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Item 5 (c) of the provisional agenda *

**Management issues: overview of partnerships,
extrabudgetary contributions and capacity development****Overview of partnerships, extrabudgetary contributions
and capacity development****Note by the secretariat***Summary*

The present document presents an overview of the secretariat's partnerships, extrabudgetary contributions and technical cooperation work in 2016. It emphasizes the importance of effective partnerships in all of the work carried out by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, in particular through its role in facilitating the work of the United Nations to deliver as one at the regional level and through engagement with regional and subregional partners. In the document, the steps taken by the secretariat to strengthen its relations with partners and donors are described, a summary of extrabudgetary contributions made available to the secretariat in 2016 is provided and the delivery of the Commission's technical cooperation work in 2016 is elaborated on using examples of results achieved in cooperation with some of the key partners of the secretariat. The Commission may wish to review the document and provide the secretariat with guidance on the development, direction and priorities of its partnerships, extrabudgetary contributions and technical cooperation work.

I. Introduction

1. The year 2016 marked the beginning of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Drawing upon the guidance received from member States at the global and regional level, the secretariat made considerable efforts to align its analytical, intergovernmental and technical cooperation functions to effectively support member States in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals contained therein.

* E/ESCAP/73/L.1.

2. The capacity development and partnerships strategies of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) have undergone revision to focus on two emerging and overarching priorities: (a) the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; and (b) regional economic cooperation and integration. Renewed emphasis has been placed on the needs of the most vulnerable countries, in particular least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States. Partnerships with other United Nations entities and development partners have continued to build upon synergies and complementarities to ensure coherent and coordinated support to member States at the regional and subregional levels.

3. The implementation of the Umoja enterprise resource planning system has advanced well, leading to more effective management of grants and projects, the adoption of a coherent approach to the receipt and management of extrabudgetary contributions, and the design and implementation of capacity development projects in line with United Nations guidance. Umoja is also expected to contribute to better monitoring of implementation and budget utilization of capacity development projects.

II. Partnership developments in 2016

A. Introduction

4. Partnerships are at the heart of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Concrete progress towards its achievement can be made only with the effective participation and contribution of all stakeholders, including government at all levels, international agencies within and outside the United Nations, development banks, civil society, communities and the business sector. Sustainable Development Goal 17 seeks to strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development. In this context, it emphasizes the importance of addressing finance, technology, capacity-building and trade, as well as systemic issues such as policy and institutional coherence, multi-stakeholder partnerships and data, monitoring and accountability.

5. Given its unique position as the most inclusive intergovernmental platform in Asia and the Pacific, and its multidisciplinary approach, ESCAP is uniquely placed to work with all relevant stakeholders and development partners to build synergy on the joint objective of making progress on the 2030 Agenda.

6. ESCAP partnerships have several dimensions, which include the following:

(a) Facilitating system-wide coherence and the efforts of the United Nations to work together as one at regional level, through the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism;

(b) Partnerships with regional and subregional organizations, such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization;

(c) Partnerships in support of technical cooperation with different categories of donors and partners who provide both financial and in-kind contributions to ESCAP.

B. Facilitating the efforts of the United Nations to work as one at the regional level

7. Strong partnerships and coordination with other regional agencies in the United Nations system within the “Delivering as one” framework are vital to ensure the effectiveness of the capacity development work of ESCAP.

8. ESCAP convenes and serves as the secretariat of the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism, which comprises 31 United Nations and affiliated entities, including the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank.

9. In 2016, the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism held 12 formal, informal and working-level meetings, which mainly focused on two issues: (a) realignment of the structure of the Mechanism to better address the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; and (b) formulation of the Plan of Action to Implement the Joint Declaration on Comprehensive Partnership between ASEAN and the United Nations (2016-2020), as relates to the economic, sociocultural and cross-sectoral sections.

10. New thematic working groups under the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism have been established in seven areas, which correspond to the relevant clusters of the Sustainable Development Goals. These groups are as follows: (a) statistics; (b) resource-efficient growth (including climate change mitigation, green economy, energy and water resources); (c) sustainable societies (including demographic change, migration, youth, ageing and urbanization); (d) inclusive development and poverty eradication; (e) disaster risk reduction and resilience (including climate change adaptation); (f) gender equality and the empowerment of women; and (g) education for all. The newly established thematic working groups have adopted their terms of reference and action-oriented workplans for the period 2016-2017, which are aimed at providing collective and coherent support from the entire United Nations system at the regional level to member States to develop plans and strategies to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

11. The Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism continued to lead the formulation of the Plan of Action to Implement the Joint Declaration on Comprehensive Partnership between ASEAN and the United Nations (2016-2020) under the economic cooperation pillar, the sociocultural pillar and the cross-cutting pillar of the comprehensive partnership. The Plan of Action was adopted at the eighth ASEAN-United Nations Summit in the Lao People's Democratic Republic in September 2016.

12. Engagement of the secretariat in the work of the United Nations Development Group for Asia and the Pacific, which focuses on helping the United Nations to deliver as one at the country level, continued to provide another important means for ESCAP to coordinate and interact with other entities in the United Nations system in 2016, including through selective involvement in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework processes. To better align the work of the two coordination bodies, the annual session of the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism was held back to back with the meeting of the United Nations Development Group for Asia and the Pacific.

C. Working with regional and subregional partners

13. ESCAP continued to work closely with regional and subregional organizations to seek common solutions to transboundary problems, and to provide a regional hub for sharing development knowledge and good practices across Asia and the Pacific. In this context, ESCAP worked with a range of regional and subregional partners, including under formal cooperation agreements.

14. In 2016, under existing agreements, ESCAP continued to work with ADB, ASEAN, the Economic Cooperation Organization, the Electric Power Council of the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Eurasian Development Bank, the Eurasian Economic Commission, the Greater Tumen Initiative, the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, the secretariat of the Integration Committee of the Eurasian Economic Community (under a trilateral arrangement also including the Economic Commission for Europe), the Pacific Community, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation.

15. In addition to engaging with ASEAN as the convener of the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism, ESCAP collaborates with ASEAN through participation in ASEAN high-level meetings and provision of capacity development support to implement the ASEAN Community Vision 2025. In May 2016, the secretariat hosted a dialogue with the Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN and senior officials from the ASEAN secretariat in Bangkok. The outcomes of these discussions resulted in an information paper on ESCAP support to ASEAN for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the ASEAN Community Blueprints 2025. This information paper was presented at the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting in the Lao People's Democratic Republic in July 2016, and at the high-level ASEAN-United Nations meetings in New York in September 2016.

16. Furthermore, the Executive Secretary participated in the eighth Cambodia-Lao People's Democratic Republic-Myanmar-Viet Nam Summit and the seventh Ayeyawady-Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy Summit, both held in Viet Nam in October 2016, with the participation of the leaders of Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Viet Nam, as well as Thailand, to discuss closing the gap between those four countries and the rest of ASEAN, and development priorities for the Greater Mekong Subregion.

17. The secretariat also continued to support ASEAN with the implementation of (a) the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity on developing an integrated transport and logistics system, (b) the Information and Communications Technology Master Plan and (c) the ASEAN-United Nations Joint Strategic Plan of Action on Disaster Management (2016-2020). Through training and the provision of relevant expertise, the secretariat also assisted ASEAN in the areas of trade facilitation, energy connectivity and the process of graduation from the status of least developed country.

D. Partnerships for the implementation of the programme of work

18. The ongoing development of a diverse and wide range of partnerships, involving funding and other forms of cooperation, is a critical foundation for the Commission's ability to deliver its programme of work efficiently and effectively.

19. The secretariat implemented a number of measures and actions in 2016 to further develop relations and cooperation with development partners and donors.

20. These included the following:

(a) Negotiation and signing of a letter of intent on promoting regional connectivity and the Belt and Road Initiative between the Government of China and ESCAP;

(b) Negotiation and signing of an agreement on administrative arrangements with ADB to facilitate the receipt of contributions and administering of funds;

(c) Negotiation and signing of an arrangement with the Republic of Korea to facilitate the receipt of contributions and administering of funds;

(d) Annual consultation meeting with the Republic of Korea that reviewed achievements of projects funded, and agreed on priorities of future funding, from the Korea-ESCAP Cooperation Fund and other partners from the country;

(e) Working-level donor relations missions by the Division of Strategy and Programme Management to Germany, Sweden and Switzerland, with the aim of increasing the visibility of ESCAP and expanding its existing partnership with these countries, in particular in support of implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific;

(f) Regular formal and informal engagements and discussions with other existing and potential new donors, including China, Germany, India, Japan, the Russian Federation, Sweden, Switzerland, the United States of America and the European Union;

(g) Adoption of the ESCAP capacity development strategy for 2016-2019, which provides integrated coherent strategic direction for ESCAP capacity development work to increase its effectiveness and impact while maximizing partnerships with a wide array of stakeholders.

21. The importance of the business sector and civil society organizations in the advocacy and capacity-development work of the secretariat has been increasing. In this context, ESCAP continued to work in 2016 with, among others, the Goldman Sachs Foundation. The secretariat continued to pursue new partnership opportunities in 2016 with a range of global and regional business sector entities, including through participation in the annual meeting of the United Nations System Private Sector Focal Points, held in the United Arab Emirates in October 2016.

III. Extrabudgetary contributions in 2016

22. ESCAP receives extrabudgetary contributions for its Technical Cooperation Trust Fund and its General Trust Fund. In 2016, the secretariat's total extrabudgetary contributions amounted to \$13.5 million (table 1).

Table 1
Summary of extrabudgetary contributions in 2016, by component

<i>Component</i>	<i>Contributions (United States dollars)</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Technical Cooperation Trust Fund	12 077 999	89.6
General Trust Fund		
Subregional Office for East and North-East Asia: Republic of Korea	1 141 000	8.5
Subregional Office for North and Central Asia: Kazakhstan	100 000	0.7
Subregional Office for South and South-West Asia: India	158 000	1.2
Subtotal, General Trust Fund	1 399 000	10.4
Total	13 476 999	100.0

23. It should be noted that the contribution of the Republic of Korea to the Subregional Office for East and North-East Asia covers the institutional costs of the office and contributes to the implementation of its programme of work. The contributions of Kazakhstan and India to the Subregional Office for North and Central Asia and Subregional Office for South and South-West Asia respectively cover the institutional costs of these offices only.

IV. Delivering the Commission's technical cooperation programme in 2016

A. Contributions to the Commission's technical cooperation programme

24. In 2016, the secretariat's technical cooperation programme continued to focus on capacity development that encompassed the following: (a) policy advocacy and dialogue on critical and emerging issues, including follow-up to global and regional commitments; (b) regional knowledge networking aimed at enabling the members and associate members of ESCAP to share and discuss information and experiences on good and innovative practices; and (c) training, advisory services and other forms of technical assistance aimed at strengthening the capacity of the members and associate members of ESCAP to formulate and implement effective policies and programmes in a range of key development areas.

25. The ESCAP technical cooperation work in 2016 was funded from both the regular budget of the United Nations and extrabudgetary resources. The regular budget comprised (a) the regular programme of technical cooperation (section 23) and (b) the Development Account (section 35). Extrabudgetary resources included voluntary contributions provided by individual Governments, entities of the United Nations system, intergovernmental organizations, the business sector and other organizations. Such contributions were provided as cash (funds-in-trust) and in kind.

26. The total cash contributions received by ESCAP in 2016 for technical cooperation, from sources within and outside the United Nations, amounted to \$17.5 million. Bilateral voluntary cash contributions by ESCAP member and non-member States remained the main extrabudgetary source of funding. A summary of the financial contributions by source in both dollars and percentage terms is provided in table 2.

27. Representing 58.1 per cent of the total financial contributions in 2016 for technical cooperation, bilateral donor country contributions amounted to \$10.2 million. Further details on the extrabudgetary resources (funds-in-trust) received from bilateral sources are provided in annex I to the present document. The largest overall bilateral donor contributions were received from China, India, the Republic of Korea and the Russian Federation. The United Nations contributed \$6.1 million, representing 35.2 per cent of the total funds received for technical cooperation in 2016 (see table 2).

Table 2
Summary of financial contributions for technical cooperation in 2016, by source

<i>Source</i>	<i>Contributions (United States dollars)</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
(a) Donor countries (see annex I)	10 158 808	58.1
(b) United Nations system (see annex II)		
1. United Nations regular programme of technical cooperation (section 23)	2 639 100	15.1
2. United Nations Development Account (section 35)	2 756 780	15.8
3. United Nations programmes, funds and specialized agencies	748 972	4.3
Subtotal, (b)	6 144 852	35.2
(c) Other organizations (see annex II)	1 170 219	6.7
Total	17 473 879	100.0
Regular budget ((b) 1 + (b) 2)	5 395 880	30.9
Extrabudgetary contributions ((a) + (b) 3 + (c))	12 077 999	69.1

28. Intergovernmental organizations, the business sector and other organizations contributed \$1.2 million of the total funds received in 2016. Some of the largest contributors under this category were the Korea Disabled People's Development Institute, the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease, Inc. (Vital Strategies), and Zhongshan College, China. More detailed information on contributions from other intergovernmental organizations, the business sector and other organizations for technical cooperation is given in annex II.

29. The Commission's technical cooperation work in 2016 was further facilitated by contributions in kind, such as the services of experts and the provision of host facilities and equipment. The former included a total 75.5 work-months of services of experts in various disciplines provided by ESCAP member States on a non-reimbursable loan basis.

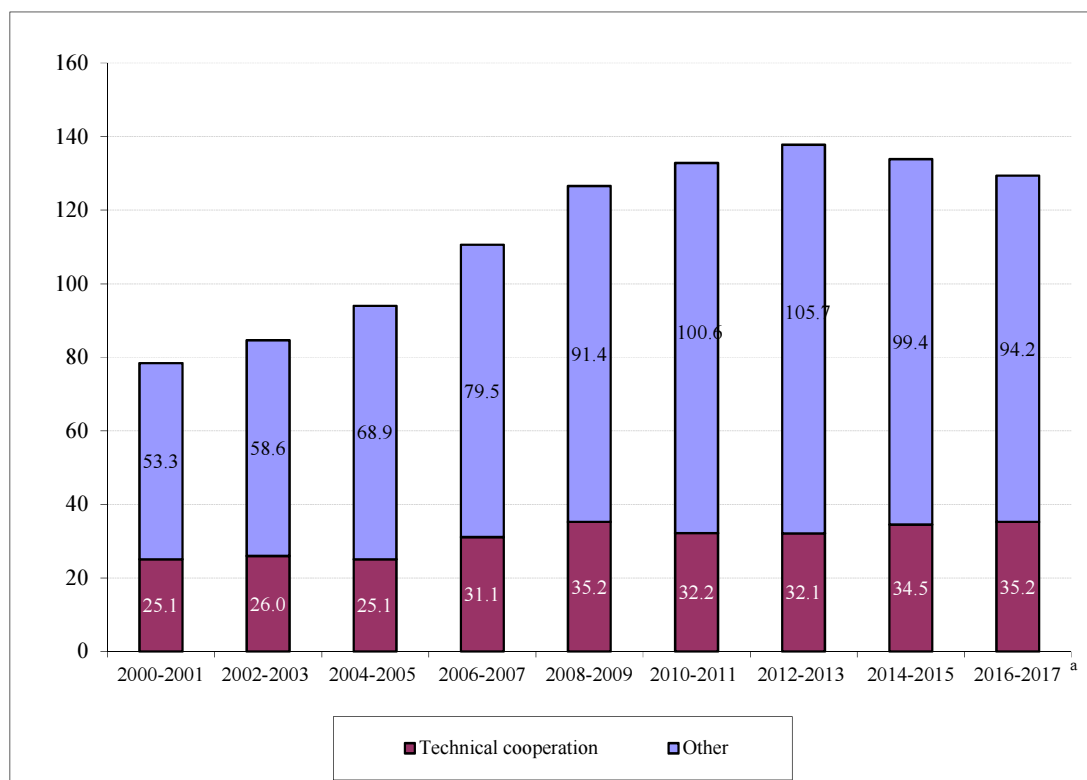
30. The volume of the secretariat's technical cooperation delivery in 2016 in financial terms totalled approximately \$22 million.

31. The distribution of extrabudgetary resources over the Commission's nine subprogrammes in 2016 is shown in table 3, and the evolution of ESCAP expenditures over the period 2000-2017 is shown in the figure.

Table 3
Distribution of extrabudgetary allocations to Commission's subprogrammes in 2016
(Percentage)

<i>Subprogramme</i>		<i>Proportion</i>
Subprogramme 1:	Macroeconomic policy and inclusive development	7.6
Subprogramme 2:	Trade and investment	
Subprogramme 3:	Transport	7.9
Subprogramme 4:	Environment and development	4.5
Subprogramme 5:	Information and communications technology and disaster risk reduction and management	23.4
Subprogramme 6:	Social development	8.2
Subprogramme 7:	Statistics	20.7
Subprogramme 8:	Subregional activities for development	12.2
Subprogramme 9:	Energy	2.8
Total		100.0

Evolution of ESCAP expenditure, 2000-2017
(Millions of United States dollars)



^a Estimated values.

B. Highlights of technical cooperation work in 2016

32. The ESCAP capacity development strategy provided overarching guidance for the secretariat's capacity development work, underpinned by evidence-based analysis and normative work. Building on the comparative advantage of ESCAP, effective, inclusive and results-driven partnerships remained central. Through various modalities, such as analytical studies, training workshops, advisory services, communities of practice and networks to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and good practice, ESCAP continued to provide a vital platform for the sharing of knowledge, information and experience among member States within Asia and the Pacific.

33. The secretariat has endeavoured to maximize the impact of the resources, experience, skills and linkages that partners bring to the implementation of the work of ESCAP in all its subprogrammes. Some of the key achievements under the ESCAP technical cooperation programme in 2016 are illustrated by the following selected examples:

(a) In collaboration with China, the secretariat supported member countries in areas of social development, space technology application and regional connectivity. This included training of national women's organizations to improve mainstreaming of gender in national policies, and promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities and application of space technology. Furthermore, the secretariat and the Government of China continued to improve regional connectivity and the Belt and Road Initiative, in particular through transport infrastructure, transport facilitation and logistics, energy connectivity, trade facilitation, information and communications technology and science, technology and innovation;

(b) The partnership with the Russian Federation continued to be instrumental in promoting the policy, normative and capacity-development work of ESCAP, mainly in support of the energy and transport sectors, as well as in other joint priority areas such as trade facilitation, international migration, statistics and disaster risk reduction. The Russian Federation hosted the third session of the Ministerial Conference on Transport in Moscow in December 2016, which reviewed the implementation of the Regional Action Programme for Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific, phase II (2012-2016). In the trade facilitation area, the collaboration focused mainly on formulating the legal and technical issues of the regional road map for implementing the Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific;

(c) With support from Japan, the secretariat initiated a project to strengthen multi-hazard risk assessment and early warning systems in Pacific island countries through enhanced institutional capacity-building to use space and geographic information systems, and to promote regional cooperation platforms on sharing of geospatial data for disaster management;

(d) In cooperation with the Republic of Korea, ESCAP continued implementing the Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real” for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific and promoting eGovernment for women’s empowerment policies and tools. ESCAP received additional equipment from the Government of the Republic of Korea for use in the Accessibility Centre at the United Nations Conference Centre in Bangkok, which supports the participation of persons with disabilities in United Nations intergovernmental processes and meetings. ESCAP also partnered with the Republic of Korea in support of trade facilitation, transport, connectivity, competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises, green-growth policies and solutions, and the dissemination of capacity-building programmes on the use of information and communications technology for development;

(e) Partnering with Germany, ESCAP worked to implement the “urban nexus” approach through the integrated planning and management of energy, water and food security in 12 Asian cities in seven countries, namely China, India, Indonesia, Mongolia, the Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam. Germany also continued supporting the ESCAP Multi-Donor Trust Fund for Tsunami, Disaster and Climate Preparedness in Indian Ocean and Southeast Asian Countries;

(f) In partnership with Kazakhstan, ESCAP continued increasing the capacity of policymakers and national experts in Pacific island countries to formulate and implement sustainable energy solutions, in particular locally available sources of energy. This included achieving sustainable development by applying green-growth strategies and developing national action plans that promote renewable energy and biogas energy system methodologies tailored to the needs and priorities of Pacific island communities.

V. Conclusion

34. In the past year, the secretariat has achieved considerable success in fully aligning all aspects of its work with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and with efforts to enhance regional economic cooperation and integration. The secretariat has strengthened its partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders, including Governments, donor agencies, United Nations entities, other international and regional organizations, development banks and the business sector, in order to support ESCAP member States in their efforts to develop and implement inclusive and sustainable economic and social development policies in Asia and the Pacific and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

35. Noteworthy in this regard are the steps taken to realign the structure of the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism and the thematic working groups to better address the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The secretariat also took steps to enhance the impact and focus of its technical cooperation work on the needs and capacity development of least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States. The secretariat took additional steps to increase and diversify its resource mobilization and partnership capabilities and base. High priority was accorded to strengthening relations with key partners and donors through regular communication and engagement as a central pillar of the secretariat's resource mobilization efforts.

36. The secretariat continued to strengthen the application of results-based management approaches and of the tools available in Umoja to ensure maximum impact of its technical cooperation work with member States. Looking ahead, the secretariat will use the recommendations and lessons identified through evaluation to strengthen performance and results. The secretariat will furthermore continue to create the necessary strategic and operational synergies with United Nations entities and subregional organizations to ensure United Nations system-wide coherence at the regional level.

Annex I

Extrabudgetary resources provided by bilateral donors in cash for technical cooperation in 2016 (funds-in-trust) (United States dollars)

<i>Donors</i>	<i>Resources</i>
Bangladesh	27 000
Bhutan	2 000
Cambodia	10 000
China	3 065 521
Fiji	159 532
Germany	222 861
Hong Kong, China	30 000
India	1 243 028
Indonesia	127 154
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	386 365
Japan	110 416
Kazakhstan	5 000
Macao, China	33 000
Malaysia	45 000
Micronesia (Federated States of)	5 000
Myanmar	1 000
New Caledonia	4 625
Pakistan	22 393
Philippines	87 750
Republic of Korea	2 646 446
Russian Federation	1 200 000
Singapore	15 000
Sri Lanka	50 000
Thailand	61 000
United Kingdom	573 717
Viet Nam	25 000
Total	10 158 808

Annex II

Technical cooperation resources provided by the United Nations system and by intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations in 2016 (United States dollars)

<i>Entity</i>	<i>Contributions</i>
United Nations system	
Regular budget resources	
Regular programme of technical cooperation (section 23)	2 639 100
Development Account (section 35)	2 756 780
Subtotal, regular budget resources	5 395 880
Extrabudgetary resources	
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	315 784
United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women	36 500
United Nations Office for Project Services	396 688
Subtotal, extrabudgetary resources	748 972
Total, United Nations system	6 144 852
Other organizations	
Agence française de développement	111 265
International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease, Inc. (Vital Strategies)	345 127
Japan Water Forum	6 685
Korea Development Institute	14 000
Korea Disabled People's Development Institute	346 116
Korea Expressway Corporation	100 000
Korea Maritime Institute	92 000
Korea Ports and Harbours Association	32 000
Zhongshan College, China	120 000
Total, other organizations	1 170 219
Grand total	7 315 071

Annex III

Extrabudgetary assistance in kind (non-reimbursable loans) in 2016

Republic of Korea (Total 75.5 work-months)

Mr. Go Eung Kim
Expert on Environment Policy
Environment and Development Division
9 work-months

Mr. Dongjung Lee
Expert on Information and Communications Technology
Information and Communications Technology and Disaster Risk Reduction Division
11.5 work-months

Mr. Joonghoon Cho
Expert on Regional Cooperation in North-East Asia, with particular focus on the Democratic
People's Republic of Korea
Macroeconomic Policy and Financing for Development Division
12 work-months

Ms. Hyun Soo Yeob
Expert on Social Policy
Social Development Division
12 work-months

Mr. Dong Oh Nam
Expert on Regional Trade and Monetary Cooperation
Trade, Investment and Innovation Division
12 work-months

Mr. Jeongsu Park
Expert on Railway Transport
Transport Division
12 work-months

Mr. Byoungmoon Son
Expert on Road Transport
3 work-months

Mr. Geunwon Ahn
Expert on Sustainable Urban Transport
4 work-months
