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Item 6 (a) of the provisional agenda**

Management issues**Proposed programme plan for 2020*******Note by the secretariat***Summary*

The proposed programme plan of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) for 2020 is submitted to the Commission for its consideration.

In preparing the proposed programme plan, every effort has been made to reflect the priorities of the member States. It also reflects the vision of the secretariat of supporting member States in achieving a prosperous Asia and the Pacific based on inclusive and sustainable development, bearing in mind the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, the regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific, lessons learned from the implementation of past programmes of work as well as the outcome of a series of external evaluations. The programme plan further aims at making ESCAP more fit for purpose by ensuring a healthy balance between the normative, analytical and operational work of ESCAP and maximizing the comparative advantages of ESCAP, including the adoption of multisectoral approaches with a strong focus on issues that are regional in nature. It builds partnerships between organizations within and outside of the United Nations system and provides linkages between subregions within the Asia-Pacific region for the mutual benefit of all member States.

The proposed programme plan for 2020 comprises (1) a foreword by the Executive Secretary; (2) an overall orientation of the programme of ESCAP; and (3) a programme plan for 2020 and performance information for 2018 for each of the nine subprogrammes.

Each programme plan consists of six sections: (1) objective of the subprogramme; (2) alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals; (3) highlighted results in 2018; (4) highlighted planned result for 2020; (5) deliverables for the period 2018–2020; and (6) most significant relative variances of deliverables. The proposed deliverables are designed to enable ESCAP to achieve the planned results as set out in the proposed programme plan. Supplementary information on the proposed programme plan, including a list of deliverables and mandates, is available in information document ESCAP/75/INF/2/Rev.1.

* Second reissue for technical reasons (21 May 2019).

** ESCAP/75/L.1.

*** The present document was submitted late owing to the internal review by the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts, Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance. It is being issued without formal editing.

The Commission may wish to provide the secretariat with further guidance on the proposed programme plan.

After consideration by the Commission, the proposed programme plan for 2020 will be reviewed by the Committee for Programme and Coordination and the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly. The Secretary-General's proposed programme budget document for secretariat entities will subsequently be submitted to the General Assembly for approval at its seventy-fourth session.

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Foreword

The pace of change in Asia and the Pacific has captured the imagination of the world. Entrepreneurship, hard work and an unrivalled appetite for innovation have powered phenomenal economic growth and transformed societies. Incomes and opportunities for education have greatly increased, and longer, healthier lives are being led. Half the world's middle class now live in this region. From cutting-edge technologies to renewable energy and bold infrastructure projects, the Asia-Pacific region is taking the lead.

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) has supported its member States on this transformational journey. I want ESCAP to help its members to keep the momentum and accelerate progress towards implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. A regional road map for that implementation has been adopted. We have established a forum to monitor progress. Recent breakthroughs have included a ministerial agreement to step up cooperation on using space applications for sustainable development, a treaty to enhance digital trade facilitation and a new Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management. A great deal, however, remains to be done.

As we look to the future, ESCAP is committed to supporting its member States in reducing inequality and increasing opportunity. This will mean empowering women, supporting active ageing, better managing migration and raising investments in social protection to eradicate extreme poverty. We will redouble our efforts, not only to build connectivity in sustainable transport, energy and information and communications technology and to achieve greater integration, but also to ensure that our region's technological prowess and innovative businesses leave no one behind. I want ESCAP to support its members in accelerating the transition to cleaner energy, strengthening resilience to natural disasters and building a science-based response to air pollution.

Our programmes target those aims, whether by supporting the design of inclusive policies to protect and empower vulnerable and marginalized groups or by working with businesses to accelerate social progress or with policymakers on the sustainable management of ecosystems. These areas of work are mutually reinforcing. Supporting progress on all fronts will be how ESCAP contributes to accelerating sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific.

(Signed) Armida Salsiah **Alisjahbana**
Executive Secretary, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Overall orientation

Mandates and background

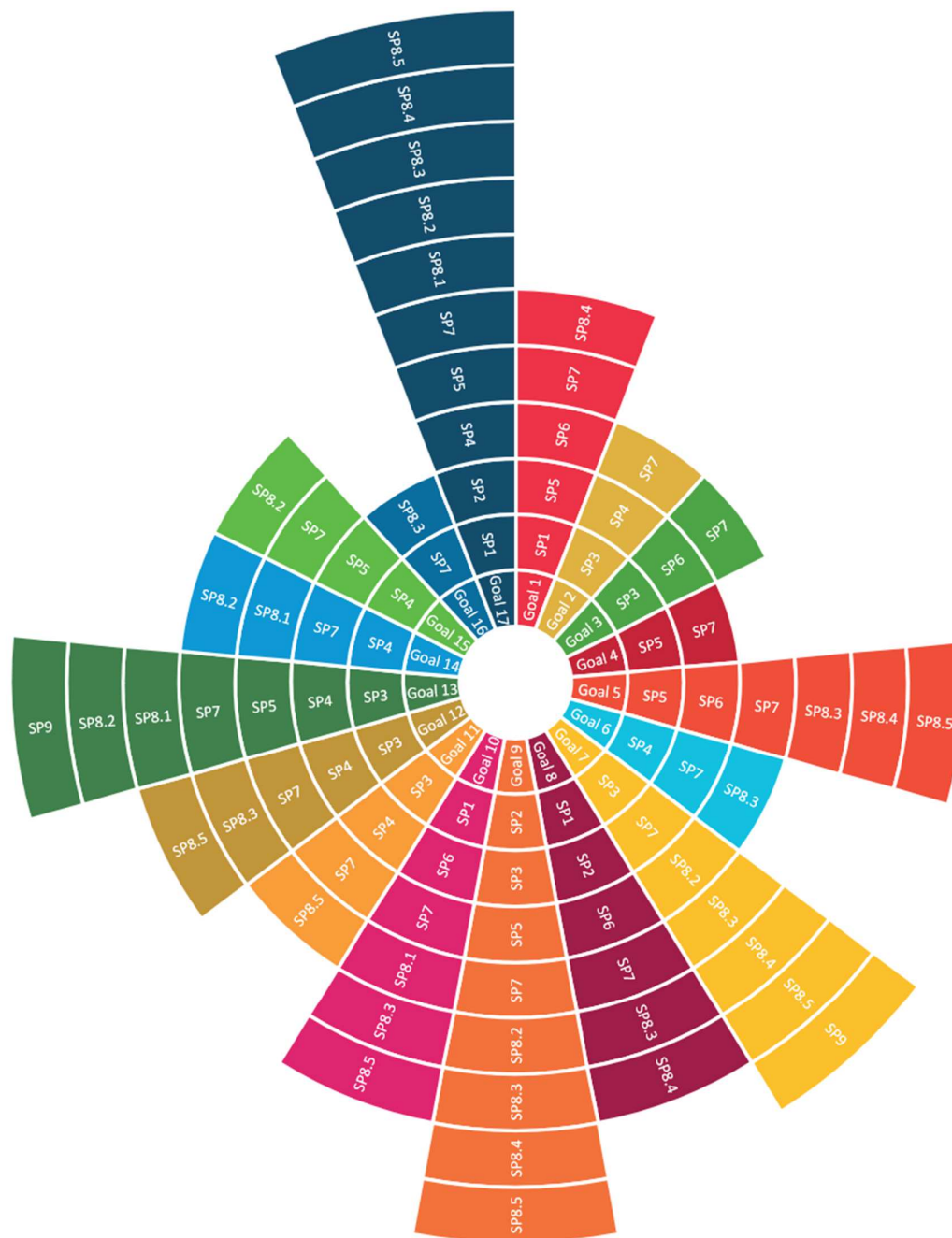
- 19.1 The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) is the regional intergovernmental platform and development arm of the United Nations and is responsible for assisting members and associate members in integrating the three dimensions of sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific. The Commission's research, intergovernmental and capacity-building functions support its member States in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through nine subprogrammes. Its mandate is derived from the priorities established in relevant resolutions and decisions of the Economic and Social Council, including resolution 37 (IV), pursuant to which ESCAP was established. The conference structure of the Commission is reviewed periodically and was most recently aligned with the requirements of the 2030 Agenda through Council resolution [2015/30](#) and ESCAP resolution 73/1. Its work is geared towards ensuring regional cooperation for sustainable development, in particular to reduce rising inequalities within and across countries, exacerbated by transboundary factors such as climate change. ESCAP support aimed at developing the capacity of Governments to formulate and implement policies for sustainable development is also provided through the implementation of projects under the regular programme of technical cooperation and Development Account.

Alignment with the Charter of the United Nations, the Sustainable Development Goals and other transformative agendas

- 19.2 The mandates of ESCAP guide the subprogrammes in producing their respective deliverables, which contribute to the attainment of each subprogramme's objective. The objectives of the subprogrammes are aligned with the Organization's purpose to achieve international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion, as stipulated in Article 1 of the Charter of the United Nations. In the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the purposes stipulated in Article 1 of the Charter are embodied by the Sustainable Development Goals. Figure 19.I summarizes the specific Sustainable Development Goals with which the objectives, and therefore the deliverables, of the respective subprogrammes are aligned.

Figure 19.I

Economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific: alignment of subprogrammes with Sustainable Development Goals



- 19.3 The objectives of the subprogrammes are also aligned with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, the New Urban Agenda, the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020, the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 and the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway.

Recent developments

- 19.4 In spite of global trade disputes and a general trend towards protectionist policies, member States in Asia and the Pacific have remained committed to multilateralism on transboundary and regional issues of common concern. That commitment was reflected in the adoption by ESCAP member States of 11 resolutions on a wide range of issues, including inequality, connectivity and the environment, at the Commission's seventy-fourth session in 2018.
- 19.5 Other examples include the adoption of the Asia-Pacific Plan of Action on Space Applications for Sustainable Development (2018–2030) at the third Ministerial Conference on Space Applications for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific, whereby member States renewed their commitment to sharing space application knowledge, expertise and tools for achieving sustainable development in the region. They have also taken steps towards implementing the Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific, ranging from the development of a road map for the implementation of substantive provisions of the Agreement, to its ratification by some member States. At the sixth session of the ESCAP Committee on Statistics, member States adopted the Declaration on Navigating Policy with Data to Leave No One Behind, based on the collective vision and framework for action of the Asia-Pacific statistical community for advancing official statistics for the 2030 Agenda. The declaration reflects the regional consensus reached on needs and commitments for whole-of-government support to strengthen official statistics for the 2030 Agenda. The commitment on multilateralism is also reflected in the increased momentum for South-South and triangular cooperation in the region and in greater support for multilateral action to meet technical or financing challenges. As a result, ESCAP and its partners established the Asia-Pacific Forum for South-South and Triangular Cooperation for directors general of cooperation agencies and units from developing countries in the region.
- 19.6 ESCAP has supported its member States in their resolve to strengthen subregional multilateral cooperation. Countries participating in the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia have reaffirmed their ownership of the Special Programme by positioning it as a platform for supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) endorsed the report by ESCAP entitled *Complementarities between the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: A Framework for Action* and have started implementing its recommendations. Countries of East and North-East Asia have decided to establish a subregional framework for promoting science-based, policy-oriented cooperation on air pollution: the North-East Asia Clean Air Partnership.

Strategy and external factors

- 19.7 In 2020, ESCAP will continue to support its member States in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda through its three core functions, namely research and analysis; intergovernmental consensus-building and norm-setting; and capacity development. The work of the Commission will be guided by the regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific, endorsed by ESCAP in its resolution 73/9.
- 19.8 ESCAP will orient its policy-focused research to inform decisions across the three dimensions of sustainable development. To enhance its research, analysis and knowledge development, especially on emerging issues, ESCAP will build on the examples of long-standing expert networks, such as the Asia-Pacific Research and Training Network on Trade and the Regional Space Applications Programme for Sustainable Development. A larger interface is also under way with the private corporate sector, building on the experience of the ESCAP Sustainable Business Network. ESCAP research products will inform intergovernmental deliberations and capacity development initiatives. To strengthen and enrich its research and analysis, ESCAP is moving towards becoming a “convener of think tanks” in Asia and the Pacific.
- 19.9 As the region's most inclusive intergovernmental platform, ESCAP will continue to facilitate the generation of innovative policies for integrated, inclusive and sustainable development in the region and to build consensus on norms and agreements to address shared challenges.

The Commission's intergovernmental frameworks are based on research and analysis on emerging and critical issues, conducted by its secretariat. Those intergovernmental frameworks, initiatives and agreements, whether generated by global processes, as in the case of migration, or at the regional level, such as on paperless trade or disability, act as enablers for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by member States in Asia and the Pacific.

- 19.10 Guided by the priorities given in globally and regionally agreed frameworks and by needs and requests for support in implementing those frameworks at the national level, technical assistance will be provided to member States in the Commission's areas of expertise, such as macroeconomic policy and financing for development, connectivity, technology, the management of natural resources, sustainable urban development, disaster risk reduction and resilience, social development, statistics and energy. ESCAP will also liaise and coordinate with United Nations country teams in those areas.
- 19.11 With regard to the external factors, the overall plan for 2020 is based on the following planning assumptions:
 - (a) National Governments remain committed to regional cooperation as a means to meet transboundary challenges;
 - (b) National Governments continue to provide development data and other relevant information for the implementation of existing global and regional frameworks, such as the Incheon Strategy to "Make the Right Real" for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific, the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway and the Asia-Pacific Plan of Action on Space Applications for Sustainable Development;
 - (c) Extrabudgetary funding for technical cooperation continues to be available.
- 19.12 ESCAP integrates a gender perspective in its operational activities, deliverables and results, as appropriate. For example, gender is a thematic area for subprogramme 6, and women's economic empowerment and gender equality comprise an important component of the subprogramme's highlighted planned result for 2020. Furthermore, subprogramme 2 will implement a capacity-building project with an expected outcome of increased access to finance for women entrepreneurs in participating countries, and the highlighted planned result for 2020 under component 4 of subprogramme 8 refers to enhancing regular exchanges on women's economic empowerment as one of the areas for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.
- 19.13 With regard to cooperation with other entities, ESCAP will partner with and support subregional processes and platforms in the delivery of its work, including the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia, ASEAN, the Economic Cooperation Organization, the Pacific Islands Forum, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. ESCAP will also strengthen its traditional role in promoting and facilitating South-South cooperation, triangular cooperation and regional partnerships.
- 19.14 With regard to inter-agency coordination and liaison, ESCAP will continue to play a leading role in coordinating regional United Nations development system entities, in particular as the convenor of the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism and through the Mechanism's thematic working groups that focus on the region's sustainable development priorities, as outlined in the regional road map. Together with the other regional commissions, ESCAP will promote interregional cooperation for inclusive, resilient and sustainable development and ensure that regional perspectives effectively influence global policy processes.
- 19.15 ESCAP support to its member States in the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda will continue to rely on analytical, intergovernmental and capacity-building work. The ESCAP secretariat and its partners will continue to:
 - (a) Convene the annual Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development, as the premier multi-stakeholder platform for follow-up and review in the region, to discuss regional priorities and needs for achieving sustainable development;
 - (b) Prepare annual progress reports on the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and develop policy recommendations to accelerate progress in the region;

- (c) Support peer learning and strengthen the capacity of member States with regard to voluntary national review planning, policy coherence, stakeholder engagement and data and statistics.
- 19.16 ESCAP will continue to organize outreach activities upon demand for the general public, including for academic organizations, on its work and on the work of the United Nations at large, in line with its communication and outreach strategy.

Evaluation activities

- 19.17 The following self-evaluations, completed in 2018, have guided the programme plan for 2020:
- (a) Self-evaluation of the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology;
 - (b) Self-evaluation of the subprogramme on social development;
 - (c) Joint self-evaluation by ESCAP and the Economic Commission for Europe of the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia.
- 19.18 The findings of the self-evaluations referenced in paragraph 19.17 above have been taken into account for the programme plan for 2020. Specifically, those referenced in paragraph (a) were taken into account for subprogramme 2, to enhance partnerships and place greater focus on the transfer of emerging and environmentally sound technologies to developing countries and on their dissemination in those countries; those referenced in subparagraph (b) were taken into account for subprogramme 6, to streamline knowledge products; and those referenced in subparagraph (c) were taken into account for subprogrammes 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 and component 3 of subprogramme 8, shifting the focus of the Special Programme from a programme to a policy coordination platform on key regional Sustainable Development Goals.
- 19.19 The following self-evaluations are planned for 2020:
- (a) Self-evaluation of the subprogramme on transport;
 - (b) Self-evaluation of the subprogramme on trade, investment and innovation;
 - (c) Self-evaluation of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development.

A. Proposed programme plan for 2020 and programme performance for 2018

Programme of work



Subprogramme 1

Macroeconomic policy, poverty reduction and financing for development

1. Objective

- 19.20 The objective, to which this subprogramme contributes, is to achieve stable, inclusive and sustainable economic development in Asia and the Pacific.

2. Alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals

- 19.21 The objective is aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 1, which is to end poverty in all its forms everywhere. Progress towards the attainment of the objective will help to ensure significant mobilization of resources from a variety of sources, including through enhanced development cooperation, in order to provide adequate and predictable means for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, to implement programmes and policies to end poverty in all its dimensions, and to create sound policy frameworks at the national, regional and international levels to support accelerated investment in poverty eradication actions.
- 19.22 The objective is also aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 8, which is to promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all. Progress towards the attainment of the objective will help to sustain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances and, in particular, at least 7 per cent gross domestic product (GDP) growth per annum in the least developed countries; achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high-value added and labour-intensive sectors; promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services; and strengthen the capacity of domestic financial institutions to encourage and expand access to banking, insurance and financial services for all.
- 19.23 Furthermore, the objective is also aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 10, which is to reduce inequality within and among countries. Progress towards the attainment of the objective will help to ensure that the bottom 40 per cent of the population progressively achieves and sustains income growth at a rate higher than the national average; adopt fiscal, wage and social protection policies that help to achieve greater equality; encourage official development assistance and financial flows to States where the need is greatest; improve the regulation and monitoring of global financial markets and institutions and strengthen the implementation of such regulations; and ensure enhanced representation and voice for developing countries in decision-making in global international economic and financial institutions in order to deliver more effective, credible, accountable and legitimate institutions.
- 19.24 Finally, the objective is also aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 17, which is to strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development. Progress towards the attainment of the objective will help to strengthen domestic resource mobilization to improve domestic capacity for tax and other revenue collection; mobilize additional financial resources for developing countries from multiple sources; assist developing countries in attaining long-term debt sustainability; and ensure

that developed countries are able to implement fully their official development assistance commitments, including the commitment by many developed countries to achieve the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance (ODA/GNI) to developing countries and the target to provide 0.15 to 0.2 per cent of ODA/GNI to least developed countries.

3. Highlighted result in 2018

Public-Private Partnership and Infrastructure Financing Network of Asia and the Pacific

Infrastructure development is integral to sustainable development; at least 12 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals envisage a role for infrastructure. However, the gap between the required and the current levels of financial investment for sustainable infrastructure in the region has grown to 5 per cent of GDP on average. The financing gap is higher for countries with special needs, exceeding 10 per cent of GDP in the least developed countries.

Infrastructure financing has many modalities, including public-private partnerships. Given limited public financial resources, the use of public-private partnerships can significantly contribute to solving the challenge of closing the investment gap, as it involves the use of private sector resources. Less than half of ESCAP member States currently have a dedicated public-private partnerships unit in their Governments, and for most of those that do, the unit was established within the past three years. Consequently, the subprogramme, in collaboration with development partners and infrastructure financing experts, delivered numerous knowledge products and capacity-building workshops on public-private partnerships and infrastructure financing issues in 2016–2017.



First meeting of the Public-Private Partnership and Infrastructure Financing Network of Asia and the Pacific, held in Guiyang, China, on 12 and 13 September 2018. Source: ESCAP

In 2018, in line with those efforts and pursuant to the request of the Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Financing for Development at its December 2017 session to consider developing a network on public-private partnerships and infrastructure financing, ESCAP began to coordinate a network of relevant actors in the region on public-private partnerships and infrastructure financing. That effort was supported by the China Public-Private-Partnerships Centre. The Public-Private Partnership and Infrastructure Financing Network of Asia and the Pacific consists of representatives of national public-private partnership units, ministry of finance officials, public procurement and executing agencies and infrastructure financing experts from ESCAP institutional partners, including development cooperation agencies, private financiers and international organizations.

ESCAP brought together all those entities for the benefit of its member States. At the first meeting of the Network, held in Guiyang, China, in September 2018, the entities shared past experiences in developing public-private partnership projects and pipelines for future bankable projects. During deliberations, the need to develop a regulatory framework for public-private partnerships was highlighted. Such a framework would be considerably different from public procurement regulations; for example, some countries allow Governments to participate in public-private partnerships projects by providing public financing, while others do not. The participants also visited bridge, water supply and school projects. Those visits allowed participants to understand the different types of contracts that can be arranged for both economic and social infrastructure. By sharing both policy options and details of ongoing projects, the Network's activities have helped to improve the capacities of participating countries. Furthermore, for the benefit of Network members, ESCAP has undertaken several studies on best practices and various infrastructure financing strategies.

Result and evidence

The deliverables contributed to the result, which is the increased capability of member States, especially countries with special needs, to develop public-private partnership projects and associated financing strategies for their infrastructure development, in turn enhancing regional connectivity, South-South cooperation and sustainable development.

Evidence of the result includes the positive feedback and evaluations from the first meeting of the Network, held in September 2018. Five Network members have already showcased key projects, at the fourth China Public-Private Partnerships Financing Forum, held in Shanghai in November 2018. The Network has generated momentum for regional cooperation in the area of infrastructure development, and Network members have indicated that they plan to adopt lessons learned from the Forum to develop their own public-private partnership policies.

The result demonstrates progress made in 2018 towards the collective attainment of the objective.

- 19.25 A planned result for 2018, which is enhanced national evidence-based macroeconomic and development policies that promote sustainable, inclusive and sustained economic growth and include gender perspectives, as referred to in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019, was achieved, as evidenced by the increase by 11 in the number of policy documents and statements of member States showing an alignment with ESCAP-promoted macroeconomic and development policy options that promote sustainable, inclusive and sustained economic growth and include gender perspectives. This was facilitated by, among other factors, the high demand among member countries across Asia and the Pacific to host policy dialogues on ESCAP flagship publications and the increased number of knowledge products.

4. Highlighted planned result for 2020

Enhanced understanding of financing needs and strategies for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals

The financing requirements of the 2030 Agenda are immense. In Asia and the Pacific, financing requirements to close the region's development gaps are estimated at \$2.1 trillion to \$2.5 trillion per year. The situation is particularly challenging for the region's countries with special needs. Some progress has been made towards mobilizing the required financial resources and enhancing access to finance, but much more is needed, especially in terms of channelling private investments and harnessing the potential for financial innovations and new technologies.

In 2018, the subprogramme prepared studies to assess financing needs and gaps for development in three groups of countries: least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States. The subprogramme also organized three national workshops, in Bhutan, Cambodia and Vanuatu, and three group-specific workshops to identify resource constraints and gaps in capacities and access to knowledge on effective policies to leverage financing for development. This type of focused and country-specific approach is more effective in addressing the diverse needs of countries with special needs.

Challenge and response

On the basis of that experience, the challenge is to improve information and knowledge tailored to the specific requirements of countries with special needs, in order to raise financial resources in support of sustainable development.

In response, for 2020, the subprogramme will develop policy-relevant knowledge products that are tailored to countries' specific circumstances. This effort will build on the secretariat's existing and ongoing work related to financing for development. For instance, the key findings of the *Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2019*, the focus of which is on costing for Sustainable Development Goals, will be complemented by policy-oriented analytical products related to financing strategies. These include a book on infrastructure financing strategies and various research papers on enhancing access to finance by small and medium-sized enterprises, increasing access to finance for women entrepreneurs and financing strategies for effective resource mobilization. The knowledge will be disseminated through subregional and national capacity-building workshops and seminars, through advocacy activities and through consultations with relevant units of government.

Result and evidence

The planned deliverables are expected to contribute to the result, which is increased capacity of member States in assessing their financing policy needs given country-specific circumstances and in designing appropriate financing strategies. Elements of financing strategies would include increasing tax revenues

and issuing government bonds; harnessing private sector investments, especially for infrastructure financing, including through capital market development and public-private partnerships; and enhancing access to credit for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, especially those run by women entrepreneurs.

Evidence of the result, if achieved, will include new initiatives by at least five member States for designing and implementing appropriate financing strategies to bridge financing gaps in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

The result, if achieved, will demonstrate progress made in 2020 towards the collective attainment of the objective.

Performance measures

2018	2019	2020
Large financing gaps, especially in countries with special needs, to implement the Sustainable Development Goals	Enhanced understanding of financing needs and strategies among policymakers in member States to effectively pursue the Sustainable Development Goals	New initiatives by at least five member States for designing and implementing financing strategies to bridge financing gaps for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda

- 19.26 The following General Assembly resolutions comprise the main mandates entrusted to the subprogramme: Assembly resolutions [72/203](#) on the international financial system and development and [72/206](#) on financial inclusion for sustainable development. The following new mandates were entrusted to the subprogramme in 2018: Assembly resolution [73/246](#) on the implementation of the Third United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2018–2027) and Commission resolution [74/1](#) on supporting the smooth transition of the least developed countries in Asia and the Pacific towards a sustainable graduation. The subprogramme will continue to be guided by all mandates entrusted to it, which provide the legislative framework for its deliverables.

5. Deliverables for the period 2018–2020

- 19.27 Table 19.1 lists all deliverables, by category and subcategory, for the period 2018–2020 that contributed and are expected to contribute to the attainment of the objective stated above.

Table 19.1

Subprogramme 1: deliverables for the period 2018–2020, by category and subcategory

	2018 planned	2018 actual	2019 planned	2020 planned
Quantified deliverables				
A. Facilitation of the intergovernmental process and expert bodies				
Parliamentary documentation (number of documents)	2	2	3	2
Substantive services for meetings (number of three-hour meetings)	13	9	19	13
B. Generation and transfer of knowledge				
Field and technical cooperation projects (number of projects)	2	5	2	1
Seminars, workshops and training events (number of days)	2	8.5	2	9
Publications (number of publications)	2	2	5	2
Technical materials (number of materials)	6	24	6	14

	2018 planned	2018 actual	2019 planned	2020 planned
Non-quantified deliverables				
C. Substantive deliverables				
Consultation, advice and advocacy				
Databases and substantive digital materials				
D. Communication deliverables				
Outreach programmes, special events and information materials				
External and media relations				
Digital platforms and multimedia content				

6. Most significant relative variances in deliverables

Variances between the actual and planned figures in 2018

- 19.28 The variance in substantive services for meetings was driven mainly by the expert group meeting on financing for development, owing to its postponement to the first quarter of 2019.
- 19.29 The variance in seminars, workshops and training events was driven mainly by policy-focused discussion based on research in the *Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific, Asia-Pacific Countries with Special Needs Development Report* and *Financing for Development in Asia and the Pacific* publications, owing to the additional dialogues organized on each of those reports.
- 19.30 The variance in technical materials was driven mainly by policy briefs on macroeconomic policy, poverty reduction and financing for development, owing to the increased number of briefs required to respond to member States' needs.

Variances between the planned figures for 2020 and 2019

- 19.31 The variance in seminars, workshops and training events is driven mainly by policy-focused discussion based on research in the *Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific, Asia-Pacific Countries with Special Needs Development Report* and *Financing for Development in Asia and the Pacific* publications, owing to the upward adjustment in the 2020 plan based on the experience of 2018.
- 19.32 The variance in publications is driven mainly by the *Asia-Pacific Sustainable Development Journal*, owing to the fact that subprogramme 1 leads its production in alternate years.
- 19.33 The variance in technical materials is driven mainly by the introduction of knowledge products tailored to countries' specific circumstances, owing to the high demand from member States to develop analytical pieces that are tailored to their circumstances.



Subprogramme 2

Trade, investment and innovation

1. Objective

- 19.34 The objective, to which this subprogramme contributes, is to harness trade, investment, innovation, technology and enterprise development towards sustainable development and regional integration in Asia and the Pacific.

2. Alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals

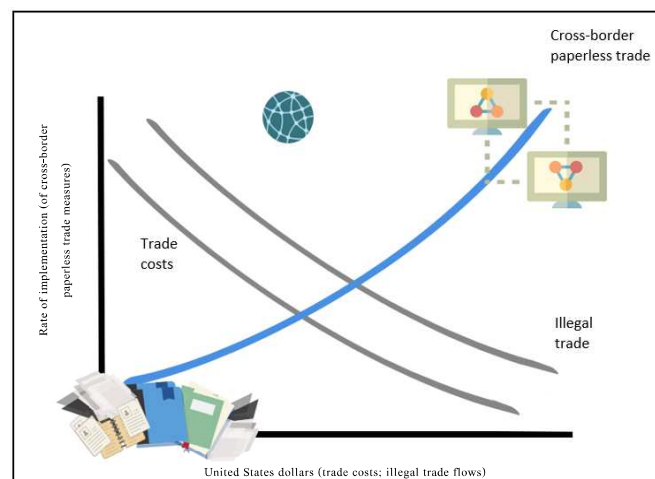
- 19.35 The objective is aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 8, which is to promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all. Progress towards the attainment of the objective will help to promote development-oriented policies that support productive capacities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services.
- 19.36 The objective is also aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 9, which is to build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation. Progress towards the attainment of the objective will help to increase the access of small-scale and other enterprises to financial services and their integration into value chains and markets; upgrade technological capabilities of industrial sectors in all countries, in particular developing countries, including, by 2030, encouraging innovation and substantially increasing the number of research and development workers per 1 million people and public and private research and development spending; and support domestic technology development, research and innovation in developing countries, including by ensuring a conducive policy environment for, inter alia, industrial diversification and value addition to commodities.
- 19.37 Furthermore, the objective is also aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 17, which is to strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development. Progress towards the attainment of the objective will help to significantly increase the exports of developing countries; promote a universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system under the World Trade Organization; ensure that preferential rules of origin applicable to imports from least developed countries are transparent and simple, and contribute to facilitating market access; enhance North-South, South-South and triangular regional and international cooperation on and access to science, technology and innovation and enhance knowledge-sharing on mutually agreed terms; promote the development, transfer, dissemination and diffusion of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries on favourable terms; and adopt and implement investment promotion regimes for least developed countries.

3. Highlighted result in 2018

Azerbaijan becomes first country to accede to regional United Nations treaty to facilitate cross-border paperless trade

ESCAP has a long-standing programme on trade facilitation, given the importance of simplifying trade processes to regional integration and to making trade more inclusive. The programme originally consisted of capacity-building workshops to disseminate best practices on how to streamline and automate trade procedures. However, as countries made progress in developing national paperless trade systems, some ESCAP member States recognized both the importance of and the challenges associated with enabling the electronic exchange and legal recognition of trade-related data across borders.

In 2012, ESCAP member States formally requested the subprogramme to examine the feasibility of an intergovernmental framework dedicated to supporting cross-border paperless trade, while further strengthening capacity-building in trade facilitation. Four years of studies and intergovernmental negotiations led to a breakthrough United Nations treaty: the Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific. The Framework Agreement will enter into force once five countries have either ratified or acceded to the treaty. Enabling the electronic exchange of trade data and documents across borders is expected not only to reduce trade costs and make it easier to comply with trade procedures, but also to help identify illegal trade transactions and illicit financial flows (see figure).



Accelerating implementation of the Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific to reduce both trade costs and illegal trade.

In 2018, the subprogramme organized three regional capacity-building workshops to support member States in effectively implementing cross-border digital trade procedures, including on single window interoperability, the development of electronic systems for the submission and exchange of licences and the use of frontier technologies such as blockchain and artificial intelligence for paperless trade. Through the interim ESCAP intergovernmental steering group on cross-border paperless trade facilitation, the subprogramme further supported countries that were considering ratifying and acceding to the Framework Agreement. The subprogramme released a regional analysis quantifying the benefits of implementing cross-border paperless trade. It also prepared several reference documents to facilitate member States' self-assessments of their technical and legal readiness for cross-border paperless trade, as well as guidelines on developing national action plans in the field.

Result and evidence

The deliverables contributed to the result, which is action taken by member States to advance digital trade facilitation, including by acceding to the Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific.

Evidence of the result includes the active engagement of 25 countries in drafting a road map for the implementation of the substantive provisions of the Framework Agreement. Of those, five countries (Armenia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China and the Islamic Republic of Iran) have already signed the Agreement as a first step towards ratification. Azerbaijan became the first country to accede to the treaty, in 2018. Eight countries, including four least developed countries and two landlocked developing countries, also initiated readiness assessments on cross-border paperless trade. Finally, a task force was created to exchange electronic trade data and documents between China, Mongolia, the Republic of Korea and the Russian Federation. The task force is working on a pilot exchange of documents and will present its lessons learned to the interim intergovernmental steering group in 2019.

The result demonstrates progress made in 2018 towards the collective attainment of the objective.

- 19.38 A planned result for 2018, which is broadened and deepened capacity of member States to advance trade, investment, enterprise development, science, technology and innovation that support sustainable development and include gender perspectives, as referred to in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019, was achieved, as evidenced by the increased percentage of surveyed participants indicating that they have increased their skills to advance trade, investment, enterprise development, science, technology and innovation, including gender perspectives, through ESCAP initiatives. For example, on average, 89 per cent of the participants in the capacity-building workshops on paperless trade and digital trade facilitation indicated that the trainings had increased their knowledge and skills.

4. Highlighted planned result for 2020

Harnessing innovative business models for social progress

Impact enterprises and investors, which aim to generate social and environmental impact alongside financial return, are emerging as innovative business models to tackle sustainable development challenges. Through the adoption in 2017 of the regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific, ESCAP member States committed themselves, for the first time, to developing enabling environments for social enterprises and impact investments.

Since that time, ESCAP has supported government efforts to develop policy and legal frameworks, strategies, supportive institutions and financial mechanisms.

In 2018, the subprogramme supported the Philippines in developing social enterprise legislation, among other activities. This work is being carried out in collaboration with a range of stakeholders, including the Global Steering Group for Impact Investment, the Social Enterprise World Forum, the British Council and the Asia Venture Philanthropy Network. ESCAP also supported the Government of Pakistan in developing the Centre for Social Entrepreneurship. The subprogramme has also supported the Government of Malaysia in developing the Social Impact Exchange, an online platform that links investors to impact enterprises.

Challenge and response

The challenge is to support member States, given the fact that policymaking to support impact enterprises and investors is a relatively new policy agenda for member States. Thus, member States have limited capacity to implement the innovative measures required to create an enabling environment for impact enterprises and investments. That has led to increased demand for guidance on how to harness innovative business models for social progress in their countries.

In response, for 2020, the subprogramme will expand its support in the area of innovative business models for social progress by developing policy guides and facilitating knowledge-sharing, for example by researching and analysing policies and measures for supporting innovative business models, drawing on best practices and lessons learned across the ESCAP membership, and by providing advisory services to more member States.

Result and evidence

The planned deliverables are expected to contribute to the result, which is enhanced capacity of ESCAP member States to support the growth of impact enterprises and investors.

Evidence of the result, if achieved, will include the implementation by member States of policies and measures, such as legislation for impact enterprises, supportive institutions or dedicated funding programmes.

The result, if achieved, will demonstrate progress made in 2020 towards the collective attainment of the objective.

Performance measures

2018	2019	2020
Absence of measures to support impact enterprises and investors	Development of measures by member States to support impact enterprises and investors	Implementation of measures by member States to support impact enterprises and investors

- 19.39 The following General Assembly resolutions comprise the main mandates entrusted to the subprogramme: resolutions [72/202](#) on international trade and development and [72/228](#) on science, technology and innovation for development. The subprogramme will continue to be guided by all mandates entrusted to it, which provide the legislative framework for its deliverables.

5. Deliverables for the period 2018–2020

- 19.40 Table 19.2 lists all deliverables, by category and subcategory, for the period 2018–2020 that contributed and are expected to contribute to the attainment of the objective stated above.

Table 19.2

Subprogramme 2: deliverables for the period 2018–2020, by category and subcategory

	2018 planned	2018 actual	2019 planned	2020 planned
Quantified deliverables				
A. Facilitation of the intergovernmental process and expert bodies				
Parliamentary documentation (number of documents)	3	20	6	16
Substantive services for meetings (number of three-hour meetings)	24	32	27	32
B. Generation and transfer of knowledge				
Field and technical cooperation projects (number of projects)	6	10	6	4
Seminars, workshops and training events (number of days)	—	7	—	6
Publications (number of publications)	3	3	3	2
Technical materials (number of materials)	7	10	8	10
Non-quantified deliverables				
C. Substantive deliverables				
Consultation, advice and advocacy				
Databases and substantive digital materials				
D. Communication deliverables				
Outreach programmes, special events and information materials				
External and media relations				
Digital platforms and multimedia content				

6. Most significant relative variances in deliverables

Variances between the actual and planned figures in 2018

- 19.41 The variance in parliamentary documentation was driven mainly by documents to the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement Standing Committee, reports to the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology and documents to the interim intergovernmental steering group on cross-border paperless trade facilitation, owing to the fact that those deliverables were not reflected in the programme of work for the biennium 2018–2019.
- 19.42 The variance in substantive services for meetings was driven mainly by the meetings of the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement Standing Committee and the expert group on trade, investment and innovation, owing to the fact that those meetings were originally planned for 2019 but were held in 2018.
- 19.43 The variance in seminars, workshops and training events was driven mainly by the increased number of workshops on trade, investment and innovation, owing to the increased demand for capacity-building in these areas by member States.

Variances between the planned figures for 2020 and 2019

- 19.44 The variance in parliamentary documentation is driven mainly by documents to the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement Standing Committee, reports to the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology and documents to the interim intergovernmental steering group on cross-border paperless trade facilitation, owing to the fact that those deliverables were not reflected in the programme of work for the biennium 2018–2019.
- 19.45 The variance in field and technical cooperation projects is driven mainly by the capacity-building project on trade policy and facilitation, owing to the completion of existing projects in this area.
- 19.46 The variance in seminars, workshops and training events is driven mainly by the increased number of workshops on trade, investment and innovation, owing to the increased demand for capacity-building in these areas by member States.



Subprogramme 3 Transport

1. Objective

19.47 The objective, to which this subprogramme contributes, is to achieve sustainable transport connectivity, logistics and mobility in the Asia-Pacific region.

2. Alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals

19.48 The objective is aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 2 (End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture), Goal 3 (Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages), Goal 7 (Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all), Goal 9 (Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation), Goal 11 (Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable), Goal 12 (Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns) and Goal 13 (Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts).

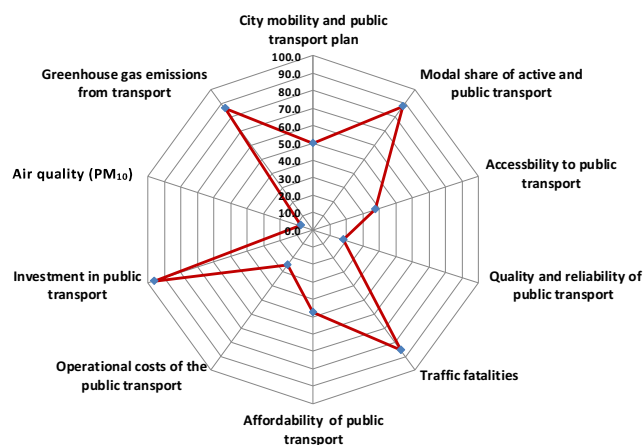
3. Highlighted result in 2018

Evidence-based urban transport policies through the sustainable urban transport index

In 2009, the number of people living in urban areas surpassed the number of people living in rural areas, and urbanization continues to be an ongoing global phenomenon, especially in the Asia-Pacific region. In 2016, 19 of the world's 31 megacities were in the Asia-Pacific region. While most cities are hubs of economic growth and wealth creation, rapid urban expansion raises concerns over land use, social inclusion, rising levels of air and water pollution, sanitation and greenhouse gas emissions. It has been critical for all levels of government to work together effectively and efficiently to plan and design the urban transport system.

In response to this growing demand, the subprogramme developed the sustainable urban transport index as a user-friendly framework of 10 indicators that help policymakers track, summarize and compare the performance of sustainable urban transport systems in cities. The index was developed with the view of helping member States to measure their progress in providing access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems, including public transport, which is in line with target 2 of Sustainable Development Goal 11. The 10 indicators cover elements of planning, access, safety, quality and reliability, affordability and emissions.

In 2018, the sustainable urban transport index was endorsed by member States at the fifth session of the Committee on Transport as a tool for the assessment and improvement of urban transport policies, following more than two years of ongoing collaboration with 10 participating cities in the Asia-Pacific region (Colombo; Dhaka; Kathmandu; Suva; Hanoi and greater Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam; Jakarta, Bandung and Surabaya, Indonesia; and Surat, India).



A visual display of the sustainable urban transport index: a point near the outer circle indicates a good result, and a point near the centre indicates low value.

Result and evidence

The deliverables contributed to the result, which is evidence-based urban transport policies and interventions by Government authorities, through the integrated assessment of multiple urban transport issues with harmonized data collection and analysis.

Evidence of the result includes the following concrete actions taken by member countries: (a) the removal of suspended cables in urban areas, improved footpaths, the development of cycle tracks, planned flyovers and the creation of subways to reduce traffic congestion in Kathmandu; (b) the development of a transit-oriented land use and transport-planning approach with successfully implemented priority bus lanes, planned multimodal transport hubs and a planned monorail system in Colombo; (c) the development of plan to enhance the integration of multimodal public transport through the nearly completed light rail transit system and mass rail transit system in Jakarta; and (d) the planned incorporation of more infrastructure for walking and cycling and intermodal transfer facilities into the already approved transport master plan of Hanoi. These examples illustrate the benefits of an integrated and evidence-based planning process and the need for the subprogramme to work with member States in major, secondary and emerging cities in the Asia-Pacific region.

The result demonstrates progress made in 2018 towards the collective attainment of the objective.

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- 19.49 A planned result for 2018, which is enhanced national evidence-based transport policies and programmes that are sustainable and gender-responsive, as referred to in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019, was achieved, as evidenced by the increased number of transport policies, programmes and initiatives developed by member States that are sustainable and gender-responsive, in line with ESCAP-promoted policy options. Five additional sustainable transport policies, programmes and initiatives were developed by member States in line with ESCAP-promoted policy options.

4. Highlighted planned result for 2020

Shifting towards more sustainable freight transport in Asia and the Pacific

Transport is a key enabler for socioeconomic development. However, its negative externalities have become increasingly apparent. Transport contributes to a quarter of global emissions, of which three fourths is due to road transport. Road congestion, accidents and local pollution are of increasing concern to ESCAP member States. Through its transport subprogramme, ESCAP strives to support countries in the design and implementation of proactive policy initiatives to ensure that increasing demands for freight and passenger mobility are met in a sustainable way.

In 2018, ESCAP supported member States in formulating a framework to identify key issues with regard to border crossings that need to be addressed in order to strengthen international railway transport in the region and to deepen regional collaboration on those issues.

Challenge and response

The challenge is in assisting countries to shift freight volumes from road to rail, which would help to reduce the negative environmental impact of freight transport, such as carbon dioxide emissions, road congestion and noise pollution, alleviate its social externalities such as road accidents and, under the right circumstances, offer greater economic efficiency. While member States have achieved significant progress in developing an overarching regional framework for international rail transport, more work can be done to address specific rail transport issues, such as persisting obstacles at border crossings that negatively affect the efficiency and competitiveness of rail and make it difficult to enhance its attractiveness as an environmentally friendly alternative for the long-distance movement of goods.

In response, for 2020, the subprogramme will intensify its support to member States for the identification and implementation of practical measures to facilitate international railway transport. It will scale up its work on facilitating intergovernmental processes, providing advisory services and undertaking capacity-building for policymakers in the region. Those activities will help to advance the harmonization of customs formalities for international railway transport, promote the electronic exchange of information among railways and address practical issues relating to border crossings, resulting from divergent infrastructure standards.

Result and evidence

The planned deliverables are expected to contribute to the result, which is improved efficiency of international railway transport and, in turn, a more sustainable freight modal split, with a greater role for railways through strengthened regional cooperation on issues affecting international railway transport.

Evidence of the result, if achieved, will include an increase of 5 additional measures at the national and regional levels for implementing an enabling legal and regulatory environment for efficient international railway transport.

The result, if achieved, will demonstrate progress made in 2020 towards the collective attainment of the objective.

Performance measures

2018	2019	2020
Limited consideration of the practical obstacles to international rail transport, undermining its efficiency and competitiveness	Identification by ESCAP member States of practical measures in support of sustainable freight transport, with a focus on international rail transport	Adoption by ESCAP member States of five policies and measures to facilitate international rail transport

- 19.50 The following General Assembly resolutions comprise the main mandates entrusted to the subprogramme: resolutions [72/212](#) on strengthening the links between all modes of transport to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and [72/271](#) on improving global road safety. The following new mandates were entrusted to the subprogramme in 2018: Commission resolutions [74/2](#) on the promotion of the regional framework for the planning, design, development and operation of dry ports of international importance and [74/3](#) on improving road safety in Asia and the Pacific for sustainable transport systems. The subprogramme will continue to be guided by all mandates entrusted to it, which provide the legislative framework for its deliverables.

5. Deliverables for the period 2018–2020

- 19.51 Table 19.3 lists all deliverables, by category and subcategory, for the period 2018–2020 that contributed and are expected to contribute to the attainment of the objective stated above.

Table 19.3

Subprogramme 3: deliverables for the period 2018–2020, by category and subcategory

	2018 planned	2018 actual	2019 planned	2020 planned
Quantified deliverables				
A. Facilitation of the intergovernmental process and expert bodies				
Parliamentary documentation (number of documents)	4	7	1	4
Substantive services for meetings (number of three-hour meetings)	15	11	25	21
B. Generation and transfer of knowledge				
Field and technical cooperation projects (number of projects)	8	9	8	7
Seminars, workshops and training events (number of days)	–	1	1	1
Publications (number of publications)	2	1	2	2
Technical materials (number of materials)	1	–	4	3

	<i>2018 planned</i>	<i>2018 actual</i>	<i>2019 planned</i>	<i>2020 planned</i>
Non-quantified deliverables				
C. Substantive deliverables				
Databases and substantive digital materials				
D. Communication deliverables				
Outreach programmes, special events and information materials				
External and media relations				
Digital platforms and multimedia content				

6. Most significant relative variances in deliverables

Variances between the actual and planned figures in 2018

- 19.52 The variance in parliamentary documentation was driven by reports to the Committee on Transport, owing to the organization of Committee sessions in alternate years, as stipulated in Commission resolution 71/1.
- 19.53 The variance in substantive services for meetings was driven by the expert group meeting on mobility, owing to the postponement of the meeting to 2019.
- 19.54 The variance in seminars, workshops and training events was driven by the training event on transport connectivity and logistics, owing to the fact that the event, which was planned for 2019, was delivered in 2018.

Variances between the planned figures for 2020 and 2019

- 19.55 The variance in parliamentary documentation is driven by reports to the Committee on Transport, owing to the organization of the Committee sessions in alternate years, as stipulated in Commission resolution 71/1.
- 19.56 The variance in substantive services for meetings is driven mainly by the meetings of the working groups on the Asian Highway network, on the Trans-Asian Railway network and on dry ports, owing to their delivery in alternate years.
- 19.57 The variance in technical materials is driven mainly by technical materials on transport connectivity and logistics, owing to the discontinuation of two technical materials.



Subprogramme 4 Environment and development

1. Objective

- 19.58 The objective, to which this subprogramme contributes, is to eliminate the adverse impacts of growth on natural and built environments and to improve human well-being and shared prosperity in Asia-Pacific urban and rural contexts.

2. Alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals

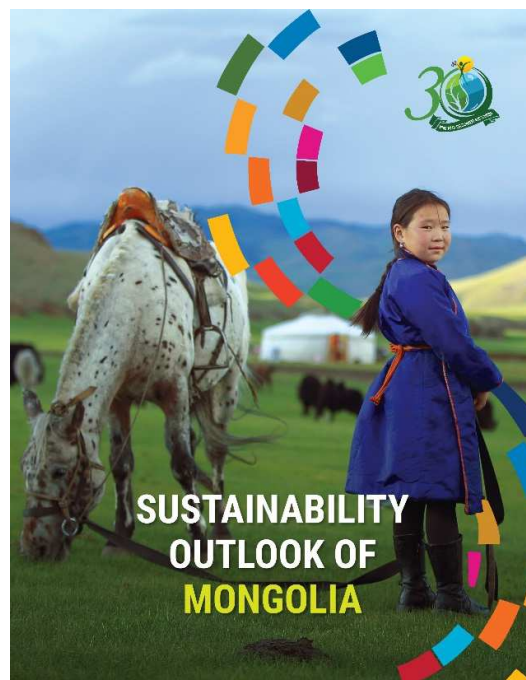
- 19.59 The objective is aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 2 (End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture), Goal 6 (Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all), Goal 11 (Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable), Goal 12 (Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns), Goal 13 (Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts), Goal 14 (Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development), Goal 15 (Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss) and Goal 17 (Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development).

3. Highlighted result in 2018

Integrating the environment into development planning and implementation

The Asia-Pacific region is the most rapidly developing area in the world and has great potential to improve its environmental performance in several areas, including the management of natural resources, waste management and climate action. Several trends indicate areas of opportunity for intensifying environmental action in the region. For example, recent reports indicate that, in 2017, the region accounted for 65 per cent of the global consumption of natural resources and produced roughly 36 per cent of the global economic product. In terms of resource intensity, that means it took almost double the amount of resources to produce one dollar of GDP in the region as compared with the rest of the world. Cities in the region generate about 1.37 million tons of municipal solid waste a day, of which up to 90 per cent leaks into the environment or is disposed of improperly. To mitigate those trends, the subprogramme conducted policy-oriented research and analysis and worked with Governments on field projects to demonstrate the benefits of integrating the environment into development planning.

In 2018, the subprogramme conducted analysis that made the economic case for more efficient management of resources. The analysis demonstrated that, among other findings, a 1 per cent improvement in resource efficiency can deliver monetary benefits to the region of up to \$275 billion, which is an amount equivalent to 51 per cent of the entire annual foreign direct investment in Asia and the Pacific. To test those notions, the subprogramme implemented projects on environmental management. Those projects included working with government ministries and local authorities in six countries to develop low-cost and financially feasible models for integrated resource recovery centres and working with two countries on adopting more circular approaches to plastic waste management that put plastic waste back to the production cycle rather than disposing of it. In addition, the subprogramme supported member States in the development of strategies at the national and municipal levels to support the implementation of several environment-related Sustainable Development Goals. This entailed the provision of support to Mongolia through the development of a sustainability outlook recognizing four cross-cutting areas to support the sustainable management of natural resources, namely, water management, land planning, the industrial use of natural resources and sustainable tourism; to two countries to develop and apply an integrated policy approach for ocean-friendly and climate-responsive urban development adapted to island systems through the Ocean Cities project; and to one country to accelerate the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14.



Cover of the publication entitled *Sustainability Outlook of Mongolia*, developed by ESCAP and the Government of Mongolia and launched in September 2018 in Ulaanbaatar.

Result and evidence

The deliverables contributed to the result, which is the improvement of development policies and practices in member States through the integration of environmental priorities, including in the areas of resource management, waste and sustainable urban development.

Evidence of the result includes the establishment of integrated resource recovery centres in six developing countries, through which traditional practices of collection, transportation and disposal were changed to waste-to-resource approaches, thereby transforming organic waste into marketable compost, biogas and clean electricity, and the adoption of the sustainability outlook by the Government of Mongolia (see figure).

The result demonstrates progress made in 2018 towards the collective attainment of the objective.

- 19.60 A planned result for 2018, which is enhanced evidence-based policies, strategies and frameworks that integrate the three dimensions of sustainable development, including gender perspectives, at the national level and in both urban and rural areas, as referred to in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019, was achieved, as evidenced by the 12 policies, strategies and frameworks that were developed.

4. Highlighted planned result for 2020

Inclusive and integrated policy processes for effective climate action and natural resources management

The natural and built environments of the Asia-Pacific region are under serious threat from wasteful resource use, widespread ecosystem degradation and pollution and human-made climate change. Pursuing effective, evidence-based policies that empower member States, their cities and stakeholders to promote sustainable resource management and accelerate climate action will build the foundation for sustainable development in the region. Urgent action is needed to steer development into an inclusive, environmentally sustainable future in both rural and urban areas.

Ensuring the protection and appropriate management of the environment will benefit from a whole-of-society approach, as the environment is primarily managed by stakeholders, whether private sector actors relying on the environment and natural resources as inputs to their production system or farmers and fishers whose livelihoods depend directly on the natural environment. Environmental changes are not abstract national issues; they are played out locally in cities throughout Asia and the Pacific. Decisions on land and resource use in urban areas lead transitions to a more sustainable future and are key to localizing implementation of Sustainable Development Goals in the region. Furthermore, the involvement of academia helps to ensure that policies are strongly grounded in science. National and subnational environmental and sustainable development policies cannot be fully and effectively developed, implemented and monitored without meaningful stakeholder engagement. However, policymakers do not always involve stakeholders in the joint production and implementation of environmental policies, owing to either a lack of political will or a lack of understanding and capacity to develop appropriate stakeholder engagement processes in policy forums.

In 2018, the subprogramme contributed to the strengthening of evidence to support environmental policymaking, through a detailed review of the environment-focused Sustainable Development Goals, namely Goals 6, 7, 11, 12 and 15. The production of evidence-based Goal profiles and associated multi-stakeholder round tables during the fifth session of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development led to policy recommendations for making progress on those Goals in Asia and the Pacific, while recognizing interlinkages across the Sustainable Development Goals framework. Direct country support was provided by the subprogramme to translate regional commitments on environmental Goals to national action for the production of the reports of Kiribati, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Sri Lanka for the 2018 voluntary national reviews, through technical assistance and stakeholder engagement training, and the production of the reports of Cambodia, Fiji, Kazakhstan, Mongolia and Timor-Leste for the 2019 voluntary national reviews.

Challenge and response

The challenge is limited knowledge and capacity to translate the policy recommendations for making progress on the environment-related Sustainable Development Goals into practical solutions and to develop and implement policies that were designed in a collaborative way with businesses, civil society and other stakeholders. Effective multi-stakeholder approaches and evidence-based decision-making, supported by regional cooperation, will provide the foundation for stronger partnerships, deepen the impact of activities and strengthen the capacities of member States to implement ambitious actions in support of the 2030 Agenda and to achieve environment- and climate change-related objectives.

In response, for 2020, the subprogramme will support member States in developing multi-stakeholder engagement processes to operationalize the localization and implementation of environment-related Sustainable Development Goals, with a focus on resource management and climate action. Analytical work carried out by ESCAP will be focused on forecasting natural resource use so that member States can develop and apply technical solutions intended to reduce their environmental impact. Multi-stakeholder support will be delivered through workshops and training sessions conducted at the regional and national levels. Such analytical work will include knowledge products, publications and tools for forecasting resource use.

Result and evidence

The planned deliverables are expected to contribute to the result, which is improved capacities of member States and their stakeholders to integrate the three dimensions of sustainable development into policies, strategies and frameworks at the national level in both urban and rural areas, with a focus on climate action and natural resource management.

Evidence of the result, if achieved, will include the development of scenarios and the adoption of policies, plans or programmes by member States to operationalize environment and climate action at different levels, taking into account inputs from various stakeholders, including academia, businesses and civil society.

The result, if achieved, will demonstrate progress made in 2020 towards the collective attainment of the objective.

Performance measures

2018	2019	2020
Absent or limited scenarios, policies, plans or programmes developed by member States to operationalize environment and climate action at different levels, taking into account inputs from various stakeholders	Limited scenarios, policies, plans or programmes strengthened by member States to operationalize environment and climate action at different levels, taking into account inputs from various stakeholders	Scenarios, policies, plans or programmes developed by member States to operationalize environment and climate action at different levels, taking into account inputs from various stakeholders

- 19.61 The following General Assembly resolutions comprise the main mandates entrusted to the subprogramme: resolutions [71/222](#) on the International Decade for Action, “Water for Sustainable Development”, 2018–2028, [71/256](#) on the New Urban Agenda and [72/225](#) on combating sand and dust storms. The following new mandate was entrusted to the subprogramme in 2018: Commission resolution 74/4 on the implementation of the Ministerial Declaration on Environment and Development for Asia and the Pacific, 2017. The subprogramme will continue to be guided by all mandates entrusted to it, which provide the legislative framework for its deliverables.

5. Deliverables for the period 2018–2020

- 19.62 Table 19.4 lists all deliverables, by category and subcategory, for the period 2018–2020 that contributed and are expected to contribute to the attainment of the objective stated above.

Table 19.4

Subprogramme 4: deliverables for the period 2018–2020, by category and subcategory

	2018 planned	2018 actual	2019 planned	2020 planned
Quantified deliverables				
A. Facilitation of the intergovernmental process and expert bodies				
Parliamentary documentation (number of documents)	3	7	2	3
Substantive services for meetings (number of three-hour meetings)	51	54	46	33
B. Generation and transfer of knowledge				
Field and technical cooperation projects (number of projects)	7	10	8	7
Seminars, workshops and training events (number of days)	7.5	7.5	2	4
Publications (number of publications)	2	2	3	3
Technical materials (number of materials)	6	12	5	4
Non-quantified deliverables				
C. Substantive deliverables				
Consultation, advice and advocacy				
Databases and substantive digital materials				

	<i>2018 planned</i>	<i>2018 actual</i>	<i>2019 planned</i>	<i>2020 planned</i>
D. Communication deliverables				
Outreach programmes, special events and information materials				
External and media relations				
Digital platforms and multimedia content				

6. Most significant relative variances in deliverables

Variances between the actual and planned figures in 2018

- 19.63 The variance in parliamentary documentation was driven mainly by reports to the Committee on Environment and Development and reports to the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development, owing to the increased number of documents required to respond to the needs of member States.
- 19.64 The variance in field and technical cooperation projects was driven mainly by the capacity-building project on sustainable urban development, owing to an increase in extrabudgetary resources in this area.
- 19.65 The variance in technical materials was driven by documents on environment and development (policy briefs, knowledge products and case studies), owing to the increased number of technical materials required to respond to the needs of member States.

Variances between the planned figures for 2020 and 2019

- 19.66 The variance in parliamentary documentation is driven by reports to the Committee on Environment and Development, owing to the organization of the Committee sessions in alternate years, as stipulated in Commission resolution 71/1.
- 19.67 The variance in substantive services for meetings is driven mainly by the annual subregional preparatory meetings for the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development, owing to the fact that those meetings are now programmed under the respective component of subprogramme 8, as expert group meetings on sustainable development.
- 19.68 The variance in technical materials is driven by guidelines and training manuals related to a framework for a regional database on agricultural mechanization, owing to the fact that this material was completed and is not recurring.



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

1. Objective

- 19.69 The objective, to which this subprogramme contributes, is to advance digital inclusion and space applications for disaster resilience in Asia and the Pacific.

2. Alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals

- 19.70 The objective is aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 1 (End poverty in all its forms everywhere), Goal 4 (Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all), Goal 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls), Goal 9 (Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation), Goal 13 (Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts), Goal 15 (Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss) and Goal 17 (Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership For Sustainable Development).

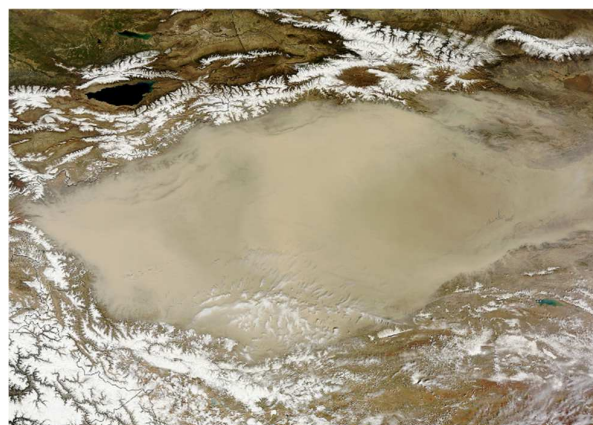
3. Highlighted result in 2018

Leveraging digital innovation and space applications to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals

As the first regional commission to develop a dedicated space applications programme, ESCAP, since the mid-1990s, has connected space-based data service suppliers with users for effective disaster resilience and sustainable development. Through this regional cooperative platform, space-faring member States such as China, India, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation and Thailand have provided policy advice and customized tools to high disaster risk countries with special needs, such as Cambodia, Fiji, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Myanmar and Sri Lanka.

As digitization made such applications increasingly available to all on handheld smart devices, the usefulness of geospatial information spread. Importantly, in the 2030 Agenda, with its increased emphasis on environmental Goals (vis-à-vis the Millennium Development Goals), the General Assembly recognized the contribution that earth observation data could make to policymaking and to the monitoring of Sustainable Development Goals implementation.

The need for such geospatial information was further augmented by climate change impacts. The Commission's flagship *Asia-Pacific Disaster Report 2017* provided evidence that disaster risk was outpacing disaster resilience and that the region was experiencing an alarming shift in the geography and intensity of droughts. With ever-wider land swathes and a growing number of poor people exposed to such disasters, ESCAP members and associate members called for greater regional cooperation, the open sharing of geospatial data and further capacity-building.



Signs of drought and dust storms can be observed from space long before they are visible on the ground. Source: Jeff Schmaltz, MODIS Land Rapid Response Team, NASA/Goddard Space Flight Center.

In October 2018, government ministers and space community leaders from over 30 countries in the region met in Bangkok for the third Ministerial Conference on Space Applications for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific. The two key outcomes of the Ministerial Conference were a Ministerial Declaration on Space Applications for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific, which was the first declaration issued at the ministerial level in two decades, and the Asia-Pacific Plan of Action on Space Applications for Sustainable Development (2018–2030). The Plan of Action is a regionally coordinated, inclusive and country needs-driven blueprint that harnesses innovations in space, geospatial and digital applications to support countries, in particular those with special needs, in achieving the 2030 Agenda. The Plan of Action is fully aligned with the regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific, and it identifies 188 actions in the following thematic areas: (a) disaster risk management; (b) natural resource management; (c) connectivity; (d) social development; (e) energy; and (f) climate change. All 188 actions are designed to contribute significantly to 37 targets of 14 Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Result and evidence

The deliverables contributed to the result, which is the commitment of member States to coordinate efforts and work jointly towards the use of space applications to achieve the Goals set out in the 2030 Agenda and their pledge to support implementation of the Plan of Action at the national and regional levels.

Evidence of the result includes the adoption by participants at the Ministerial Conference of the Ministerial Declaration and the Plan of Action, which will guide work on space applications in Asia and the Pacific for the next decade.

The result demonstrates the progress made in 2018 towards the collective attainment of the objective.

- 19.71 A planned result for 2018, which is strengthened regional mechanisms to effectively address shared challenges and opportunities in information and communications technology (ICT), space technology applications and disaster risk reduction and management for resilient and sustainable development, as referred to in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019, was partially achieved, as evidenced by the 8 documents, declarations, statements and decisions by member States supporting regional cooperation in ICT, space technology applications and disaster risk reduction and management in line with ESCAP recommendations. For example, at the third Ministerial Conference on Space Applications for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific, member States adopted the Ministerial Declaration on Space Applications for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific and the Asia-Pacific Plan of Action on Space Applications for Sustainable Development (2018–2030). At the second session of the Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation, 12 member States recommended that the updates to the Master Plan for the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway and the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway Regional Cooperation Framework Document be endorsed by the Commission, while also noting the satisfactory outcomes of the second session of the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway Steering Committee.

4. Highlighted planned result for 2020

Advanced subregional implementation of the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway

The widening broadband divide and ICT capacity gaps between advanced and developing countries is an urgent development challenge. Digital technologies, including artificial intelligence, have provided unparalleled data, information and insight. However, these technologies rely on the availability and reliability of broadband connectivity and human capacity. The widening digital divide has constrained socioeconomic opportunities, hampering the disaster resilience-building capabilities of Governments and the transition to a digital society and economy. The lack of connectivity and capacity have therefore become a bottleneck in the region's sustainable development trajectory.

The connectivity and capacity gap has widened in the region over the past 15 years. For example, while 40 per cent of the people in the Republic of Korea have broadband access, less than 2 per cent of people in more than 16 countries in Asia and the Pacific have such access. In 2016, ESCAP member countries launched the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway initiative, in order to support regional broadband connectivity and to develop related human and institutional capacity.

In 2018, all ESCAP member countries endorsed the updates to the Master Plan for the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway as a regional road map for the region's digital transformation. To support the implementation of the Master Plan, the subprogramme conducted analysis on regional infrastructure gaps, recommended policies for increasing broadband affordability, proposed financing options and conducted ICT capacity-building through the work of the Commission's Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development.

Challenge and response

The challenge is to address subregion-specific ICT needs, such as limited availability and affordability in subregional broadband networks that can support national-level broadband expansion, and to build ICT skills among government officials.

In response, for 2020, within the framework of the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway and the Training Centre's capacity development programme, the subprogramme will support the development and implementation of subregional broadband network initiatives within subregional implementation plans for the Information Superhighway by identifying infrastructure gaps and by proposing financing options, including private-public partnerships, and frameworks for cooperation among countries situated along ICT connectivity corridors. Some subregions began the plan development process in 2018; that process will be expanded to all subregions and will lead to the full implementation of the Information Superhighway in 2020. The Training Centre will focus on the roll-out and localization of its training programme for government officials, who will gain the knowledge they need to develop ICT policies and applications. Special focus will be placed on Central Asia and the Pacific, where broadband connectivity and capacity gaps are most prominent.

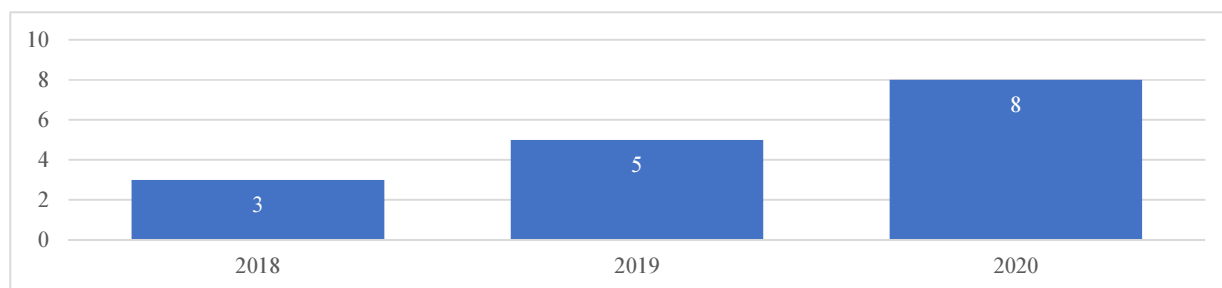
Result and evidence

The planned deliverables are expected to contribute to the result, which is an expansion of broadband coverage and affordability in previously unserved and underserved areas in Central Asia and the Pacific.

Evidence of the result, if achieved, will include the adoption of eight broadband network initiatives that will reflect increases in coverage (by 5 per cent) of broadband networks implemented within the subregional implementation plans for the Information Superhighway, as shown in the chart below.

The result, if achieved, will demonstrate progress made in 2020 towards the collective attainment of the objective.

Performance measures: number of broadband network initiatives developed and implemented within subregional implementation plans for the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway



		Increased coverage (by 5 per cent) of broadband network initiatives developed and implemented within subregional implementation plans for the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway
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- 19.72 The following General Assembly and Economic and Social Council resolutions comprise the main mandates entrusted to the subprogramme: Assembly resolutions [72/77](#) on international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space and [72/132](#) on international cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development and Council resolution [2016/27](#) on strengthening institutional arrangements on geospatial

information management. The following new mandate was entrusted to the subprogramme in 2018: Commission resolution 74/6 on advancing disaster-related statistics in Asia and the Pacific. The subprogramme will continue to be guided by all mandates entrusted to it, which provide the legislative framework for its deliverables.

5. Deliverables for the period 2018–2020

- 19.73 Table 19.5 lists all deliverables, by category and subcategory, for the period 2018–2020 that contributed and are expected to contribute to the attainment of the objective stated above.

Table 19.5

Subprogramme 5: deliverables for the period 2018–2020, by category and subcategory

	<i>2018 planned</i>	<i>2018 actual</i>	<i>2019 planned</i>	<i>2020 planned</i>
Quantified deliverables				
A. Facilitation of the intergovernmental process and expert bodies				
Parliamentary documentation (number of documents)	5	16	2	5
Substantive services for meetings (number of three-hour meetings)	38	38	35	36
B. Generation and transfer of knowledge				
Field and technical cooperation projects (number of projects)	6	9	6	6
Seminars, workshops and training events (number of days)	12	12	14	14
Publications (number of publications)	0	0	1	1
Technical materials (number of materials)	10	7	8	9
Non-quantified deliverables				
C. Substantive deliverables				
Consultation, advice and advocacy				
Databases and substantive digital materials				
D. Communication deliverables				
Outreach programmes, special events and information materials				
External and media relations				
Digital platforms and multimedia content				

6. Most significant relative variances in deliverables

Variances between the actual and planned figures in 2018

- 19.74 The variance in parliamentary documentation was driven mainly by reports to the Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation, owing to an increased number of documents required to respond to the needs of member States.
- 19.75 The variance in field and technical cooperation projects was driven by capacity-building projects on information and communication technology and capacity-building projects on space technology applications, owing to increased extrabudgetary resources in this area.
- 19.76 The variance in technical materials was driven by technical papers on information and communication technology, owing to the fact that these materials, which had been planned for 2018, will be produced in early 2019.

Variances between the planned figures for 2020 and 2019

- 19.77 The variance in parliamentary documentation is driven mainly by reports to the Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation, owing to the organization of the Committee sessions in alternate years, as stipulated in Commission resolution 71/1.
- 19.78 The variance in technical materials is driven mainly by technical papers on disaster information management and disaster risk reduction, owing to the delivery of those materials in alternate years.



Subprogramme 6 Social development

1. Objective

- 19.79 The objective, to which this subprogramme contributes, is to realize inclusive societies that protect, empower and ensure equality for all in Asia and the Pacific.

2. Alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals

- 19.80 The objective is aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 1 (End poverty in all its forms everywhere), Goal 3 (Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages), Goal 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls), Goal 8 (Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all) and Goal 10 (Reduce inequality within and among countries).

3. Highlighted result in 2018

Regional consensus to reduce inequality and close the gender gap in Asia and the Pacific

The Asia-Pacific region has significant and increasing inequality of both income and access to opportunity, with large segments of the population left behind. Specific groups, such as women, persons with disabilities, migrants and older persons, face significant obstacles that prevent their full participation in society and the enjoyment of their rights. The weak evidence base makes addressing those issues more complex.

In recognition of the challenges, ESCAP provided technical and capacity-building support for the development of evidence, including through assessment tools to enhance the collection and analysis of data. Member States adopted regional frameworks, such as the Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real”

for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific, the outcome document of the Asia-Pacific Intergovernmental Meeting on the Third Review and Appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Advancing Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment. Member States also mandated that the subprogramme support them in implementing the recommendations of those commitments. Furthermore, they adopted the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (see General Assembly resolution [73/195](#)), in which the regional commissions and other regional processes were invited to review the implementation of the Global Compact within their respective regions, beginning in 2020.

In 2018, the subprogramme provided technical and capacity-building support for the development of evidence-based policies to reduce inequality in various countries. Several analytical and capacity-building tools were developed, including tools for designing and implementing inclusive social protection initiatives to reach marginalized groups. The subprogramme also supported countries in the more accurate measurement of inequality of opportunity, through sector-specific guides, introducing tools to identify those who were the furthest behind.

The challenge was that women were represented in the furthest-behind groups more frequently than were men. In response, the subprogramme led capacity-building initiatives for national women’s machineries, ministries of finance and line ministries in Cambodia and the Lao People’s Democratic Republic. Those



Working towards the full participation of older persons in societies of Asia and the Pacific. Source: ESCAP

initiatives addressed gender concerns in national planning and budgetary processes with a view to reducing gender disparity in all aspects. Given the limited data available on persons with disabilities in the region, the subprogramme provided technical assistance, in 2018, to Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Micronesia (Federated States of), Pakistan and Sri Lanka on disability statistics. A total of 17 countries participated in the ESCAP capacity-building project on disability statistics from 2014 to 2018. The subprogramme also conducted a training course on the design of comprehensive pension policies in cooperation with the Government of Malaysia, targeting 10 countries in the region. In support of the theme of the seventy-fourth session of the Commission, the subprogramme produced a study entitled *Inequality in Asia and the Pacific in the Era of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, which provides a comprehensive review of inequality trends in the region across all dimensions of inequality.

Result and evidence

The deliverables contributed to the result, which is the commitment of ESCAP member States to reduce inequality through their policies.

Evidence of the result includes the adoption of the first Asia-Pacific regional resolution on inequality, Commission resolution 74/11, entitled “Strengthening regional cooperation to tackle inequality in all its forms in Asia and the Pacific”, the introduction of policy reforms to address the needs of older persons in the Cook Islands, the presentation of initiatives to apply gender-responsive budgeting principles in planning new programmes in Cambodia and the Lao People’s Democratic Republic and the adoption of five national action plans to improve disability statistics.

The result demonstrates progress made in 2018 towards the collective attainment of the objective.

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- 19.81 A planned result for 2018, which is enhanced national evidence-based policies aimed at reducing inequalities and addressing the impact of demographic challenges, including gender perspectives, as referred to in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019, was achieved, as evidenced by the increase (from six to eight) in the number of policies of member States and other stakeholders, based on regional frameworks promoted by ESCAP, aimed at reducing inequality and addressing the impact of demographic challenges. Those included policies adopted by member States to address the needs of persons with disabilities and older persons and to promote gender-responsive budgeting.

4. Highlighted planned result for 2020

Inclusive national policies to protect and empower vulnerable and marginalized groups

In 2018, ESCAP identified population groups that had not benefited from the overall gains made in social development in the region. By extracting granular country-level data from demographic and health surveys, the subprogramme was able to zoom in at the country level and identify countries with the widest gaps in access to socioeconomic services and opportunities. The findings raised interest at the regional and subregional levels.

Challenge and response

The challenge is to support member States, given their limited capacity to assess inequality of opportunity and introduce policy solutions to address it, owing, for instance, to a lack of disaggregated data.

In response, for 2020, the subprogramme will scale up the dissemination of its analytical work and further tailor its capacity-building programmes to address specific concerns of member States, for example by prioritizing country-specific social sectors or population groups for which reducing inequality is more urgent. Building on the commitment to leave no one behind, the subprogramme will raise awareness and increase policymakers’ skills in building a social protection floor. To further advance women’s economic empowerment, the subprogramme will focus on promoting women’s entrepreneurship, enhancing women’s access to finance and to ICT, and creating a gender-responsive entrepreneurial ecosystem. Furthermore, the subprogramme will strengthen the technical assistance provided to governments in implementing the Incheon Strategy and the Beijing Platform for Action, with a focus on policy initiatives to enhance accessibility, social protection and decent work for persons with disabilities. The subprogramme will also disseminate knowledge products, strengthen technical cooperation and serve as a platform for the exchange of knowledge on shifts in population age structures and on international migration.

In this regard, it will support relevant country-level initiatives, including parliamentary proposals on promoting active ageing, national plans or programmes to harness the demographic dividend and reforms to render migration more safe, orderly and regular. The subprogramme will also engage in developing the capacity of countries to strengthen the demographic evidence base in the field of population ageing and migration.

Result and evidence

The planned deliverables are expected to contribute to the result, which is increased capacity of member States in Asia and the Pacific to develop and implement evidence-informed inclusive policies that support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Evidence of the result, if achieved, will include an increase in the number of national policy initiatives addressing inequality and promoting the inclusion of vulnerable and marginalized groups, with consideration given to, inter alia, gender, age, income and wealth, and disability.

The result, if achieved, will demonstrate progress made in 2020 towards the collective attainment of the objective.

Performance measures

2018	2019	2020
ESCAP member States with limited capacity to address inequality and marginalized groups through policies	ESCAP member States identify priority areas for country-specific policies for population groups that are left behind, including by developing solid evidence bases	ESCAP member States develop and implement an increased number of evidence-informed socially inclusive policies to ensure that no one is left behind

- 19.82 The following General Assembly and Economic and Social Council resolutions comprise the main mandates entrusted to the subprogramme: Assembly resolutions [71/237](#) on international migration and development and [73/195](#) on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and Council resolution [2016/25](#) on the future organization and methods of work of the Commission on Population and Development. The following new mandate was entrusted to the subprogramme in 2018: ESCAP resolutions [74/7](#), on disability-inclusive sustainable development: implementation of the Beijing Declaration, including the Action Plan to Accelerate the Implementation of the Incheon Strategy, and [74/11](#), on strengthening regional cooperation to tackle inequality in all its forms in Asia and the Pacific. The subprogramme will continue to be guided by all mandates entrusted to it, which provide the legislative framework for its deliverables.

5. Deliverables for the period 2018–2020

- 19.83 Table 19.6 lists all deliverables, by category and subcategory, for the period 2018–2020 that contributed and are expected to contribute to the attainment of the objective stated above.

Table 19.6

Subprogramme 6: deliverables for the period 2018–2020, by category and subcategory

	2018 planned	2018 actual	2019 planned	2020 planned
Quantified deliverables				
A. Facilitation of the intergovernmental process and expert bodies				
Parliamentary documentation (number of documents)	5	8	2	6
Substantive services for meetings (number of three-hour meetings)	23	25	25	35

	2018 planned	2018 actual	2019 planned	2020 planned
B. Generation and transfer of knowledge				
Field and technical cooperation projects (number of projects)	7	9	7	8
Publications (number of publications)	3	4	4	6
Technical materials (number of materials)	13	13	13	12
Non-quantified deliverables				
C. Substantive deliverables				
Consultation, advice and advocacy				
Databases and substantive digital materials				
D. Communication deliverables				
Outreach programmes, special events and information materials				
External and media relations				
Digital platforms and multimedia content				

6. Most significant relative variances in deliverables

Variances between the actual and planned figures in 2018

- 19.84 The variance in parliamentary documentation was driven mainly by reports to intergovernmental bodies for their meetings on social development, owing to an increase in the number of documents produced to respond to the needs of member States.
- 19.85 The variance in field and technical cooperation projects was driven mainly by the capacity-building projects on gender equality and disability inclusion, owing to the availability of increased extrabudgetary resources in those areas.
- 19.86 The variance in publications was driven by *Social Outlook for Asia and the Pacific*, owing to the delivery of the publication, planned for 2019, in 2018.

Variances between the planned figures for 2020 and 2019

- 19.87 The variance in parliamentary documentation is driven by reports to the Committee on Social Development, owing to the organization of the Committee sessions in alternate years, as stipulated in Commission resolution 71/1, and by reports to intergovernmental meetings on social development, owing to the fact that the meeting is organized on an ad hoc basis.
- 19.88 The variance in substantive services for meetings is driven mainly by the meetings of the Committee on Social Development, owing to the organization of the Committee's sessions in alternate years, as stipulated in Commission resolution 71/1, and by the meeting of the Working Group on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022, owing to the fact that that deliverable was not reflected in the programme of work for the biennium 2018–2019.
- 19.89 The variance in publications is driven mainly by the *Asia-Pacific Sustainable Development Journal*, owing to the fact that subprogramme 6 leads its production in alternate years.



Subprogramme 7 Statistics

1. Objective

- 19.90 The objective, to which this subprogramme contributes, is to improve the availability, accessibility and use of quality data and official statistics in support of sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific.

2. Alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals

- 19.91 Given its broad scope, the objective is aligned with all of the Sustainable Development Goals.

3. Highlighted result in 2018

Deepened commitment from Asia-Pacific countries to improving official statistics for the 2030 Agenda

In “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” (General Assembly resolution 70/1), States demonstrated their ambition of achieving progress on a broad range of development issues. Governments have stressed the significant role of relevant, accessible, timely, reliable and disaggregated data in its implementation. They have also acknowledged the importance of establishing partnerships with other stakeholders to foster innovation and the use of new data sources as well as of ensuring national ownership in supporting and tracking progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

In 2018, an expert-level discussion among countries was organized under the subprogramme to identify areas, including legislation, coordination of the national statistical system and data-sharing, where national statistical systems needed support from other parts and higher levels of government to meet the demand for official statistics in connection with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The discussion, which followed years of deliberations among national statistical offices in the Asia-Pacific region, led to the endorsement of a collective vision and framework for action to advance progress in the area of official statistics for the 2030 Agenda.

In preparation for the discussion, the subprogramme prepared background documents identifying actions that member States and development partners could take to bolster national statistical systems and to increase investment aimed at strengthening the position of national statistical offices and increasing their capacity to coordinate national statistical systems, to source data from other parts of the government and to expand the use of official statistics in decision-making. On that basis, experts drafted a declaration for the consideration of member States, which was adopted by the ESCAP Committee on Statistics at its sixth session.



Participants in the sixth session of the ESCAP Committee on Statistics at the adoption of the Declaration on Navigating Policy with Data to Leave No One Behind. Source: ESCAP

Result and evidence

The deliverables contributed to the result, which is the agreement of member States to strengthen national statistical systems in Asia and the Pacific.

Evidence of the result includes the adoption by the high-level segment of the Committee on Statistics, in October 2018, of the Declaration on Navigating Policy with Data to Leave No One Behind. The Committee for the first time met with the participation of policymakers of relevant government entities, reflecting the aim and reach of the Declaration.

The result demonstrates progress made in 2018 towards the collective attainment of the objective.

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- 19.92 A planned result for 2018, which is increased availability and use of quality and gender-sensitized statistical products and services for regional follow-up and review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as referred to in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019, was achieved, as evidenced by the reference to the ESCAP statistical database in documents submitted to the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development at its fifth session and in various ESCAP publications, among others (a total of 13 documents).

4. Highlighted planned result for 2020

Stronger policy-data links for better decision-making

In 2018, ESCAP member States reached a consensus on the need for a whole-of-government approach to strengthening national statistical systems in support of national, regional and global agendas, including the 2030 Agenda, as contained in the Declaration on Navigating Policy with Data to Leave No One Behind. The Declaration contains nine commitments, including integrating statistics development with national development plans, strengthening legislative provisions and advocating for the expanded use of official statistics for the formulation, implementation and monitoring of policy.

Challenge and response

The challenge was to support member States in implementing those commitments at the national level. For example, implementing strengthened legislation requires the commitment of the whole of government, including parliament, not just the national statistical office.

In response, for 2020, the subprogramme will focus on activities aimed at facilitating the national implementation of the commitments, such as providing advice on policy-data integration, statistics legislation and policies and advocating the expanded use of official statistics in line with the commitments outlined in the Declaration. For instance, the secretariat will conduct workshops to train government officials in the use of the EPIC (Every Policy Is Connected) tool, developed by the subprogramme to enhance the engagement of and dialogue between the producers and the users of official statistics.

Result and evidence

The planned deliverables are expected to contribute to the result, which is strengthened national statistical systems in the region.

Evidence of the result, if achieved, will include the integration of statistics development with national development plans, new and/or strengthened legislative provisions and expanded use of official statistics for the formulation, implementation and monitoring of national policy.

The result, if achieved, will demonstrate progress made in 2020 towards collective attainment of the objective.

Performance measures

2018	2019	2020
Commitment to the Declaration on Navigating Policy with Data to Leave No One Behind, adopted by ESCAP member States in 2018	National implementation of the commitments contained in the Declaration	At least five countries demonstrating strengthened statistical systems in the account of progress prepared for the seventh session of the ESCAP Committee on Statistics in 2020

- 19.93 The following General Assembly resolution comprises the main mandate entrusted to the subprogramme: resolution [71/313](#) on the work of the Statistical Commission. The following new mandates were entrusted to the subprogramme in 2018: Commission resolutions [74/6](#) on advancing disaster-related statistics in Asia and the Pacific and [74/8](#) on accelerating the implementation of the Regional Action Framework on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific. The subprogramme will continue to be guided by all mandates entrusted to it, which provide the legislative framework for its deliverables.

5. Deliverables for the period 2018–2020

- 19.94 Table 19.7 lists all deliverables, by category and subcategory, for the period 2018–2020 that contributed and are expected to contribute to the attainment of the objective stated above.

Table 19.7

Subprogramme 7: deliverables for the period 2018–2020, by category and subcategory

	2018 planned	2018 actual	2019 planned	2020 planned
Quantified deliverables				
A. Facilitation of the intergovernmental process and expert bodies				
Parliamentary documentation (number of documents)	3	15	1	4
Substantive services for meetings (number of three-hour meetings)	28	30	22	46
B. Generation and transfer of knowledge				
Field and technical cooperation projects (number of projects)	5	5	5	5
Publications (number of publications)	1	1	1	1
Technical materials (number of materials)	1	2	1	2
Non-quantified deliverables				
C. Substantive deliverables				
Consultation, advice and advocacy				
Databases and substantive digital materials				
D. Communication deliverables				
Outreach programmes, special events and information materials				
External and media relations				
Digital platforms and multimedia content				

6. Most significant relative variances in deliverables

Variances between the actual and planned figures in 2018

- 19.95 The variance in parliamentary documentation was driven mainly by reports to the Committee on Statistics, owing to an increase in the number of documents produced to respond to the needs of member States.
- 19.96 The variance in substantive services for meetings was driven by the meetings of the Committee on Statistics, owing to the increase in the number of meetings required to respond to member States' needs.
- 19.97 The variance in technical materials was driven mainly by statistical briefs and working papers, owing to an increase in the number of materials produced to respond to the needs of member States.

Variances between the planned figures for 2020 and 2019

- 19.98 The variance in parliamentary documentation is driven mainly by reports to the Committee on Statistics, owing to the organization of its sessions in alternate years, as stipulated in Commission resolution [71/1](#), and by the reports for the Ministerial Conference on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific, owing to the fact the meeting is organized on an ad hoc basis.
- 19.99 The variance in substantive services for meetings is driven mainly by the meetings of the Committee on Statistics, owing to the organization of its sessions in alternate years, as stipulated in Commission resolution [71/1](#), by the expert group meeting on the use of non-traditional and complementary data sources in official statistics, owing to its organization in alternate years, and by the Ministerial Conference on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific, owing to the fact the meeting is organized on an ad hoc basis.
- 19.100 The variance in technical materials is driven mainly by statistical briefs and working papers, owing to an increase in the number of materials produced to respond to the needs of member States.



Subprogramme 8

Subregional activities for development

Component 1

Subregional activities for development in the Pacific

1. Objective

- 19.101 The objective, to which component 1 of the subprogramme contributes, is to strengthen regional cooperation and integration for sustainable development, in line with the subregional priorities of the Pacific, including climate change, ocean management and reduction of inequality.

2. Alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals

- 19.102 The objective is aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 10, which is to reduce inequality within and among countries. Progress towards the attainment of the objective will help to ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequality of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and by promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in that regard.
- 19.103 The objective is also aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 13, which is to take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts. Progress towards the attainment of the objective will help to promote mechanisms for increasing the capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in least developed countries and small island developing States, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities.
- 19.104 Furthermore, the objective is also aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 14, which is to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development. Progress towards the attainment of the objective will help to increase the economic benefits to small island developing States and least developed countries from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through the sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism.
- 19.105 Finally, the objective is also aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 17, which is to strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development. Progress towards the attainment of the objective will help to enhance policy coherence for sustainable development and the provision of capacity-building support to developing countries, including for least developed countries and small island developing States, significantly increasing the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts.

3. Highlighted result in 2018

Meaningful regional policy alignment and reduced reporting burden for Pacific small island developing States

The Pacific subregion is characterized by great diversity and a high degree of vulnerability to climate change, disasters and economic shocks, and as such has long presented a unique case in favour of targeted support to advance sustainable development. There is a critical need to ensure that international and regional sustainable development frameworks serve the policy priorities of Pacific small island developing States and do not add additional burdens to their small and often overstretched bureaucracies and national reporting systems. Central to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals is integrated planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting. The Pacific road map for sustainable development, developed with support from the subprogramme and launched in 2017 by the leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum, helps to establish regional and national coordination mechanisms, embeds the Sustainable Development Goals in national planning, budgets, monitoring and reporting processes and identifies regional Sustainable Development Goal indicators in line with Pacific regional priorities to jointly monitor progress on the 2030 Agenda, the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway and the Framework for Pacific Regionalism.



Settlement in the Marshall Islands with limited access to basic services, vulnerability to natural disasters and high incidence of poverty. Source: ESCAP

In 2018, in their annual meeting with the Secretary-General, Pacific leaders asked the United Nations to work with the Pacific Islands Forum to implement the Pacific road map for sustainable development. The component has played a key role in coordinating the development and implementation of the road map and in consolidating a subregional approach in support of the 2030 Agenda. The component has provided support including technical assistance, the mapping of subregional priorities, the drafting of policy briefs and funding documentation and the servicing of subregional meetings and workshops. Integrated reporting has been a pillar of the work of ESCAP in the Pacific, including through the midterm review of the SAMOA Pathway, where, through its subregional office, the component carried out the main coordinating role.

Result and evidence

The deliverables contributed to the result, which is the aligned and coordinated implementation, follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda, the regional road map and the Pacific road map for sustainable development. Given the limited capacity of their national statistical systems, the small Governments of the Pacific small island developing States requested support in carrying out the processes of follow-up and review of global and regional sustainable development frameworks and their commitments and obligations under international law (including human rights reporting and reporting under international environmental conventions). Strengthening the capacity to monitor planned priorities and budget allocations tracked through relevant and connected indicators makes it possible to build a coherent knowledge base for reporting and to better localize global development commitments and mainstream them with national development (and sector) plan monitoring reports, providing a solid basis for global reporting, including through the voluntary national review process.

Evidence of the result includes the publication of the *First Quadrennial Pacific Sustainable Development Report 2018*, in which reporting under the Framework for Pacific Regionalism, the 2030 Agenda, the SAMOA Pathway and the Pacific Leaders Gender Declaration is harmonized; the identification of the most appropriate indicators for tracking progress towards the achievement of national priorities and for meeting the global and regional reporting requirements of the SAMOA Pathway; the drafting of reports and meeting papers for the midterm review of the SAMOA Pathway in the Pacific; and the successful conclusion of the voluntary national review process in Kiribati for the 2018 high-level political forum on sustainable development and the 2019 voluntary national review preparations for Fiji, Nauru, Palau, Tonga and Vanuatu.

The result demonstrates progress made in 2018 towards the collective attainment of the objective.

- 19.106 A planned result for 2018, which is a strengthened policy environment that supports the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development, including gender perspectives, as referred to in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019, was achieved, as evidenced by the increased number of eight member States in the subregion adopting policies that integrate the three dimensions of sustainable development, including gender perspectives, in line with ESCAP recommendations. At least eight countries have adopted national and/or subregional policy instruments within the global, regional and subregional sustainable development frameworks referred to in the above-mentioned result, including with respect to linkages to the budgetary process and the development of national sustainable development indicator sets and policies and legislation in support of gender equality and disability rights in line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Incheon Strategy.

4. Highlighted planned result for 2020

Strong national sustainable development indicator sets for follow-up and review

In the *communiqué* of the 2018 Pacific Islands Forum, leaders called for consolidated systems to reduce reporting burdens and to ensure meaningful follow-up and review processes, guided by the 2030 Agenda. National indicator development has often placed too much emphasis on meeting global reporting requirements and has overlooked the need to focus on national policy priorities. On behalf of the United Nations system in the Pacific, the component has helped to lead the development of the Pacific road map for sustainable development, a core section of which is on integrated reporting. To ensure the sustainability and cohesiveness of reporting efforts, linking the monitoring of Sustainable Development Goals with performance measures used for associated national planning systems and implementation processes, including budgets and resourcing, remains critical. More specifically, if global commitments can be localized and mainstreamed as appropriate, national and sectoral development plan monitoring reports can provide a solid basis for voluntary national reviews and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework.

Challenge and response

The challenge is to support member States, given the limited institutional capacity of the Pacific small island States for implementing sustainable development frameworks, including statistical capacity for monitoring and reporting.

In response, for 2020, ESCAP will increase its efforts to strengthen institutional capacity in the Pacific through an additional technical assistance mission and additional expert working group meetings aimed at designing and adopting national sustainable development indicator sets that are based on national policies and sustainable development priorities and that are linked to the budgetary process. By tackling data production and use, the implementation of development priorities and the resourcing components collectively, national, regional and global reporting needs will be addressed more effectively and efficiently.

Result and evidence

The planned deliverables are expected to contribute to the result, which is strengthened national planning and monitoring systems.

Evidence of the result, if achieved, will include the adoption of new policies related to Sustainable Development Goals 10, 13, 14 and 17, using localized success indicators common to at least four of the Pacific small island developing States.

The result, if achieved, will demonstrate progress made in 2020 towards the collective attainment of the objective.

Performance measures

2018	2019	2020
Recognition of the need to have integrated monitoring and reporting of sustainable development frameworks by small island developing States	Strengthened statistical capacity through the establishment of national sustainable development indicator sets and technical assistance for integrated monitoring and reporting on sustainable development frameworks	Implementation of sustainable development frameworks supported by localized indicators

- 19.107 The following General Assembly resolution comprises the main mandate entrusted to the component: resolution [63/260](#) on development-related activities. The component will continue to be guided by all mandates entrusted to it, which provide the legislative framework for its deliverables.

5. Deliverables for the period 2018–2020

- 19.108 Table 19.8 lists all deliverables, by category and subcategory, for the period 2018–2020 that contributed and are expected to contribute to the attainment of the objective stated above.

Table 19.8

Subprogramme 8, component 1: deliverables for the period 2018–2020, by category and subcategory

	2018 <i>planned</i>	2018 <i>actual</i>	2019 <i>planned</i>	2020 <i>planned</i>
Quantified deliverables				
A. Facilitation of the intergovernmental process and expert bodies				
Parliamentary documentation (number of documents)	1	1	1	1
Substantive services for meetings (number of three-hour meetings)	1	5	5	9
B. Generation and transfer of knowledge				
Field and technical cooperation projects (number of projects)	2	1	2	2
Publications (number of publications)	–	–	1	–
Non-quantified deliverables				
C. Substantive deliverables				
Databases and substantive digital materials				
D. Communication deliverables				
Outreach programmes, special events and information materials				
External and media relations				
Digital platforms and multimedia content				

6. Most significant relative variances in deliverables

Variances between the planned and actual figures for 2018

- 19.109 The variance in substantive services for meetings was driven by the expert group meeting on policy and programme options to address emerging sustainable development issues in the Pacific, owing to its organization in 2018 rather than 2019.
- 19.110 The variance in field and technical cooperation projects was driven by the capacity-building project on economic and social development, owing to increased use of the United Nations

Development Account and the regular programme of technical cooperation rather than extrabudgetary resources in that area.

Variances between the planned figures for 2020 and 2019

- 19.111 The variance in substantive services for meetings is driven mainly by the expert group meeting on sustainable development in the Pacific, owing to the movement of that deliverable from subprogramme 4 to subprogramme 8 as from 2020.
- 19.112 The variance in publications is driven mainly by the publication on sustainable development in the Pacific, owing to its delivery in alternate years.



Component 2

Subregional activities for development in East and North-East Asia

1. Objective

- 19.113 The objective, to which component 2 of the subprogramme contributes, is to strengthen regional cooperation and integration for sustainable development, in line with the subregional priorities of East and North-East Asia, including connectivity, resilience and environmental sustainability.

2. Alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals

- 19.114 The objective is aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 7 (Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all), Goal 9 (Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation), Goal 13 (Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts), Goal 14 (Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development), Goal 15 (Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss) and Goal 17 (Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development).

3. Highlighted result in 2018

Enhanced science and policy interaction and cooperation in addressing transboundary air pollution in North-East Asia

Transboundary air pollution has been recognized by the member States of the North-East Asian Subregional Programme for Environmental Cooperation as one of the most serious environmental challenges in the subregion, owing to a range of factors, such as climate-meteorological conditions, increase of fossil fuel-based energy production, lack of environmental enforcement and technology and inadequacy of existing regional frameworks. Many North-East Asian cities have recently experienced sharp peaks of extremely high levels of air pollution, causing adverse environmental impacts and health concerns. The transboundary nature of air pollution in the subregion requires effective



Image of air pollution in an industrial area. Source: Pixabay

cooperation to ensure the exchange of experience, the sharing of information, comprehensive assessment and monitoring, and dialogue on potential multilateral measures that could be taken to tackle the problem.

To address the issue, the component, serving as the secretariat of the North-East Asian Subregional Programme for Environmental Cooperation, between 2014 and 2017 coordinated a joint assessment of transboundary air pollution and organized a series of expert and intergovernmental consultations towards the establishment of a subregional framework for promoting science-based, policy-oriented cooperation on air pollution. In 2018, the component continued consultations with member States of the Programme on transboundary air pollution.

Result and evidence

The deliverables contributed to the result, which is the institutionalization of subregional cooperation on air pollution, decided during the Programme's twenty-second Senior Officials Meeting, held on 25 and 26 October 2018.

Evidence of the result includes the launch of the North-East Asia Clean Air Partnership platform, as recognized in the report of the meeting.

The result demonstrates progress made in 2018 towards the collective attainment of the objective.

- 19.115 A planned result for 2018, which is increased effectiveness of subregional initiatives and coordination processes to address regional and subregional dimensions of sustainable development, as referred to in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019, was achieved, as evidenced by the two additional subregional initiatives and coordination processes facilitated by ESCAP aimed at addressing regional and subregional dimensions of sustainable development, namely, the establishment of the North-East Asia Clean Air Partnership and North-East Asia Regional Power Interconnection and Cooperation Forum.

4. Highlighted planned result for 2020

Subregional intergovernmental policy dialogue on integrated trade and transport facilitation

The East and North-East Asia subregion consists of several leading trading economies in Asia and the Pacific. However, intraregional trade data show that member economies have varying levels of trade integration within the subregion. The component has carried out subregional dialogues and assessments to deepen intraregional trade integration by improving country-specific trade- and transport-related measures, such as implementing cross-border paperless trade and developing a multilateral transport agreement, respectively. The ongoing work is underpinned by agreements supported by ESCAP member States. Countries in the subregion could benefit from the Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific for improving the exchange and mutual recognition of trade-related data and documents in electronic form and for facilitating interoperability among national and subregional single windows and/or other paperless trade systems. On transport facilitation, the subregion could benefit from implementing the Intergovernmental Agreement on International Road Transport along the Asian Highway Network (signed by China, Mongolia and the Russian Federation), which lays the foundation for trade-enhancing trilateral cooperation by granting carriers the right to undertake international road transport in their respective national territories along routes 3 and 4 of the Asian Highway Network.

In 2018, progress in the area of trade and transport facilitation has advanced the implementation of those Agreements, but relatively high non-tariff costs persist for intra-subregional trade owing to the lack of coordination of trade and transport facilitation measures in the region.

Challenge and response

The challenge is to support member States, given the limited synergy between initiatives on trade and transport facilitation in the subregion, inhibiting achievement of the full potential of seamless connectivity. For instance, issues in cross-border road and rail transit, such as the use of single window systems to accommodate both trade and transport documentation requirements and close coordination between customs and transport authorities at the border, could benefit from a collective discussion involving trade and transport officials.

In response, for 2020, the subprogramme will undertake country consultations, prepare a study on synergies between trade and transport facilitation applicable to the subregion and organize an expert group meeting to foster the operationalization of the synergies.

Result and evidence

The planned deliverables are expected to contribute to the result, which is the increased commitment of subregional bodies on trade and transport facilitation, two important components of regional connectivity.

Evidence of the result, if achieved, will include the establishment of a formal subregional intergovernmental mechanism for policy dialogue on trade and transport facilitation, which would operationalize the existing regional agreements.

The result, if achieved, will demonstrate progress made in 2020 towards the collective attainment of the objective.

Performance measures

2018	2019	2020
Absence of dialogue between subregional governmental bodies	Lack of a structured subregional intergovernmental body	Establishment of a formal subregional intergovernmental policy dialogue on trade and transport facilitation

- 19.116 The following General Assembly resolution comprises the main mandates entrusted to the component: resolution [63/260](#) on development-related activities. The component will continue to be guided by all mandates entrusted to it, which provide the legislative framework for its deliverables.

5. Deliverables for the period 2018–2020

- 19.117 Table 19.9 lists all deliverables, by category and subcategory, for the period 2018–2020 that contributed and are expected to contribute to the attainment of the objective stated above.

Table 19.9

Subprogramme 8, component 2: deliverables for the period 2018–2020, by category and subcategory

	2018 planned	2018 actual	2019 planned	2020 planned
Quantified deliverables				
A. Facilitation of the intergovernmental process and expert bodies				
Parliamentary documentation (number of documents)	1	1	1	1
Substantive services for meetings (number of three-hour meetings)	7	5	7	11
B. Generation and transfer of knowledge				
Field and technical cooperation projects (number of projects)	1	2	1	2
Publications (number of publications)	1	1	–	1
Non-quantified deliverables				
C. Substantive deliverables				
Databases and substantive digital materials				
D. Communication deliverables				
Outreach programmes, special events and information materials				
External and media relations				
Digital platforms and multimedia content				

6. Most significant relative variances in deliverables

Variances between the actual and planned figures in 2018

- 19.118 The variance in substantive services for meetings was driven by an expert group meeting on policy and programme options held to address emerging sustainable development issues in East and North-East Asia, owing to the decision to organize a second section of the expert group meeting (2 three-hour meetings) in early 2019 to review the draft publication guided by the expert group at its first section and to discuss opportunities for implementing the findings and developing a subregional and a regional plan for collaboration.

- 19.119 The variance in field and technical cooperation projects was driven by the project on the North-East Asian Subregional Programme for Environmental Cooperation, owing to the availability of increased extrabudgetary resources in that area.

Variances between the planned figures for 2020 and 2019

- 19.120 The variance in substantive services for meetings is driven by the expert group meeting on sustainable development in East and North-East Asia, owing to the movement of this deliverable from subprogramme 4 to subprogramme 8 as from 2020.
- 19.121 The variance in field and technical cooperation projects is driven by the North-East Asian Subregional Programme for Environmental Cooperation, owing to the availability of increased extrabudgetary resources in that area.
- 19.122 The variance in publications is driven by the publication on the sustainable development of North-East Asia, owing to its delivery in alternate years.



Component 3 Subregional activities for development in North and Central Asia

1. Objective

- 19.123 The objective, to which component 3 of the subprogramme contributes, is to strengthen regional cooperation and integration for sustainable development, in line with the subregional priorities, including improved infrastructure connectivity and structural economic transformation of North and Central Asia.

2. Alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals

- 19.124 The objective is aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls), Goal 6 (Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all), Goal 7 (Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all), Goal 8 (Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all), Goal 9 (Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation), Goal 10 (Reduce inequality within and among countries), Goal 12 (Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns), Goal 16 (Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels) and Goal 17 (Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development).

3. Highlighted result in 2018

Reaffirmation by countries of ownership of the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia

The United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia, supported jointly by the ESCAP and Economic Commission for Europe secretariats, was established in 1998 to facilitate economic cooperation and the integration of its participating countries with the global economy. With its six thematic working groups, on sustainable transport, transit and connectivity; trade; water, energy and the environment; knowledge-based development; gender and the Sustainable Development Goals; and statistics, the Special Programme has provided opportunities for working-level coordination to enhance connectivity and to address the cross-cutting issues of gender mainstreaming and statistics.

At its 2016 session, the Governing Council of the Special Programme called upon the component to continue its efforts to revitalize and strengthen the Programme so that participating countries would be in a position to implement, review, measure and adapt the implementation of the Sustainable Development



Economic Forum of the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia, held in Almaty on 20 and 21 September 2018. Source: ESCAP

Goals. In response to the request, the component initiated an external evaluation of the Programme and, in 2017, presented the preliminary result of the evaluation to the Governing Council.

Convening national experts to discuss action-oriented recommendations based on the evaluation, in 2018, the component identified ways to strengthen the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the Special Programme, which were presented to participant countries, namely the five Central Asian countries of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, as well as Afghanistan and Azerbaijan, for consideration. On the basis of those recommendations, along with those of the expert group meeting, the Governing Council, at its thirteenth session, convened in 2018 with support from the component, recognized the need to redouble efforts in: (a) strengthening connectivity in trade, transport, energy and ICT; (b) accelerating structural economic transformation; and (c) enhancing partnerships in support of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024 and other internationally agreed goals. The Council further decided to establish national focal points for the Programme and its six thematic working groups, as well as to consider financial and/or in-kind contributions for the activities of the Programme.

Result and evidence

The deliverables contributed to the result, which is the reinvigoration of the countries' ownership of the Special Programme.

Evidence of the result includes the offer by the Government of Kazakhstan to host the secretariat of the Special Programme in Almaty, as well as the offers by the Governments of Turkmenistan and Kyrgyzstan to host the Economic Forum and Governing Council sessions in 2019 and 2020, respectively.

The result demonstrates progress made in 2018 towards the collective attainment of the objective.

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- 19.125 A planned result for 2018, which is the increased effectiveness of subregional initiatives and coordination processes to address regional and subregional dimensions of sustainable development, as referred to in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019, was achieved, as evidenced by the increased number of outcome documents and resolutions reflecting consensus on regional and subregional dimensions of sustainable development. An example of such a document is the report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia on its thirteenth session, which illustrates agreement to strengthen the Programme.

4. Highlighted planned result for 2020

Enhanced structural economic transformation through policy advice and dialogue

The landlocked countries of Central Asia, located between the three large consumer markets of Europe, South Asia and China, have undergone significant economic transformation resulting from the adoption of market-oriented policies over the years. Economic growth in the subregion has slowed in recent years, however, owing in part to the fall of commodity prices and to the narrow basis and relatively small size of the economies of the countries in the subregion. Further growth will require the broadening of those economies, including through the expansion of the external sector, in terms of both trade and investment, through continued structural economic transformation and through greater connectivity, so that the countries are better able to gain access to neighbouring consumer markets.

Structural economic transformation, which is priority 5 of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024, is essential for meeting the challenges facing landlocked countries, especially those in North and Central Asia, as they continue to introduce market-oriented policies. In 2018, the component facilitated a discussion on structural economic transformation during the meeting of the Economic Forum of the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia. As a result, the Forum recognized that the acceleration of structural economic transformation was a fundamental condition for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and for increasing shared prosperity and called upon the subprogramme to provide support for the efforts of the participating countries of the Programme in accelerating structural economic transformation.

Challenge and response

The challenge is to support member States in the coordination of structural economic transformation and sustainable development support.

In response, for 2020, the component will develop a holistic framework in line with the Sustainable Development Goals to support further structural economic transformation, in particular through enhanced economic governance, financial sector integration and improved regulatory frameworks, so that the countries of North and Central Asia are able to benefit from greater access to consumer markets through improved connectivity. ESCAP will provide policy advice as well as a platform for policy dialogue to promote a holistic approach to structural economic transformation through the Special Programme, as well as through other modalities, including the expert group meeting on sustainable development for North and Central Asia.

Result and evidence

The planned deliverables are expected to contribute to the result, which is increased engagement for a holistic approach to further structural economic transformation by high-level representatives of national Governments.

Evidence of the result, if achieved, will include references to a more integrated approach for structural economic transformation in national strategic documents and statements in intergovernmental meetings.

The result, if achieved, will demonstrate progress made in 2020 towards the collective attainment of the objective.

Performance measures

2018	2019	2020
Recognition of the need to accelerate structural economic transformation by member States	A holistic framework linking structural economic transformation and sustainable development elaborated by member States	References to a more integrated approach to structural economic transformation in national strategic documents and statements in intergovernmental meetings

- 19.126 The following General Assembly resolution comprises the main mandate entrusted to the component: resolution [63/260](#) on development-related activities. The component will continue to be guided by all mandates entrusted to it, which provide the legislative framework for its deliverables.

5. Deliverables for the period 2018–2020

- 19.127 Table 19.10 lists all deliverables, by category and subcategory, for the period 2018–2020 that contributed and are expected to contribute to the attainment of the objective stated above.

Table 19.10

Subprogramme 8, component 3: deliverables for the period 2018–2020, by category and subcategory

	2018 planned	2018 actual	2019 planned	2020 planned
Quantified deliverables				
A. Facilitation of the intergovernmental process and expert bodies				
Parliamentary documentation (number of documents)	1	2	1	1
Substantive services for meetings (number of three-hour meetings)	5	5	9	13

	<i>2018 planned</i>	<i>2018 actual</i>	<i>2019 planned</i>	<i>2020 planned</i>
B. Generation and transfer of knowledge				
Field and technical cooperation projects (number of projects)	–	–	1	1
Publications (number of publications)	–	–	1	–
Technical materials (number of materials)	1	1	1	1
Non-quantified deliverables				
C. Substantive deliverables				
Databases and substantive digital materials				
D. Communication deliverables				
Outreach programmes, special events and information materials				
External and media relations				
Digital platforms and multimedia content				

6. Most significant relative variances in deliverables

Variances between the actual and planned figures in 2018

- 19.128 The variance in parliamentary documentation was driven by reports to ESCAP, owing to an increase in the number of documents produced to respond to the needs of member States.

Variances between the planned figures for 2020 and 2019

- 19.129 The variance in substantive services for meetings is driven by the expert group meeting on sustainable development in North and Central Asia, owing to the movement of this deliverable from subprogramme 4 to subprogramme 8 as from 2020.
- 19.130 The variance in publications is driven mainly by the publication on sustainable development in North and Central Asia, owing to its delivery in alternate years.



Component 4

Subregional activities for development in South and South-West Asia

1. Objective

- 19.131 The objective, to which component 4 of the subprogramme contributes, is to advance regional cooperation and integration for sustainable development in line with the subregional priorities, including connectivity and women's empowerment in South and South-West Asia.

2. Alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals

- 19.132 The objective is aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 1 (End poverty in all its forms everywhere), Goal 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls), Goal 7 (Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all), Goal 8 (Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all), Goal 9 (Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation) and Goal 17 (Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development).

3. Highlighted result in 2018

Transport corridors for harnessing the potential of intraregional trade in South Asia

South Asia is often described as one of the least integrated regions in the world, with poorly developed surface transport networks and inadequate transport facilitation measures. As a result, the costs associated with intraregional trade are much higher than those for trade with distant regions, such as North America, thereby denying countries the benefits of geographical proximity and contiguity in trading locally produced goods. The Commission's research, as reported in *Unlocking the Potential of Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration in South Asia: Potential, Challenges and the Way Forward* has shown that the actual intraregional trade of South Asia is less than one third of its potential, with more than \$50 billion in trade opportunities lost each year. Fully harnessing intraregional trade potential could lead to the creation of millions of jobs, thereby helping to reduce poverty.



Flagging off the first ever container rail service between India and Bangladesh on 3 April 2018. Source: CONCOR/Indian Railways

Recognizing the challenges associated with the lack of transport connectivity, the component prioritized regional transport connectivity as part of its work in enhancing regional cooperation and integration in South and South-West Asia. It has produced a range of analytical and knowledge products and carried out capacity-building and policy advocacy activities to strengthen transport connectivity within the subregion. From 2013 to 2018, the component, in consultation with subprogramme 3, conducted analytical studies and undertook a series of consultations with Governments and other stakeholders to identify and promote extended multimodal corridors connecting the countries of the subregion, especially the landlocked countries, such as Afghanistan, Bhutan and Nepal, and connecting them to the contiguous subregions of South-East Asia and Central Asia so as to leverage the strategic location of South Asia. In 2014, the leaders of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, in the Kathmandu Declaration, renewed their commitment to substantially enhance regional connectivity, as advocated by ESCAP. The component

developed a proposal for an Istanbul-Tehran-Islamabad-Delhi-Kolkata-Dhaka-Yangon container corridor along the trans-Asian railway network, with multimodal connections to landlocked countries and ports of the subregion, as a key artery for strengthening connectivity across the subregion and beyond. The analytical work undertaken by the component demonstrated that the corridor had the potential to save up to 55 per cent of the time and up to 45 per cent of the cost of freight, enhancing the competitiveness of intraregional trade. Furthermore, the component conducted policy advocacy activities in support of the proposal and its multimodal variant connecting with Chabhar port in the Islamic Republic of Iran. The activities were also supported by the Development Account project on strengthening the connectivity of countries in South and Central Asia, particularly landlocked and least developed countries, to link with subregional and regional transport and trade networks. The Indian railway adopted the component's Istanbul-Tehran-Islamabad-Delhi-Kolkata-Dhaka-Yangon corridor proposal in its business plan for 2017–2018.

Result and evidence

The deliverables contributed to the result, which is the implementation of partnerships by and cooperation between member States on regional rail connectivity.

Evidence of the result includes a memorandum of understanding between Indian and Bangladeshi container companies to establish a container train service between Kolkata, India, and Dhaka, and concrete steps taken by some countries to activate key segments of the corridor towards improving connectivity in the subregion, as corroborated by an evaluative survey, conducted in April 2018, on activities carried out under the Development Account. The first-ever cross-border container train demonstration run between Kolkata and Dhaka was conducted on 3 April 2018 and received encouraging feedback from the freight forwarders.

The result demonstrates progress made in 2018 towards the collective attainment of the objective.

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- 19.133 A planned result for 2018, which is the increased effectiveness of subregional initiatives and coordination processes to address regional and subregional dimensions of sustainable development, as referred to in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019, was achieved, as evidenced by the increase by two in the number of the ESCAP-facilitated subregional initiatives and coordination processes aimed at addressing regional and subregional dimensions of sustainable development. The signing of the memorandum of understanding for the Kolkata-Dhaka container train service and the demonstration run of the Istanbul-Tehran-Islamabad-Delhi-Kolkata-Dhaka-Yangon corridor proposal and its adoption in the business plan of the Indian railway are two examples demonstrating progress achieved in strengthening regional transport connectivity.

4. Highlighted planned result for 2020

Regional cooperation for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in South Asia

South Asia, a populous subregion accounting for nearly a quarter of the world's population, holds the key to the global achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Despite its dynamism in economic terms, the subregion accounts for 36 per cent of people living in extreme poverty and nearly 50 per cent of children suffering from malnutrition. There is a wide gender gap, especially in terms of women's economic and political empowerment. For instance, the labour force participation rate of women in South Asia in 2018, at 27.6 per cent, was among the lowest in the world and was well below the developing country average rate of 69.3 per cent, according to International Labour Organization estimates.

The component launched South Asia forums on the Sustainable Development Goals as part of its work in assisting countries of the subregion in their efforts to achieve the Goals. The participants in the second forum, hosted by the National Institution for Transforming India in New Delhi on 4 and 5 October 2018, including governmental focal points on the Sustainable Development Goals, heads of national think tanks and other stakeholders from the eight South Asian countries, recognized the potential role of subregional cooperation in accelerating the achievement of the Goals. Besides the contextualization of the Goals to subregional requirements and the sharing of good practices and development experiences, regional cooperation could support the formulation of regionally coordinated industrial policies and cross-border connectivity and harness the potential of regional value chains to create jobs and reduce poverty. Participants noted the limitations of existing institutional frameworks for fostering regional cooperation on the implementation of the Goals and agreed that, without an effective institutional mechanism for exchanging development experiences, sharing good practices and identifying solutions to their collective

challenges, the member States' ability to utilize the results, as well as the sustainability of such cooperation, would be at risk. The participants invited the component to help create a subregional network of think tanks on the Goals.

Challenge and response

The challenge is to identify effective modalities for an institutional mechanism for such exchange and to define focus areas for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals for the subregion.

In response, for 2020, the component, through its subregional office, has begun engaging key think tanks in the subregion in a series of analytical studies mapping out the national and subregional perspectives on the Sustainable Development Goals. The studies were launched at a research policy workshop organized in Dhaka on 20 and 21 November 2018. The component also hosted a high-level session on regional cooperation for the Sustainable Development Goals at the eleventh South Asia Economic Summit, held in Islamabad from 4 to 7 December 2018, at which the need for a subregional platform on the Goals for parliamentarians was raised. The component will continue its analytical work and consultations with think tanks, parliamentarians and other stakeholders in 2019 to define the focus areas of and modalities for a network of think tanks to foster the regular exchange of development experiences and good practices in support of the Sustainable Development Goals, including in the area of women's economic empowerment. In 2020, the component, building on its earlier work in engaging think tanks and other stakeholders, will conduct consultations and analytical studies with the aim of preparing a subregional synthesis report, on the basis of which the specific terms of reference, programme of work, membership, governance structure and modalities of the network will be worked out. The synthesis study will be shared with member States for action.

Result and evidence

The planned deliverables are expected to contribute to the result, which is the institutionalization of regular exchanges in specific areas relating to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals that give member States an opportunity to benefit from good practices observed in the subregion. Evidence of the result, if achieved, will include the formal launch of the South Asia Network on the Sustainable Development Goals, including its website, as a subregional mechanism for sharing good practices and distilling evidence-based research findings and recommendations for uptake and use by policymakers.

The result, if achieved, will demonstrate progress made in 2020 towards the collective attainment of the objective.

Performance measures

2018	2019	2020
Interest expressed by South Asian stakeholders in developing a cooperation mechanism for supporting the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals	Specific areas identified for subregional cooperation in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals	Subregional mechanism established for sharing good practices and distilling evidence-based research findings and recommendations for uptake and use by policymakers

- 19.134 The following General Assembly resolution comprises the main mandates entrusted to the component: resolution [63/260](#) on development-related activities. The component will continue to be guided by all mandates entrusted to it, which provide the legislative framework for its deliverables.

5. Deliverables for the period 2018–2020

- 19.135 Table 19.11 lists all deliverables, by category and subcategory, for the period 2018–2020 that contributed and are expected to contribute to the attainment of the objective stated above.

Table 19.11

Subprogramme 8, component 4: deliverables for the period 2018–2020, by category and subcategory

	<i>2018 planned</i>	<i>2018 actual</i>	<i>2019 planned</i>	<i>2020 planned</i>
Quantified deliverables				
A. Facilitation of the intergovernmental process and expert bodies				
Parliamentary documentation (number of documents)	1	1	1	1
Substantive services for meetings (number of three-hour meetings)	4	2	4	8
B. Generation and transfer of knowledge				
Field and technical cooperation projects (number of projects)	–	–	1	–
Publications (number of publications)	1	1	–	1
Technical materials (number of materials)	1	4	1	3
Non-quantified deliverables				
C. Substantive deliverables				
Consultation, advice and advocacy				
Databases and substantive digital materials				
D. Communication deliverables				
Outreach programmes, special events and information materials				
External and media relations				
Digital platforms and multimedia content				

6. Most significant relative variances in deliverables**Variances between the actual and planned figures in 2018**

- 19.136 The variance in substantive services for meetings was driven by the expert group meetings on policy and programme options to address emerging sustainable development issues in South and South-West Asia, owing to the postponement of the deliverable to 2019.
- 19.137 The variance in technical materials was driven by the series of papers on economic and social development, owing to an increase in the number of materials produced to respond to the needs of member States.

Variances between the planned figures for 2020 and 2019

- 19.138 The variance in substantive services for meetings is driven by the expert group meeting on sustainable development in South and South-West Asia, owing to the movement of the deliverable from subprogramme 4 to subprogramme 8 as from 2020.
- 19.139 The variance in publications is driven by the publication on sustainable development in South and South-West Asia, owing to its delivery in alternate years.
- 19.140 The variance in technical materials is driven by the development paper series on economic and social development, owing to an increase in the number of materials produced to respond to the needs of member States.



Component 5

Subregional activities for development in South-East Asia

1. Objective

- 19.141 The objective, to which component 5 of the subprogramme contributes, is to strengthen regional cooperation and integration for sustainable development, in line with the subregional priorities of South-East Asia, including connectivity, inclusive development and resilience-building.

2. Alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals

- 19.142 The objective is aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls), Goal 7 (Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all), Goal 9 (Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation), Goal 10 (Reduce inequality within and among countries), Goal 11 (Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable), Goal 12 (Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns) and Goal 17 (Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development).

3. Highlighted result in 2018

Strengthened regional cooperation and integration for sustainable development through the implementation of the Plan of Action to Implement the Joint Declaration on Comprehensive Partnership between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the United Nations (2016–2020)

The Plan of Action to Implement the Joint Declaration on Comprehensive Partnership between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the United Nations (2016–2020) was adopted by the ASEAN leaders and the Secretary-General in 2016. The aim of the Plan of Action is to support the realization of the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in a complementary manner and to strengthen collaboration in jointly addressing development challenges faced by the South-East Asian countries through consultations between ASEAN and the United Nations and with the Committee of Permanent Representatives of ASEAN member States. Through the strengthened partnership, the member States can effectively mobilize scarce resources and avoid duplication of effort towards achieving the goals of the two agendas.



ASEAN-United Nations annual regional meeting, Jakarta, April 2018. Source: ESCAP

In 2018, in order to identify areas and modalities of cooperation, ESCAP led the preparation of the publication entitled *Complementarities between the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: A Framework for Action*. The report is the first outcome of an initiative to support ASEAN member States in implementing the two agendas in an integrated way. The report presents a framework for identifying complementarities and proposes a number of flagship initiatives to support ASEAN countries in translating simultaneously the ASEAN Vision 2025 and the 2030 Agenda

from political aspiration to practical implementation. The report has contributed to further strengthening of regional cooperation and integration for sustainable development. For example, in the context of the report, member States focused on identifying the potential to increase the share of renewable energy and to promote sustainable transboundary power trade and interconnection through bilateral and multilateral consultations. Annual high-level brainstorming dialogues on enhancing complementarities between the two agendas have been organized: (a) to further define the flagship initiatives and identify operational arrangements for their implementation; (b) to align and link the proposed flagships and outputs to the work of ESCAP, the ASEAN secretariat and ASEAN Centres and identify implementation modalities; and (c) to identify funding opportunities for the implementation of the proposed actions. The ASEAN Centre for Energy and the component jointly produced a publication on the subject entitled *Energy Interconnection in ASEAN for Sustainable and Resilient Societies: Accelerating Energy Transition*.

Result and evidence

The deliverables contributed to the result, which is the implementation of the complementarities initiative jointly by ESCAP and ASEAN under the cross-sectoral cooperation component of the Plan of Action.

Evidence of the result includes the endorsement by the ASEAN leaders of the report on complementarities and the commitment of Thailand to set up the ASEAN Centre for Sustainable Development Studies and Dialogue, which is one of the recommendations contained in the report.

The result demonstrates progress made in 2018 towards the collective attainment of the objective.

- 19.143 A planned result for 2018, which is a strengthened policy environment that supports the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development, including gender perspectives, as referred to in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019, was achieved, as evidenced by an increase by five in the number of member States in the subregion adopting policies that integrate the three dimensions of sustainable development, including its gender aspects, in line with ESCAP recommendations, including the result highlighted above.

4. Highlighted planned result for 2020

Enhanced subregional energy connectivity and accessibility

In 2018, the ASEAN member States and ESCAP and other relevant United Nations agencies identified strategic priorities and measures to be undertaken by both sides to enhance regional cooperation and integration for sustainable development. The strategic priorities serve as a guidepost for future action. A focus was placed on enhancing the sustainability of electricity supply through connectivity under the ASEAN Plan of Action for Energy Cooperation 2016–2025, which would ultimately lead to increased energy security, as described in *Energy Interconnection in ASEAN for Sustainable and Resilient Societies: Accelerating Energy Transition*, published jointly by the ASEAN Centre for Energy and the component.

Challenge and response

The challenge is to support ASEAN member States in identifying barriers impeding the implementation of the specific targets of Goal 7 relating to enhancing the sustainability of the electricity supply through connectivity.

In response, for 2020, the component, through the secretariat and its sectoral bodies, will organize consultations with the ASEAN member States and conduct analytical work in cooperation with the Centre for Energy to identify specific barriers to the implementation of Goal 7, including universal access to electricity, that could be eliminated through subregional cooperation and to promote connectivity among the ASEAN countries. The component will have prepared two knowledge products for the ASEAN region: (a) *Statistical Perspectives: Energy and Development in the ASEAN Region*; and (b) a status report on the implementation of Goal 7 for the region. The reports will highlight the challenges faced in enhancing the sustainability of electricity supply through connectivity. They will be submitted to the ASEAN Ministers on Energy Meeting in 2019 for their endorsement and agreement on the subregion's challenges in relation to Goal 7. This will lead to more analytical work aimed at developing solutions.

Result and evidence

The planned deliverables are expected to contribute to the result, which is the endorsement by ASEAN member States of proposed solutions that can be implemented through subregional cooperation.

Evidence of the result, if achieved, will include a declaration covering issues related to energy connectivity, particularly electricity supply, in the ASEAN region.

The result, if achieved, will demonstrate progress made in 2020 towards the collective attainment of the objective.

Performance measures

2018	2019	2020
ASEAN member States and the United Nations identify the strategic priorities and measures to be undertaken by both sides to enhance regional cooperation and integration for sustainable development	ASEAN member States agree on the challenges impeding the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 7	ASEAN member States agree on solutions to Goal 7-related challenges that can be implemented through subregional cooperation

- 19.144 The following General Assembly resolutions comprise the main mandates entrusted to the component: resolution [63/260](#) on development-related activities and resolution [73/259](#) on cooperation between the United Nations and ASEAN. The component will continue to be guided by all mandates entrusted to it, which provide the legislative framework for its deliverables.

5. Deliverables for the period 2018–2020

- 19.145 Table 19.12 lists all deliverables, by category and subcategory, for the period 2018–2020 that contributed and are expected to contribute to the attainment of the objective stated above.

Table 19.12

Subprogramme 8, component 5: deliverables for the period 2018–2020, by category and subcategory

	2018 planned	2018 actual	2019 planned	2020 planned
Quantified deliverables				
A. Facilitation of the intergovernmental process and expert bodies				
Parliamentary documentation (number of documents)	1	1	1	1
Substantive services for meetings (number of three-hour meetings)	–	–	4	4
B. Generation and transfer of knowledge				
Field and technical cooperation projects (number of projects)	–	–	1	–
Technical materials (number of materials)	1	–	1	1
Non-quantified deliverables				
C. Substantive deliverables				
Consultation, advice and advocacy				
Databases and substantive digital materials				

	<i>2018 planned</i>	<i>2018 actual</i>	<i>2019 planned</i>	<i>2020 planned</i>
D. Communication deliverables				
Outreach programmes, special events and information materials				
External and media relations				
Digital platforms and multimedia content				

6. Most significant relative variances in deliverables

Variances between the actual and planned figures in 2018

- 19.146 The variance in technical materials was driven by the working papers on the implementation of the Plan of Action to Implement the Joint Declaration on Comprehensive Partnership between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the United Nations (2016–2020), owing to the postponement of the deliverable to 2019.

Variances between the planned figures for 2020 and 2019

- 19.147 The variance in field and technical cooperation projects is driven by the capacity-building project on the institutional programmatic priorities of ESCAP in South-East Asia, owing to the fact that capacity-building in the subregion will be conducted through sectoral subprogrammes.



Subprogramme 9 Energy

1. Objective

19.148 The objective, to which this subprogramme contributes, is to ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all in Asia and the Pacific

2. Alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals

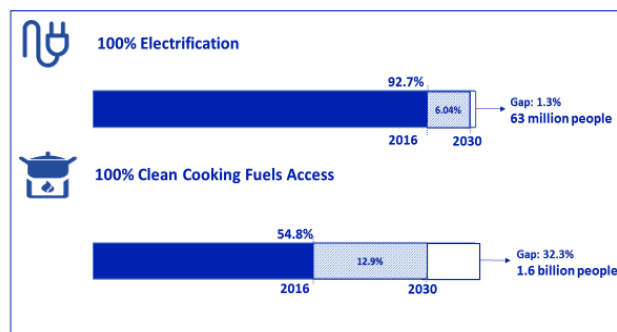
19.149 The objective is aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 7, which is to ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all. Progress towards the attainment of the objective will help to ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services; to increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix; to double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency; to enhance international cooperation to facilitate access to clean energy research and technology; and to expand infrastructure and upgrade technology for supplying modern and sustainable energy services for all in developing countries.

19.150 The objective is also aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 13, which is to take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts. Progress towards the attainment of the objective will help to integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning and to promote mechanisms for increasing the capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in least developed countries and small island developing States.

3. Highlighted result in 2018

Ministerial Declaration paving the way for energy transition for 4 billion people

In April 2018, energy ministers from the region met at the second Asian and Pacific Energy Forum to assess the outlook for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 7. The subprogramme undertook substantial research, developing a study entitled *Energy Transition Pathways for the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific*, in which it examined the future trajectory of Goal 7 in all Asia-Pacific countries. The research, presented to the ministers attending the Forum, showed that with the current level of effort, the region would not be able to attain the targets of Goal 7 by 2030. More specifically, the findings showed that, in 2030, 63 million people would still lack access to electricity and 32 per cent of the population would continue to rely on cooking fuels that jeopardized their health. Likewise, the share of renewable energy would fall short by 8 per cent of the subprogramme's projection of what would be required to achieve the target on clean energy, and the rate of improvement of energy efficiency would fall short of the 2030 target.



Energy access outlook under current policy scenario in Asia and the Pacific.

Result and evidence

The deliverables contributed to the result, which is the commitment by ESCAP member States at the Forum to accelerate progress on Goal 7. Member States requested ESCAP assistance in developing national road maps and in mainstreaming the global targets related to energy into national policies, plans and strategies.

Deliberations at the Forum subsequently focused on how to attain sustainable, affordable and reliable energy for all in the most cost-effective manner and on the role that regional cooperation can play. The detrimental environmental and health impacts that conventional energy sources have on the lives of people in Asia and the Pacific received particular attention.

Evidence of the result includes the adoption of the Ministerial Declaration on Regional Cooperation for Energy Transition towards Sustainable and Resilient Societies in Asia and the Pacific at the Forum.

The result demonstrates progress made in 2018 towards the collective attainment of the objective.

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- 19.151 A planned result for 2018, which is enhanced regional cooperation frameworks on energy security, sustainable use of energy and energy connectivity, as referred to in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019, was achieved, as evidenced by the increase by two in the number of ESCAP-facilitated regional cooperation mechanisms on energy security, sustainable use of energy and energy connectivity. One such mechanism was established through the adoption in 2018 of the Ministerial Declaration on Regional Cooperation for Energy Transition towards Sustainable and Resilient Societies in Asia and the Pacific at the second Asian and Pacific Energy Forum.

4. Highlighted planned result for 2020

Changing course: Goal 7 national road maps to set Asia and Pacific on track for sustainable energy by 2030

In 2018, on the basis of the outcome of the second Asian and Pacific Energy Forum, the subprogramme supported member States in developing national road maps for Sustainable Development Goal 7, including the option to make use of cross-border energy connectivity to ensure that countries of the region achieve the related targets by 2030.

Challenge and response

The challenge is to support member States with limited capacity in the area of energy to ascertain the impact of different scenarios on technology options, the energy mix, investment needs and emissions, with a view to taking evidence-based policy decisions.

In response, for 2020, the subprogramme will develop a toolkit bringing together best practices in modelling and data analysis to enable member States to generate different scenarios on how policy choices would affect the energy sector in terms of demand and supply, investment needs and emissions. The analysis will feed into the development of Goal 7 national road maps. The toolkit will help countries to assess gaps between the targets and the current implementation rate, identify strategies to fill the gaps and forecast the outcomes of the strategies. For example, each national road map will provide policy options to maximize investment in renewable energy and energy efficiency, to identify the optimal mix of grid extension and off-grid rural electrification solutions for those without access to electricity and to identify strategic policy interventions to reduce health hazards due to cooking with traditional fuelwood. The Goal 7 toolkit will be designed so that, for the first time, different scenarios will be able to be generated to facilitate the assessment of the most suitable policy options, which will enable member States having limited energy-planning capacity to adjust their current policies and to achieve the targets of Goal 7 by 2030.

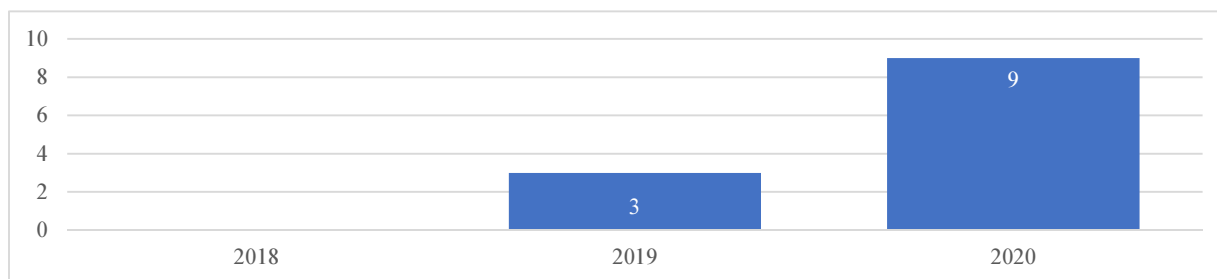
Result and evidence

The planned deliverable is expected to contribute to the result, which is an increase in the capacity of countries to use evidence-based analysis and multi-stakeholder dialogues in the development of national Goal 7 road maps.

Evidence of the result, if achieved, will include Goal 7 national road maps in nine countries by the end of 2020, as shown in the figure.

The result, if achieved, will demonstrate progress made in 2020 towards the collective attainment of the objective.

Performance measures: number of Goal 7 national road maps in the Asia-Pacific region



- 19.152 The following General Assembly resolution comprises the main mandate entrusted to the subprogramme: resolution [72/224](#) on ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all. The following new mandate was entrusted to the subprogramme in 2018: Commission resolution 74/9 on the implementation of the outcomes of the second Asian and Pacific Energy Forum. The subprogramme will continue to be guided by all mandates entrusted to it, which provide the legislative framework for its deliverables.

5. Deliverables for the period 2018–2020

- 19.153 Table 19.13 lists all deliverables, by category and subcategory, for the period 2018–2020 that contributed and are expected to contribute to the attainment of the objective stated above.

Table 19.13

Subprogramme 9: deliverables for the period 2018–2020, by category and subcategory

	2018 planned	2018 actual	2019 planned	2020 planned
Quantified deliverables				
A. Facilitation of the intergovernmental process and expert bodies				
Parliamentary documentation (number of documents)	2	3	2	1
Substantive services for meetings (number of three-hour meetings)	15	15	13	11
B. Generation and transfer of knowledge				
Field and technical cooperation projects (number of projects)	1	3	1	3
Seminars, workshops and training events (number of days)	1	1	1	1
Publications (number of publications)	1	1	2	1
Technical materials (number of materials)	1	1	–	1
Non-quantified deliverables				
C. Substantive deliverables				
Consultation, advice and advocacy				
Databases and substantive digital materials				
D. Communication deliverables				
Outreach programmes, special events and information materials				
External and media relations				
Digital platforms and multimedia content				

6. Most significant relative variances in deliverables

Variances between the actual and planned figures in 2018

- 19.154 The variance in parliamentary documentation was driven mainly by reports to the Asian and Pacific Energy Forum, owing to an increase in the number of documents produced to respond to the needs of member States.
- 19.155 The variance in field and technical cooperation projects was driven by capacity-building projects on the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 7, owing to the availability of increased extrabudgetary resources in this area.

Variances between the planned figures for 2019 and 2020

- 19.156 The variance in parliamentary documentation is driven by reports to the Committee on Energy, owing to the organization of the Committee sessions in alternate years, as stipulated in Commission resolution 71/1.
 - 19.157 The variance in field and technical cooperation projects is driven by capacity-building projects on the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 7, owing to the availability of increased extrabudgetary resources in this area.
 - 19.158 The variance in publications is driven by the planning of a non-recurrent publication in 2019 to respond to the needs of member States.
-