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**Review of issues pertinent to the subsidiary structure of the
Commission, including the work of the regional institutions**

Interim programme performance report for the biennium 2016-2017**

Note by the secretariat***

Summary

The present report provides an account of the mid-biennium programme performance of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) for the biennium 2016-2017, as assessed against the expected accomplishments set out in the strategic framework. It presents the interim results achieved for each subprogramme and for executive direction and management.

The assessment of programme achievements and results is supported by information collected from the end-users of the secretariat's products and services through surveys, interviews and evaluations or other reviews.

The Commission may wish to review the present report and comment on the overall performance of ESCAP and its nine subprogrammes. Based on the lessons learned, the Commission may also wish to provide the secretariat with guidance on future implementation modalities that would improve the effectiveness of ESCAP.

* E/ESCAP/73/L.1

** The present document was submitted late owing to the internal review of the report by the Policy and Oversight Coordination Services, Office of the Under-Secretary-General, Department of Management.

*** The present report is being issued without formal editing.

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I. Highlights of programme achievements in the mid-biennium 2016-2017

A. Highlights of programme results

1. To address regional challenges and support the balanced integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, ESCAP continued to act as the most inclusive intergovernmental platform in Asia and the Pacific and to promote innovative solutions, the sharing of knowledge and good practices and the development of critical capacities. ESCAP supported the engagement of its member States, in particular the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, in regional and global policy dialogues. To support the implementation, follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, ESCAP provided research, analysis and technical cooperation needed for developing and implementing evidence-based policies on macroeconomics and financing for development, trade and investment, science, technology and innovation, transport development and connectivity, environment, natural resources management and urban development, information and communications technology, disaster risk management, social dimensions, statistics and energy. ESCAP also provided technical assistance to address sub-regional priorities within the Sustainable

Development Goals in the Pacific, East and North-East Asia, North and Central Asia, South and South-West Asia as well as South-East Asia. As the convener of the Regional Coordination Mechanism, ESCAP worked towards coordination and coherence across the United Nations system.

B. Challenges and lessons learned

2. Attainment of internationally agreed development goals in the region is often hampered by weaknesses in institutional frameworks and capacities as well as varying levels of development, which affect the effective design and implementation of evidence-based policies and programmes.

3. Identifying and promoting new drivers of growth to close development gaps and sustain economic dynamism, and ensuring that growth is resilient to risks are important priorities for the region in promoting inclusive and sustainable development.

4. Re-orienting sector-specific national decision-making and planning processes into an integrated, holistic process remains a challenge, as institutional set-ups, practices and financing mechanisms are geared towards sector-specific planning and implementation.

5. Limited availability of wide-ranging disaggregated data hampers evidence-based analysis for comprehensive multi-sectoral development planning.

6. To address these challenges, mechanisms to deepen regional economic cooperation and integration, policy coordination and multi-sectoral approaches that address complex challenges across national boundaries need to be further strengthened.

II. Results at mid-biennium 2016-2017¹

A. Executive direction and management

Objective of the Organization: To ensure full implementation of legislative mandates and compliance with United Nations policies and procedures with respect to the management of the programme of work and of staff and financial resources of ESCAP

Expected accomplishments:

- (a) Programme of work is effectively managed
- (b) Identification of critical and emerging issues relevant to the region's development agenda
- (c) Enhanced policy coherence in coordination among United Nations agencies in the Asia-Pacific region

¹ Objectives and outputs mentioned in the present section are listed in the proposed programme budget submitted to the General Assembly at its seventieth session (A/70/6 (Sect. 19)). The programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017 was approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 70/249 A-C. Subsequent changes resulting from the adoption of Commission resolution 71/1 *Restructuring the conference structure of the Commission to be fit for the evolving post-2015 development agenda*, which was endorsed by ECOSOC resolution 2015/30 bearing the same title, are also reflected.

(d) Enhanced visibility of the role of ESCAP in the promotion of equitable and inclusive economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific

(e) Timely submission of manuscripts to Conference and Documentation Services Section

7. As at 31 December 2016, 37 per cent of legislative outputs had been delivered within established deadlines (biennial target: 93 per cent). The seventy-second session of the Commission served as an inclusive decision-making forum for the region and culminated in resolutions that will have long-reaching impact. The participation of Heads of States and Governments as well as other high-level dignitaries added distinction and depth to the substantive policy discussions. Specifically, the adoption of Commission resolution 72/6 on Committing to the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific specified the will of the member States to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. A total of 93 recommendations on emerging issues requiring attention had been identified by intergovernmental bodies against the biennial target of 110 recommendations.

8. In 2016, the reformulation of the Regional Coordination Mechanism thematic working groups led to policy coherence and coordination among UN agencies and development. New terms of reference were developed to align joint work on projects and policy development for the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development with relevant themes. A total of 35 joint outputs were implemented, which exceeded the biennial target of 30. Strategies developed in 2016 to maximise the understanding and exposure for ESCAP proved to be useful. About 200 citations about ESCAP activities and policies appeared in key media outlets of Asia and the Pacific (biennial target: 160 citations) as well as 180 citations (biennial target: 50 citations) related to 14 op-eds written by the Executive Secretary, in top tier, regional and national outlets such as AFP, the BBC, CNBC, Reuters, Bloomberg, CCTV and Channel News Asia. About 40 per cent of pre-session documents were submitted by the 10-week deadline (biennial target: 100 per cent). The low implementation rate is attributable to protracted internal consultations in the preparation of documents. ESCAP is engaged in a review of the process of preparing documents to identify measures for introducing efficiencies in this respect.

B. Subprogramme 1. Macroeconomic policy, poverty reduction and financing for development

Objective of the Organization: To enhance regional economic cooperation and foster forward-looking macroeconomic policymaking for inclusive and sustainable development, especially in support of poverty reduction and attainment of internationally agreed development goals including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Expected accomplishments:

(a) Enhanced understanding among policymakers and other target groups of policies that promote economic growth, reduce poverty and narrow development gaps in the region

(b) Enhanced regional voice in global development forums and strengthened economic and financial cooperation to foster inclusive, equitable, sustainable and resilient development

(c) Improved capacity of member States, particularly countries with special needs, to design and implement development policies for achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other internationally agreed development goals, including gender equality

(d) Improved capacity of member States to formulate and implement rural development policies and measures that promote sustainable agriculture and food security for the equitable benefit of women and men, girls and boys

9. ESCAP's publications have generated innovative and timely discussions on emerging regional economic and social challenges in Asia and the Pacific. As at December 2016, 414 references to the Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific and its Year End Update were visible in policy documents, academic literature, and media outlets (biennial target: 850). In the Asia-Pacific Forum for Sustainable Development and the seventy-second Session of the Commission, member countries often referred to the findings of the Survey in their statements and discussions.

10. Thus far, against a biennial target of 3 outcome documents and resolutions, ESCAP submitted one outcome document which resulted from the First High-Level Follow-up Dialogue on Financing for Development in Asia and the Pacific to the seventy-second session of the Commission. The Second High-Level Follow-up Dialogue on Financing for Development in Asia and the Pacific will be held in 2017.

11. Most of the countries in the region, including countries with special needs, have incorporated Sustainable Development Goals in their development strategies. Against a biennial target of 85 per cent, about 94 per cent of participants in ESCAP activities indicated that the activities to promote capacity development for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development had enabled them to design and implement sound economic development policies for achieving internationally agreed development goals.

12. In 2016, the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture, a subsidiary body of ESCAP, conducted analytical research, organized capacity building events and facilitated policy dialogue, knowledge sharing and networking. These activities provided innovative policy options and contributed to the improvement in evidence-based policy making in member States in the areas of rural development policies and measures. Overall, results of the post-evaluation surveys of such capacity-building activities indicated that 93 per cent of participants felt that the training equipped them with useful knowledge, which exceeded the biennial target of 85 per cent.

C. Subprogramme 2. Trade and investment

Objective of the Organization: To support the contribution of trade, investment, enterprise development, innovation and technology transfer to inclusive and sustainable development in the Asia-Pacific region.

Expected accomplishments:

(a) Enhanced knowledge among ESCAP member States of trends, emerging issues and evidence-based policy options in the area of trade and investment and related fields of enterprise development, innovation and technology development and transfer, for inclusive and sustainable development

(b) Strengthened regional cooperation mechanisms in trade, investment, enterprise development, innovation and technology transfer for inclusive and sustainable development

(c) Increased capacity of ESCAP member States to formulate and implement policies on trade, investment, innovation, enterprise development and technology transfer for inclusive and sustainable development, including those that are gender-responsive

13. ESCAP publications and activities related to trade and investment were reflected in 26 articles and references in policy-related literature (biennial target: 35) and in 1158 downloads (biennial target: 40000) as at December 2016. Key analytical tools included the Asia-Pacific Trade and Investment Report, which highlighted the need to focus on domestic value addition of exports and carefully balance sources of growth, as well as ESCAP Trade and Investment working paper series, ESCAP Trade Insights series and ESCAP-World Bank Trade Cost Databases, which provide a solid basis for evidence-based policymaking and implementation.

14. Thirty-four ESCAP member States found that the regional cooperation mechanisms fostered by ESCAP in trade, investment and enterprise development as well as regional cooperation mechanisms promoted by the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology and the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization to foster innovation and to develop and transfer technology were useful (biennial target: 20). In addition, under the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement, the average margin of preferences increased to 32.5 per cent (biennial target: 35 per cent) and the number of products receiving preferences increased to from 10,000 to 10,677 as at December 2016 (biennial target: 10,000).

15. ESCAP worked actively to build the capacity of member States and Associate Members in trade and investment policymaking, and more than 600 participants were trained in 22 capacity-building events. 93.5 per cent of the participants (biennial target: 85 per cent) indicated that their capacity to formulate or implement policies on trade, investment and enterprise development, including those that are gender-responsive, had increased. In addition, 96 per cent of participants (biennial target: 80 per cent participants) in activities organized by the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology and the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization indicated that their capacity to formulate and/or implement policies that foster innovation and technology transfer, including in the area of agricultural mechanization had increased.

D. Subprogramme 3. Transport

Objective of the Organization: To enhance regional cooperation and integration in transport for inclusive and sustainable development.

Expected accomplishments:

(a) Increased capacity of ESCAP member States to develop and implement transport policies and programmes that support inclusive, equitable and sustainable development and are gender-responsive

(b) Increased capacity of ESCAP member States to plan, develop and implement international intermodal transport linkages, including the Asian Highway network, the Trans-Asian Railway network, inter-island shipping and dry ports of international importance

(c) Increased capacity of ESCAP member States and the private sector to initiate and implement measures to improve the efficiency of international transport operations and logistics

16. Member countries benefitted from transport-related advocacy and capacity building activities, which led to the formulation and implementation of 93 policies and programmes (biennial target: 95). The number of national projects and programmes to upgrade regional transport infrastructure increased to 77 in 2016 (biennial target: 73). The Commission also adopted resolution 72/5 on strengthening regional cooperation on transport connectivity for sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific, and ESCAP initiated concerted efforts with the Secretariat of the Pacific Community to address the specific challenges faced by Small Island developing States. (17/01/2017)

17. ESCAP continued to assist member States in improving the efficiency of international transport operations and logistics and developing operational transport connectivity. The number of measures to remove bottlenecks and facilitate efficient movements of people and goods and means of transport along transport routes and at border crossings reached 32 in 2016 (biennial target: 34), while 5 countries took measures to improve logistics performance (biennial target: 18).

E. Subprogramme 4. Environment and development

Objective of the Organization: Improved policies for integrating environment into development, management of water resources and urban development.

Expected accomplishments:

(a) Enhanced understanding by local and national government officials and other stakeholders of means of aligning environment and development policymaking and water resources management and urban development policies, including their gender dimensions, with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals

(b) Improved capacity of local and national governments and major stakeholders to operationalize environment and development policymaking and water resources management and urban development policies, including their gender dimensions, in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals

(c) Enhanced regional cooperation frameworks and networks of local and national governments and major stakeholders with respect to environment and development policymaking and water resources management and urban development policies, including their gender dimensions

18. The analytical work of ESCAP provided an important basis for discussions at national and regional levels on the New Urban Agenda of Habitat III, as well as water and sanitation in the broader context of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development. Three references to related ESCAP publications, policy briefs, projects and activities were made in policy documents, declarations and statements (biennial target: 10), which included The World Water Development Report 2016, to which ESCAP contributed.

19. ESCAP implemented a series of capacity development events and field projects, which resulted in seven initiatives developed by governments and major stakeholders to operationalize environment and development policymaking and water resources management and urban development policies, including their gender dimensions (biennial target: 10). These include initiatives on integrated approaches to planning with Sustainable Development Goal 6 on water and sanitation as the entry point, scaling-up and lessons sharing on the implementation of integrated resource recovery centres and developments of nationally appropriate mitigation actions for sustainable waste management.

20. ESCAP pursued 5 initiatives (biennial target: 10) to establish or strengthen regional cooperation frameworks and networks related to environment and development policymaking and water resources management and urban development policies, including their gender dimensions. The 2016 Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD) agreed on the process for developing a regional roadmap for implementing the 2030 Agenda in the region. Regional civil society networks were strengthened through participation of the Asia-Pacific Regional Civil Society Organisations Engagement Mechanism in a preparatory meeting for the APFSD. Furthermore, ESCAP successfully established the Urban Sustainable Development Goals Knowledge Platform for sharing best practices and fostering city-to-city cooperation among local governments in the region. The International Forum on Urban Policy for the Sustainable Development Goals, co-organized by ESCAP reaffirmed the commitment of cities to implement the 2030 Agenda, guided by key principles, including regional cooperation. Additionally, a national Sustainable Development Goals focal point system was established.

F. Subprogramme 5. Information and communications technology and disaster risk reduction and management

Objective of the Organization: To enhance the contribution of information and communications technology connectivity, space applications, and disaster risk reduction and management strategies to the achievement of inclusive, sustainable and resilient development in Asia and the Pacific.

Expected accomplishments:

(a) Strengthened regional cooperation in information and communications technology connectivity, space applications and disaster risk reduction and management for inclusive and sustainable development

(b) Improved knowledge and awareness of member States of effective strategies and policies in information and communications technology connectivity, space applications and disaster risk reduction and management, including their gender dimensions, for inclusive, equitable, sustainable and resilient development

(c) Strengthened capacity of member States to apply information and communications technology, space applications and disaster risk reduction and management strategies for inclusive, equitable, sustainable and resilient development

21. Member States continued to value the impact of ESCAP efforts to enhance regional cooperation in the areas of information and communications technology (ICT) connectivity, space technology applications, and disaster risk reduction and management. As of December 2016, 12 ESCAP member States indicated that they had benefited from ESCAP-led regional

cooperation mechanisms devoted to ICT connectivity, space technology applications and disaster risk reduction and management (biennial target: 15).

22. Eighty-five percent of member States (biennial target: 75 per cent) indicated that they were more aware and knowledgeable of strategies and policies related to ICT, space technology applications and disaster risk reduction and management, including as a result of the Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation, the WMO/ESCAP Panel on Tropical Cyclones, the working groups of the ESCAP/WMO Typhoon Committee, as well as work undertaken on ICT for development, early warning systems and regional drought mechanism. A total of 830 downloads of ESCAP publications on ICT, space technology applications, and disaster risk reduction and management were noted (biennial target: 800). The Academy programme of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development is now utilized by 35 countries and 88.5 per cent of stakeholders participating in the Centre's events (biennial target: 85 per cent) indicated that they were better able to apply ICT for socioeconomic development. The programme has already been integrated into national capacity-building frameworks through 433 training initiatives (biennial target: 205), thereby enhancing its sustainability and impact.

G. Subprogramme 6. Social development

Objective of the Organization: To strengthen regional cooperation in building a socially inclusive society that protects, empowers and ensures equality for all social groups in Asia and the Pacific

Expected accomplishments:

(a) Enhanced knowledge, capacity and regional cooperation to address population and development trends, including their gender dimensions, in Asia and the Pacific

(b) Enhanced knowledge, capacity and regional cooperation to strengthen social protection systems, including the health and gender dimensions, in Asia and the Pacific

(c) Enhanced knowledge, capacity and regional cooperation to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in Asia and the Pacific

(d) Enhanced knowledge, capacity and regional cooperation to promote the rights of persons with disabilities in Asia and the Pacific

23. About 95 per cent of respondents to questionnaires (biennial target: 80 per cent) indicated that their knowledge and skills had been enhanced as a result of the analytical products, meetings and workshops by ESCAP on population and development trends and policies, including their gender dimensions. 86 per cent (biennial target: 80 per cent) of respondents to questionnaires indicated that their knowledge and skills have been enhanced through ESCAP meetings and workshops on populations ageing, migration and development, youth development and other population-related issues, including their gender dimensions, particularly with respect to youth policies, facilitating migration management in North and Central Asia, and population ageing. Two national initiatives (biennial target: 4) were undertaken within the context of the third regional review of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing.

24. About 92 per cent of respondents (biennial target: 80 per cent) indicated that their knowledge had been enhanced through ESCAP's analytical products on social protection policies and good practices. 90 per cent of respondents (biennial target: 80 per cent) indicated that their knowledge and skills on social protection and HIV, including their gender dimensions, had been enhanced as a result of ESCAP activities. In addition, one initiative (biennial target: 3) was developed to strengthen social protection systems by formulating comprehensive action plans on access to medicines, diagnostics and vaccines. (17/01/2017)

25. Through the provision of an intergovernmental platform, analytical work and technical assistance, ESCAP enhanced regional cooperation and strengthened the knowledge and capacities of government entities to mainstream gender in national development agendas. 93 per cent of respondents (biennial target: 80 per cent) indicated that ESCAP analytical products had enhanced their knowledge on gender equality and women's empowerment policies and programmes. 98 per cent of respondents (biennial target: 80 per cent) indicated that their knowledge and skills had been enhanced through ESCAP activities. Based on regional frameworks, several member States took initial steps, to promote gender equality and women's empowerment, in particular through the integration of gender concerns into the national planning and budgetary processes, with the outcomes expected to come to fruition in 2017 (biennial target: 3 initiatives).

26. As a result of ESCAP support, ESCAP member States undertook 8 initiatives (biennial target: 4) to promote the rights of persons with disabilities, including the development of national laws to promote the rights of persons with disabilities in line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the adoption of national action plans on data generation to monitor the Incheon Strategy and the mainstreaming of disability in the regional plan of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. 97 per cent of respondents indicated that their knowledge of disability issues had been enhanced as a result of the analytical products and background documents produced by ESCAP (biennial target: 80 per cent) and 97 per cent of respondents indicated that their knowledge and skills of disability issues had been enhanced as a result of their participation in meetings organized by ESCAP (biennial target: 80 per cent).

H. Subprogramme 7. Statistics

Objective of the Organization: To improve the availability, quality, relevance and use of statistics in support of effective policies for inclusive and sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific

Expected accomplishments:

(a) Enhanced awareness of member States of effective strategy and policy options for inclusive and sustainable development, including gender equality, in Asia and the Pacific, through increased availability of relevant statistical products and services

(b) Increased capacity of member States in Asia and the Pacific to produce, disseminate and use statistics in accordance with internationally agreed standards and good practices in support of progress towards inclusive and sustainable development, including gender equality, in Asia and the Pacific

27. The number of downloads of online statistical products of ESCAP saw an increase, from 2200 per month in 2015 to 4200 in 2016, against a biennial target of 7000 per month. Overall, 64.8 per cent of participants (biennial target: 65 per cent) in ESCAP initiatives indicated that ESCAP statistical products and services had increased their awareness of effective strategy and policy options for inclusive and sustainable development, including gender equality.

28. ESCAP's activities contributed towards building national capacities to produce, use and disseminate economics, social, population, environment and gender statistics and supported countries to improve their civil registration and vital statistics systems. 96 per cent of participants (biennial target: 70 per cent) in ESCAP activities indicated that the knowledge gained improved their ability to produce, disseminate or use statistics in accordance with internationally agreed standards and good practices. 55 per cent of the participants (biennial target: 70 per cent) in training courses delivered by the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific indicated that they were better able to produce, disseminate or use data and statistics in accordance with internationally agreed standards and good practices.

I. Subprogramme 8: Subregional activities for development

Component 1

Subregional activities for development in the Pacific

Objective of the Organization: To strengthen regional cooperation and integration in line with the development priorities of the Pacific subregion in order to accelerate progress towards attainment of internationally agreed development goals and to achieve inclusive and sustainable development

Expected accomplishments:

(a) Strengthened capacity of Pacific island countries and territories to plan and implement policies in support of balanced integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, including gender considerations

(b) Increased effectiveness of Pacific regional arrangements to address the regional and subregional dimensions of sustainable development, including through knowledge-sharing and South-South cooperation

29. In the Pacific ESCAP supported the linkage of national sustainable development priorities to fiscal frameworks, and contributed to a broader understanding of development financing. 10 member States (biennial target: 12) indicated that they found ESCAP activities relevant and useful in support of balanced integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, including gender considerations. 3 national planning documents (biennial target: 4) reflected a better integration of the dimensions of sustainable development, particularly gender equality. (17/01/2017)

30. The number of South-South cooperation initiatives in the Pacific facilitated with or through ESCAP increased to 17 (biennial target: 12) in particular under the regional Sustainable Development Goals Taskforce and with regard to regional cooperation on climate change migration. In addition, 50 per cent of national decision makers (biennial target: 80 per cent) found ESCAP knowledge-sharing outputs relevant and useful in supporting effective participation in subregional and regional sustainable development

forums and processes. By leading the support provided by the United Nations to the development of the Pacific Sustainable Development Goals Roadmap, ESCAP directly contributed to the increased effectiveness of regional arrangements in support of the Sustainable Development Goals and implementation of the SAMOA Pathway.

Component 2

Subregional activities for development in East and North-East Asia

Objective of the Organization: To strengthen regional cooperation and integration in line with the development priorities of the East and North-East Asian subregion in order to accelerate progress towards attainment of internationally agreed development goals and to achieve inclusive and sustainable development

Expected accomplishments:

(a) Increased engagement of policymakers of ESCAP member States in East and North-East Asia in regional cooperation as an approach for addressing key development challenges, including those of green economy (in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication), nature and marine conservation, transboundary air pollution, inclusive development through leveraging the skills and knowledge of older persons, women, youth and persons with disabilities, trade and transport facilitation, disaster risk reduction and disaster risk management, addressing the gender dimensions in all areas and for the achievement of internationally agreed development goals

(b) Strengthened knowledge-sharing and partnerships among ESCAP member States, civil society and other relevant development partners in East and North-East Asia to address priority issues with a particular focus on green economy (in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication), nature and marine conservation, transboundary air pollution, inclusive development through leveraging the skills and knowledge of older persons, women, youth and persons with disabilities, trade and transport facilitation, disaster risk reduction and disaster risk management, addressing the gender dimensions in all areas and for the achievement of internationally agreed development goals

31. In support of trade facilitation, ESCAP provided a regular platform of joint assessment and dialogue for member governments and stakeholders. Overall, 85 participants (biennial target: 40) engaged in discussions on addressing key development challenges. Out of the 85 participants, 85 per cent of participants (biennial target: 70) indicated they found ESCAP activities improved understanding of regional cooperation as an approach for pursuing the development priorities of the subregion, including addressing their gender dimensions.

32. ESCAP made significant progress in strengthening knowledge sharing and partnerships among ESCAP member States, civil society and other relevant development partners in East and North-East Asia. 65 per cent of participants (biennial target: 70 per cent) indicated that they found ESCAP activities have increased their access to knowledge and information relevant to addressing priority issues in East and North-East Asia including their gender dimensions. 5 partner institutions from East and North-East Asia (biennial target: 4) collaborated in knowledge-sharing and partnership-building activities that are facilitated by ESCAP.

Component 3

Subregional activities for development in North and Central Asia

Objective of the Organization: To strengthen regional cooperation and integration in line with the development priorities of the North and Central Asian subregion in order to accelerate progress towards attainment of internationally agreed development goals and to achieve inclusive and sustainable development

Expected accomplishments:

(a) Enhanced capacity of ESCAP member States in North and Central Asia to formulate and implement inclusive, equitable and sustainable development policies and programmes that address the development priorities of the subregion and are gender-responsive

(b) Strengthened knowledge-sharing and partnerships among ESCAP member States in North and Central Asia, regional organizations, civil society and other relevant development partners to address priority issues for inclusive, equitable and sustainable development and achievement of internationally agreed development goals

33. ESCAP supported subregional meetings, on migration issues, statistical capacity development, ICT connectivity and disaster risk reduction. Overall, 85 per cent of participants (biennial target: 85 per cent) from ESCAP member States in North and Central Asia in ESCAP initiatives indicated an enhanced capacity to formulate and implement inclusive, equitable and sustainable development policies and programmes that address the development priorities of the subregion and are gender-responsive.

34. ESCAP, in cooperation with the Economic Commission for Europe, organized the Economic Forum “Enhanced Implementation of Sustainable Development Goals through Cooperation” of the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA) as well as the eleventh session of the SPECA Governing Council in Ganja, Azerbaijan. 75 per cent of ESCAP member States (biennial target: 80 per cent) in North and Central Asia indicated that collaboration in addressing key sub-regional priority areas to support the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including the sustainable development goals, had increased. In addition, six partner institutions (biennial target: 8 partner institutions) from ESCAP member States participated in knowledge-sharing activities facilitated by ESCAP.

Component 4

Subregional activities for development in South and South-West Asia

Objective of the Organization: To strengthen regional cooperation and integration in line with the development priorities of the South and South-West Asian subregion in order to accelerate progress towards attainment of internationally agreed development goals and to achieve inclusive and sustainable development

Expected accomplishments:

(a) Enhanced understanding and capacity of policymakers of ESCAP member States in South and South-West Asia to formulate and implement policies to foster regional cooperation to address key development

priorities and achieve internationally agreed development goals, including those relating to gender equality and empowerment, and with special reference to countries with special needs

(b) Strengthened knowledge-sharing and partnerships among member States, regional organizations, civil society and other relevant development partners to address key development priorities and close development gaps through regional cooperation in South and South-West Asia in support of the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including the gender dimension

35. Making the most of multiple high-impact intergovernmental platforms and building on its evidence-based analytical work, ESCAP highlighted the criticality of the Sustainable Development Goals for the subregion as well as the importance of maximizing spillovers between interrelated goals, improving policy coherence and coordination and nurturing stronger partnerships and deeper regional cooperation and integration. Overall, 75 per cent of participants (biennial target: 75 per cent) indicated improved understanding and capacity to pursue regional cooperation as an approach for pursuing the development priorities of the subregion, including addressing their gender dimensions. 6 references (biennial target: 10) to policy measures to foster regional cooperation in policy statements were made by member States from the sub-region.

36. ESCAP articulated key messages about top development priorities and challenges for the subregion to support the comprehensive implementation of the 2030 Agenda and ensured that subregional perspectives and analysis were included in ESCAP publications. Eighty per cent of participants (biennial target: 70 per cent) indicated that the events organized by ESCAP had increased their access to knowledge and information relevant for their engagement in regional cooperation. Some 130 references and citations in media and downloads (biennial target: 120) mentioned ESCAP key outputs, proposals and activities in South and South-West Asia.

Component 5

Subregional activities for development in South-East Asia

Objective of the Organization: To strengthen regional cooperation and integration in line with the development priorities of the South-East Asian subregion in order to accelerate progress towards attainment of internationally agreed development goals and to achieve inclusive and sustainable development

Expected accomplishments:

(a) Enhanced capacity of ESCAP member States in South-East Asia to formulate and implement inclusive, equitable and sustainable development policies and programmes that address their key development challenges, with particular focus on least developed and landlocked developing countries, within the framework of Association of Southeast Asian Nations-United Nations partnership

(b) Strengthened partnerships and knowledge-sharing among member States, regional organizations, civil society and other relevant development partners in South-East Asia in priority areas in support of the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including gender equality

37. Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Viet Nam have continued to integrate into the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. These countries are also in the process of integrating Sustainable Development Goals into their national policies, with the full involvement of the private sector and other stakeholders. 75 per cent of participants in ESCAP activities in the sub-region (biennial target: 70 per cent) indicated enhanced capacity to formulate and implement inclusive, equitable and sustainable development policies and programmes that address their key development challenges, including gender inequality.

38. Through its sustained efforts, ESCAP provided support to help policymakers overcome institutional constraints in order to facilitate cross-sectoral collaboration, which would continue to remain basic tenants for the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including the Sustainable Development Goals. Overall, ESCAP successfully facilitated three collaborative initiatives (biennial target: 6) involving member States and other stakeholders to address priority areas of the subregion.

J. Energy

Objective of the Organization: To enhance energy security and the sustainable use of energy through improved regional cooperation in the attainment of internationally agreed development goals, including 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Expected accomplishments:

(a) Enhanced understanding by national government officials and other stakeholders of policy options and strategies to improve energy security and the sustainable use of energy

(b) Enhanced regional cooperation frameworks and networks of national Governments and major stakeholders with respect to policies and strategies on energy security and the sustainable use of energy, including their gender dimensions

39. With a view to enhancing understanding by national government officials and other stakeholders of policy options and strategies to improve energy security and the sustainable use of energy, ESCAP organized various activities, including multi-stakeholder dialogues to support the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 7, including through work on pro poor public-private partnerships for rural development to widen access to energy services. 18 review articles and references to ESCAP publications, related materials and activities were made in policy-related literature and key media outlets (biennial target: 30), including to the publication entitled “Towards a Sustainable Future: Energy Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific” and the “Regional Trends Report on Energy for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific”. The Asia Pacific Energy Portal was launched to provide member States with a strong informational foundation for evidence-based policy-making. It has received more than 8731 unique visits (biennial target: 120).

40. In collaboration with governments and international organizations, ESCAP worked towards strengthening national capacities for transition to a sustainable energy system through regional cooperation. In 2016, ESCAP’s efforts resulted in four such initiatives (biennial target: 5): (i) the G20 Energy Access Action Plan for the Asia-Pacific region; (ii) the Baku call for action to achieve energy-related sustainable Development Goals; (iii) the Exchange of Memorandum of Understanding with the Global Interconnection Energy

Development and Cooperation Organization and; (iv) the Report of the Energy Access Forum - Powering Development in the Asia Pacific at the Singapore International Energy Week. Through these initiatives, member States of ESCAP will be able to further strengthen their capacity for transition towards a sustainable energy system.
