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Statistical Committee
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Item 4 (b) of the provisional agenda

**Activities implemented in the field of statistics****Activities under the programme of work****Summary**

The present document sets out the activities undertaken by the secretariat of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) under subprogramme 5 on statistics for evidence-based policymaking, since the twelfth session of the Statistical Committee. Those activities include issuing publications, reports and technical material in the field of statistical system management, economic statistics and national accounts, demographic and social statistics, and gender statistics. The present document also outlines statistical activities financed by the United Nations Development Account and those funded from extrabudgetary sources.

The Statistical Committee is invited to take note of achievements in those areas and comment thereon.

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Introduction

1. The present document sets out the activities undertaken by the secretariat of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) under subprogramme 5 on statistics for evidence-based policymaking, since the twelfth session of the Statistical Committee. Those activities include issuing publications, reports and technical material in the field of statistical system management, economic statistics and national accounts, demographic and social statistics, and gender statistics. The present document also outlines statistical activities financed by the United Nations Development Account (UNDA) and those funded from extrabudgetary sources.

I. STATISTICAL SYSTEM MANAGEMENT

Initial release of the ESCWA Data Portal (data.unescwa.org)

2. In October 2018, the ESCWA secretariat launched an experimental version of its Data Portal, which employs an advanced system to disseminate statistical data and information via the Internet. The bilingual (Arabic/English) portal aims to facilitate access to the ESCWA stock of social, economic and environment data that covers all Arab countries, through an advanced data-analysis system. The portal allows users to view and download data using tables, various types of charts and geographical maps; and to browse the news, search, and download publications and documents.

ESCWA membership of the Group on Earth Observations

3. In July 2018, ESCWA joined the Group on Earth Observations (GEO) as a participating organization. GEO is an intergovernmental organization that aims to improve access to Earth observation processes for the benefit of society. Through its participation, ESCWA aims to operationalize cooperation and coordination mechanisms with all international stakeholders in Earth observation and promote the use of geospatial data in the development process.

Big data

4. The ESCWA secretariat formed a team on big data aimed primarily at building the secretariat's internal capacity in identifying new data sources for official statistics and other data-related fields. The team collected information on activities and measures undertaken by other regional commissions under global initiatives, so as to identify new data sources that complement traditional sources, such as censuses and statistical surveys, to meet the increasing demand for data on progress in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Launch of the e-learning platform (<https://elearning.unescwa.org> (Arabic))

5. In March 2018, the ESCWA secretariat launched an e-learning platform, and conducted an e-training session on gender statistics. The training session aims to build stakeholder capacity in producing gender statistics and using statistics to monitor progress towards achieving gender equality and women's empowerment.

II. ECONOMIC STATISTICS AND NATIONAL ACCOUNTS

6. Over the period 2017-2018, the ESCWA secretariat focused on capacity-building in member States to adopt the System of National Accounts (SNA) as a comprehensive general framework to integrate economic and supporting statistics, and employ supply and use tables to ensure an integrated collection of data on national accounts, trade, business and various economic sectors. The secretariat also supported countries in

developing the necessary infrastructure for statistical work, such as international classifications, information and communications technology and institutions' statistical registers. This work was complemented by publications, reports, technical material and specialized meetings, technical and advisory support and knowledge exchange.

A. PUBLICATIONS, REPORTS AND TECHNICAL MATERIAL

External Trade Bulletin of the Arab Region, twenty-sixth issue
([E/ESCWA/SD/2018/1](#))

7. The bulletin contains statistical data and indicators on external trade in goods for ESCWA member States, derived primarily from national sources and complemented by secondary sources. It presents gross and detailed statistics on external trade for each country, and statistics on intraregional trade. The bulletin covers import and export statistics until 2016.

External Trade in ESCWA Member States: Country Profiles
([E/ESCWA/SD/2018/Technical Paper.1](#))

8. The bulletin reviews the external trade profiles of ESCWA member States and several trade-related indicators, such as import and export trends and their share of gross domestic product (GDP), the balance of trade, main trading partners, key imported and exported goods, export diversification indicators, and trade openness.

Methodological Study on Economic Statistics: Islamic Finance in the National Accounts
([ESCWA/SD/2017/Technical Paper.4](#))

9. The study shows how to calculate Islamic finance in the SNA. Given the major disparities between traditional and Islamic finance, the study highlights the need to conduct further research, and to identify best practices regarding financial assets and liabilities and classify them by the type of financial instrument described in the monetary and financial statistics framework, in line with the 2008 SNA.

National Accounts Studies of the Arab Region, Bulletin No. 35
([E/ESCWA/SD/2017/4](#))

10. Bulletin No. 35 of the National Accounts Studies of the Arab Region contains data and estimates of GDP at current and constant prices, consolidated national accounts for each ESCWA member State, and estimates of real GDP growth for 2016.

Bulletin of Industrial Statistics for Arab Countries, No. 9
([E/ESCWA/SD/2017/1](#))

11. The Bulletin of Industrial Statistics for Arab Countries is published biennially by the Arab Industrial Development and Mining Organization and ESCWA. The bulletin is divided into two parts. Part I contains summary tables on overall industrial trends, including levels of output; labour productivity; the contribution made by industry to GDP; and the average wage of employees in Arab countries. Part II contains tables of industrial statistics for each Arab country. It presents available data on the number of establishments, the number of employees, their wages and salaries, output and value added.

Climate Change-Related Statistics in the Arab Region: A Proposed Set of Indicators – Special Issue of the Compendium of Environment Statistics in the Arab Region
([E/ESCWA/SD/2017/3](#))

12. The publication provides statistics to monitor and measure the economic and social impact of climate change at the national and regional levels. This special issue of the Compendium of Environment Statistics in

the Arab Region reviews the role of national statistical offices in leading and coordinating climate change statistics, and proposes a set of climate change-related indicators for Arab countries in line with international recommendations.

Study on statistical business registers and their role in the development of economic statistics
(Under preparation)

13. The study aims to inform statistical offices in Arab countries of the importance of using business registers in statistical work and in producing economic statistics, given the recency of their use, in line with related United Nations recommendations. The study presents some practical aspects of establishing business registers, especially technical and legislative aspects. It also addresses the relationship between statistical offices and government departments, and the potential uses of those registers.

Electronic glossary of statistical terms in Arabic and English

14. The electronic glossary of statistical terms, which contains around 5,000 terms in 14 fields such as national accounts and economic and sectoral statistics, is available at the following link: <https://www.unescwa.org/sd-glossary>. Moreover, the glossary of terms on institutions' statistical registers was published and disseminated, in collaboration with the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and MEDSTAT IV, with a financial contribution from the French international technical cooperation agency (Expertise France). ESCWA reviewed the glossary and issued its final version to establish specific definitions in Arabic according to international guidelines.

B. MEETINGS AND CAPACITY-BUILDING ACTIVITIES

15. The ESCWA secretariat held a regional workshop on statistics for international trade in services in Abu Dhabi, from 20 to 23 November 2017. Nine experts from regional and international organizations and 40 representatives of national statistical offices, central banks and stakeholder ministries from 13 Arab States attended the workshop. It was preceded by an electronic training session on the subject, held from 3 October to 12 November 2017. On 19 November 2017, a meeting was held in Dubai on statistics for trade in services, at which participants discussed cooperation in data exchange. Other meetings and capacity-building activities were undertaken in the field of economic statistics and are presented to the Statistical Committee in documents of its thirteenth session.

III. POPULATION AND SOCIAL STATISTICS

16. Over the period 2017-2018, the ESCWA secretariat focused its demographic and social statistics work on building statistical capacity in member States in the field of planning, on conducting and evaluating population and housing censuses, and on using technology to conduct censuses, while taking into account costs and data quality and timeliness. The secretariat also worked on supporting civil registration systems to produce high-quality vital statistics by urging countries to enhance cooperation and coordination between data producers for civil registers. The secretariat prepared studies on poverty and household expenditure statistics, and complemented its work with technical material, specialized meetings, technical and advisory support, and knowledge exchange.

A. PUBLICATIONS, REPORTS AND TECHNICAL MATERIAL

Arab Society: A Compendium of Demographic and Social Statistics, Issue No. 13
([E/ESCWA/SD/2017/5](#))

17. Issue No. 13 of *Arab Society: A Compendium of Demographic and Social Statistics* provides an overview of population, employment, education, health and cultural issues in Arab countries, based on data from national statistical offices.

Undertaking Population and Housing Census: Register-based and Combined Methodologies
([E/ESCWA/SD/2017/Technical Paper.3](#))

18. The report focuses on the use of administrative registers in housing and population censuses. It provides a case study of Poland, which conducted a population census in 2011 using various administrative registers. The report also discusses several conditions that must be met to shift from traditional census methodologies to combined methodologies. It highlights the experiences of some Arab countries to assess the possibility of using registers in the 2020 round on censuses.

*Dissemination and use of data from population and housing censuses:
emerging methods and lessons learned*
([E/ESCWA/SD/2017/Technical Paper.2](#))

19. The technical paper highlights key and emerging methods to disseminate data from population and housing censuses, and the quality of products required by decision-makers and policymakers, such as preliminary and final results, thematic and analytical reports, and maps showing integration between data dimensions and geographic and spatial divisions, and online dynamic applications. It also reviews several good practices in some developed countries. Moreover, the technical paper underscores the importance of census results for national development planning and for the 2030 Agenda.

*Pilot study on the completeness of death registration based on linked records
in Nablus, State of Palestine*

20. The document provides a summary of record linkage studies on for death registration and assessment of its completeness by linking data from census and civil registers in Nablus, State of Palestine.

*Study on non-monetary indicators to monitor SDG targets 1.2 and 1.4:
availability, comparability and quality*

21. The study provides information on non-monetary indicators to monitor targets 1.2 and 1.4 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and assess availability, comparability, quality and suitability of data for monitoring at the international level. It also reviews multidimensional poverty indicators at the national level in Arab countries.

B. MEETINGS AND CAPACITY-BUILDING ACTIVITIES

*Regional workshop on the use of technology in population and housing censuses
in Arab countries*

22. ESCWA, in collaboration with the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), the Regional Office of the United Nations Population Fund and the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics in Egypt, organized a regional workshop on the use of technology in population and housing censuses in Arab countries, which was held in Cairo from 29 to 31 January 2018. Participants discussed guidelines on the use of electronic data collection technologies in population and housing censuses, including key requirements for adopting a common methodology for census design, and benefiting from Arab countries' successful experiences in using technologies in censuses.

*Expert group meeting on record linkage studies to assess the completeness
of death registration*

23. ESCWA organized an expert group meeting on record linkage studies to assess the completeness of death registration, within the framework of continuing work on civil registration and vital statistics. The meeting was held at the United Nations House in Beirut on 21 and 22 December 2017. It presented

demographic ways to assess data completeness from civil registers, and participants discussed the preliminary findings of a pilot study on the completeness of death registration based on linked records. ESCWA reviewed ways to evaluate vital statistics used in some member States, and the use of individual census data in record linkage studies.

IV. GENDER STATISTICS

24. Over the period 2017-2018, the ESCWA secretariat focused its gender statistics work on capacity-building in member States and on developing integrated technical material and tools.

MEETINGS AND CAPACITY-BUILDING ACTIVITIES

Fifth meeting of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics in the Arab Countries

25. The fifth meeting of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics in the Arab Countries was held on 15 and 16 October 2018. Participants included experts from national statistical offices, women's machineries and international and regional experts. They reviewed and discussed gender statistics and SDG 5 indicators, and adopted the final version of a questionnaire for an ESCWA household survey on violence against women.

Workshop on measuring women's representation in local government

26. ESCWA held a workshop on measuring women's representation in local government in Beirut on 12 and 13 September 2017, in collaboration with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women). Participants included representatives of national statistical offices, national women's machineries, ministries concerned with women's empowerment, and electoral management bodies. Participants discussed a study on women's participation in local government prepared by UN-Women and methodologies for reliable and standardized data and statistics on women's representation in local government. They also discussed issues related to SDG indicator 5.5.1b, especially definitions and terms relevant to local government, indicator calculation and data sources.

V. DISABILITY STATISTICS

27. In 2016, ESCWA launched a programme on disability statistics, under which it implemented several activities in the Arab region.

A. PUBLICATIONS, REPORTS AND TECHNICAL MATERIAL

Regional Guidebook to Improve Disability Data Collection and Analysis in the Arab Countries ([E/ESCWA/SD/2018/MANUAL.1](#))

28. ESCWA launched the first *Regional Guidebook to Improve Disability Data Collection and Analysis in the Arab Countries*. The guidebook reviews all approaches to collecting, preparing, applying and analysing disability data, and focuses on the role of disability data in formulating inclusive social policies and in monitoring and evaluating their impact. It also presents the data collection tools of the Washington Group on Disability Statistics,¹ addresses the prevalence of disability and related data, and concludes with recommendations in those fields.

¹ The Washington Group on Disability Statistics was established by the United Nations to enable the international community to address the themes and suggestions of the United Nations International Seminar on the Measurement of Disability. Its first meeting, hosted by the National Center for Health Statistics of the United States, was held from 18 to 20 February 2002 in Washington, D.C.

Arab Disability Statistics in Numbers 2017
([E/ESCWA/SD/2017/Technical Paper.1](#))

29. ESCWA issued an e-publication entitled *Arab Disability Statistics in Numbers 2017*, based on national data collected from national statistical offices that were verified using a questionnaire specifically designed to meet the needs of policymakers in the region and of those concerned with monitoring the SDGs and implementing the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Sex-disaggregated data collected from 13 countries provides significant information on persons with disabilities in areas such as education and employment.

B. MEETINGS AND CAPACITY-BUILDING ACTIVITIES

*Third regional Inter-agency and Expert Group Meeting on Improving Disability Statistics
in the Sustainable Development Goals*

30. ESCWA, in collaboration with the Washington Group and several international organizations, organized the third regional Inter-agency and Expert Group Meeting on Improving Disability Statistics in the Sustainable Development Goals, held in Cairo from 18 to 20 September 2018. Participants discussed global and regional guidelines for improving disability data, applying the Washington Group's questions on functioning in the Arab region, the effective use of statistics in policy development and monitoring, disability indicators under the SDGs, producing and analysing indicators, developing the Arab framework for disability indicators, training needs for field work, and a proposal on forming the Casablanca group for disability statistics in the Arab region. Key recommendations included applying global and regional guidelines for improving disability data to promote the production of consistent and comparable data of importance for policymakers and non-governmental organizations concerned with persons with disabilities.

**VI. PROJECTS FUNDED BY THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT
ACCOUNT AND FROM EXTRABUDGETARY SOURCES**

A. INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON PROGRAMME

31. ESCWA, in its capacity as regional secretariat of the International Comparison Programme (ICP) that is funded from extrabudgetary sources, has developed several projects, innovative initiatives and national and regional activities to provide accurate and high-quality data on prices and national accounts, so as to produce purchasing power parities (PPP) and calculate annual real GDP per capita, in line with recommendations by the United Nations Statistical Commission. Those activities contribute to building member States' capacity to collect, review and validate data, and improve national price indices using ICP methodologies.

32. ESCWA has undertaken national projects to produce PPP at the subnational level and calculate the real purchasing power of currencies within countries, real GDP and real GDP per capita. Those indicators facilitate the development of necessary measures and economic policies using data and statistics produced to improve national economies and economic growth. ESCWA also held and participated in the following workshops and regional meetings:

- ICP regional workshop for developing purchasing power parities (Cairo, 20-24 April 2017);
- Regional workshop to launch work on national accounts (Cairo, 26-27 April 2017);
- National training workshop for launching the 2017 ICP activities (Tunis, 12-14 June 2017);
- Regional meeting to validate retrospective feedback data for 2014-2015 in the 2016 regional session of the ICP project (Amman, 3-6 October 2017);
- National training workshop to launch work on the 2017 ICP activities in the United Arab Emirates (Dubai, 18-21 December 2017);

- National workshop to validate 2017 price data in the United Arab Emirates (Dubai, 22-25 January 2018);
- Regional ICP meeting for the final validation of 2014-2015-2016 data under the 2016 regional session of the ICP project (Istanbul, Turkey, 3-5 December 2018);
- Regional ICP meeting for the computation of preliminary results for 2014-2015-2016 under the 2016 regional session of the ICP project (Istanbul, Turkey, 22-24 April 2018);
- Workshop for the Computation of the Harmonized Consumer Price Index (Istanbul, Turkey, 25-27 April 2018);
- Regional meeting to validate national accounts data for 2017 (Istanbul, Turkey, 3-5 December 2018);
- Regional meeting to validate price data for 2017 under the 2017 ICP project (Istanbul, Turkey, 7-11 December 2018);
- Special meeting of countries participating in ICP activities within Africa and Western Asia (13-14 December 2018).

33. ESCWA also participated in global ICP meetings held by the World Bank, at which it represented the Arab region by presenting implemented activities and progress achieved.

B. BUILDING THE STATISTICAL CAPACITY OF ESCWA MEMBER STATES IN PRODUCING AND DISSEMINATING SHORT-TERM ECONOMIC INDICATORS FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

34. Given the impact of short-term economic fluctuations on economic and social growth, ESCWA worked with other organizations on identifying a set of short-term economic indicators for all sectors through which economic fluctuations and crises can be estimated and monitored. Over the period 2015-2017, ESCWA implemented a project funded by the United Nations Development Account² to build the statistical capacity of member States in producing and disseminating comparable and reliable short-term economic indicators. The independent evaluation of the project stated that it had taken into account the needs of the region, where short-term political trends were more important for decision makers. The project achieved its expected accomplishments and ensured country participation in collecting short-term indicators, and may be complemented with additional efforts to build upon those achievements.

35. As part of the project, and since the twelfth session of the Statistical Committee, ESCWA organized a training session on residential property price indices, held in Tunis from 14 to 18 August 2017. The project concluded with two regional workshops on industrial statistics and on short-term economic statistics, held in Beirut from 11 to 15 December 2017. Activities and documents related to the project are available at <https://www.unescwa.org/sub-site/strengthening-statistical-capacity-short-term-indicators>.

C. PROGRAMME ON STATISTICS AND DATA

36. The Programme on Statistics and Data is a comprehensive programme funded through the tenth tranche of the Development Account. It aims to build statistical capacity to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Document E/ESCWA/C.1/2019/6 provides the Statistical Committee with an overview of the Programme, the recommendations of its mid-term evaluation and the way forward. The following sections set out the activities implemented under its four pillars since the twelfth session of the Statistical Committee. Some activities

² The Development Account was established by the General Assembly in 1997 through its resolution [52/12 B](#), as a mechanism to fund capacity development projects. It is aimed at enhancing capacities of developing countries in the priority areas of the United Nations development agenda. The Development Account is funded from the Secretariat's regular budget.

undertaken to achieve the Programme are presented in document E/ESCWA/C.1/2019/3(Part III) on technical cooperation activities, as they formed part of the technical cooperation services offered to member States.

1. *Pillar 1. Means of implementation (managerial issues of official statistics and statistical information infrastructure)*

Workshop on sound institutional environment, cooperation, dialogue and partnerships for the production and utilization of SDG indicators

37. ESCWA organized a workshop on sound institutional environment, cooperation, dialogue and partnerships for the production and utilization of SDG indicators, held in Beirut from 16 to 18 January 2018. The workshop addressed the institutional environment of official statistics for monitoring progress towards achieving the SDGs, including statistics management and coordination mechanisms and tools, in addition to dialogue and partnerships between data and statistics users and producers. The workshop also highlighted the institutional, organizational and managerial arrangements that can support the transformation and modernization of official statistics to meet users' emerging needs to access high-quality and internationally comparable data and statistics.

High-level regional workshop on implementing the SDG indicator framework

38. ESCWA organized a high-level regional workshop on implementing the SDG indicator framework, held in Beirut on 5 and 6 April 2017. Participants discussed national indicator frameworks based on national, regional and global priorities, the importance of strengthening information exchange, coordination and synergies under the Programme on Statistics and Data, and the need to benefit from financial support and avoid duplication. Participants also addressed incorporating development indicators in national strategies, and developing a road map to strengthen national statistical systems, reporting processes and data dissemination, in line with the Cape Town Global Action Plan for Sustainable Development Data.

Fifth Plenary Meeting of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management: Arab States

39. ESCWA participated in the fifth plenary meeting of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management: Arab States, held in Muscat from 19 to 21 February 2018. The meeting was organized by the National Survey Authority in Amman in collaboration with the secretariat of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management: Arab States. The meeting aimed to follow up on the work of the Committee and the technical teams, and to discuss the Committee's work programme for the coming period. The representative of the secretariat gave a presentation on using geospatial data to drive development, and clarified the complementarities between the secretariat's work and efforts by other international bodies in that field.

2. *Pillar 2. Environment statistics*

Workshop on the Central Framework of the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting

40. Representatives of national statistical offices in Arab countries concerned with environment and water statistics and national accounts and experts participated in a workshop on the Central Framework of the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA), held in Amman from 26 to 29 March 2018. The workshop aimed to increase understanding of data and systems needs to develop environment accounts, including water, energy and land accounts, to formulate integrated environment and economic policies and monitor SDG indicators. The workshop also built capacity to develop environment accounts and incorporate environment information in national accounts systems.

*Central Framework of the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting 2012:
Arabic e-training session*

41. The SEEA Central Framework is a conceptual framework for measuring interactions between the environment and the economy, and analysing the impact of economic policies on the environment to ensure the sustainable management of natural resources. ESCWA participated in organizing an e-training session on the SEEA Central Framework in January and February 2018, and worked on providing all training material in Arabic. The training material contained a summary of the Central Framework and training units on water, energy, land use and emissions. ESCWA also organized four sessions with SEEA experts.

Capacity-building on geospatial issues

42. ESCWA collaborated with the European Topic Centre of the University of Malaga in Spain to build technical capacity for preparing and analysing a detailed questionnaire to identify available geospatial information in Egypt, Jordan and the State of Palestine. The research phase was concluded with advisory missions to the three countries in May 2018 to provide technical support on exchanging national data for monitoring the SDGs and building geospatial skills. A joint report was published by ESCWA and the University of Malaga on the survey study and the missions' findings, available at http://www.etc.uma.es/un_escwa_etcuma.

Translating international recommendations on energy data

43. ESCWA translated international recommendations on energy data into Arabic in February 2018, as a reference to assist stakeholders in Arab countries in applying methodologies adopted at the international level. The translation is available at <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/energy/ires/IRES-ar.pdf>.

*Consultative meeting on the implementation framework for the environmental dimension
of the 2030 Agenda in the Arab region*

44. ESCWA, in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme and the League of Arab States, prepared a draft implementation framework for the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda, which proposes ways to incorporate the environmental dimensions in national development plans and policies in the Arab region. ESCWA held the meeting in Cairo from 19 to 21 September 2017, which was attended by representatives of national statistical offices to consider the feasibility of implementing the framework within national statistical systems and the data required for analysing, monitoring and reporting in the region, and to support the formulation of environment-related policies.

3. Pillar 3. Social and demographic statistics

*Regional workshop on the collection, elaboration, and reporting of human settlements
indicators in Arab countries*

45. ESCWA, in collaboration with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), organized a regional workshop on collecting, preparing and disseminating data on human settlement indicators, held in Cairo from 3 to 5 July 2018. The workshop aimed to increase understanding of required data, including geographic data; of the methodology to monitor human settlement indicators, their dissemination and the level of detail required; and of ways to collect data and verify their accuracy and to bridge data gaps in Arab countries. Participants discussed the New Urban Agenda and ways to monitor its implementation, and to improve local and national coordination mechanisms when collecting, preparing and disseminating data on human settlement indicators.

*Advisory mission to strengthen national and local capacity in the field
of civil registration and vital statistics*

46. ESCWA conducted an advisory mission to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics in Ramallah from 9 to 13 April 2017. ESCWA provided technical guidance on record linkage of data from the housing and censuses registers in the State of Palestine, and on reviewing the current status of civil registration and vital statistics to identify needs and challenges so as to improve the system.

4. Pillar 4. Economic statistics

Seminar on supply and use tables

47. ESCWA, in collaboration with UNSD, organized a seminar on supply and use tables, held in Beirut on 29 and 30 August 2018. Participants discussed ways to improve economic data collection for comprehensive coverage to monitor progress towards achieving the SDGs.

Training workshop on supply and use tables

48. ESCWA organized a training workshop for Bahrain and Jordan on using supply and use tables to ensure effective monitoring of progress towards the SDGs, held in Manama from 6 to 10 May 2018.

*Regional workshop on national accounts and the development of economic statistics
infrastructure within the SDG framework*

49. In the context of monitoring progress towards the SDGs, ESCWA and the Arab Institute for Training and Research in Statistics, in collaboration with UNSD and the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, organized a regional workshop on national accounts and developing economic statistics infrastructure, which was held in Amman from 15 to 18 May 2017. Participants discussed the implications of implementing the 2008 SNA on GDP, using supply and use tables in estimating the size of the informal sector, and indirect ways of calculating brokerage services and insurance outputs.
