks aim to identify priority areas for technical support and the results to be achieved. These frameworks are expected to increase the effectiveness and impact of RPTC activities and enhance transparency and accountability in implementation.
3. ESCWA technical cooperation work in the field of social development for 2018-2019 aimed to strengthen the capacity of member countries to develop and adopt rights-based social policies and programmes that promote social inclusion, social protection and social justice and participatory development, as well as supporting national and regional initiatives related to mainstreaming migration and integrating issues of concern to youth, older persons and persons with disabilities into development policies, plans and programmes.
4. In this respect, the subprogramme responded to requests of member States by providing advisory services and organizing national, subregional and regional capacity-building workshops in the following areas: disability, urban development, social justice and inequality, participatory democracy, consensus-building, social mediation and implementation of the 2030 Agenda and mainstreaming the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in development planning. The subprogramme also made use of its normative and analytical strengths for the development of training material and the documentation and dissemination of regional experiences and best practices. In addition, a regional adviser on social justice issues and a regional adviser on disability issues have been recently recruited to better respond to requests received from ESCWA member States in these areas.
5. To ensure human rights and dignity of older persons and migrants in the Arab region and duly promote their inclusion and participation as stipulated by Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, a number of national and regional workshops and consultations were organized for government officials and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The States of Jordan, Lebanon, Oman, Morocco, Tunisia and the Sudan all benefited from technical support on integrating key population issues into national development.
6. Furthermore, ESCWA has provided technical support to Egypt, Iraq and the Sudan and collaborated with the League of Arab States (LAS) in workshops and meetings on disability policy, such as one focused on developing an Arab Disability Indicator Framework to improve data collection and SDG reporting on persons with disabilities.
7. The present document provides an overview of technical cooperation activities undertaken by ESCWA subprogramme 2 on social development since the eleventh session of the Committee on Social Development held in Khartoum, the Sudan, in October 2017. These activities include advisory services, training workshops and capacity-building activities funded by RPTC as well as the United Nations Development Account.

I. ADVISORY SERVICES

8. Table 1 sets out advisory services provided by the secretariat in the area of social development, categorized by recipient country.

TABLE 1. ADVISORY SERVICES

Recipient country	Activity
Egypt	National Consultation on Violence Against Women with Disabilities (6-7 November 2018). Participation in the Arab Forum of Women with Disabilities (AFOWD): Collaborating for a Safe and Barrier-Free World (28-29 April 2018).
Iraq	Conducting an institutional assessment of the needs of the Iraqi Commission for Persons with Disabilities and Special Needs to modify its role. (October 2018). Revising legislation in line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (in progress). The mission is implemented in cooperation with the Jordanian Higher Council for the Rights of persons with disabilities. Three-day advisory mission to support the Commission for Persons with Disabilities and Special Needs in Iraq to build and implement a rights-based approach to disability. (30 April to 2 May 2019).
Jordan	National workshop on population priorities in Jordan: framework and methodology development for in-depth studies related to selected priority areas, Amman, (19-20 December 2017). Organization of a series of trainings and workshops, at request of Jordan Higher Population Council, to support capacity building of the council's staff with civil society participation. (Between July and November 2018).
Kuwait	Participation in the Fourth International Symposium on ICF Education (6-7 April 2019).
Lebanon	ESCWA continues to assist Lebanon's Ministry of Social Affairs to formulate its ageing strategy and serves as a member of the Steering Committee (which includes the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Lebanon Country Office, entrusted with overseeing the development process).
Morocco	Provision of advisory services to the Ministry of Family Solidarity, Equality and Social Development and held initial workshop on e-accessibility for persons with disabilities, exploring initiatives and plans. (Rabat, 27-29 November 2017).
Oman	Provision of technical advice on the draft outline of the national population strategy and its workplan, at the request of Oman's Supreme Council for Planning.
Sudan	National Workshop Towards Drafting a National Migration Strategy (Khartoum, 14 August 2018). Participation in a LAS workshop on persons with disabilities in the context of implementation of the Agenda 2030 (23-24 January 2018).
Syrian Arab Republic	Participation in an ESCWA mission to the Syrian Arab Republic to discuss the needs of various ministries in preparation of the framework for technical cooperation (3-5 June 2018).
Tunisia	Training of Trainers on designing and implementing equality-oriented public policies and programmes, in partnership with the Ministry of Social Affairs (15-18 April 2019). Provision of technical advisory services to assist Tunisian policymakers in implementing new measurements of socioeconomic inequalities and effectively designing and implementing evidence based and equality-oriented social protection, labour and green fiscal policies. (April 2019) ESCWA advisory mission on the Social Expenditure Monitor project and fiscal policies. The aim was to kickstart the pilot project. (22-24 October 2018).

II. WORKSHOPS

9. Table 2 sets out workshops held as part of technical cooperation services to build capacity in the field of social development since the eleventh session of the Committee.

TABLE 2. WORKSHOPS

Topic	Objective	Venue	Date
Capacity-building workshop on the “Toolkit on the Design of Social Protection Policies Using a Participatory Approach”	The training aimed at strengthening national capacities in Egypt, Mauritania, Morocco, the Sudan and Tunisia on the use of the toolkit for building national capacities in the design of participatory social protection policies.	Rabat	26-29 November 2018
A workshop to pilot the guide on Mainstreaming Social Justice in Development Plans, Policies and Programmes	Government officials from Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon, Morocco, the State of Palestine, and the Sudan concerned with public policy development and implementation tested the guide and provided feedback on its content, relevance and applicability to the Arab region.	Beirut	12-14 September 2017
Capacity-building workshops on the “Toolkit on the analysis and measurement of socioeconomic inequalities in the Arab region”	The workshops aimed to train Government officials from various ministries as well as other national stakeholders, including civil society representatives, on the utilization of the toolkits.	Tunisia	4-6 September 2017
		The Sudan	1-3 August 2017
Capacity Building workshops on the “Toolkit on the design and implementation of equality-oriented policies in the Arab countries”	The workshops aimed to train Government officials from various ministries as well as other national stakeholders, including civil society representatives, on the utilization of the toolkits.	Tunisia	1-3 November 2017
		Tunisia	22-25 January 2018
		The Sudan	19-21 November 2017
Workshops on Enhancing the Capacities of Arab Youth for Participation in Public Life and Decision-making Processes	The workshop aimed at 1) testing the newly created manual on enhancing youth participation in decision-making processes; 2) introducing the concept, principles, dimensions and tools of Youth participation; and 3) identifying the situation and challenges of participatory governance and youth participation in the Arab region.	Jordan	8-10 August 2017
		Kuwait	22-24 August 2017
		Tunisia	13-15 September 2017
Regional workshop on Strengthening the Capacity of Governments in the Arab Region to Respond to the Needs of Youth in Formulating Inclusive and Sustainable Development Policies	The workshop was attended by youth activists and leaders, civil society representatives and Government officials from the member countries as well as experts from other academic institutions.	Beirut	30-31 October 2017

Topic	Objective	Venue	Date
Subregional Training Workshop on Building Capacities for Partnership in Democratic Governance (PDG) (Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Syrian Arab Republic and Tunisia)	The workshop focused on increasing the knowledge and understanding of policymakers, local leaders and civil society actors in target countries of the participatory approaches and techniques to public policymaking. The programme also aimed to enhance their capacities to introduce and accelerate good governance reforms and to effectively manage transitions to democracy.	Beirut	6-8 November 2018
Training of Trainers workshop on Capacity-Building for PDG	The workshop aimed to train the same participants as above on delivering the PDG training including replicating and implementing the programme in their respective countries and expanding its applicability to their specific contexts.	Beirut	11-13 December 2018
Regional Workshop on Migration and the Sustainable Development Goals in the Arab Region (in partnership with International Organization for Migration, LAS, United Nations agencies members of the Working Group on International Migration)	Arab officials from various ministries benefited from this timely training on achieving migration-related SDGs, organized by co-chairs of the Working Group on International Migration in the region and in cooperation with members of the Group.	Cairo	16-17 July 2018
Workshop on Social Protection Reform in the Arab region	The workshop aimed to enhance the capacities of ESCWA member countries to undertake reforms through peer-learning and discussions of recent and ongoing reforms of social insurance, social assistance and health care in the Arab region.	Beirut	25-28 February 2019
Training of Trainers on National Urban Policies	The workshop aimed to increase the understanding of urbanization and the challenges and opportunities for the implementation of National Urban Policies (NUP) in the Arab region, and to explain the NUP Process (Feasibility, Diagnostics, Formulation, Implementation and Monitoring and evaluation) and their thematic application.	Beirut	17-18 June 2019
Workshop on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in the Labour Market	The training supported participants in developing policies and practices leading towards increased employment of persons with disabilities and facilitating an enabling environment. The workshop also strengthened and created new partnerships between different stakeholders from the public, civil and private sector. The workshop was attended by participants from Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, the State of Palestine, Qatar, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia and Yemen.	Beirut	5-6 December 2017

Topic	Objective	Venue	Date
Workshop on establishing an Arab Disability Indicator Framework and improving data collection on persons with disabilities	The workshop aimed to develop an Arab Disability Indicator Framework to assist policymakers and statisticians to implement and monitor the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the SDGs. It included participants from Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, the State of Palestine, Qatar, the Sudan, Tunisia and Yemen).	Cairo	18-20 September 2018

III. CONCLUDING PROPOSALS

10. Member States are invited to follow up on the implementation of the technical cooperation frameworks in place and to ensure they include a social development component, in line with national priorities.

11. Member States are encouraged to make use of ESCWA technical cooperation services in the following proposed areas and in accordance with national needs:

- Supporting member countries in the development of policies and programmes aimed at accelerating the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the Arab region;
- Building member countries' capacities in enhancing inclusive social development, based on internationally agreed development and human rights frameworks, such as the social development targets in the 2030 Agenda and the New Urban Agenda;
- Supporting member countries in developing policies and actions that protect the rights of migrants and improve their lives in line the principles and objectives of the Global Compact on Migration;
- Supporting member countries in mainstreaming youth and older persons' issues of relevance into development plans and programmes;
- Supporting member countries in their formulation and/or implementation of more equality-oriented and socially just policies and of measures to increase civil society participation;
- Supporting member countries in reforming and designing social protection policies.
