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Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

Technical Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade, Economic
Globalization and Financing for Development in the Countries of the ESCWA Region
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Item 7 of the provisional agenda

**PROPOSED PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR THE BIENNIUM 2012-2013
IN THE FIELDS OF LIBERALIZATION OF FOREIGN TRADE, ECONOMIC
GLOBALIZATION AND FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT**

Summary

The proposed programme of work of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) for the biennium 2012-2013 in the fields of liberalization of foreign trade, economic globalization and financing for development presents a set of activities and outputs related to the implementation of the expected accomplishments envisaged under subprogramme 3 on economic development and integration, of the revised strategic framework for the biennium 2012-2013. While subprogramme 3, which is implemented by the Economic Development and Globalization Division, comprises the work of ESCWA in the fields of transport and trade, financing for development and economic analysis, the proposed activities in the fields of liberalization of foreign trade, economic globalization and financing for development are presented in bold in order to distinguish them from the other activities.

The Technical Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade, Economic Globalization and Financing for Development in the Countries of the ESCWA Region is invited to review the proposed programme of work, and present comments on the proposed outputs, the extent to which they meet the priorities of ESCWA member countries and their relevance to the expected accomplishments in the fields of liberalization of foreign trade, economic globalization and financing for development under subprogramme 3. The Committee is also invited to discuss ways to concretely measure the indicators of achievement in order to accurately monitor progress achieved in member countries as a result of implementing the proposed outputs.

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Introduction

1. This document contains the proposed programme of work of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) for the biennium 2012-2013 in the fields of liberalization of foreign trade, economic globalization and financing for development. The proposed programme of work is presented to the Technical Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade, Economic Globalization and Financing for Development in the Countries of the ESCWA Region at its seventh session for consideration and comments. It was formulated on the basis of subprogramme 3 on economic development and integration of the revised strategic framework for the biennium 2012-2013¹ which was adopted by ESCWA at its twenty-sixth session (Beirut, 17-20 May 2010).

2. In preparing the outputs proposed in the programme of work, ESCWA secretariat has given due consideration to the following:

(a) Major issues related to the participation of the countries of the region in the multilateral trading system;

(b) Issues related to financing for development in the Western Asia region, including those that have emerged during the implementation of the programme of work for the biennium 2010-2011;

(c) The need to continue to support the efforts of member countries in conducting multilateral trade negotiations within the framework of the Doha Development Agenda;

(d) The importance of improving the skills of trade officials to handle multilateral negotiations within the framework of the World Trade Organization (WTO);

(e) The importance of offering advisory services on WTO accession procedures;

(f) The necessity to contribute to increasing knowledge of issues related to international trade in the Arab private sector;

(g) Enhancing the capacity of member countries to achieve regional integration and mobilize financial resources needed to finance development and attain the Millennium Development Goals.

3. The proposed programme of work of ESCWA for the biennium 2012-2013, which comprises the seven subprogrammes, had been presented to the Technical Committee at its fifth session (Beirut, 6-7 April 2011). The recommendations made by member country representatives participating in that session were taken into consideration while preparing the proposed programme of work pertaining to subprogramme 3 which is presented in this document. **Aspects related to the liberalization of foreign trade, economic globalization and financing for development in the expected achievements, indicators of achievement, the strategy and the outputs of subprogramme 3 are presented in bold characters in order to distinguish them from other areas covered by the subprogramme.**

4. The Technical Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade, Economic Globalization and Financing for Development in the Countries of the ESCWA Region is invited to review the proposed outputs and give guidance to the secretariat on the basis of the following criteria:

(a) The extent to which the proposed outputs meet the needs of targeted beneficiaries, namely the ministries and bodies concerned with foreign trade, economic globalization and financing for development in the countries of the ESCWA region;

¹ ESCWA, *Management issues: Revised draft strategic framework for the biennium 2012-2013*, E/ESCWA/26/7. Available at: <http://documents.un.org>.

(b) The extent to which the proposed outputs contribute to the implementation of the expected achievements of subprogramme 3.

5. The Committee is also invited to take into consideration the outcome of the discussions that will take place during the session, in particular with respect to item 4 of the provisional agenda on the progress of the negotiations of the Doha Development Round in the area of services over the last ten years from a regional perspective, and item 6 on financing for development in the process of implementing the Monterrey Consensus.

SUBPROGRAMME 3: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INTEGRATION

A. OBJECTIVE

The objective of subprogramme 3 is to achieve economic development and accelerate the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals through appropriate macroeconomic policies, adequate financing for development and the promotion of regional integration including transport and trade facilitation.

B. EXPECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND INDICATORS OF ACHIEVEMENT

Expected accomplishments	Indicators of achievement
(a) Enhanced capacity of member countries to formulate and implement policies and measures recommended in the Monterrey Consensus and the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development, taking into consideration the consequences of the global economic and financial crisis	<p>(a) (i) Increased number of policies and measures adopted by member countries to implement the Monterrey Consensus and the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development, taking into consideration the consequences of the global economic and financial crisis, with ESCWA assistance, through training, advisory services and technical assistance</p> <p><i>Performance measures:</i> 2008-2009: 15 policies/measures Estimate for 2010-2011: 18 policies/measures Target for 2012-2013: 21 policies/measures</p> <p>(ii) Increased number of policies and agreements adopted by member countries for promoting regional integration, with ESCWA assistance, through training, advisory services and technical assistance</p> <p><i>Performance measures:</i> 2008-2009: N/A Estimate for 2010-2011: N/A Target for 2012-2013: 2 policies/agreements</p>
(b) Enhanced capacity of member countries to continue the implementation of the international transport agreements concluded within ESCWA for the enhancement of regional integration, as well as the other various components of the Integrated Transport System in the Arab Mashreq including institutional frameworks, transport and trade facilitation and road traffic safety	<p>(b) (i) Increased number of actions taken by member countries to accelerate and enhance regional integration through the implementation of the United Nations international transport agreements concluded within ESCWA on road, railway and maritime transport</p> <p><i>Performance measures:</i> 2008-2009: 31 actions Estimate for 2010-2011: 32 actions Target for 2012-2013: 34 actions</p> <p>(ii) Increased number of policy measures taken by member countries, based on ESCWA recommendations, to facilitate intraregional transport and trade among member countries including the implementation of the Single Window Initiative, and the establishment and activation of the national transport and trade facilitation committees</p>

Expected accomplishments	Indicators of achievement
	<p><i>Performance measures:</i></p> <p>2008-2009: 9 policy measures Estimate for 2010-2011: 10 policy measures Target for 2012-2013: 11 policy measures</p> <p>(iii) Increased number of measures taken by member countries, based on ESCWA recommendations, to improve road traffic safety</p> <p><i>Performance measures:</i></p> <p>2008-2009: 6 measures Estimate for 2010-2011: 7 measures Target for 2012-2013: 8 measures</p>
<p>(c) Enhanced capacity of member countries to negotiate and implement subregional, regional and multilateral trade agreements designed to increase international trade</p>	<p>(c) (i) Increased number of requests for technical assistance, including advisory services in trade policy and negotiations, to which ESCWA is able to respond positively</p> <p><i>Performance measures:</i></p> <p>2008-2009: 3 requests Estimate for 2010-2011: 4 requests Target for 2012-2013: 5 requests</p> <p>(ii) Increased percentage of follow-up survey responses where member countries acknowledge that they benefited from ESCWA analytical outputs and capacity-building services in trade policy and trade negotiations</p> <p><i>Performance measures:</i></p> <p>2008-2009: N/A Estimate for 2010-2011: 20 per cent increase in number of positive responses Target for 2012-2013: 30 per cent increase in number of positive responses</p>
<p>(d) Enhanced capacity of member countries in the region in designing and implementing suitable macroeconomic policies and strategies for sustainable economic growth, employment creation and poverty alleviation</p>	<p>(d) (i) Increased percentage of stakeholders in the region that, through follow-up surveys, acknowledge benefits from ESCWA analytical outputs in the area of macroeconomic policies and development strategies in designing and implementing suitable macroeconomic policies and development strategies for sustainable economic growth, employment creation and poverty alleviation</p>

Expected accomplishments	Indicators of achievement
	<p><i>Performance measures:</i> 2008-2009: 50 per cent increase in number of positive responses Estimate for 2010-2011: 55 per cent increase in number of positive responses Target for 2012-2013: 60 per cent increase in number of positive responses</p> <p>(ii) Increased number of macroeconomic policies and development strategies adopted by member countries based on ESCWA analytical work in these areas</p> <p><i>Performance measures:</i> 2008-2009: N/A Estimate for 2010-2011: N/A Target for 2012-2013: 2 policies/strategies</p>
<p>(e) Strengthened capacity of policymakers in member countries and other stakeholders to design and implement policies and instruments to achieve diversified economies and create effective national and regional value chains</p>	<p>(e) (i) Increased number of policy measures taken by member countries, based on ESCWA recommendations, to diversify their national economy and create effective value chains</p> <p><i>Performance measures:</i> 2008-2009: N/A Estimate for 2010-2011: N/A Target for 2012-2013: 2 policy measures</p> <p>(ii) Increased number of requests for technical assistance, including advisory services, in economic policy and strategic planning, that ESCWA is able to respond to positively</p> <p><i>Performance measures:</i> 2008-2009: N/A Estimate for 2010-2011: N/A Target for 2012-2013: 2 requests</p>

C. STRATEGY

18.26 The responsibility for implementing this subprogramme lies with the Economic Development and Globalization Division. The Millennium Development Goals, the revised Damascus Declaration on responding to the International Financial Crisis in the ESCWA Region, the Monterrey Consensus, the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development, the Doha Development Agenda, the Integrated Transport System in the Arab Mashreq, and the relevant General Assembly and ESCWA resolutions provide the legislative authority for the subprogramme.

18.27 To enhance the capacity of member countries in accelerating the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the subprogramme will continue to lead the coordination and production of a joint regional LAS-United Nations report on the Millennium Development Goals in the Arab region. The report will be policy-oriented and will suggest practical policy recommendations for member countries that should assist them in accelerating the attainment of the Goals by 2015.

18.28 To achieve its expected accomplishment in the financing for development area, the subprogramme will assist member countries to analyse and evaluate world and regional financial development and propose regional strategies and coordinated regional responses. Emphasis will be placed on the development of strategic partnerships with financial institutions and development funds to accelerate the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus and the Doha Declaration. The subprogramme will also undertake normative and analytical studies to assist policymakers in member countries to deal with issues related to financial markets development, foreign direct investment, workers' remittances, debt management, official development assistance, regional integration and globalization.

18.29 The subprogramme will focus on enhancing regional integration through building the capacities of member countries in accelerating the implementation of the United Nations international transport agreements concluded within ESCWA over the past 35 years for road, railway and maritime transport. Work will continue on the implementation of the Integrated Transport System in the Arab Mashreq including transport and trade facilitation for enhancing regional integration and South-South cooperation. Special attention will be given to the implementation of the Single Window Initiative and the continued establishment and activation of the national transport and trade facilitation committees and related regional coordination. The subprogramme will also serve as a regional platform to raise awareness about road traffic safety issues.

18.30 The subprogramme will continue to work to enhance international trade policy formulation for servicing productive capacity-building and utilization of domestic and regional markets, and intra- and interregional trade in line with regional economic agreements such as the Greater Arab Free Trade Area. It will continue to enhance the capacities of member countries in the subregional, regional and multilateral trade agreements designed to increase their international and intraregional trade and their integration into the multilateral trading system.

18.31 In the area of economic analysis, the subprogramme adopts a two-track strategy. The first track consists of:

(a) A continuous assessment of the region's macroeconomic performances for timely identification and analysis of socially inclusive macroeconomic policy issues;

(b) Economic research with modelling and forecasting techniques and normative approaches, including human rights-based approaches to development that are relevant to the regional context;

(c) Putting analytical emphasis on regional priorities such as poverty alleviation, socially inclusive macroeconomic policies consistent with long-term development goals, and employment creation, in particular among young people.

18.32 The second track will be implemented in parallel with the first, by utilizing analytical and normative outputs of the former in order to enhance technical awareness, capacity and networking on development and socially inclusive macroeconomic issues and policies in the region.

18.33 The analytical outputs of the subprogramme will be utilized in order to enhance technical awareness, capacity and networking on policies and strategies pertaining to achieving the objectives of the subprogramme. This will be carried out through organizing effective intergovernmental group meetings, expert group meetings, seminars, workshops, technical advisory services and the preparation of studies and reports. An increased interaction with global and regional stakeholders, and governmental and non-governmental bodies, will be sought to promote regional cooperation in the above-mentioned areas.

D. EXTERNAL FACTORS

Subprogramme 3 is expected to achieve its expected accomplishments on the assumption that: (a) member countries are willing to increase their subregional and regional cooperation and integration; (b) there are no significant shortfalls in funding; (c) the political situation in the region does not further deteriorate; (d) up-to-date and reliable economic and transport statistics are made available on youth unemployment and the MDGs; and (e) regional stakeholders have access to information technology facilities.

E. OUTPUTS

During the biennium 2012-2013, the following outputs are expected to be delivered under subprogramme 3:

(a) *Servicing of intergovernmental and expert bodies*(i) *ESCWA*

Parliamentary documentation:

- a. Report of the Committee on Transport on its twelfth session (2012, expected accomplishment (b));
- b. Report of the Committee on Transport on its thirteenth session (2013, expected accomplishment (b));
- c. Report of the Technical Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade, Economic Globalization and Financing for Development in the countries of the ESCWA Region on its seventh session (2012, expected accomplishments (a) and (c));**
- d. Report on policy options for key macro-economic issues (2012, expected accomplishment (d));
- e. Report on the progress towards the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals in the Arab region (2012, expected accomplishment (d)).

(ii) *Committee on Transport*

- a. Substantive servicing of meetings of the thirteenth and fourteenth sessions of the Committee on Transport (6 each in 2012 and 2013, expected accomplishment (b));
- b. Parliamentary documentation:
 - i. Follow-up report on the implementation of the United Nations international transport agreements concluded within the ESCWA region (2012, expected accomplishment (b));
 - ii. Report on the national transport and trade facilitation committees in the ESCWA region (2013, expected accomplishment (b)).

(iii) *Technical Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade, Economic Globalization and Financing for Development in the Countries of the ESCWA Region*

- a. **Substantive servicing of the meetings of the eighth session of the Technical Committee on Trade and Financing for Development (4 meetings) (2013, expected accomplishments (a) and (c));**
- b. **Parliamentary documentation:**
 - i. **Report on the implementation of the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development (2013, expected accomplishment (a));**
 - ii. **Report on trade policy formulation servicing productive capacity (2013, expected accomplishment (c)).**

(iv) *Ad hoc expert groups*

Nine expert group meetings on the following topics:

- a. **Assessment of the progress made by ESCWA member countries in the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus and the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development and the preparation for the 2013 International Conference on Financing for Development (2012, expected accomplishment (a));**
- b. **High priority issues of financing for development: regional cooperation (2013, expected accomplishment (a));**
- c. Transport and trade facilitation in the ESCWA region (2012, expected accomplishment (b));
- d. **Trade and development in the ESCWA region: South-South cooperation (2013, expected accomplishment (c));**
- e. Regional economic situation and policy assessment including diversification (2 meetings) (2012-2013, expected accomplishment (d));
- f. Trends, challenges and emerging issues in the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (2 meetings) (2012-2013, expected accomplishment (d));
- g. **Regional integration: an economic perspective (2013, expected accomplishments (a), (b), (c) and (d));**
- h. **Global economy, regional integration and national trade policies (2012, expected accomplishment (c));**
- i. Diversified economic policy formulation and its positive impact in the ESCWA region (2013, expected accomplishment (e)).

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

(i) *Recurrent publications*

- a. **Progress report on the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus and the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development (2012, expected accomplishment (a));**

- b. Regional Millennium Development Goals Report (2013, expected accomplishment (d));
- c. Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the ESCWA Region (2 issues) (2012-2013, expected accomplishment (d)).

(ii) *Non-recurrent publications*

- a. **High Priority Issues of Financing for Development: Post-financial Crisis, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), Debt and Development (2012, expected accomplishment (a));**
- b. **Foreign Direct Investment Report (2013, expected accomplishment (a));**
- c. Transport and Trade Facilitation: Behind Border Facilitation – Procedures and Possible Actions (2012, expected accomplishment (b));
- d. **Trade and Development in the ESCWA Region: Regional Cooperation – WTO and Market Access (2012, expected accomplishment (c));**
- e. Enhancing Fiscal Capacity to Attain the Millennium Development Goals (2012, expected accomplishment (d));
- f. Regional Cooperation and the Millennium Development Goals (2012, expected accomplishments (a) and (d));
- g. Proposed Economic Diversification Policies and Strategies in the ESCWA Region (2013, expected accomplishment (e)).

(iii) *Technical material*

- a. **Working paper series on: financing for development; trade; the Millennium Development Goals; and economic development (2012-2013, expected accomplishments (a), (b), (c) and (d));**
- b. Regional Economic Forecasts (2 issues) (2012-2013, expected accomplishment (d));
- c. **Maintenance and update of ESCWA homepage on economic development and integration (2012-2013, expected accomplishments (a), (b), (c) and (d));**
- d. Establishing and updating a web page on Arab Millennium Development Goals (2012-2013, expected accomplishment (d)).

(iv) *Booklets, pamphlets, fact sheets, wall charts, information kits*

- a. **Booklet on trade facilitation initiatives in the region (2013, expected accomplishment (c));**
- b. **Information kit on the status of implementation of trade agreements in the ESCWA region (2013, expected accomplishment (c));**
- c. **Fact sheet on trade indices and indicators in the ESCWA region (2012, expected accomplishment (c)).**

(v) *Contribution to inter-agency meetings and joint outputs*

- a. Regional input to the annual publication of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) *World Economic Situation and Prospects* (2 contributions) (2012-2013, expected accomplishment (d));
- b. Contribution to the annual report *Aid for Trade Statistics* published by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2012-2013, expected accomplishment (c));**
- c. Organizing a meeting for the Thematic Working Group on Arab Millennium Development Goals (ESCWA, United Nations agencies and League of Arab States) (2012-2013, expected accomplishment (d)).

(vi) *Special events*

- a. Launching of the Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the ESCWA Region (2012-2013, expected accomplishment (d));
- b. Launching of the Regional Millennium Development Goals Report (2013, expected accomplishment (d)).

(c) *Technical cooperation (extrabudgetary)*

(i) *Training courses, seminars and workshops*

Training workshops on bilateral investment agreements, FDI outflows, double taxation avoidance, and debt management for government officials in the ESCWA region (Development Account) (2012-2013, expected accomplishment (a)).

(ii) *Field projects*

- a. Strengthening the capacity to negotiate bilateral investment treaties in the ESCWA region (Development Account) (2010-2013, expected accomplishment (a));**
- b. Facilitating effective integration of developing countries in the global economy through Aid for Trade schemes (Development Account) (2011-2012, expected accomplishments (a) and (b)).**

(d) *Conference services and administration oversight*

Discretionary self-assessment of subprogramme 3 (2012, related to all expected accomplishments).

Annex**LEGISLATIVE MANDATES****Subprogramme 3. Economic development and integration***General Assembly resolutions*

60/5	Improving global road safety
63/277	Organization of a United Nations conference at the highest level on the world financial and economic crisis and its impact on development
64/188	International trade and development
64/191	External debt sustainability and development
64/193	Follow-up to and implementation of the Monterrey Consensus and the outcome of the 2008 Review Conference (Doha Declaration on Financing for Development)
64/221	South-South Cooperation
65/142	International trade and development
65/143	International financial system and development
65/145	Follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development
65/167	Towards a New International Economic Order
65/168	Role of the United Nations in promoting development in the context of globalization and interdependence

Economic and Social Council resolutions

2006/4	Sustained economic growth for social development, including the eradication of poverty and hunger
2007/2	The role of the United Nations system in providing full and productive employment and decent work for all
2007/30	Follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development
2009/30	A strengthened and more effective intergovernmental inclusive process to carry out the financing for development follow-up
2010/26	Follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development and the 2008 Review Conference
2010/33	Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia resolutions

- 256 (XXIII) Adoption of the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the Field of Maritime Transport in the Arab Mashreq
- 257 (XXIII) Selection of the routes to be given priority in implementation of the Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq
- 265 (XXIII) Regional cooperation in the field of road traffic safety
- 270 (XXIV) Macroeconomic policy for financial stability
- 279 (XXIV) Follow-up to implementation of components of the Integrated Transport System in the Arab Mashreq
- 290 (XXV) Call for regional action to accelerate implementation of the Monterrey Consensus in Western Asia
