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**PROPOSED PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR THE BIENNIUM 2010-2011
IN THE FIELD OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT****Summary**

This document presents the various activities that will be implemented by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) in the field of social development under its programme of work for the biennium 2010-2011. The proposed activities have been formulated with reference to subprogramme 2, Integrated social policies, of ESCWA Strategic Framework for the Biennium 2010-2011.

The Committee on Social Development is invited to review and discuss the elements of the proposed programme of work and comment on the listed activities and outputs, the extent to which they meet the needs and priorities of member countries and their relevance to the expected accomplishments in the field of social development.

SUBPROGRAMME 2: INTEGRATED SOCIAL POLICIES

A. ORIENTATION OF SUBPROGRAMME 2 FOR THE BIENNIUM 2010-2011

1. Responsibility for implementing the subprogramme lies with the Social Development Division. The programme of work has been formulated with reference to subprogramme 2 of programme 18 of the United Nations strategic framework for the period 2010-2011. The objective of this subprogramme is to strengthen a vision of social policy that is based on social equity and equal opportunity for all, taking into consideration regional specificities and cultural sensitivities.

B. EXPECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND INDICATORS OF ACHIEVEMENT

Expected accomplishment	Indicators of achievement
(a) Enhanced capacity of national Governments to integrate social equity priorities and perspectives in public policies	(a) (i) Increased number of exploratory and follow-up measures pursued by Governments, with ESCWA assistance, indicating increased understanding of social policy options and implications (ii) Increased number of social policy mechanisms and instruments adopted by Governments, with ESCWA assistance
(b) Enhanced capacity of member countries to address the implications of demographic changes with particular emphasis on the youth bulge, migration and good urban governance for national policymaking processes, and to adopt relevant policies	(b) (i) Increased number of follow-up measures taken up by member countries, with ESCWA assistance, indicating increased understanding of the socio-demographic implications of the youth bulge for migration and development (ii) Increased number of measures and policy provisions adopted by member countries, with ESCWA assistance, to integrate demographic changes, with particular emphasis on the youth bulge and migration in development plans and programmes (iii) Increased number of urban governance initiatives undertaken by member countries, with ESCWA assistance, in order to address secure housing for poor people
(c) Enhanced participation of civil society in social policy dialogue and in the formulation of Government social policy	(c) (i) Increased number of consultative processes, networks and agreements on shared social policy agendas forged with ESCWA assistance (ii) Increased number of instances in which civil society institutions, including the media, advocate social issues and participate in social policy processes with ESCWA assistance

C. STRATEGY

2. Experiences around the world have so far proved that a “growth-first philosophy” does not necessarily deliver socially stable societies or achieve equitable, gender-sensitive and environmentally friendly development dividends. On the contrary, countries that have achieved higher social development dividends and sustained equitable social well-being for all ultimately achieved those targets by ensuring synergy between economic and social objectives, adopting an integrated social policy framework that incorporates a policy vision and equal access to basic social and economic services, and establishing mechanisms for consensus-building between public offices and interest groups.

3. The aforementioned three-tier structure can best be captured at the following levels:

(a) The vision and public policymaking level, which usually rests with the duty-bearers or Governments and institutions that hold public office and are responsible for formulating, implementing and monitoring public policies, including social policy;

(b) The management and coordination level of social services, provided either directly through Government departments, or indirectly through institutions of civil society at the central and subnational level, prompting a stronger role for civil society institutions in monitoring the impact of public and social policies on different groups and society;

(c) The programme and advocacy level, undertaking an evidence-based social policy analysis, advancing knowledge and documenting the demographic, social and economic conditions and trends of groups of interest or issues of relevance to equitable and sustainable social development.

4. The subprogramme will build on the experience gained during the past bienniums, and continue to advocate equity and social justice as guiding principles for public policymaking in member countries and civil society organizations in the region. During the biennium 2010-2011, specific attention will be paid to promoting and implementing an integrated social policy approach and devising measures that mainstream issues of the youth bulge, the disadvantaged and other vulnerable groups in public policymaking processes, in addition to focusing on population mobility and good urban governance, while recognizing the role of social safety nets in maintaining social and political stability.

5. Having documented and disseminated knowledge about social policy tools and institutional mechanisms, the subprogramme will seek to build the capacity of member countries to adopt and institutionalize social policy in their public policymaking, including the finding of mechanisms to finance social development. The subprogramme will also continue to assist member countries in the implementation of internationally agreed plans of action and recommendations, including the Millennium Development Goals.

6. In order to achieve the expected accomplishments, the subprogramme will conduct meetings and undertake normative field analyses and technical cooperation activities, including advisory services, capacity development workshops and field projects. Social policy mechanisms in selected member countries will be tested and findings disseminated through publications, meetings and available information technology. Partnerships will be further strengthened with other regional commissions, United Nations agencies, international and regional organizations and civil society groups.

D. EXTERNAL FACTORS

7. The subprogramme is expected to achieve its expected accomplishments on the assumption that: (a) member countries remain committed to achieving the internationally agreed goals and continue to support activities that promote an integrated social policy approach; (b) there is a political will to engage in social policy dialogue and to strengthen partnership with national and regional social policy stakeholders;

(c) Governments of the region will commit to seeking harmony and balance between economic priorities and social outcomes; (d) extrabudgetary financial resources will be commensurate with planned activities; and (e) minimum political stability and secure working environment are prevalent.

E. OUTPUTS

8. During the biennium 2010-2011, subprogramme 2 is expected to deliver the following final outputs:

(a) *Servicing of intergovernmental and expert bodies*

(i) *ESCWA*

Report of the Committee on Social Development on its seventh session (2010, expected accomplishments (a) (b) and (c)).

(ii) *Committee on Social Development*

- a. Substantive servicing of the eighth session of the Committee on Social Development (2011, expected accomplishments (a) (b) and (c));
- b. Reports on: Recommended policy approaches favouring social inclusion in the ESCWA region (2010, expected accomplishment (a)); Youth and unemployment in ESCWA member countries (2010, expected accomplishment (b)); and Civil society participation in public policy information (2010, expected accomplishment (c)).

(iii) *Ad hoc expert group meetings*

- a. Follow-up to the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY) to the year 2000 and beyond in the Arab region (2010, expected accomplishment (b));
- b. Equitable distribution of urban services: overcoming challenges (2010, expected accomplishment (b));
- c. Review of the publication “Comparative analysis of civil society participation in public policy formulation in selected Arab countries (2010, expected accomplishment (c));
- d. Review of the Integrated Social Policy Report No. 4: Building consensus on social policy (2011, expected accomplishment (a));
- e. Civil society forum on operationalizing recommendations for participation in public policy formulation (2011, expected accomplishment (c));

(b) *Other substantive activities (regular budget)*

(i) *Recurrent publications*

- a. Integrated Social Policy Report No. 4: Building consensus on social policy (2011, expected accomplishments (a) and (c));
- b. Population and Development Report No. 5: Policy analysis of gaps and impediments to the implementation of WPAY in the Arab region (2011, expected accomplishment (b)).

- (ii) *Non-recurrent publications*
 - a. New challenges to local authorities: Good governance and equitable urban services in selected cities (2010, expected accomplishment (b));
 - b. Comparative analysis of civil society participation in public policy formulation in selected Arab countries (2010, expected accomplishment (c)).
- (iii) *Booklets, fact sheets, wall charts, information kits*
 - a. Social development bulletins (two each in 2010 and 2011, expected accomplishments (a), (b) and (c));
 - b. Pamphlets on the work of ESCWA in the field of social development (one each in 2010 and 2011, expected accomplishments (a), (b) and (c));
 - c. Brochures on the special themes of the forty-eighth and forty-ninth sessions of the United Nations Commission on Social Development (one each in 2010 and 2011, expected accomplishments (a), (b) and (c));
 - d. Demographic profiles of the Arab countries (2011, expected accomplishment (b));
 - e. Information kit on enhancing civil society participation in public policy formulation (2011, expected accomplishment (c)).
- (iv) *Technical material*
 - a. Guide on selected social policy approach (2010, expected accomplishment (a));
 - b. Working paper: Review of regional and international experiences with institutional change promoting social inclusion (2010, expected accomplishment (a));
 - c. Working paper: A conceptual framework for integrating international migration in the development planning process (2010, expected accomplishment (b));
 - d. E-discussions on the proposed outline of Integrated Social Policy Report No. 4 (2010, expected accomplishment (a));
 - e. Social Policy Briefs (one each in 2010 and 2011, expected accomplishment (b));
 - f. Technical paper: Good practices in adopting the Social Policy Guide for Urban Observatories in selected cities of the ESCWA region (2011, expected accomplishment (b));
 - g. Technical paper: Monitoring and evaluation of social policy by Arab civil society (2011, expected accomplishment (c));
 - h. Maintenance and updating of the Social Development Division home page (2010-2011, expected accomplishments (a), (b) and (c));
 - i. Maintenance and updating of the Population and Information Network (POPIN) website (2010, 2011, expected accomplishments (a), (b) and (c)).

(c) *Technical cooperation (extrabudgetary)*

(i) *Advisory services*

Advisory services at the request of member countries to implement capacity-building programmes on the participatory social development approach (2010-2011, expected accomplishment (c)).

(ii) *Training courses, seminars and workshops*

- a. Subregional training on a proposed social policy approach and entry points (2011, expected accomplishment (a));
- b. Regional training on enhancing the capacities of urban observatories in the collection and analysis of urban services and urban poverty indicators (2011, expected accomplishment (b));
- c. Regional training workshop on enhancing civil society and Government participation in policy formulation (2011, expected accomplishment (c)).

(iii) *Field projects*

- a. Promoting national dialogue on social policy (2010-2011, expected accomplishment (a));
- b. Strengthening national capacities to formulate youth policies: Responding to WPAY (2010-2011, expected accomplishment (b));
- c. Strengthening national capabilities to deal with international migration: Maximizing development benefits and minimizing negative impact [United Nations Development Account] (2010-2011, expected accomplishment (b));
- d. Enhancing participatory human development in post-conflict countries in Western Asia [United Nations Development Account] (2010-2011, expected accomplishment (c)).
