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**REVISED PROGRAMME OF WORK AND PRIORITIES
FOR THE BIENNIUM 2002-2003**

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SUBPROGRAMME 1

INTEGRATED POLICIES FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF REGIONAL RESOURCES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

A. ORIENTATION OF THE SUBPROGRAMME FOR THE BIENNIUM

1. This subprogramme is implemented by the Sustainable Development and Productivity Division. The programme of work has been formulated with reference to programme 18, subprogramme 1 of the revised medium-term plan for 2002-2005.
2. The objective of this subprogramme is to have a positive impact on regional integration and cooperation among the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) member countries through concerted approaches to the integrated sustainable management of water and energy and the production sectors.
3. The key issues that must be addressed by this subprogramme relate to the acute shortage of water; limited energy and water supplies in rural and remote areas; limited intraregional and interregional cooperation in the development of concerted sustainable water and energy management strategies; and the need to formulate strategies aimed at integrating environmental issues into development planning.
4. The subprogramme will focus on supporting national efforts to further the sustainable management of water and energy resources and the use of more plentiful energy resources in order to offset the scarcity of water resources. It will also focus on increasing efficient water and energy resource use in the production sectors. Special attention will be accorded to increasing public participation in the production, energy, water and environment-related decision-making process.
5. Special emphasis will also be placed on strengthening national capacities with respect to renewable energy resources, namely, wind and solar power; improving water use in the agricultural and other sectors; and making preparations to establish a mechanism for the development and management of shared groundwater resources in the region.
6. Assistance will be provided to member countries in preparing a regional assessment of the progress made towards sustainable development, to be submitted to the forthcoming World Summit on Sustainable Development. Efforts will also be made to raise awareness of the key issues to be addressed at the Summit and formulate common positions in relation thereto.
7. Preparations will continue for a regional certification and accreditation scheme and the provision of assistance to small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in enhancing competitiveness and productivity.
8. The subprogramme will assist in raising awareness of the gender dimension in the water, energy and production sectors and in promoting an approach based on gender equity and equality in the relevant sectors.
9. The target end-users and beneficiaries of this subprogramme are public authorities concerned with water, energy and environmental issues; private and public institutions concerned with the productivity and competitiveness of the agricultural and industrial sectors; rural communities; and the institutions of civil society.
10. Expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement are listed below.

Expected accomplishments	Indicators of achievement
(a) Improved policy frameworks and the wider application by member countries, of economically viable, environmentally friendly technological options to rationalize the use and enhance the sustainability of water and energy resources;	(a) Number of countries responding favourably to water and energy policy recommendations and technological options recommended by ESCWA for the water and energy sectors; an increased capacity to use solar and wind energy among member countries;
(b) Increased awareness and application in the countries of the region of internationally recognized standards with respect to the integrated management of water, renewable energy resources and the environment;	(b) Number of countries applying internationally recognized environmental standards and protocols, especially in relation to water and energy resources and the production sectors;
(c) Heightened state of preparation in the countries of the region for the World Summit on Sustainable Development;	(c) Positive feedback from participants on preparations initiated by ESCWA for and follow-up to the World Summit;
(d) Support for the adoption of standardization and accreditation schemes proposed by ESCWA;	(d) Number of countries where innovative technology and management initiatives are increasingly being adopted in order to enhance the competitiveness of the production sector;
(e) Improved conditions for the development of SMEs through the wider diffusion of information on related support institutions and services and greater expertise in the development of networking among such enterprises.	(e) Demand for and feedback on publications on SMEs.

B. ACTIVITIES

1. *Substantive servicing of intergovernmental and expert bodies*

- (a) *Substantive servicing of meetings*
 - (i) Servicing of the fourth session of the Committee on Energy (four meetings);
 - (ii) Substantive servicing of the fifth session of the Committee on Water Resources (six meetings).
- (b) *Parliamentary documentation*
 - (i) Report to the Commission on the fourth session of the Committee on Energy;
 - (ii) Report to the Commission on the fifth session of the Committee on Water Resources.
- (c) *Other services provided (ad hoc expert group meetings)*
 - (i) Expert group meeting on capacity-building and regional integration with respect to the development of a sustainable energy sector;
 - (ii) Expert group meeting on promoting awareness and participation in developing sustainable energy policies and systems;
 - (iii) Expert group meeting on water supply and demand management measures;

- (iv) Expert group meeting on a regional scheme for certification and accreditation: the status of standardization and accreditation infrastructure in selected ESCWA member countries;
- (v) Expert group meeting on enhancing manufacturing productivity and competitiveness through the promotion and diffusion of innovative approaches in SMEs;
- (vi) Expert group meeting on environmental statistics in the transport, energy and production sectors.

2. *Other substantive activities*

(a) *Recurrent publications*

Review of productivity and sustainable development activities, Nos. 1 and 2.

(b) *Non-recurrent publications*

- (i) Sectoral water allocation policies in selected ESCWA member countries: an evaluation of the economic, social and drought-related impacts;
- (ii) Updating the status of selected energy sectors in the ESCWA region: the electric power and natural gas sectors;
- (iii) Assessment of the role of the private sector in the development and management of water supply in selected ESCWA member countries;
- (iv) Mechanism for enhancement of regional cooperation in the management of groundwater resources;
- (v) Capacity-building in sustainable energy systems: an approach to poverty alleviation and gender mainstreaming;
- (vi) A guide to efficient energy management in the tourism sector;
- (vii) Enhancing agricultural productivity through on-farm water use efficiency;
- (viii) Modern wastewater treatment technologies;
- (ix) Promotion of public awareness and participation in environmental decision-making in the ESCWA region;
- (x) Governance for sustainable development in the ESCWA region: institutions and instruments for moving beyond an environmental management culture;
- (xi) Assessment report on follow-up in the ESCWA region to the World Summit on Sustainable Development;
- (xii) Gender, agriculture and food processing: case study of the Syrian Arab Republic;
- (xiii) Directory of SME support institutions and services in selected ESCWA member countries;
- (xiv) Enhancing the productivity and competitiveness of SMEs through networking and clustering;
- (xv) Towards a regional scheme for certification and accreditation: the status of standardization and accreditation infrastructure in selected ESCWA member countries;
- (xvi) Study on new indicators for science, technology and innovation in the knowledge-based society;
- (xvii) Statistical indicators on production, energy and water.

(c) *Technical material (including databases and software)*

- (i) Development and maintenance of ESCWA Statistical Information System (ESIS): energy, industry, water and the environment database modules;
- (ii) Development and maintenance of the Web page on productivity and sustainable development activities on the ESCWA Web site.

3. *International cooperation and inter-agency coordination and liaison*

(a) *Participation in activities of intergovernmental bodies*

- (i) Cooperation with the World Water Council on follow-up to the recommendations of the World Water Forum and the Water Vision for the Arab Countries Towards the Year 2025;
- (ii) Cooperation with the Arab Section of the International Solar Energy Society;
- (iii) Cooperation with the Arab Center for Studies of Arid Zones and Dry Lands on water-related issues;
- (iv) Cooperation with the European Union (EU) and International Energy Agency, on the World Energy Assessment, energy sector reforms, renewable energy and the management of shared water resources;
- (v) Cooperation with the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas on wadi hydrology; water use efficiency and management of irrigation water; drought preparedness; the establishment of a database on water; and norms and standards for agricultural produce;
- (vi) Cooperation with the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for Environment in the fields of desertification, industrial pollution, environmental awareness and networking, environmental indicators and international environmental conventions;
- (vii) Cooperation with the Joint Committee on Environment and Development in the Arab Region on regional approaches to the environment and sustainable development;
- (viii) Cooperation with the Centre for Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe on shared water resources, including groundwater;
- (ix) Cooperation with the League of Arab States and its subsidiary bodies, in the fields of energy, water and environment, and on industrial and agricultural development issues;
- (x) Cooperation with the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and its subsidiary bodies with regard to capacity-building in the energy sector; rural energy schemes; capacity-building in the water sector; water law and administration; and water resource management;
- (xi) Cooperation with the World Conservation Union on environmental issues and priorities;
- (xii) Cooperation with the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) on certification, accreditation, technology management and training;
- (xiii) Cooperation with the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, on energy, oil and gas statistics.

(b) *Participation in activities of funds, programmes and agencies of the United Nations system*

- (i) Coordination with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) on energy policies for sustainable development, the preparation of the World Water Development Report and capacity-building to improve water management;

- (ii) Coordination with other regional commissions on renewable energy promotion and an integrated approach towards and enhancement of regional cooperation with respect to shared groundwater resources;
- (iii) Coordination with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), on mitigating the effects of drought in the region;
- (iv) Coordination with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and World Health Organization, on water issues and policies, agricultural and rural development and standardization issues;
- (v) Coordination with the United Nations Environment Programme, on drought mitigation, environmental management methods, agricultural and rural development and standardization issues;
- (vi) Participation in the biennial session of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources for Development;
- (vii) Cooperation and/or coordination with the Commission on Sustainable Development;
- (viii) Participation in the annual meetings of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) Subcommittee on Water Resources;
- (ix) Coordination with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, International Labour Organization (ILO), World Bank, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), United Nations University and related non-governmental organizations (NGOs) on agricultural and rural development and standardization issues;
- (x) Coordination with UNIDO and the Arab Industrial Development and Mining Organization (AIDMO) on industrial statistics.

4. Technical cooperation

(a) Advisory services

Productivity and sustainable development issues.

(b) Group training (training courses, seminars and workshops)

- (i) Workshop on the legal framework for shared groundwater development and management in the ESCWA region;
- (ii) Workshop on wind energy assessment and capacity-building;
- (iii) Workshop on solar electricity systems and capacity-building;
- (iv) Workshop on capacity-building in on-farm water use efficiency;
- (v) Workshop on capacity-building in selected aspects of rural development.

SUBPROGRAMME 2

INTEGRATED SOCIAL POLICIES

A. ORIENTATION OF THE SUBPROGRAMME FOR THE BIENNIUM

11. This subprogramme is implemented by the Social Development Division. The programme of work has been formulated with reference to programme 18, subprogramme 2 of the revised medium-term plan for 2002-2005.

12. The objective of this subprogramme is to achieve regional cooperation in the advocacy and promotion of integrated social policies that are region-specific, culturally sensitive and operationally inclined.
13. The ESCWA region lacks integrated social policies that foster a comprehensive rights-based approach to human development and take into consideration the interdependence of social policies and interlinkages between social and economic development. Social policies are often formulated and implemented with little input from civil society institutions which are major partners in the development process. This contributes to the inadequacy and inappropriateness of such policies. The development process is further impeded by failure to build the capacities of the human capital which is the driving force for economic and social development.
14. The subprogramme will therefore focus on monitoring social conditions in the ESCWA region and responding to globalization and global trends, with the aim of providing analytical assessments of implications thereof for the formulation of social policies. Special emphasis will be placed on social integration, poverty and unemployment, population dynamics, the situation of women and urban development. The subprogramme will also provide advice and technical assistance to member countries in formulating integrated social policies in general and, in particular, in building capacities to develop strategies, plans and programmes of action for policies relating to the aforementioned social issues.
15. The subprogramme will provide substantive support to member countries in formulating action-oriented policies and elaborating strategies, within a right-to-development approach, for selected critical issues, including the social integration of the disabled and the elderly; proposing policies and measures for the empowerment of youth, women and the family; and monitoring, assessing and analysing poverty and the relationship of unemployment-related indicators and issues, including skill-formation, with labour market structures and needs. The right-to-development approach will also target post-conflict reconstruction in ESCWA member countries that have witnessed war and civil strife.
16. By serving as a platform for dialogue during which member countries may exchange experiences and good practices, the subprogramme will also facilitate the negotiation and adoption of common positions and regional strategies, programmes and plans of action on various social issues debated at international forums. It is intended that the subprogramme, as a regional focal point for activities in preparation for and follow-up to global conferences and in observance of international years and decades relating to older persons, youth, the family, disabled persons, gender-related issues and urbanization, will act as an early-warning system by proposing concrete and action-oriented programmes and initiatives.
17. The subprogramme will foster accountable governance by assisting in building the capacities of civil society institutions as partners in the development process; promoting strategies for participatory development and greater popular involvement in decision-making on social policies; and promoting synergy and dialogue between governmental organizations and civil society institutions through the organization of policy forums and round table discussions.
18. The subprogramme will undertake the compilation and processing of the requisite statistical information and data and develop indicators in various social development fields relevant to its work, in order to propose action-oriented social policies, especially in such new areas as poverty, unemployment, gender and culture indicators and statistics. It will also contribute to building the capacities of member countries in methods and applications and statistics for social policy formulation and analysis in selected areas.
19. The subprogramme will undertake studies, analyses and projects aimed at assisting member countries in addressing population dynamics and challenges, reducing poverty and unemployment, and increasing capacities for urban planning and affordable housing and shelter. It will also focus on increasing gender awareness, using media campaigns and meetings and workshops on critical issues, and on building the capacities of national machineries for the empowerment and advancement of women by mainstreaming a gender perspective into policies, plans and programmes.

20. The intended end-users and beneficiaries of this subprogramme are decision makers in member countries, national machinery and civil society institutions.

21. Expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement are listed below.

Expected accomplishments	Indicators of achievement
(a) Improved capacity of member countries for the integrated management and adjustment of social policies;	(a) The number of ESCWA member countries adopting social policies and/or replicating pilot projects by drawing on recommendations and analyses proposed by the ESCWA secretariat;
(b) Increased involvement and contribution of civil society institutions to policy dialogue with Governments and monitoring and implementation of the recommendations of global conferences;	(b) Extent of networking and cooperation between Governments and of civil society institutions, facilitated by the ESCWA secretariat;
(c) Improved capacity of policy makers in formulating and promoting policies, measures, mechanisms and programmes for reducing unemployment as a primary tool for the alleviation of poverty;	(c) Increase in the number of measures introduced by Governments in order to alleviate unemployment, especially among groups with special needs;
(d) Strengthened capacity of member countries to address gender imbalances;	(d) Systematic improvement of institutional capacities to address and analyze gender imbalances in various areas of social policy;
(e) Enhanced urban management practices that take into consideration the human, social and physical dimensions;	(e) Increase in the number of projects, schemes and approaches to urban management that take into consideration all aspect of urban development, and in collaborative efforts between Governments and civil society institutions in the implementation thereof;
(f) Improved national capacities with regard to and increased production, dissemination and use of social indicators and gender-disaggregated statistics for analysis, monitoring and policy-making purposes.	(f) Increase in the number of gender-disaggregated statistical reports and social statistical publications produced by member countries; and an increase in the number of timely social statistics produced by the ESCWA secretariat and employed as references by end-users.

B. ACTIVITIES

1. *Servicing of intergovernmental and expert bodies*

- (a) *Substantive servicing of meetings*
 - (i) Substantive servicing of the fourth session of the Committee on Social Development (six meetings);
 - (ii) Substantive servicing of the Arab Preparatory Meeting for the Second World Assembly on Ageing (two meetings).
- (b) *Parliamentary documentation*
 - (i) Two reports to the Economic and Social Council on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan;

(ii) Report to the Commission on the fourth session of the Committee on Social Development.

(c) *Other services provided (ad hoc expert groups)*

- (i) Expert group meeting on social policies in the ESCWA region (2002);
- (ii) Expert group meeting on social policies in the ESCWA region (2003);
- (iii) Expert group meeting on the Arab Preparatory Meeting for the Second World Assembly on Ageing;
- (iv) Expert group meeting on 10 year review of the situation of the Arab family;
- (v) Expert group meeting on poverty statistics;
- (vi) Expert group meeting on urban governance and security of tenure;
- (vii) Expert group meeting on methodologies for formulating population policies.

2. *Other substantive activities*

(a) *Recurrent publications*

- (i) Social policies series;
- (ii) ESCWA population and development report No. 1;
- (iii) Studies on Arab Women and Development Series, No. 32: Globalization, Poverty and the Gender-based Division of Labour in Selected ESCWA Member Countries;
- (iv) Studies on Arab Women and Development Series, No. 33: Gender, Citizenship and the Role of Non-Governmental Organizations in Selected Gulf Countries;
- (v) Review of Developments in the Situation of Arab Women in the ESCWA Region, No. 1;
- (vi) Compendium of social statistics and indicators, No. 1.

(b) *Non-recurrent publications*

- (i) Towards a code of conduct for NGOs: compendium on the role of NGOs in follow-up to global conferences;
- (ii) Responding to globalization: skill-formation linked to unemployment reduction policies;
- (iii) Responding to globalization: trends, challenges and policies on labour migration and population dynamics;
- (iv) Housing policies and security of tenure;
- (v) Urbanization and the changing character of the Arab city;
- (vi) Integrating safety nets in social policies as a tool for poverty reduction.

(c) *Booklets, fact sheets, wall charts, information kits*

- (i) Information kits on population;
- (ii) Brochure on the Population Policies Information System (PPIS);
- (iii) Statistical pamphlets on women and men in the areas of education, employment and poverty;
- (iv) Brochure on the empowerment of disabled persons.

(d) *Technical material (including databases and software)*

- (i) Maintenance of the POPIN Western Asia Web site;
- (ii) Development and maintenance of the PPIS Web page;

also analyse the main trends in economic sectors and comparative economic studies among the set or subset of selected service and production sectors in member countries, in order to assess the comparative strengths of those sectors at domestic and regional levels. It will also analyse macroeconomic issues and economic sector performance using current analysis, forecasting and policy simulation tools.

25. The orientation of this subprogramme is therefore to provide data and indicators; conduct analytical reviews, assessments, analyses and forecasts on the economic situation in the region; and enhance economic management and assess economic developments in general and sectoral developments in particular. This is especially relevant in view of new economic trends arising from the rapid evolution of the world economy, their implications for national economies and the need to facilitate common regional policies and positions in this regard where needed.

26. Special emphasis will be placed on providing periodic and timely statistical publications and forecasts as inputs for macroeconomic policy formulation and analysis and for corrective intervention. The areas covered will include internal and external financial markets, international and intraregional trade, the performance of principal growth determinants, productivity, international accounts and the international comparison programme.

27. The subprogramme will also use global forecasts in order to provide the countries of the region with an international perspective through global forecasts, and will assist them in adopting policy measures to increase the competitiveness and efficiency of their production base. Moreover, the subprogramme will assess economic reform policies in member countries and their impact on employment and social issues.

28. Support will be provided to decision makers in member countries in increasing their capacity for economic analysis and the use of the appropriate economic measurements and indicators through training, technical assistance and the development of forecasting models and multidimensional interdisciplinary indicators.

29. The intended end-users are policy makers, private sector institutions, NGOs and academics and researchers.

30. Expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement are listed below.

Expected accomplishments	Indicators of achievement
(a) Improved use by member countries of indicators, techniques and analyses of macroeconomic performance as inputs to economic policy decisions;	(a) Increase in the demand for and use of statistical information and analyses generated by the ESCWA secretariat and degree of satisfaction expressed by users;
(b) Improved capacity of member countries and business associations for monitoring productivity trends;	(b) Increase in the number of economic reports using statistics and indicators developed by ESCWA;
(c) Utilization by member countries of statistical tools and indicators provided by the ESCWA secretariat for economic policy analysis in the areas of economic growth, external trade, national accounts and on production and productivity;	(c) Extent of utilization by member countries of ESCWA-generated statistics and indicators for monitoring and assessing the production and productivity sectors;
(d) Enhanced capacity of member countries in the implementation of the International Comparison Programme (ICP).	(d) Increase in the number of personnel trained in the use of ICP and the number of countries applying ICP.

B. ACTIVITIES

1. *Servicing of intergovernmental and expert bodies*

Ad hoc expert group meeting

Expert group meeting on index numbers of economic activities and GDP deflators.

2. *Other substantive activities*

(a) *Recurrent publications*

- (i) Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the ESCWA Region, 2001-2002;
- (ii) Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the ESCWA region, 2002-2003;
- (iii) Analysis of performances and assessment of growth and productivity, Nos. 1 and 2;
- (iv) Global forecasts and predictions, No. 1;
- (v) Economic Trends and Impacts, No. 1.
- (vi) National Accounts Studies of the ESCWA Region, bulletins Nos. 22 and 23;
- (vii) Quarterly Indices of Production, Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8;

(b) *Non-recurrent publications*

Macroeconomic policy analysis for regional cooperation in ESCWA member countries.

(c) *Technical material (including databases and software)*

Development and maintenance of ESIS: financial statistics and national accounts database modules.

3. *International cooperation and inter-agency coordination and liaison*

(a) *Participation in activities of intergovernmental bodies*

- (i) Cooperation with the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) in the implementation of activities on economic development issues related to oil;
- (ii) Cooperation with the Arab Planning Institute on activities related to economic development.

(b) *Participation in activities of funds, programmes and agencies of the United Nations system*

- (i) Coordination with UNCTAD in the implementation of the memorandum of understanding on cooperation in the fields of trade and economic development;
- (ii) Coordination with DESA on the regional survey, gender issues and other areas of concern under economic development;
- (iii) Coordination with the World Bank on activities related to economic development;
- (iv) Coordination with the International Monetary Fund on the 1993 System of National Accounts (SNA);
- (v) Coordination with ILO on labour force statistics.

4. *Technical cooperation*

Field projects

The International Comparison Programme.

SUBPROGRAMME 4

REGIONAL INTEGRATION AND RESPONDING TO GLOBALIZATION

A. ORIENTATION OF THE SUBPROGRAMME FOR THE BIENNIUM

31. This subprogramme is implemented by the Globalization and Regional Integration Division. The programme of work has been formulated with reference to programme 18, subprogramme 4 of the revised medium-term plan for 2002-2005.
32. The objective of this subprogramme is to impact positively on integrating regional markets and facilitate transboundary flows of goods, services, persons and capital in order to meet the challenges of globalization.
33. The ESCWA region must address the impact of World Trade Organization (WTO) agreements on the liberalization of international trade and the resulting free access of more competitive goods and services to the markets of the region.
34. This subprogramme will support member countries with regard to promoting policies and programmes aimed at strengthening and accelerating the process of economic cooperation and integration, with emphasis on global competition within the framework of the WTO Agreements. Transboundary flows will be effected by the continuous promotion of regional agreements in relation to the operationalization of various aspects of the Integrated Transport System in the Arab Mashreq (ITSAM), already launched by ESCWA; proposing policies and measures for improving domestic and export competitiveness; conducting analytical studies on member countries' policies with regard to intraregional and international flows of human, financial and trade flows; analysing existing and potential direct intraregional and foreign direct investment (FDI), with emphasis on the comparative analysis of financial liberalization and investment promotion policies, with a view to mobilizing savings and other financial resources and enabling the region's financial system to benefit from globalization; conducting comparative studies on the impacts of fiscal and monetary policies with regard to the evolution of regional cooperation and integration among the countries of the region; and studying the existing and projected needs of tourism, transport and communications infrastructures in addition to assisting member countries to mobilize resources for the financing thereof.
35. Furthermore, the subprogramme will closely monitor and analyse the implications of evolving trends, the new world trading system and WTO Agreements on countries of the region in order to facilitate their response to globalization. With this in mind, special attention must be given to sensitizing member countries to issues related to the area of international trade, namely, liberalization of energy services, trade-related intellectual property rights, tourism services, technical barriers to trade, the environment, partnership agreements with EU, the regional bloc and the relation of those issues to WTO Agreements.
36. The subprogramme will further assist member countries with regard to globalization by providing advice and technical assistance on new world trade issues, the legal and economic considerations that accompanied the advent of WTO and the signing of multiple agreements. It will further support member countries in building their capacities by providing advisory services that focus on the various issues of the WTO and partnership agreements.

37. Capacity-building of the countries in the region in relation to understanding the rules negotiated under the multilateral trading system and WTO and accession thereto will be one of the main concerns of this subprogramme, and will be addressed by training workshops that focus on WTO agreements and trade issues in addition to expert group meetings. The aim will be to better prepare member countries for future rounds of multilateral negotiations and formulate consolidated regional positions thereon.

38. The subprogramme will strive to sensitize member countries and the public at large to issues pertaining to the implications of economic globalization for the ESCWA region. This will be effected by disseminating technical material and information on macroeconomic and globalization issues related to governmental organizations and NGOs.

39. Intended end-users and beneficiaries of this subprogramme are Government officials, planners and decision makers, the private sector and NGOs.

40. Expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement are listed below.

Expected accomplishments	Indicators of achievement
(a) Increased adoption of measures for trade facilitation and increased promotion by member countries of the various components of ITSAM;	(a) The number of measures adopted by member countries to facilitate trade and the number of countries acceding to the Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq;
(b) Enhanced common understanding of international development trends and issues among member countries;	(b) The extent of dialogue and sharing of experiences among member countries, with regard to the implications of the new international trading system on their economies, instigated by ESCWA, and positive feedback from end-users with regard to the benefits of meetings and publications concerning WTO-related issues and advisory services provided by ESCWA;
(c) Increased availability of data and information developed by ESCWA in order to survey, monitor and improve financial integration, especially FDI-related issues; and increased understanding of the factors that hinder the attraction of FDI and the implications of globalization on financial markets;	(c) The extent of action taken by member countries to improve domestic and foreign direct investment and the extent of use of the foreign direct investment database developed by ESCWA;
(d) Strengthened capacity of member countries to identify and adopt schemes and initiatives to enhance their respective competitive environments.	(d) The number of countries that adopt measures to improve domestic competitiveness of products and increase their export capacity.

B. ACTIVITIES

1. *Servicing of intergovernmental and expert bodies*

- (a) *Substantive servicing of meetings*
- (i) Servicing of the third session of the Committee on Transport (six meetings);
 - (ii) Servicing of the fourth session of the Committee on Transport (six meetings);
 - (iii) Servicing of the third session of the Technical Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade and Economic Globalization in the Countries of the ESCWA Region (six meetings).

(b) *Parliamentary documentation*

- (i) Report to the Commission on the third session of the Committee on Transport;
- (ii) Report to the Commission on the fourth session of the Committee on Transport;
- (iii) Report to the Commission on the third session of the Technical Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade and Economic Globalization in the Countries of the ESCWA Region.

(c) *Other services provided (ad hoc expert groups meeting)*

- (i) Expert group meeting on the facilitation of regional trade and transport and the implications of WTO Agreements;
- (ii) Expert group meeting on regional energy services and the implications of WTO Agreements;
- (iii) Expert group meeting on regional export competitiveness and the implications of WTO Agreements;
- (iv) Expert group meeting on regional tourism services and the implications of WTO Agreements.

2. *Other substantive activities*

(a) *Recurrent publications*

- (i) Methodological Framework for the Integrated Transport System in the Arab Mashreq (ITSAM-FRAMEWORK), vol. 3;
- (ii) ESCWA Annual Review of Globalization and Regional Integration, Nos. 1 and 2.
- (iii) External Trade Bulletin of the ESCWA Region Nos. 11 and 12.

(b) *Non-recurrent publications*

- (i) Regional trade facilitation;
- (ii) Guidelines for the establishment of national trade and transport facilitation committees;
- (iii) Agreement on international railways in the Arab Mashreq;
- (iv) Formulation of multilateral agreements for the facilitation of transboundary flows;
- (v) Report on accession to WTO;
- (vi) International agreements and trade issues in the region: intellectual property rights;
- (vii) International agreements and trade issues in the region: the environment;
- (viii) Challenges and opportunities of the world trading system: agriculture;
- (ix) Status of trade facilitation and selected services within the WTO Agreements;
- (x) Attraction of FDI and intraregional investment: improvement of investment climate and mobilization of domestic savings;
- (xi) Responding to globalization: financial markets' networking in the region.

(c) *Booklets, fact sheets, wall charts and information kits*

Doha agenda for development.

(d) *Electronic and audio-video issuances*

Media campaign with regard to ITSAM projects.

(e) *Technical material (including databases and software)*

- (i) Database on domestic and foreign direct investment and foreign companies in the ESCWA region;
- (ii) Development and maintenance of ESIS: trade database modules;
- (iii) Development and maintenance of the ESCWA Web page concerning globalization and regional integration on the ESCWA Web site.

3. *International cooperation and inter-agency coordination and liaison*

(a) *Participation in activities of intergovernmental bodies*

- (i) Cooperation, coordination and liaison with the League of Arab States and its subsidiary bodies with regard to activities related to WTO, environment and trade, trade-related intellectual property rights, FDI and transport issues;
- (ii) Cooperation, coordination and liaison with OAPEC in the implementation of WTO-related activities;
- (iii) Cooperation, coordination and liaison with API on activities related to integration and WTO issues;
- (iv) Cooperation, coordination and liaison with Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development on issues related to Euro-Med partnership and promotion of trade;
- (v) Cooperation, coordination and liaison with the Islamic Development Bank and other subsidiary bodies of OIC with regard to transport issues;
- (vi) Cooperation, coordination and liaison with the Gulf Cooperation Council with regard to transport issues;
- (vii) Cooperation, coordination and liaison with the European Commission and its subsidiaries with regard to transport issues;
- (viii) Cooperation, coordination and liaison with the International Road Transport Union with regard to transport issues;
- (ix) Cooperation, coordination and liaison with the World Customs Organization with regard to transport issues;
- (x) Cooperation, coordination and liaison with other related NGOs with regard to transport issues.

(b) *Participation in activities of funds, programmes and agencies of the United Nations system*

- (i) Coordination and cooperation with UNCTAD and participation in the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in the fields of trade;
- (ii) Coordination and cooperation with other relevant regional commissions;
- (iii) Coordination and cooperation with UNDP with regard to issues related to FDI and WTO;
- (iv) Coordination and cooperation with the World Bank with regard to activities related to trade and transport issues;
- (v) Coordination and cooperation with, and participation in the UNCTAD preparatory meeting with regard to the new WTO Agenda for negotiation and transport issues;
- (vi) Coordination and cooperation with, and participation in activities of ACC and its subsidiary organs.

4. *Technical cooperation*

(a) *Advisory services*

Transport facilitation, WTO and competitiveness.

(b) *Group training (training courses, seminars and workshops)*

- (i) Seminar on capacity-building with regard to WTO-related issues and trade facilitation;
- (ii) Training workshop on capacity-building with regard to the opportunities and challenges of tourism.

(c) *Field projects*

- (i) Project on capacity-building through cooperation with regard to developing interregional land and land-sea transport links;
- (ii) Development of an information base for ITSAM, namely, the ITSAM-Infosystem.

SUBPROGRAMME 5

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY FOR REGIONAL INTEGRATION

A. ORIENTATION OF THE SUBPROGRAMME FOR THE BIENNIUM

41. This subprogramme is implemented by the Information and Communication Technology Division. The programme of work has been formulated with reference to programme 18, subprogramme 5 of the revised medium-term plan for 2002-2005.

42. The objectives of this subprogramme are to increase the capabilities of member countries to harness information and communication technologies (ICTs), to coordinate regional efforts of multilateral stakeholders and to streamline these efforts within the framework of the global initiative led by the United Nations.

43. Such technologies are characterized by the very rapid development of innovations and by pervasive and synergic applications. The slow pace of ICT infrastructure construction in the region and the tardy adoption of relevant applications could lead to an increased widening of the existing "digital gap". Direct intervention by the Governments of member countries in order to facilitate the formulation and implementation of ICT policies at national and regional levels is badly needed. ESCWA and the United Nations can have an immediate and effective impact in this area.

44. The subprogramme will aim to raise awareness among decision makers and end-users in the region with regard to ICT impact and implications on the development process and on the knowledge-based economy. It will further sensitize member countries to the need for concerted efforts at national and regional levels for capacity-building in all fields related to ICTs.

45. The subprogramme will identify ICT-related priorities, examine ICT infrastructure and applications and identify tools and techniques for enhancing the digitizing of Arabic text in computer and communication networks. It will support efforts related to the establishment of standards for the Arabic language in ICT and improve the harmonization thereof, with a view to establishing regional connectivity in this regard.

46. Furthermore, member countries will be encouraged to participate in the coming World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS). With this in mind, the subprogramme will utilize WSIS to attempt to enhance

the partnership between various regional stakeholders and to facilitate coordination and collaboration among Governments, NGOs, private sector firms and relevant regional and international institutions.

47. As a regional node, the subprogramme will propose cooperation and coordination mechanisms between public and private institutions engaged in ICT at national and regional levels. It will also identify regional joint endeavours and conduct detailed studies to harmonize standards and protocols for interconnectivity within the ICT field.

48. The subprogramme will further endeavour to develop monitoring and assessment mechanisms and plans for the diffusion of ICT applications in ESCWA member countries. It will promote the sharing of experiences and indicate best practices in ICT with regard to development. The aim of this process is to identify priority issues and formulate action-oriented recommendations and work plans in order to enhance these practices and assist in capacity-building in this regard. Special attention will be directed towards improving the efficiency of public administrations and the competitiveness of the private sector.

49. Intended end-users and beneficiaries for this subprogramme are public authorities concerned with ICT infrastructure in member countries; decision makers concerned with development and with ICT applications as inputs into the development process; private sector firms and institutions in the areas related to ICT and ICT applications; civil society institutions; and the general public.

50. Expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement are listed below.

Expected accomplishments	Indicators of achievement
(a) Improved coordination between member countries and/or firms through expanded ICT infrastructure;	(a) Extent of improvement of ICT indicators in the region and establishment of new projects related to standards for the Arabic language in ICT by the ESCWA secretariat;
(b) Wider dissemination of knowledge and information concerning ICT standards, infrastructure and applications in addition to wider diffusion of ICT applications;	(b) Increase in the demand for ICT programmes and applications and demand for ESCWA publications in this domain;
(c) Increased preparedness of member countries to participate effectively in WSIS and awareness of the need to formulate tangible policies for the integration of ICT policies, standards and applications in the development process;	(c) Positive feedback from the participants in the regional preparatory meeting for WSIS; and the number of countries participating in WSIS and working to implement adopted recommendations;
(d) Establishment of regional connectivity standards and protocols.	(d) Adoption of connectivity standards and protocols.

B. ACTIVITIES

1. *Servicing of intergovernmental and expert bodies*

Ad hoc expert groups

- (i) Expert group meeting on public sector management and governance with stress on electronic tools;
- (ii) Forum on technology, employment and poverty alleviation;

- (iii) Expert group meeting on regional preparatory meeting for WSIS;
- (iv) Expert group meeting on legal framework for ICT policies;
- (v) Expert group meeting on new technology strategies and capacity-building with emphasis on ICTs.

2. *Other substantive activities*

(a) *Recurrent publications*

ICT Bulletin, Nos. 1 and 2.

(b) *Non-recurrent publications*

- (i) Selected ICT priority issues for the ESCWA region;
- (ii) ICT standards in computer and communication networks, particularly in the Arabic language;
- (iii) Tools and techniques for enhanced digitizing of Arabic text for computer and communication networks;
- (iv) Review of ICT infrastructure in ESCWA member countries with an emphasis on telecommunication networks and broadband issues;
- (v) The infrastructure of electronic commerce;
- (vi) Promotion of best practices in governance in selected ESCWA member countries, with an emphasis on ICT tools and techniques;
- (vii) Study on capacity-building in selected ICT applications in ESCWA member countries;
- (viii) Knowledge-based industries, with an emphasis on ICT application: opportunities and challenges in selected member countries;
- (ix) Trade and transport facilitation: e-business and ICT applications;
- (x) Report on regional initiatives to enhance the benefit of member countries from the World Bank and the G8 programme of technical assistance in ICT.

3. *International cooperation and inter-agency coordination and liaison*

(a) *Participation in activities of intergovernmental bodies*

- (i) Cooperation, coordination and liaison with AIDMO with regard to enhancing ICT capacity-building and infrastructure in the region;
- (ii) Cooperation, coordination and liaison with AIDMO, the International Telecommunication Union and ISO with regard to developing standards and protocols for the region and in preparing for WSIS.

(b) *Participation in activities of funds, programmes and agencies of the United Nations system*

Coordination, cooperation with and participation in the United Nations ICT board and UNIDO with regard to identifying ICT priority areas and enhancing capacity-building in the region.

SUBPROGRAMME 6

COMPARABLE STATISTICS FOR IMPROVED PLANNING AND DECISION-MAKING

A. ORIENTATION OF THE SUBPROGRAMME FOR THE BIENNIUM

51. This subprogramme is coordinated by the Statistics Coordination Unit, which reports to the Statistics Steering Committee headed by the Deputy Executive Secretary. The programme of work has been formulated with reference to programme 18 of the revised medium-term plan for 2002-2005.

52. The objective of this subprogramme is to strengthen the capacity of member countries with regard to providing timely comparable statistical information. This will rationalize decisions related to economic and social development and regional integration.

53. The foremost directive of this subprogramme is to utilize intensive capacity-building services in order to upgrade the quality of statistics in member countries. This will enable member countries produce and exchange comparable quality statistics that conform to international standards and classifications and respond to the increasing need for relevant data for policy analysis, forecasting and comparative studies. Hence, this subprogramme is intended to produce harmonized quality statistics customized at the regional level. Furthermore, it aims to exchange them cost-effectively and without duplication through the use of technological advancement in the areas of communications and data management. This will serve the member countries directly, or indirectly with the assistance of quantitative research provided by the relevant divisions of ESCWA.

54. The dynamic relationship between producers and the users of statistics, thereby harnessed and reinforced, will help to determine the required statistical output, while recognizing conceptual connotations and limitations. Therefore, outputs will be focused. Furthermore, they will retain the integrity and objectivity of data sourced from member countries. With a view to realizing further cost-effectiveness, this subprogramme will utilize ICTs in order to share databases and questionnaires with United Nations and other organizations and for Internet and CD-ROM publishing of statistics and information.

55. The subprogramme will carry out capacity-building in order to raise the skills of national statisticians in member countries. This will be effected by workshops, training seminars, expert group meetings and regional advisory services. The implementation of strategies to promote the development and increased usage and analysis of core social and economic development statistics, in addition to indicators to monitor and analyse the human dimensions of development and progress made in the implementation of the recommendations of global conferences, will be one of the main directives governing this subprogramme. To this end, training in the harmonization of concepts and definitions, according to international standards, will be emphasized, with special reference to the 1993 SNA and ICP.

56. Furthermore, the compilation of statistics and indicators in new statistical areas that include gender, poverty, unemployment, and health statistics will be another main directive of this subprogramme. In addition, the subprogramme will collect, process and analyse sectoral and environmental data and statistics and derive productivity and sustainable development indicators for the countries of the region. Finally, the subprogramme will continue compiling and expanding its statistical activities in the areas previously addressed, namely, 1993 SNA, financial statistics and other areas. It will focus on strengthening links between national accounts and other systems of statistics.

57. In order to meet the requirements of globalization, the subprogramme will tackle new areas by collecting, processing and analysing statistics on international trade in goods and services. Furthermore, it will derive international trade indicators for the countries of the region.

58. The end-users of the output of the subprogramme include governmental bodies, namely, central statistical offices, planning entities, ministries and governmental departments, NGOs, universities, research institutions and statisticians of various disciplines.

59. Expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement are listed below.

Expected accomplishments	Indicators of achievement
(a) Increased interconnectivity with the United Nations Statistics Division in the harmonization and quality control of statistics and improved complementarity between member countries;	(a) The operationalization of United Nations Economic and Social Information System;
(b) Improved ability of national institutions to produce harmonized economic, social and sectoral indicators and statistics using international statistical standards;	(b) Increase in the number of national cadres trained in the use of international statistical standards;
(c) Increased training of Government officials in the use of the 1993 SNA and other international statistical standards;	(c) The extent of use of member countries of comparable national accounts;
(d) Increased production of customized economic statistics and sustainable development indicators;	(d) Increase in the coverage and quality of statistics and indicators relating to productivity and efficiency;
(e) Increased coverage and improved quality and use of national statistics relating to core social statistics and indicators, particularly in new areas.	(e) Increase in the number of national cadres trained in the use of social indicators for monitoring social policies and publications utilizing social indicators for policy analysis.

B. ACTIVITIES

1. *Servicing of intergovernmental and expert bodies*

(a) *Substantive servicing of meetings*

Servicing of the fifth session of the Statistical Committee (six meetings).

(b) *Parliamentary documentation*

Report to the Commission on the fifth session of the Statistical Committee.

2. *Other substantive activities*

Technical material (including databases and software)

- (i) Overall development, maintenance and coordination of ESIS database modules;
- (ii) Statistical abstract of the ESCWA region.

3. *International cooperation and inter-agency coordination and liaison*

- (a) *Participation in activities of intergovernmental bodies*
- (i) Cooperation, coordination and liaison with the Board of Directors of the Arab Institute for Training and Research in Statistics;
 - (ii) Cooperation, coordination and liaison with the Statistical Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries;
 - (iii) Cooperation, coordination and liaison with participation in the annual meetings of the League of Arab States Standing Technical Committee on Statistics and its subcommittee on National Accounts;
 - (iv) Cooperation, coordination and liaison with participation in the meetings of the Statistical Committee of the Council of Arab Economic Unity.
- (b) *Participation in activities of funds, programmes and agencies of the United Nations system*
- (i) Coordination and cooperation with, and participation in the Statistics Division of DESA with regard to capacity-building and networking between national statistical systems;
 - (ii) Coordination and cooperation with, and participation in the annual sessions of the ACC Subcommittee on Statistics.

4. *Technical cooperation*

Field projects

Strengthening statistical capacity in the ESCWA region.

