



---

**Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)**

Twenty-ninth session  
Doha, 13-15 December 2016

Item 5 (e) of the provisional agenda

**Report of the Executive Secretary  
on the activities of the Commission**

**Technical cooperation and regional advisory services**

**Summary**

This report provides an overview of the technical cooperation activities carried out by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) during the biennium 2014-2015 and funded through the Regular Programme for Technical Cooperation (RPTC), the United Nations Development Account (DA) and extrabudgetary resources (XB). It presents some of the advisory services provided in the form of technical missions, training workshops and fellowships, highlighting the success stories and challenges.

Participants are invited to take note of this report and provide comments thereon.

## CONTENTS

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
Introduction.....	1-2	3
<i>Chapter</i>		
<b>I. ADVISORY SERVICES.....</b>	<b>3-25</b>	<b>3</b>
A. Subprogramme 1. Integrated management of natural resources for sustainable development.....	5-7	4
B. Subprogramme 2. Social development .....	8-11	5
C. Subprogramme 3. Economic development and integration .....	12-14	6
D. Subprogramme 4. Information and communications technology for regional integration .....	15-17	7
E. Subprogramme 5. Statistics for evidence-based policymaking.....	18-20	8
F. Subprogramme 6. Advancement of women.....	21-23	9
G. Subprogramme 7. Conflict mitigation and development.....	24-25	10
<b>II. CAPACITY-BUILDING.....</b>	<b>26-34</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>III. FELLOWSHIPS.....</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>IV. UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNT .....</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>V. EXTRABUDGETARY PROJECTS.....</b>	<b>37-38</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>VI. STRENGTHENING THE TECHNICAL COOPERATION NETWORK</b>	<b>39-40</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>VII. TECHNICAL COOPERATION SUCCESS STORIES.....</b>	<b>41-47</b>	<b>15</b>
A. Contribution to the GCC unified water strategy.....	41	15
B. Mainstreaming gender into community development .....	42	15
C. Strengthening the national planning capacity of Saudi Arabia .....	43	15
D. Implementing the Government Electronic and Mobile Service Maturity Index.....	44	16
E. Survey of the impact of the 2014 Israeli offensive on living conditions in the Gaza Strip.....	45	16
F. Developing an action plan for the implementation of the Cairo Declaration.....	46	16
G. Supporting the Lebanese-Palestinian Dialogue.....	47	16
<b>VIII. CHALLENGES .....</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>IX. WAY FORWARD.....</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>17</b>
<i>Annex.</i> List of capacity-building workshops, 2014-2015.....		18

## Introduction

1. The Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation (RPTC) of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) was established to provide advisory and capacity-building services to member States. Technical cooperation translates the normative work of ESCWA into practical activities, which are aimed at supporting the formulation and implementation of national policies, strategies and programmes in the economic and social fields. These activities constitute a platform for knowledge sharing between member States. ESCWA works with regional advisors and consultants to provide swift technical assistance, supporting government-led policies and initiatives. Its approach is coherent, interdisciplinary and results-oriented.

2. Technical cooperation activities respond to the needs of member States as articulated in their national development plans; they are thus demand-driven and tailored to the requirements of beneficiaries. They are funded through the RPTC, the United Nations Development Account (DA) and extrabudgetary (XB) resources.

### I. ADVISORY SERVICES

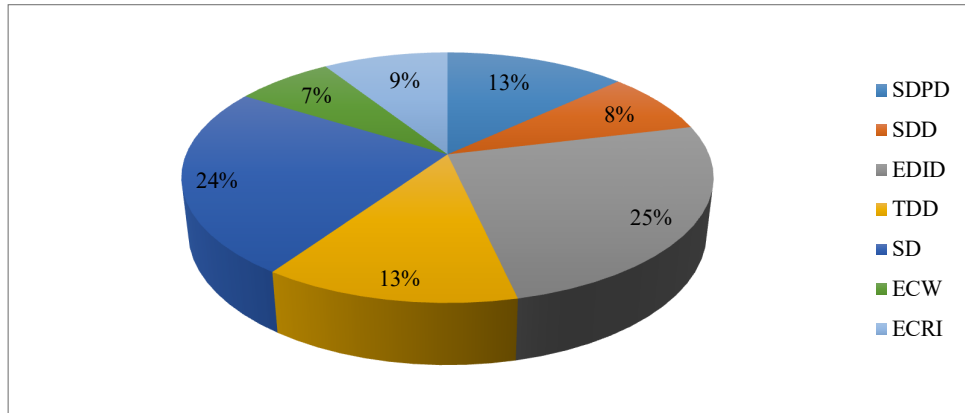
3. Table 1 presents the advisory services provided in 2014-2015 by country and subprogramme. Subprogrammes reflect the thematic areas in which ESCWA intervenes to support economic and social development in member States. In the programme of work for the biennium 2014-2015, they were defined as follows: subprogramme 1: integrated management of natural resources for sustainable development; subprogramme 2: social development; subprogramme 3: economic development and integration; subprogramme 4: information and communications technology for regional integration; subprogramme 5: statistics for evidence-based policymaking; subprogramme 6: advancement of women; and subprogramme 7: conflict mitigation and development.

TABLE 1. ADVISORY SERVICES, 2014-2015

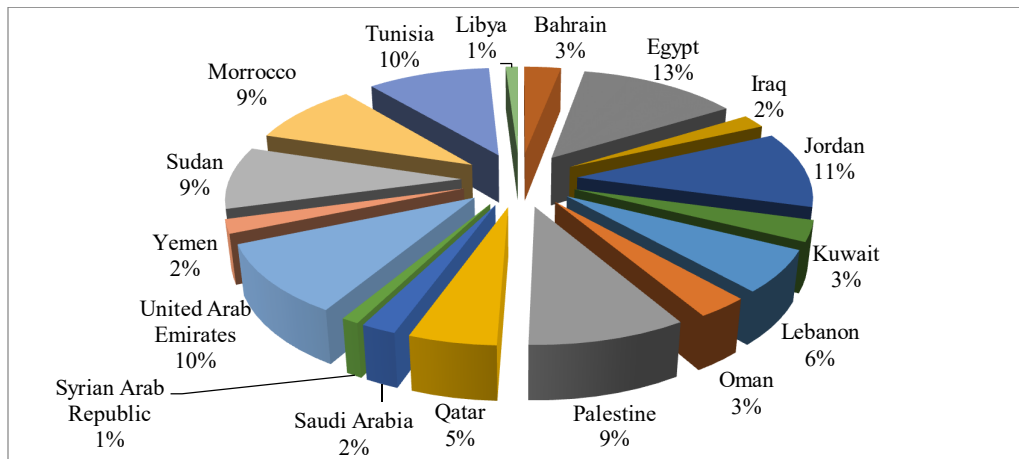
Subprogramme								
Country	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total
Bahrain	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	3
Egypt	3	0	5	1	3	1	0	13
Iraq	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	2
Jordan	2	0	5	0	3	0	1	11
Kuwait	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	3
Lebanon	0	0	0	3	0	2	1	6
Libya	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Morocco	2	1	5	0	1	0	0	9
Oman	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	3
Palestine	0	2	1	0	5	0	1	9
Qatar	2	0	0	0	2	1	0	5
Saudi Arabia	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
Sudan	0	3	0	2	2	2	0	9
Syrian Arab Republic	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Tunisia	2	0	6	0	0	0	2	10
United Arab Emirates	1	0	2	2	5	0	0	10
Yemen	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>99</b>

4. During 2014-2015, ESCWA provided 99 advisory services to member States. Activities carried out under subprogrammes 3 on “Economic development and integration” and subprogramme 5 on “Statistics for evidence-based policymaking” represented the lion’s share of services. The demand for statistical services was in keeping with the previous years, while requests for economic services increased.

**Figure 1. Advisory services by subprogramme, 2014-2015**



**Figure 2. Advisory services by country, 2014-2015**



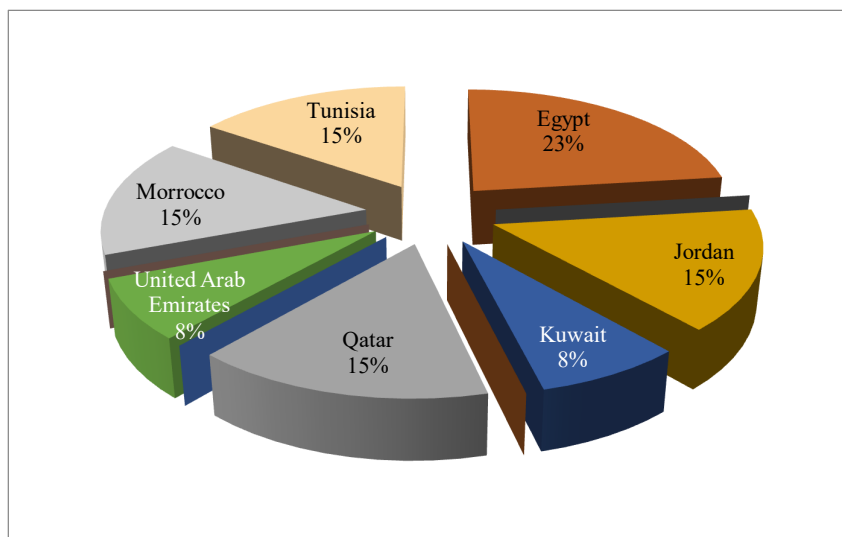
**A. SUBPROGRAMME 1. INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

5. Responsibility for the implementation of subprogramme 1 lies with the Sustainable Development Policies Division (SDPD). In 2014-2015, technical assistance and policy advice focused on water and land management, climate change adaptation, the green economy and other sustainable development issues. The countries concerned were Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, Qatar, Tunisia and the United Arab Emirates.

6. Advisory services in the energy field included a workshop on Financing Mechanisms for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Projects, which was organized in Beirut in December 2014 for a group of Yemeni and Sudanese experts and representatives from the ministries of electricity, financial institutions and private sector. ESCWA also co-organized a training course in Granada, Spain, on setting up national and regional agendas for developing energy efficiency strategies and policies that target the building sector. Beneficiaries included participants from Palestine and the Sudan.

7. Advisory services in the water sector included a contribution to the formulation of the Gulf Cooperation Council Unified Water Strategy, and activities on transboundary water cooperation, strategic planning processes, and cost assessment of water resources degradation. Nine institutions (two in Jordan, one in Kuwait, two in Lebanon, one in Oman, one in Saudi Arabia and two in Palestine) and representatives from the League of Arab States and the Gulf Cooperation Council have benefitted from the assistance provided on sustainable water management issues. ESCWA also built the capacity of climate change negotiators from 12 member States through four workshops.

**Figure 3. Advisory services rendered under subprogramme 1 (2014-2015)**



#### B. SUBPROGRAMME 2. SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

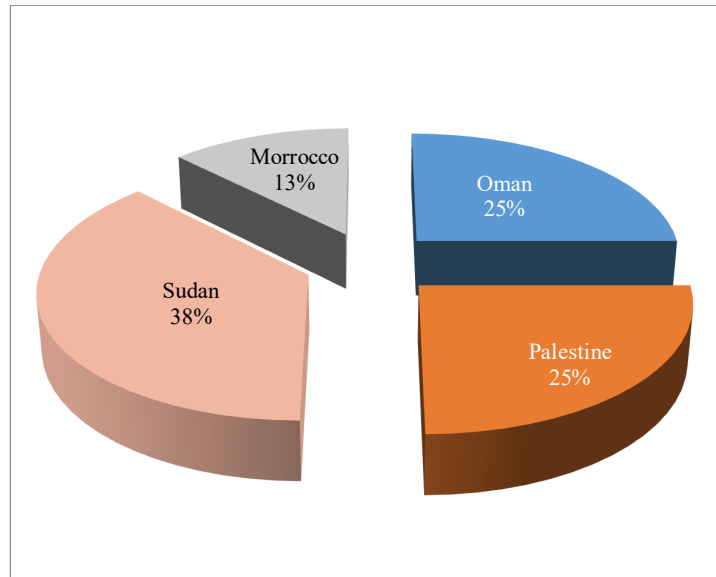
8. Responsibility for the implementation of subprogramme 2 lies with the Social Development Division (SDD). In 2014-2015, eight advisory services, focusing on the subjects of social protection, migration and disability, were delivered to Oman, Morocco, the State of Palestine and the Sudan.

9. On the subject of disability, ESCWA assisted in the development of a framework and set of indicators to enable the Government of Morocco to jointly monitor the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Sustainable Development Goals. A workshop on Strengthening Institutional Capacities and Partnerships for Disability-inclusive Development in the Arab Region was organized in Beirut in December 2015. The ESCWA and League of Arab States report on *Disability in the Arab Region: An Overview* was adopted during the thirty-fourth session of the Council of Arab Ministers for Social Affairs in December 2014.

10. Assistance in the area of social protection included facilitation of a national social dialogue aimed at establishing a framework for integrated social policies in the Sudan. Thirty-three senior officials from Sudanese ministries were also trained on innovative ways to expand social protection to rural informal workers in the agricultural sector. ESCWA tested its toolkit on enhancing capacity in the development of participatory social protection policies with representatives from Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman and Tunisia.

11. ESCWA contributed to the development of new migration policies and plans in Egypt, Jordan and Tunisia. Advisory and technical services were also provided to Oman to support the Ministry of Social Development in the formulation of its social work strategy for 2016-2017.

**Figure 4. Advisory services rendered under subprogramme 2 (2014-2015)**

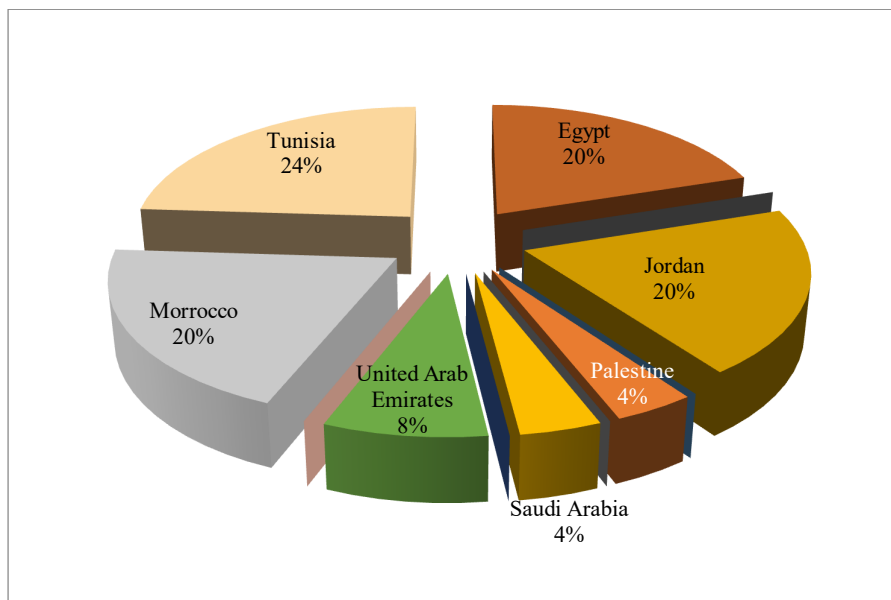


**C. SUBPROGRAMME 3. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INTEGRATION**

12. Responsibility for the implementation of subprogramme 3 lies with the Economic Development and Integration Division (EDID). A total of 25 advisory services were delivered in 2014-2015 to seven member States on various aspects of economic development.

13. Technical assistance targeted, for example, the Ministry of Planning in Egypt (to set up a macroeconomic policy unit), the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation in Jordan (to review an analytical study on the legislation of investment and find ways to support the investment environment), the Ministry of Transport in Tunisia (to finalize the project on the extension of the Port of Rades and prepare the Interregional Forum on Facilitating the Effective Integration of Developing Countries in the Global Economy through Aid for Trade), and the Ministry of Economy and Planning in Saudi Arabia (to draft the tenth National Development Agenda).

14. ESCWA provided the League of Arab States with new tools for multidimensional poverty measurement. It also assisted Egypt, Jordan and Morocco in the adoption of policies and measures to implement the Monterrey Consensus adopted by the International Conference on Financing for Development and related resolutions: Egypt issued new regulations allowing insurance companies to assign the management of their portfolios to industry specialists in May 2015; Morocco received assistance on tax planning and misuse or abuse of tax treaties; and Jordan received assistance on investment and adopted, in 2014, a new law establishing an independent investment commission and another on public-private partnerships in the finance sector.

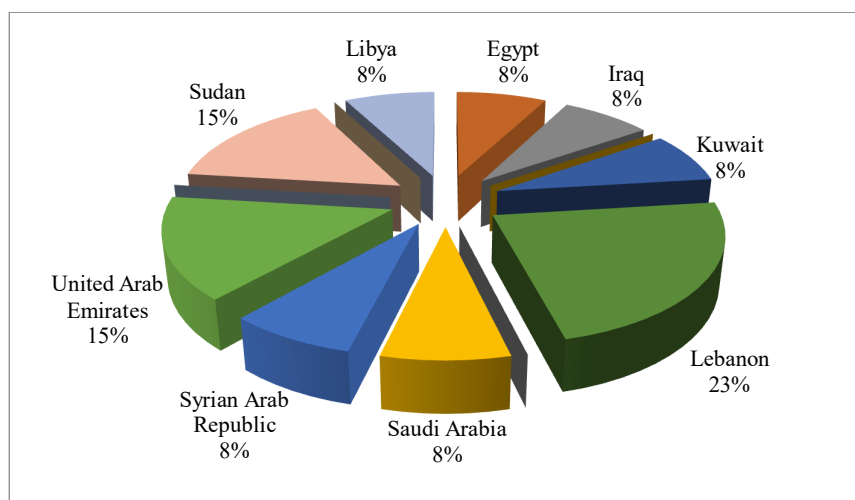
**Figure 5. Advisory services rendered under subprogramme 3 (2014-2015)**

#### D. SUBPROGRAMME 4. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY FOR REGIONAL INTEGRATION

15. Responsibility for the implementation of subprogramme 4 lies with the Technology for Development Division (TDD). A total of 13 advisory services were provided in 2014-2015, which targeted the development and enhancement of mechanisms, processes and tools to build a knowledge-based economy. Egypt, Iraq, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Saudi Arabia, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and the United Arab Emirates received assistance in formulating and evaluating information and communications technology (ICT) policies; formulating and reviewing cyberlegislation; enhancing the performance of e-government; and business process reengineering efforts.

16. Sixteen national ICT offices have taken steps to implement the recommendations of ESCWA on the information society and on harnessing ICTs for socioeconomic development. Jordan used modelling to devise implementation scenarios for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; Morocco reviewed its ICT business survey; Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates improved their e-service environments and measuring tools; Palestine revised its innovation strategy; the Sudan developed a new e-government portal and updated its cybercrime law; and Yemen drafted an e-government plan and upgraded its network project.

17. ESCWA led efforts, in partnership with the League of Arab States, to establish the Arab Internet Governance Forum (AGIF) as a platform for cooperation and inclusive consultations on the Internet. Two annual meetings of the Forum and five Arab Multistakeholder Advisory Group meetings were conducted in 2014-2015.

**Figure 6. Advisory services rendered under subprogramme 4 (2014-2015)**

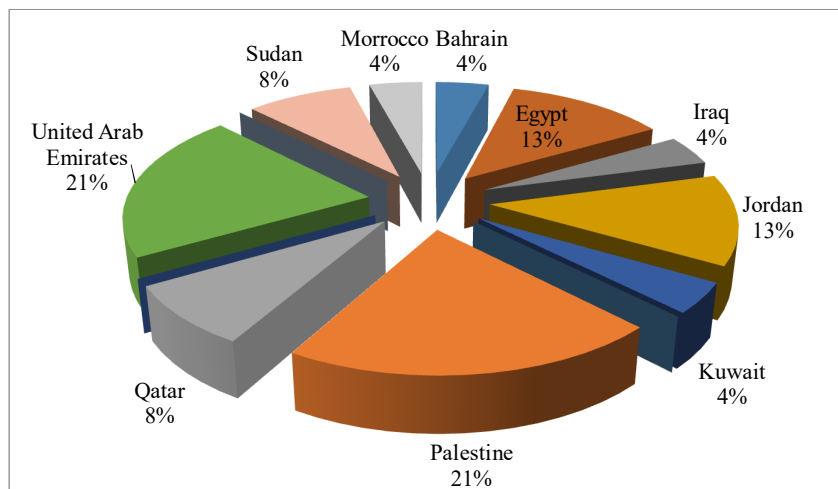
#### E. SUBPROGRAMME 5. STATISTICS FOR EVIDENCE-BASED POLICYMAKING

18. Responsibility for the implementation of subprogramme 5 lies with the Statistics Division (SD). A total of 24 advisory services were provided in 2014-2015 to Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, Qatar, Palestine, the Sudan and the United Arab Emirates on national accounts, and social, gender and environment statistics.

19. The technical assistance of ESCWA contributed to improved production and availability of socioeconomic statistics and indicators. It was extended, for example, in the context of surveys in conflict areas such as Gaza; assessment of the national statistical system in Egypt; improvement of national accounts in terms of supply and use in seven countries; and training to 13 countries on quarterly gross domestic product estimates by expenditure components, and on the treatment of financial corporations in national accounts. Fourteen Arab States implemented the first milestone of the 2008 System of National Accounts.

20. Fourteen member States provided at least 60 per cent of the core indicators for the ESCWA statistical database. ESCWA implemented regional and national price projects, co-funded by member States, which helped to harmonize price indices for 11 countries and harmonize national methodologies. Technical assistance also focused on enhancing capacity in the implementation of population and housing censuses and mainstreaming gender in civil registration and vital statistics. Four workshops were held in Egypt on energy statistics and the production of environment and sustainable development indicators. A workshop was also organized to train the staff of the Central Bureau of Statistics in Dubai in assessing the national population register and making population projections.



**Figure 7. Advisory services rendered under subprogramme 5 (2014-2015)**

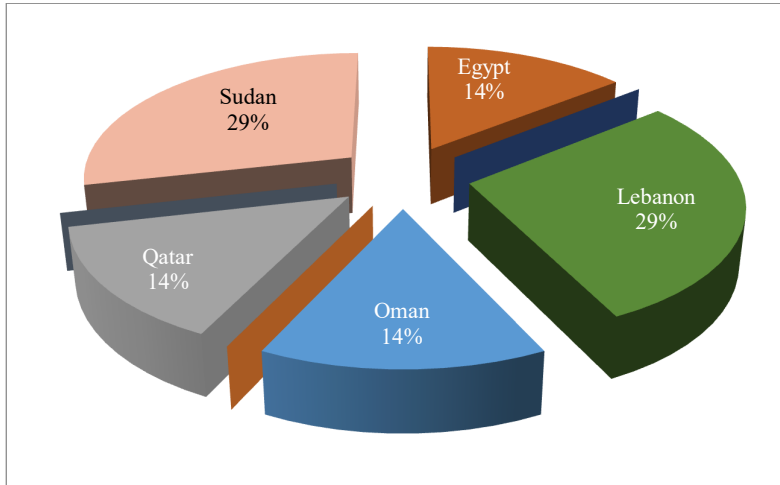
#### F. SUBPROGRAMME 6. ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

21. Responsibility for the implementation of subprogramme 6 lies with the ESCWA Centre for Women (ECW). In 2014-2015, seven advisory missions targeted Egypt, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar and the Sudan to mainstream a gender perspective in national development strategies and action plans.

22. National policy instruments in which gender was mainstreamed include the tenth National Development Plan of Saudi Arabia, the draft constitution of Yemen, two strategies on family and women in the Sudan, and the regional strategic framework for the implementation of the Cairo Declaration on “The Post-2015 Development Agenda for Women”, adopted in February 2014. ESCWA also provided advisory services on the estimation of the cost of violence against women and reporting on implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

23. In 2014-2015, seven member States adopted measures to combat gender-based violence, including Iraq, which developed a strategy for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security; Egypt, which drafted national action plans on that matter; and Yemen, which envisaged including a clause on combating all forms of violence against women and girls in its draft constitution, adopting compulsory education for girls and amending legislation on the minimum age of marriage. A toolkit on combating gender-based violence in times of peace and war was issued in October 2015. Four workshops were conducted in Egypt and Tunisia on the subject. Finally, at the request of the National Council for Women in Egypt, a high-level training workshop was held on formulating integrated legislation to protect women and girls from all forms of violence.

**Figure 8. Advisory services rendered under subprogramme 6 (2014-2015)**

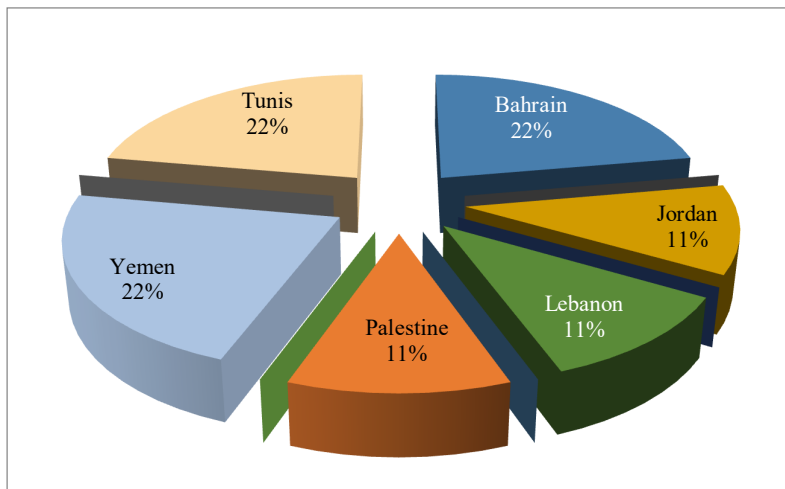


**G. SUBPROGRAMME 7. CONFLICT MITIGATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

24. Responsibility for the implementation of subprogramme 7 lies with the Division for Emerging and Conflict-related Issues (ECRI). In 2014-2015, nine advisory services were provided to seven member States on enhancing institutional capacity in times of crisis, monitoring progress in governance and elaborating conflict mitigation strategies.

25. The National Statistics Institute of Tunisia, for example, received assistance in finalizing and reviewing the results of a field study on urban poverty. An assessment of the newly established Crisis Management Unit in Yemen was also undertaken, and mediation capacity and governance monitoring methodologies were enhanced in the country. Technical assistance also targeted the design of national development plans in Jordan and the Sudan, with a view to integrating the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

**Figure 9. Advisory services rendered under subprogramme 7 (2014-2015)**



## II. CAPACITY-BUILDING

TABLE 2. CAPACITY-BUILDING ACTIVITIES, 2014-2015

Subprogramme								
Country	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total
Bahrain	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Egypt	2	1	1	0	0	1	0	5
Iraq	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Jordan	2	0	0	0	3	2	1	8
Kuwait	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	3
Lebanon	1	1	1	0	0	4	1	8
Morocco	0	1	4	1	0	0	0	6
Oman	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Palestine	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	3
Qatar	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
Saudi Arabia	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Sudan	0	4	0	1	0	2	1	8
Syrian Arab Republic	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tunisia	0	0	2	1	0	2	0	5
United Arab Emirates	0	0	1	3	1	0	0	5
Yemen	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Others	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>59</b>

26. During 2014-2015, ESCWA held 59 training workshops, 22 of which were organized at the regional or subregional levels, and 37 the national level in response to requests from member States. A total of 2,501 participants, of whom 39 per cent (or 987) were women, benefited from these trainings.

27. On the topic of the environment, a workshop was organized jointly with the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) in April 2014 on Shared Groundwater Aquifers in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Countries, and another in May 2015, in collaboration with the League of Arab States, on capacity development for climate change negotiations.

28. Various capacity-building activities were organized on social protection as development, in which the successes and failures of different social protection models were analysed. A regional training workshop was also organized in Egypt, in September 2014, on international migration and development.

29. In the Sudan, training workshops were conducted in the field of strategic planning, evaluation and programme cycle management, aimed at training staff from different ministries on decision-making, preparing project concept papers and using various evaluation tools.

30. ESCWA also organized national workshops in Morocco, in collaboration with the League of Arab States, on measuring poverty, inequality and human development (January 2014), double taxation avoidance and international law (November 2014) and tax planning and misuse of tax treaties (June 2015). The topics of transport and trade were also tackled in various trainings, including on the effects of conflict on transport, trade and regional integration; public-private partnerships in interregional projects for trade and transport; and follow-up on the outcomes of the Ninth World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference held in Bali in December 2013.

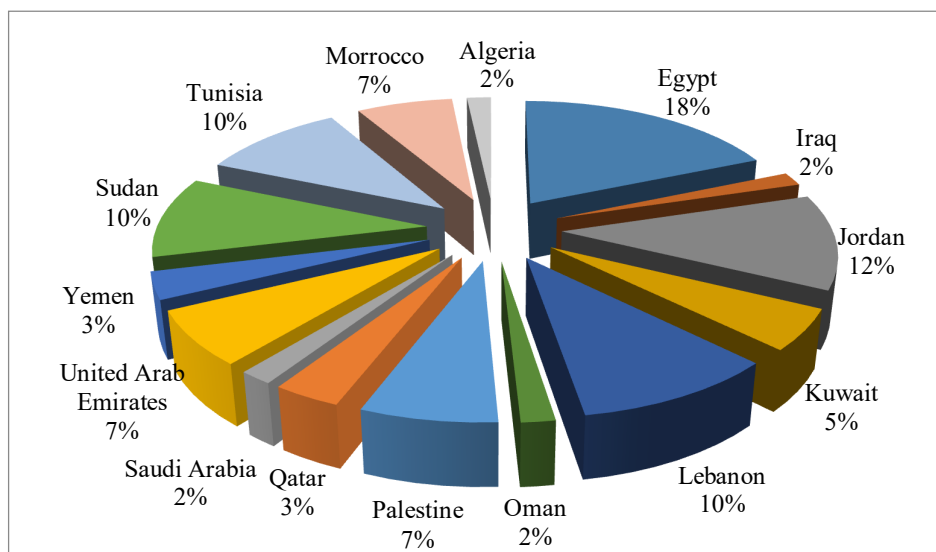
31. In the area of ICTs, ESCWA held training workshops on building trust in e-services, developing e-learning strategies, benchmarking the ICT sector, and fostering innovation in the public sector. ESCWA also co-organized the second and third sessions of the Digital Arabic Content Forum, aimed at strengthening the link between academic research activities, industrial production and market needs (November 2014 and October 2015).

32. Regional training workshops were held in the field of statistics, including one in Kuwait, organized jointly with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Statistics Department, on national accounts; one in Jordan, organized in collaboration with Arab Institute for Training and Research in Statistics (AITRS), on input/output tables and the implementation of the International Standards for Industrial Classifications of All Economic Activities (ISIC); and one in Turkey on the computation of 2012 and 2013 purchasing power parities. ESCWA also conducted capacity-building activities on civil registration and vital statistics.

33. ESCWA held 12 training workshops on gender mainstreaming, gender equality and violence against women. Officials were trained on the use of an economic model developed by ESCWA to estimate the cost of violence against women, an important tool for strategic planning and reporting on the implementation of CEDAW.

34. Technical cooperation activities also focused on the enhancement of institutional capacities in Iraq, Palestine, the Sudan and Yemen, in the formulation of sustainable economic and social policies and programmes. Palestinian officials involved in preparing the national development strategy benefited from capacity-building activities, so did the members of the Lebanese Palestinian Dialogue Committee in various areas of its work, particularly on a census on refugees in Lebanon. ESCWA worked with the Jordanian Government to assess the impact of the influx of refugees in the country and design mitigation policies.

**Figure 10. Capacity-building activities by country, 2014-2015**



### III. FELLOWSHIPS

35. Fellowships involve representatives from member States visiting their counterparts in institutions in other countries in order to exchange knowledge and build expertise. During the biennium 2014-2015, ESCWA sponsored several study tours, the most important of which are presented in table 3.

TABLE 3. STUDY TOURS, 2014-2015

Activity	Country	No. of participants
Conference on Social Water Studies in the MENA Region: State of the Art and Perspectives (Maadaba, Jordan, 28-29 September 2014)	Egypt	1
	Morocco	1
	Tunisia	1
Workshop on the Jordan River Basin Dialogue (Amman, 6-7 April 2014)	Jordan	5
	Lebanon	1
	Palestine	4
Workshop on Quarterly National Accounts and Short-Term Indicators (Abu Dhabi, 23-26 February 2014)	Jordan	2
Sixth Annual Conference of the GIFT-MENA Network on Governance, State Building and the Rule of Law (Marrakesh, Morocco, 10-12 February 2015)	Yemen	1
	Yemen	1
	Sudan	2
	Palestine	1
	Total	20

*Abbreviations:* MENA, Middle East and North Africa; GIFT, Governance Institutes Forum for Training.

#### IV. UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNT

36. The United Nations Development Account (DA) finances multi-year projects intended to enhance the capacities of developing countries in the priority areas of the Development Agenda. The biennium 2014-2015 represents the eighth and ninth tranches of the DA. Table 4 presents the main information on the projects lead by ESCWA under each of those tranches.

TABLE 4. ESCWA-LED DA PROJECTS, 2014-2015

Division and project ID	Tranche	Project title	Funding date	Initial funding (in United States dollars)
TDD 9174	8	Academy of information and communications technology essentials for government leaders in the ESCWA region	13/02/2013	509 000
ECW 9175	8	Institutional and capacity-building for Arab parliaments and other stakeholders for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security	04/06/2013	510 000
EDID 9177	8	Strengthening capacities to utilize workers' remittances in financing for development	15/08/2013	464 000
SDPD 9178	8	Developing the capacities of the Arab countries for climate change adaptation by applying integrated water resource management tools	28/08/2013	517 000
SDPD 9179	8	Building capacities in developing appropriate green technologies for improving the livelihood of rural communities in the ESCWA region	14/02/2014	590 936
SD 9180	9	Strengthening the statistical capacity of the countries members of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia in producing and disseminating short-term economic indicators for sustainable growth	27/05/2014	518 000
SDD 9181	9	Strengthening national capacities for integrated, sustainable and inclusive population and development policies in the Arab region	11/08/2014	714 000

TABLE 4 (continued)

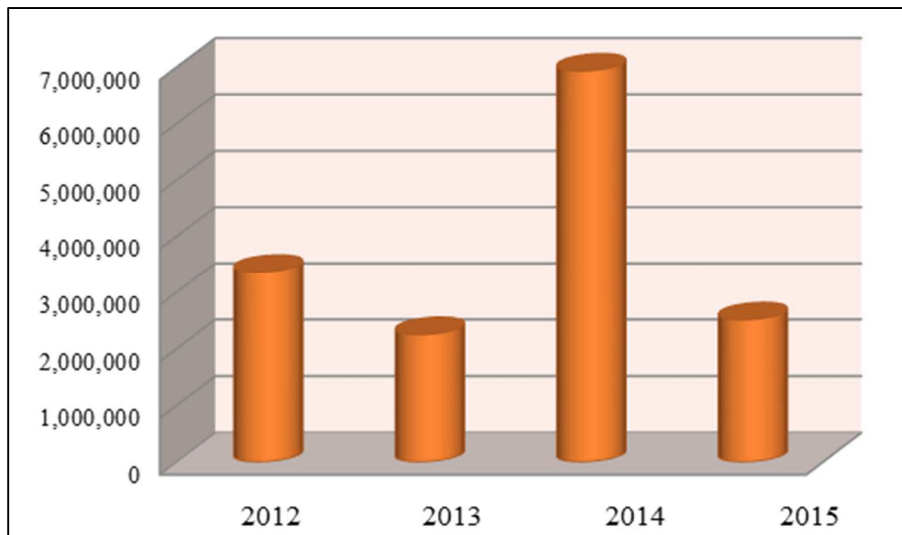
Division and project ID	Tranche	Project title	Funding date	Initial funding (in United States dollars)
SDPD 9182	9	Promoting renewable energy investments for climate change mitigation and sustainable development	12/08/2014	632 000
SDPD 9184	9	Developing the capacity of countries members of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia to address the water and energy nexus for achieving sustainable development goals	26/12/2014	525 000
TDD 9185	9	Establishing national technology development and transfer systems in selected ESCWA member States	30/04/2015	497 000
<b>Total</b>				<b>7 905 336</b>

## V. EXTRABUDGETARY PROJECTS

37. Over the course of the biennium 2014-2015, ESCWA raised approximately \$9.4 million to implement extrabudgetary (XB) projects, which represents an increase of about \$3.8 million from the previous biennium. Funded projects addressed the themes of sustainable development and productivity, the impact of climate change on water resources, economic development and globalization, statistics for evidence-based policymaking, technology development, Internet governance, gender issues, social development, and emerging conflict-related issues.

38. Extrabudgetary contributions were received from United Nations organizations, Governments, international and regional funding organizations, specialized agencies and civil society institutions. Several partnerships were also built with regional think tanks and academic institutions. Major contributors included the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, the Arab Gulf Programme for United Nations Development Organizations, the European Union, the Government of Finland, the Government of Germany, the Government of Saudi Arabia, the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Jordanian Higher Council for Science and Technology, the Jordanian Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, the United Nations Development Group – Iraq Trust Fund, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, and the World Bank.

**Figure 11. XB funding, 2012-2015**



## VI. STRENGTHENING THE TECHNICAL COOPERATION NETWORK

39. The Technical Cooperation Network aims to strengthen coordination, networking and the exchange of knowledge, conduct trainings and execute pilot projects. It seeks to optimize the benefits of technical cooperation services and build partnerships between stakeholders at the national, regional and international levels. During the biennium, the Network portal was updated to reflect new offerings and increase interaction between ESCWA and member States. It is available from <http://tcportal.escwa.un.org/default.aspx>.

40. The second meeting of the ESCWA Executive Committee, which was held in Amman in December 2015, discussed the workplan and terms of reference of the Technical Cooperation Network, with a view to strengthening it. It was decided that the next Network meeting would take place in the second quarter of 2016, back-to-back with the third Executive Committee meeting.

## VII. TECHNICAL COOPERATION SUCCESS STORIES

### A. CONTRIBUTION TO THE GCC UNIFIED WATER STRATEGY (Subprogramme 1)

41. In April 2015, the ESCWA Regional Advisor on Environment and Water contributed to a workshop on the development of a unified water strategy and implementation plan for State members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (2015-2035), which was held in Manama. The workshop was aimed at discussing the timeline, vision, mission, draft orientations and implementation plan of the GCC unified water strategy. ESCWA suggested that focus be placed on areas in which such a subregion-wide strategy could add value to the different national water strategies, specifically on capacity development programmes and knowledge exchange.

### B. MAINSTREAMING GENDER INTO COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (Subprogramme 2)

42. In January 2015, the ESCWA regional advisors on social development and on gender issues designed and delivered an intensive subregional training workshop on Participatory Community Development and Change Management from a Gender Perspective. Twenty-eight women leaders from local gender units, community development institutions and national women's machineries in Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine and the Sudan were trained on concepts, methodologies, tools and techniques of local development; on change management approaches that integrate a gender perspective; and on how to apply gender-sensitive change strategies in the management of programmes and projects. They were also trained on implementing, monitoring and evaluating programmes that target gender equality and the empowerment of women, and on using tools for tracking change.

### C. STRENGTHENING THE NATIONAL PLANNING CAPACITY OF SAUDI ARABIA (Subprogramme 3)

43. In response to a request for technical assistance by the Ministry of Economy and Planning in Saudi Arabia, ESCWA undertook a project aimed at building the Ministry's capacity to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate the ninth and tenth national development plans. Computable general equilibrium (CGE) models were provided to determine a set of quantitative indicators to be considered in the elaboration of 5- or 10-year development plans; facilitate quantitative monitoring; and enhance evidence-based policymaking. Ministry staff were trained on the use of such indicators, which were designed to assess the operational plans of 75 different State actors. ESCWA also supported the elaboration of the 2015-2019 development plan, and prepared a media strategy and campaign to highlight development achievements and their implementation mechanisms. The establishment of a communication unit within the Ministry was also facilitated.

D. IMPLEMENTING THE GOVERNMENT ELECTRONIC AND MOBILE SERVICE MATURITY INDEX  
(*Subprogramme 4*)

44. Launched by ESCWA in cooperation with the Prime Minister's Office in the United Arab Emirates, the Government Electronic and Mobile Services (GEMS) Maturity Index is used to gauge the progress of Arab countries in developing and using e-government services. At the request of the Ministry of Finance, a capacity-building workshop was conducted by ESCWA in October 2014 in Abu Dhabi on using the index to measure the services of the Ministry. Based on that successful experience, ESCWA is currently rolling out the GEMS Index in Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia.

E. SURVEY OF THE IMPACT OF THE 2014 ISRAELI OFFENSIVE ON LIVING CONDITIONS  
IN THE GAZA STRIP  
(*Subprogramme 5*)

45. ESCWA cooperated with the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) to design a survey of the impact of the 2014 Israeli offensive on key socioeconomic indicators in the Gaza Strip, measured at the household level. A mission to the country was conducted in March 2015 to provide technical support for the survey design, contents and methodology. The fieldwork has been accomplished and results are being analysed by PCBS. The survey will be conducted annually and will enable the monitoring of the socioeconomic situation in Gaza. It will also be instrumental in supporting research and macroeconomic simulations and projections.

F. DEVELOPING AN ACTION PLAN FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CAIRO DECLARATION  
(*Subprogramme 6*)

46. ESCWA, in collaboration with the UN Women Regional Bureau for Arab States and the Centre of Arab Women for Training and Research (CAWTAR), extended technical support to the League of Arab States Women, Family and Childhood Department to develop an action plan for the implementation of "the Cairo Declaration on the Post-2015 Development Agenda for Women", which was adopted by Arab States on 23 February 2014. The four thematic areas of the Declaration, namely political participation; economic empowerment; social transformation; and violence against women and girls were covered, in addition to the advancement of women and gender equality. A results matrix was also developed. The action plan was reviewed at the meeting of the League of Arab States Women Outstanding Committee on 30 January and 1 February 2015, and will be submitted to the Arab Summit on Social and Economic Development for final adoption.

G. SUPPORTING THE LEBANESE-PALESTINIAN DIALOGUE  
(*Subprogramme 7*)

47. In July 2011, ESCWA received a technical request from the Common Space Initiative to facilitate the Lebanese-Palestinian Dialogue, endorsed by a formal request from the Lebanese Palestinian Dialogue Committee operating in the Prime Minister's Office in Lebanon. Support is still being extended to both the Initiative and the Committee. As a result, the Lebanese-Palestinian Forum was established and a common vision for the future of Lebanese-Palestinian relations was formulated and launched. On the basis of this experience, ESCWA is also extending support for the establishment of a working group of Lebanese political party representatives, with a view to facilitating dialogue among them.

## VIII. CHALLENGES

48. Technical cooperation was affected by the instability witnessed in the region, which has sometimes forced ESCWA to delay or cancel some activities. New types of needs and priorities have emerged, which also required new interventions. Changes in the political and security dynamics, conflicts and crises have thwarted development achievements, especially in the field of environmental sustainability, and have put women's rights at risk. Overcoming these obstacles will require strong political will and increased investment in policy-



oriented research and capacity-building activities. Another obstacle facing technical cooperation is indeed that the financial resources available are relatively limited compared to the level of demand from member States.

## **IX. WAY FORWARD**

49. According to feedback from member States, there is a need for more national activities in the framework of technical cooperation country plans that should be developed with concerned ministries, national focal points and local United Nations bureaus. Adopting this strategy would allow ESCWA to deliver a better response to priority needs in terms of technical cooperation, while maximizing resources. Advisory missions should also be more multidisciplinary to better address interlinked challenges. Finally, ESCWA should forge more alliances with academic institutions to strengthen the fellowship programme, enhance knowledge sharing and offer a faster response to member States' requests. Partnerships with United Nations organizations should also be deepened.

Annex**LIST OF CAPACITY-BUILDING WORKSHOPS, 2014-2015**

Theme	Number of participants	Number of female participants	Country	Date
<b>Subprogramme 1. Sustainable Development Policies Division (SDPD)</b>				
Workshop on shared groundwater aquifers in GCC countries (jointly with the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research)	90	36	Kuwait	1-2 April 2014
Second regional training workshop on capacity development for climate change negotiations (jointly with the League of Arab States)	40	10	Jordan	26-28 May 2014
Third regional training workshop on capacity development for climate change negotiations (jointly with the League of Arab States)	55	20	Kuwait	11-13 November 2014
Regional workshop on advancing hydro-diplomacy skills for shared water resources negotiations (jointly with the League of Arab States, the Arab Water Council, and the Center for Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe)	600	210	Egypt	11-12 December 2014
Capacity-building workshops on the use of solar energy in water pumping units in the Agriculture Sector in Yemen	18	1	Lebanon	9-11 December 2014
National training workshop on climatic seasonal prediction in the Arab region	25	11	Saudi Arabia	29-30 December 2014
Training course on developing energy efficiency strategies and policies in the building sector	23	9	Spain	6-10 April 2015
Capacity-building workshop on the integration of renewable energy resources in the transmission and distribution networks of the Arab Region	54	11	Jordan	2-3 September 2015
Fourth regional training workshop on capacity development for climate change negotiations (jointly with the League of Arab States)	60	9	Qatar	19-21 May 2015
Fifth regional training workshop on capacity development for climate change negotiations (jointly with the League of Arab States)	36	7	Egypt	17- 19 November 2015
<b>Subprogramme 2. Social Development Division (SDD)</b>				
National workshops for senior staff of the Higher Council for Youth and Sports on strategic planning, policymaking and monitoring and evaluation systems	23	11	Palestine	18-25 February 2014
National workshops for staff of the Ministry of Trade of the Sudan on strategic planning concepts, tools, applications and evaluation	30	10	Sudan	15-17 April 2014
National training workshop on programme cycle management	30	10	Sudan	11-15 May 2014

Theme	Number of participants	Number of female participants	Country	Date
Regional workshop on international migration and development	25	10	Egypt	15-18 September 2014
National training workshop on programme cycle management, project proposal writing and fundraising	27	5	Palestine	12-22 October 2014
National workshop on strategic planning and evaluation	32	7	Sudan	9-12 December 2014
National workshop on expanding social protection to the rural informal sector in the Sudan	33	18	Sudan	21-27 February 2015
Workshop to test the toolkit on enhancing national capacity in the development of social protection policies using a participatory approach	7	4	Lebanon	27-30 July 2015
National workshop on building national indicators on Morocco's compliance with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	34	13	Morocco	27-28 October 2015
<b>Subprogramme 3. Economic Development and Integration Division (EDID)</b>				
National workshop on measuring poverty, inequality and human development (in cooperation with the League of Arab States)	42	17	Morocco	18-22 January 2014
Regional workshop on multilateral trade negotiations after the ninth World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference (in cooperation with the Ministry of Economy of the United Arab Emirates)	25	9	United Arab Emirates	10-12 March 2014
Workshop on the impact of the Libyan crisis on Tunisia and Egypt	15	2	Tunisia	21-22 October 2014
National workshop on double taxation avoidance and international tax law	18	8	Morocco	25-27 November 2014
Regional workshop on the effects of conflicts on transport, trade and regional integration	10	3	Lebanon	4-6 March 2015
Regional training workshop on intraregional projects for trade and transport	16	3	Tunisia	21-23 April 2015
Training workshop on poverty measurement (jointly with the League of Arab States)	57	11	Algeria	26-29 April 2015
Regional workshop on the Arab Customs Union	38	7	Egypt	18-19 May 2015
Regional workshop on the Arab Customs Union and the Arab Maghreb Union	38	7	Morocco	9-10 June 2015
National training workshop on tax planning and misuse of tax treaties	20	8	Morocco	10-12 June 2015

Theme	Number of participants	Number of female participants	Country	Date
<b>Subprogramme 4. Technology for Development Division (TDD)</b>				
Capacity-building on e-services and automation in Yemen	53	17	Yemen	5-6 March 2014
National workshop for launching the Digital Arabic Content competition	20	10	United Arab Emirates	10 April 2014
Workshop on the development of an e-learning strategy and on the development of the Public Key Infrastructure (PKI)	40	18	Sudan	21-22 May 2014
Capacity-building workshop on the implementation of the Government Electronic and Mobile Service (GEMS) Maturity Index in the United Arab Emirates	17	8	United Arab Emirates	20-21 October 2014
Capacity-building workshop on promoting a safer cyberspace in the Arab region	80	20	Oman	8-9 December 2014
Workshop on ICT indicators and business surveys in Morocco	25	10	Morocco	6-8 October 2015
Workshop on research, development and innovation as modern pillars for developing the digital Arabic content	100	25	United Arab Emirates	20 October 2015
Workshop on innovation in the public sector (Parallel event during the ICT4All Forum)	35	15	Tunisia	17 November 2015
<b>Subprogramme 5. Statistics Division (SD)</b>				
Regional training on National Accounts (jointly with the International Monetary Fund Statistics Department)	25	10	Kuwait	23 March - 3 April 2014
Regional training workshop on input-output tables (jointly with the Arab Institute for Training and Research in Statistics (AITRS))	25	7	Jordan	20-24 April 2014
Regional workshop on the implementation of the International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC) in the Arab countries	25	9	Jordan	28 September - 1 October 2014
National training on the development of a gender statistics database	25	7	Qatar	20-23 October 2014
Regional workshop for the computation of 2012 and 2013 purchasing power parities	24	9	Turkey	8-11 December 2014
National training workshop on National Accounts (financial statistics)	10	3	Jordan	24-28 May 2015

Theme	Number of participants	Number of female participants	Country	Date
Training to local statistics offices on data entry and validation softwares and on the Model Report on Expenditure Statistics (MORES) questionnaire for the compilation of National Accounts data	25	10	United Arab Emirates	13-17 September 2015
<b>Subprogramme 6. ESCWA Centre for Women (ECW)</b>				
Regional training workshop to support the preparation of national reports to follow up on Beijing+20 (in cooperation with UN-Women and the League of Arab States)	20	15	Jordan	27-28 February 2014
Training workshop on gender mainstreaming for the staff of the Ministry of Social Affairs in Lebanon	15	15	Lebanon	18-19 March 2014
High-level training workshop entitled "Towards an Integrated Legislation to Protect Women and Girls from all Forms of Violence"	20	5	Egypt	18-19 June 2014
Training workshop on gender mainstreaming techniques for the staff of the Ministry of Social Affairs in Lebanon	19	17	Lebanon	1-2 July 2014
Capacity-building workshop on mainstreaming gender in economic policies, programmes and budgets	25	15	Palestine	18-21 August 2014
Subregional workshop on participatory community development from a gender perspective in Palestine, the Sudan, Yemen and Lebanon (jointly with the Social Development Division)	28	28	Jordan	20-22 January 2015
National capacity-building workshop to support the Sudan in updating and formulating policies and strategies on the empowerment of women	71	67	Sudan	4-5 May 2015 and 6-10 September 2015
National capacity-building workshop to support the Sudan in updating and formulating policies and strategies on family development	37	32	Sudan	6-7 May 2015
Workshop on electoral laws in support of women's political participation in Lebanon (jointly with the Emerging and Conflict-related Issues Division)	60	58	Lebanon	28-29 May 2015
Capacity-building workshop on international frameworks, instruments and processes related to women and development, gender equality and gender mainstreaming	50	25	Tunisia	1-4 June 2015
Regional Workshop on Addressing Gender-based Violence in the Arab Region	30	16	Tunisia	27 July - 1 August 2015
Subregional training workshop on Institutional Development of National Women's Machineries in the Arab Region	21	18	Lebanon	26-27 August 2015

Theme	Number of participants	Number of female participants	Country	Date
<b>Subprogramme 7. Emerging and Conflict-related Issues Division (ECRI)</b>				
National workshop on policy formulation for the infrastructure sector in Palestine (with the Ministry of Planning and Administrative Development)	25	0	Jordan/ Palestine	6-10 April 2014
National workshop on linking the study of urban poverty in Khartoum to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	30	10	Sudan	21-25 November 2015

-----