

DRAFT RESPONSES TO THE DESA QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2030 AGENDA AND THE SDGs

1. Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, has the governing body of your organization taken (or will it take) any decisions or new strategies to guide the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs? If any, please provide a brief summary below, including the overarching vision of your organization.

Summary:

Regional Commissions have undertaken fit for purpose exercises for some years now. ESCAP convened the first Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development in 2014, and undertook an independent conference structure evaluation in 2016, which resulted in the addition of Financing for Development and Science, Technology and innovation in the subsidiary structure of the Commission supported by dedicated sections in ESCAP, allowing comprehensive coverage of the means of implementation in ESCAP's work. ESCAP's long-standing work on energy was elevated with the establishment of a Committee on Energy supported by a full-fledged Energy Division. These steps ensured that the ESCAP conference and secretariat structure were fully aligned with the 2030 agenda. In 2017, the Commission formally established the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development as part of the conference structure and adopted the Regional road map for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, which sets out the sustainable development priorities of the region and is the expressed will of the countries of Asia and the Pacific on the assistance they require from UNDS at the regional level for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. ESCAP has also set up a SDG response facility to respond to requests from member States on implementation of the SDGs.

The Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism convened by ESCAP was also restructured in 2016 to be fully aligned with the 2030 Agenda. Seven Thematic Working Groups (TWGs) have been created on Statistics, Resource Efficient Growth, Sustainable Societies, Inclusive Development and Poverty Eradication, Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience, Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and Education 2030+. These correspond to the respective clusters of SDGs.

To advance its commitment to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the Commission adopted resolution 72/6 on *Committing to the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific*. Actions called for in the resolution were further endorsed by the ECOSOC resolution 2016/11. The Commission requested the Executive Secretary (a) to promote the balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development and provide annual updates and recommendations to member States, including through the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable

Development; (b) to support the process to define a regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda and to address challenges to its achievement in Asia and the Pacific, pursuant to the recommendations of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development, as contained in its report; (c) to strengthen support to member States in their efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda in an integrated approach, inter alia, with analytical products, technical services and capacity-building initiatives through knowledge-sharing products and platforms, and to enhance data and statistical capacities; and (d) to continue to provide capacity-building opportunities to member States, leveraging existing expertise and its intergovernmental forum to contribute to the strengthening of their capacity, including through support for mainstreaming financing for development issues in areas such as domestic resource mobilization, as well as through support for their efforts in developing integrated approaches, models and tools in enhancing their regional cooperation on the Sustainable Development Goals with a special emphasis on the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States.

Following the adoption of resolution 72/6, the countries of Asia and the Pacific have developed the Regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to facilitate cooperation at the regional level supported by the ESCAP Secretariat and other United Nations entities. The road map was agreed on during the 4th Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development and adopted by the Commission at its 73rd session through resolution 73/9 on *Regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific*. The resolution called for enhanced cooperation among relevant organizations in the United Nations system and other stakeholders in the region in support of the Regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific. The Regional road map, which promotes the balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development through regional cooperation in a set of priority areas that support effective pursuit of sustainable development by member States, serves as a framework for regional cooperation and support in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, in particular by least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States, countries in conflict situations and post-conflict countries and other countries with special needs in the region.

The Regional road map embodies ESCAP's vision for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs. The full document can be accessed at <http://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/publications/SDGs-Regional-Roadmap.pdf>

For an overview on progress made in the first year of implementation of the regional road map, please see http://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/B1800081_E_RFSD-3.pdf

2. At ESCAP level, has your organization taken (or will it take) any steps in follow-up to the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs? If yes, please specify actions, including but not limited to the following areas:

a) SDG-specific strategies, plans or work programmes

b) Aligning the structure of the organization with the transformative features of the 2030 Agenda, including any challenges and lessons learned in doing so

c) Readjusting or updating results-based budgeting and management, including performance indicators

d) Action to enhance support to the principle of "leaving no one behind" and to integrated policy approaches

2a) SDG-specific strategies, plans and work programmes

The inclusion of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD) as the subsidiary structure of the Commission through the adoption of resolution 73/1 on *A conference structure of the Commission aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* has reaffirmed ESCAP's role in the follow-up and review of the implementation of 2030 Agenda at the regional level to feed into the high-level political forum on sustainable development (HLPF) at the global level.

To fully assume such a role, the programme of work for the biennium of 2018-2019 has been optimized in line with the 2030 Agenda and SDGs.

- i. The most inclusive regional intergovernmental platform for the follow-up and review of the progress of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and SDGs:

Pursuant to ESCAP resolution 72/6 on *Committing to the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific*, Governments and other stakeholders convene at the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development on a theme set by the HLPF. This forum will engage member States, United Nations and other institutions, and major groups and other stakeholders including civil society organizations in dialogue on regional perspectives on the implementation and the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including in-depth review of the theme and SDGs.

Better coordination with member States has been achieved through close consultation with the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission, through national ESCAP coordination focal points, designated by countries at ESCAP's request, and through a dedicated space for activities on the 2030 Agenda on the ESCAP website. Member States have been consulted thoroughly in the organization of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development and the preparation of the Regional Road Map. The process of developing the draft involved consultation through the Advisory Committee, the circulation of successive drafts to Governments, civil society and members of the Regional Coordination Mechanism, and consultations with the Advisory Committee in an informal session. In response to subparagraph 7 (c) in resolution 72/6, ESCAP has contributed to national

implementation efforts with analytical products, technical services provided to subregional institutions and programmes, and capacity-building in various areas, in particular in relation to strengthening follow-up and review and through knowledge platforms and products.

The fourth session of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development was concluded in March 2017 with the adoption of the Regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific, which was subsequently endorsed by the 73rd session of the ESCAP Commission in the same year. The Regional road map identified priority areas for regional cooperation and collaboration among member States with emphasis on practical means of implementation to achieve SDGs. These key areas, namely data and statistics, technology, financing for development, policy coherence, regional partnerships, social development, disaster risk reduction and resilience, climate change, management of natural resources, connectivity, and energy, also lay out the direction and approaches of ESCAP's normative, analytical and capacity building work, as well as strategic partnerships with UN agencies and other stakeholders.

- ii. The Regional Coordination Mechanism: Steps taken since the adoption of resolution 72/6 include the realignment of the Regional Coordination Mechanism thematic working groups with the Sustainable Development Goals as well as the establishment of terms of reference and work plans for each thematic working group, which include outputs in support of least developed, land-locked and Pacific island developing countries, among other subregional groupings. The thematic working groups support knowledge-sharing and will be involved in tracking progress on the 2030 Agenda and coordinating support at the regional level. The seven, new thematic working groups are on resource efficient growth; sustainable societies; inclusive development and poverty eradication; disaster risk reduction and resilience; gender equality and the empowerment of women; education 2030+; and statistics. The thematic working groups have work plans for 2016-2017 which include joint outputs that will feed into the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development and its reporting to the high-level political forum on sustainable development. The thematic working groups will be positioning future work plans to align with the high-level political forum themes and the mandates of the Asia-Pacific regional road map. The Regional Coordination Mechanism has also cooperated in the negotiation and adoption of the ASEAN-United Nations Plan of Action for 2016-2020, which specifically supports ASEAN member States in identifying the complementarities between the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the 2030 Agenda.

In addition, a communications plan has been developed for the Regional Coordination Mechanism which included the launching of a new website in 2016 that provides comprehensive reporting and archiving of collaboration efforts among the United Nations agencies in Asia and the Pacific, including work that is produced by the Regional Coordination Mechanism thematic working groups.

iii. Analytical work focusing on Sustainable Development and SDGs:

Sustainable development- and SDGs-focused flagship publications and books to be delivered during the biennium 2018-2019 analyze challenges, means of implementation and progress made in the Asia-Pacific region in the context of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and SDGs. New titles such as the thematic reports on Sustainable Development, Financing for Development in Asia and the Pacific, Social Outlook for Asia and the Pacific, and Asia-Pacific SDGs Indicators-based Progress Report are introduced to provide a comprehensive analysis of the challenges and situations of the three dimensions of sustainable development.

ESCAP's key SDG publications that were released in 2016-2017 included:

Eradicating Poverty and Promoting Prosperity in a Changing Asia-Pacific, available at: http://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/publications/AP_SDG_Thematic-Report_2017.pdf

Asia-Pacific Sustainable Development Goals Outlook 2017, available at: <http://www.unescap.org/publications/asia-pacific-sustainable-development-goals-outlook>

Statistical Yearbook for Asia and the Pacific 2017: Measuring SDG progress in Asia and the Pacific: Is there enough data?, available at: <http://www.unescap.org/publications/statistical-yearbook-asia-and-pacific-2017>

Statistical Yearbook for Asia and the Pacific 2016-SDG Baseline Report, available at: http://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/ESCAP_SYB2016_SDG_baseline_report.pdf

iv. Capacity-building projects for member States focusing on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and SDGs:

Capacity-building projects for member States, in particular for least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, and small island developing States, focus mainly on enhancing their capacity in designing and implementing policies and programmes for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and SDGs with emphasis on financing for development, connectivity, technology and innovation, conduct of national follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda, social development, statistics and energy. Some of this work was supported through a Rapid Response Facility. The Rapid Response Facility provides quick and effective response to support countries in the implementation of the SDGs. In particular, identifying and addressing SDG data and statistics gaps (including visualization); supporting integrated systems analysis to help understand SDG interlinkages and identify policy priorities; supporting national follow up and review; facilitating stakeholder participation in SDG implementation, supporting trade facilitation, integration and LDC graduation. Other core areas including facilitating ICT for development (gender, youth etc), development of social polities etc. will also be considered.

2b) Aligning the structure of the organization with the transformative features of the 2030 Agenda, including any challenges and lessons learned in doing so

The Commission, through the adoption of resolutions 71/1 on *Restructuring the conference structure of the Commission to be fit for the evolving post-2015 development agenda* and 73/1 on *A conference structure of the Commission aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, has strengthened its effectiveness and efficiency for assisting member States in the implementation of 2030 Agenda and the SDGs in the Asia-Pacific region. The former resolution mandated the establishment of the committee on energy; and the establishment of the committee on information and communications technology, science, technology and innovation, and the committee on macroeconomic policy, poverty reduction and financing for development through reconstituting two existing committees. The latter mandated the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development as the subsidiary structure of the Commission; and decided that the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management is under the auspices of the Commission. The current conference structure of the Commission, which reflects the areas of needs for development identified by member States, is aligned with the substantive requirements of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

2c) Readjusting or updating results-based budgeting and management, including performance indicators

For the programme of work 2018-2019, each subprogramme has been strategized to focus on the support to member States in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, with emphasis on the SDGs pertaining to the executing division of the subprogramme. To measure the effectiveness of ESCAP work, the indicators of achievement have been synchronized across subprogrammes to measure (1) member States' adoption of regional frameworks and ESCAP-promoted policy options in their national policies, frameworks and strategies; and (2) capacity of participants from member States in applying the knowledge gained from ESCAP initiatives related to the 2030 Agenda and SDGs. The standardization of the performance indicators for all subregions aims at measuring deeper of ESCAP's support to member States in a given subregion in terms of (1) building capacity of planning and implementing coherent policies supporting the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development; (2) adoption of policies in line with ESCAP recommendations; and (3) reaching consensus on regional and subregional dimensions of sustainable development.

2d) Action to enhance support to the principle of "leaving no one behind" and to integrated policy approaches

Leaving no one behind:

ESCAP, with its resolution 73/9 endorsed the Regional Road Map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific. The Regional Road Map has, as one its thematic areas, "leaving no one behind" where the following opportunities for regional collaboration are identified:

- (a) Promote analytical studies and policy advocacy to address inequalities, reduce poverty and enhance social protection, including for persons with disabilities, to build socioeconomic resilience;
- (b) Continue regional and subregional dialogues to support multisectoral policies, strategies and programmes to implement the 2030 Agenda, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and advance gender equality and women's empowerment;
- (c) Address unemployment and underemployment among youth, including by improving the match between the knowledge and skills of youth and labour market demands;
- (d) Facilitate regional and subregional dialogue on policies to address population ageing;
- (e) Implement the Incheon Strategy to "Make the Right Real" for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific;
- (f) Strengthen the linkages between international migration and development, including through more effective management of migration.

As part of its work on leaving no one behind, ESCAP launched the flagship publication entitled Sustainable Social Development in Asia and the Pacific: Towards a People-Centred Transformation, which contains a summary of the social development gaps in the region and an outline of the key priorities and resources needed for a people-centred transformation in 2017. ESCAP also organized the Strategic Dialogue on Poverty and Inequality in Asia and the Pacific in Bangkok to identify the challenges faced by the region in measuring and addressing poverty and inequality and sharing good practices.

ESCAP published a policy paper series on inequality of opportunity, with four papers measuring inequality of access to education, employment, clean energy and health. The policy papers are accompanied by a guide on how to measure inequality of opportunity. A study on multidimensional inequality in Indonesia was prepared and discussed at the Indonesia Development Forum 2017. The study reviewed progress in key opportunities and highlighted persisting rural-urban disparities and an increasing gap in educational attainment between the richest and poorest quintiles.

As a part of its efforts to promote women's empowerment through entrepreneurship, ESCAP prepared a study entitled Fostering Women's Entrepreneurship in ASEAN: Transforming Prospects, Transforming Societies. ESCAP organized a regional forum on gender-responsive budgeting in Asia and the Pacific in Bangkok, resulting in increased momentum in the advocacy of the importance of gender-responsive

budgeting and enhanced dialogue and partnerships around sustainable financing for achieving gender equality and the 2030 Agenda.

ESCAP prepared a report entitled *Realizing Youth Inclusion for a More Sustainable Asia and the Pacific* to broaden understanding of the multitude of institutional and sociocultural barriers that youth face in realizing their potential, and established a youth policy toolbox as an online repository of good practices and policies to assist Governments in developing policies for harnessing the potential of youth. The toolbox has been launched in Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Mongolia, the Philippines and six Pacific island countries. ESCAP also convened an Interregional Youth Policy Forum in Bangkok in cooperation with the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and the Economic Commission for Africa to share good practices across the regions in facilitating the school-to-work transition of youth.

To enhance the evidence base for policy options, ESCAP prepared a report entitled *Addressing the Challenges of Population Ageing in Asia and the Pacific: Implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing*, in which it argues that with effective policies, population ageing can herald a period of sustained progress. A special issue of the *Asia-Pacific Population Journal* (vol. 32, No. 1, August 2017) focused on population ageing, covering themes such as human resource requirements for meeting the needs of an ageing society; the availability and use of appropriate technology to enhance access by older persons to services, including health and long-term care services; and gender dimensions of ageing in the Asia-Pacific region. ESCAP convened the Asia-Pacific Intergovernmental Meeting on the Third Review and Appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing to accelerate the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002, in order to foster an inclusive society for all ages. ESCAP organized subregional capacity-building workshops on income security for older persons in the Pacific and in South Asia. The workshops focused on the design of policies for income security for older persons and the importance of providing sustainable systems of income security in ageing societies.

ESCAP produced a report entitled *Building Disability-Inclusive Societies in Asia and the Pacific: Assessing Progress of the Incheon Strategy*, a comprehensive regional progress report on the participation of persons with disabilities in development opportunities at the midpoint review of the implementation of the Incheon Strategy. ESCAP convened the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Midpoint Review of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022, in Beijing in November 2017. The Meeting adopted the Beijing Declaration, including the Action Plan to Accelerate the Implementation of the Incheon Strategy, to foster disability-inclusive development through a comprehensive regional policy action plan involving Governments and other stakeholders over the subsequent five years.

ESCAP published a report entitled *Towards Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in the Asia-Pacific Region: Challenges and Opportunities*, in which it provides up-to-date information on migration trends, highlights key policy issues with respect to ensuring safe, orderly and regular migration in the Asia-Pacific region and provides recommendations to help guide discussions at the Asia-Pacific Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, which was convened by ESCAP in cooperation with the International Organization for Migration and other United Nations agencies. The Meeting helped the region develop an Asia-Pacific perspective on safe, orderly and regular migration to feed into the global stocktaking meeting on the global compact on migration that was held in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, from 4 to 6 December 2017. ESCAP also published four studies on the links between international migration and development in North and Central Asia.

ESCAP developed a series of online training tools to support policymakers in Asia and the Pacific in their efforts with respect to social protection, youth and disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction.

Under the Thematic Working Group on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, joint initiatives have been carried out including research and analysis, intergovernmental consensus-building and stakeholder engagement towards advancing gender equality in the Asia-Pacific region. Specifically, an analytical paper on financing for gender equality in Asia and the Pacific has been developed, which proposes key recommendations to enhance investment in women and girls to meet the ambitions of the 2030 Agenda. The Thematic Working Group has also undertaken joint advocacy efforts, including on prevention of violence against women and children. The outputs reported have supported progress towards targets and means of implementation 1.3, 5.1, 5.4, 5.5, 5.a, 5.b, 8.3, 8.5, 8.8, 10.2, 10.3, 10.4, 10.7 and 16.12 of the Sustainable Development Goal indicator framework.

Further, ESCAP has been working on sex-disaggregation breakdowns by relevant population groups with a view to improving the availability of disaggregated data for monitoring the SDGs.

Integrated policy approaches:

The ESCAP methodological tool on Integrated Approaches for Sustainable Development Goals Planning: The Case of Goal 6 on Water and Sanitation was published.

ESCAP supported the localization of the Sustainable Development Goals with the means of implementation of the New Urban Agenda under a new partnership with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), focusing on providing policy assistance in the areas of financing, data and partnerships with non-State actors. ESCAP co-chaired the United Nations Development Group Asia-Pacific Task Team on Urbanization, which promotes policy coherence on urban issues at both the regional and the country levels among 20 member-agencies.

ESCAP and UN-Habitat collaborated to support policy coherence in mainstreaming climate change responses, including the nationally determined contribution priorities of selected countries in the region, into current and forthcoming national urban policies.

The Asia-Pacific Research and Training Network on Trade Expert Group on Trade and the Sustainable Development Goals was established and nodal points as well as capacity-building needs were identified for Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Nepal. Policy advice was also provided to Afghanistan on trade and the Sustainable Development Goals.

ESCAP published Asia-Pacific Trade and Investment Report 2017: Channelling Trade and Investment into Sustainable Development, which focused on the means of implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. A handbook on policies, promotion and facilitation of FDI for sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific was published in October 2017. Good practice case studies, tools for evidence-based policymaking and the negotiation of agreements for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, and publications relating to the negotiation of development-oriented preferential

trade agreements, intellectual property rights and non-tariff barriers were issued, and online training materials were developed as contributions to existing courses.

Workshops and training on FDI promotion and facilitation were held in Myanmar and Uzbekistan. The annual meeting and capacity-building events were organized for the Asia-Pacific FDI Network for Least Developed and Landlocked Developing States, at which the linkages between FDI, innovation and the Sustainable Development Goals were also discussed. Regional and national workshops were organized on trade agreements with respect to graduation from least developed country status, and trade policies for sustainable development.

The outputs reported have supported progress towards targets 1.1, 8.3, 8.10, 9.3, 10.1 and 17.16 of the Sustainable Development Goal indicator framework.

3. Has your organization provided (or will it provide) any normative, analytical, technical assistance or capacity building to countries in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs? If yes, please provide a brief account of the activities you have organized or intend to undertake, including but not limited to the following areas:

- a) Mainstreaming the SDGs in development plans and policies or through national sustainable development plans/strategies;**
- b) Mainstreaming the SDGs in sectoral strategies, including specific SDG/target strategies;**
- c) Data and statistical capacity building;**
- d) Science, technology and innovation for the SDGs;**
- e) Multi-stakeholder partnerships;**
- f) Sub-national plans/strategies and implementation for the SDGs;**
- g) Leveraging interlinkages across SDG goals and targets.**

ESCAP as a Regional Commission carries out normative/intergovernmental, research and analytical and capacity building functions. ESCAP's work programme is fully aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and guided by the Regional road map at the Asia-Pacific level.

ESCAP's Programme of Work 2018-2019 is available at: [https://undocs.org/en/A/72/6\(Sect.19\)](https://undocs.org/en/A/72/6(Sect.19))

The Regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific is available at: <http://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/publications/SDGs-Regional-Roadmap.pdf>

a) Mainstreaming the SDGs in development plans and policies or through national sustainable development plans/strategies;

ESCAP in its work with countries takes as national development plans as a framework to operate in to be able to respond to the demands of member States and ensure policy coherence. The following are some examples of ESCAP's work on mainstreaming the SDGs in national planning through multisectoral and sectoral frameworks.

Multi-sectoral

ESCAP established a rapid response facility (RRF) to provide quick and effective response to countries in support of the different thematic areas and priority issues of the Regional Road Map. In 2017, missions were deployed to 10 countries in Asia and the Pacific (Bhutan, Mongolia, Pakistan, Samoa, Cambodia, Timor-Leste, Lao PDR, Kiribati and Sri Lanka). RRF missions focused on a wide range of issues such as strengthening national statistical systems including the identification and of addressing SDG data and statistics gaps (including visualization); supporting integrated systems analysis to help understand SDG interlinkages and identify policy priorities; supporting national follow up and review including through Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs); facilitating stakeholder participation in SDG implementation; and supporting trade facilitation, integration and LDC graduation.

In support of increasing the coherence and alignment of UN operational activities, RRF missions at the national level are implemented in the context of the work of UN Country Team (UNCTs). The RRF secretariat is requested to inform the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator (UNRC) of the intended scope of work of the mission, including details of the duration and purpose.

Target countries are those with limited capacities in data mapping, collection and visualization; those embarking on national planning processes that can benefit from integrated systems analysis; countries on the verge of LDC graduation; countries requiring support with convening the multiple stakeholders needed to implement, follow up and review the SDGs; countries undertaking VNRs; countries embarking on UNDAF process.

ESCAP has established a Sustainable Development Goals Help Desk (SDG Help Desk) to support policy makers from member States in the Asia-Pacific region with tools, methodologies and opportunities for sharing best practices on developing effective strategies, policies and institutional mechanisms for implementation of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and the SDGs. The SDG Help Desk is designed to serve as the primary modality for coordinating ESCAP's support to member States in specific priority areas such as integration of the SDGs in national planning, stakeholder engagement, effective follow-up and review, and building partnerships for SDG implementation. The Help Desk will be launched at the fifth session of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development in 2018 and can be accessed at: <https://sustdev.unescap.org/>

Gender

ESCAP's work on building capacity and advocating for enabling legislative frameworks for women entrepreneurs to be able to reach their full potential, for policy interventions and investment to promote women's transformative leadership in the region and for promoting the integration of gender concerns into national planning and budgetary processes as well as the institutionalization of gender-responsive

budgeting across Asia-Pacific, governments to harness e-government as a tool towards women's empowerment, has strengthened the application of gender-responsive budgeting in national contexts and enhanced dialogue and partnerships around sustainable financing for achieving gender equality and the 2030 Agenda. Governments in the region have committed to follow-up activities to fully integrate gender concerns into the national planning and budgetary processes, e.g. Lao People's Democratic Republic, Cambodia and China.

Environment

ESCAP launched a methodology that takes stock of the "indivisible" nature of the 2030 Agenda and the three dimensions of sustainable development—economic prosperity, social justice and environmental protection—and applies systems thinking approach to integration of the SDGs into national planning. Further illustrating the application of integrated and systems thinking approaches is a selection of case studies. Country case studies describe the applications in Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, and Fiji with SDG 6 on water and sanitation planning at the core. A case study on SDG 11 on sustainable urban development applies systems thinking principles including best practices from Japan, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, and Thailand in relation to urban metabolism and natural resource efficiency. Regional case studies highlight emerging, persistent, and systemic issues, including microplastics, wastewater management, and gender-sensitive access to sanitation. The theme of the integrated approach will be featured on the SDG Help Desk through interactive methodologies, tools and various knowledge products to further assist member states in integrating the SDGs into national planning.

Through its work on Integrated Resource Recovery Center (IRRC) ESCAP supported developing countries in the region to achieve SDG 12 through integration of 3R principles (reduce, reuse, recycle) and resource efficiency in their national development plans (target 12.5).

Statistics

In 2016, member States and development partners in Asia and the Pacific agreed to the Collective Vision and Framework for Action by the Asia-Pacific Statistics Community to enable and empower national statistics systems to lead development and delivery of innovative, trusted and timely products and services for urgent and evolving statistical requirements of the 2030 Agenda. Consensus was established through a series of subregional and regional consultations organized by ESCAP, under the guidance of the Committee on Statistics.

Guided by this collective vision, regional initiatives in the areas of economic statistics, population and social statistics, civil registration and vital statistics, gender statistics, environment statistics, disaster-related statistics and modernization were adjusted and realigned to contribute directly to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. ESCAP statistical products and services, including the database and the statistical yearbook, provided critical insights on the baseline status and progress of SDG implementation for enhanced awareness of effective strategy and policy options for inclusive and sustainable development. These products also guided the development of statistical work plans and national strategies for development of statistics through improved understanding of the current data availability, gaps and capacity needs.

b) Mainstreaming the SDGs in sectoral strategies, including specific SDG/target strategies;

ESCAP's work on LDC graduation on SDGs

Macroeconomic policy

ESCAP, in collaboration with the Royal Government of Cambodia, co-organised a regional workshop, ***Strengthening Development of Least Developed Countries in Asia and the Pacific to Support Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development***, to support the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action for LDCs, including its support for the smooth transition of LDCs graduation processes. The meeting was held in October 2017 in Cambodia, where 11 of the region's 12 LDCs participated. The workshop reviewed progress of LDCs in the region in implementing the Istanbul Programme of Action for LDCs, shared knowledge among policymakers and researchers on ways to effectively leverage development cooperation partnerships, and discussed ways to enhance regional economic cooperation and integration of LDCs, with a focus on CLM (Cambodia, Myanmar and Lao PDR) integration with other ASEAN countries. For further information, please see <http://www.unescap.org/events/csn-ldc-workshop-in-cambodia>

ESCAP organized with the Royal Government of Bhutan a regional workshop on formulating national policies and strategies in preparation for graduation from the LDC category in Bhutan in 2017. The capacity building workshop provided opportunities for policymakers from Bhutan, Lao PDR, Cambodia, Bangladesh and Myanmar to understand the usage and policy scenarios of macroeconomic models and tools to identify strategies and implement policies for LDCs post-graduation opportunities within the SDGs framework. For further information, please see <http://www.unescap.org/events/csn-ldc-workshop-in-bhutan> ESCAP has also provided advisory services for the development of a bond market in Bhutan.

There is a plan to organise a subregional workshop for the Pacific LDCs (i.e., Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and Vanuatu) to study how graduation can be made sustainable and beneficial to all segments of society as well as carrying out a cost benefit analysis of graduation and understanding the incentive structures. This will also provide a good opportunity to raise the issue of vulnerability and other forms of challenges within the context of these LDCs, which will also be aligned with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Under the Development Account Project, 11th tranche, there is a planned two-day capacity building workshop in Vanuatu during the fourth quarter of 2018 on formulating national policies and strategies in preparation for graduation, including the financing for development strategies.

Trade policy

As a part of its mandate and against the backdrop of slow growth in least developed countries, ESCAP has been providing tailor-made capacity-building and policy advice that support the Asia-Pacific economies in mainstreaming the SDGs in development plans. ESCAP organized a Regional workshop of least developed countries (LDCs) on 2-4 August 2017 in Bhutan, where the policymakers and stakeholders discussed and identified their future capacity building needs. ARTNeT group of experts on Trade and SDGs was also established in this Bhutan workshop.

Tailor-made national capacity building programmes on challenges relating to trade-related issues with special focus on LDC graduation and market access were organized in Cambodia (August and October 2017), Lao PDR (May and July 2018) and Timor Leste (November 2017). in collaboration with their Governments. The workshops also facilitated the dialogue between policy makers and stakeholders in identifying, by using an integrated approach, possible way forward for meeting the goals relating to Istanbul Programme of Action and SDGs. Advisory services were also provided to Cambodia (October 2017) and Timor Leste (November 2017) on meeting the challenges in trade and investment associated with least developed countries' graduation and to harness trade for implementation of SDGs.

To assist the Asia-Pacific least developed countries in improving their market access and improving exports, ESCAP conducted detailed studies of trade-related procedures in Bhutan, Bangladesh and Nepal to be used as baseline for the establishment of national trade and transport facilitation monitoring mechanism. ESCAP/ARTNeT also published studies on the role and impact of non-tariff measures focused on for Cambodia, Lao PDR and Myanmar.

Several regional, subregional and national capacity building workshops were also organized to build capacity of least developed countries on trade policy issues, including on how to negotiate and formulate inclusive development-friendly preferential trade agreements and policy options to enhance and diversify markets. This included a Regional workshop for least developed countries and leveraging trade as a means of implementation for the 2030 Agenda (August 2017). ESCAP also assisted Myanmar to formulate its global safeguard rules to protect domestic producers from serious injury caused by increased imports.

As part of its support to least developed countries' in simplifying trade procedures and facilitating trade for sustainable development, ESCAP also organized capacity building sessions on the Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific in Cambodia (January 2017) and Bangladesh (March 2017), as well as Myanmar (September 2017). Bangladesh and Cambodia signed the UN treaty in August 2017.

Of the 12 ESCAP least developed country members, eight are now members of WTO. Afghanistan was the latest country to accede in July 2016. Bhutan and Timor Leste are observers. Policy advisory services in the area of SME development were provided to Cambodia and the Lao People's Democratic Republic (November 2016).

Manual/Reference materials:

1. Analytical Approaches to Evaluating Preferential Trade Agreements. http://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/Analytical%20Approaches_Low%20resolution.pdf
2. A Handbook on Safeguard Rules for Least Developed Countries. <https://artnet.unescap.org/publications/books-reports/handbook-safeguard-rules-least-developed-countries>
3. A Handbook on Negotiating Development Oriented Intellectual Property Provisions in Trade and Investment Agreements. <https://artnet.unescap.org/publications/books-reports/handbook-negotiating-intellectual-property-provisions-trade-agreements>

4. Trade integration within ASEAN: The role of non-tariff measures for Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Viet Nam. <https://artnet.unescap.org/publications/books-research-reports/trade-integration-within-asean-role-non-tariff-measures-cambodia-lao>
5. For E-Learning Series on Business Process Analysis for Trade Facilitation. <http://www.unescap.org/our-work/trade-investment-innovation/trade-facilitation/bpa-course>

Capacity building/Training with training materials:

1. WTO/ESCAP- 13th ARTNeT Capacity Building Workshop on “Empirical Trade Analysis: Structural gravity estimation and counterfactuals”, 18-21 December 2017, Bangkok, Thailand
<http://www.unescap.org/events/wtoescap-13th-artnet-capacity-building-workshop-empirical-trade-analysis-trade-and-welfare>
2. ARTNeT Symposium on Preferential Trade Agreements and Inclusive Trade, 14-15 December 2017, Bangkok, Thailand
<http://www.unescap.org/events/artnet-symposium-preferential-trade-agreements-and-inclusive-trade>
3. International Conference on Cross-border Paperless Trade: Single Window in the Context of New Technological Wave, 7-8 December 2017, Moscow, Russian Federation
<http://www.unescap.org/events/international-conference-cross-border-paperless-trade-single-window-context-new-technological>
4. Workshop on International Trade of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables: The role of Standards and Quality Inspection systems, 20-21 November 2017, Bangkok, Thailand
<http://www.unescap.org/events/workshop-international-trade-fresh-fruit-and-vegetables-role-standards-and-quality-inspection>
5. ESCAP-EIF Capacity-building Workshop on Emerging Priorities in Least Developed Countries on Trade and Development, 2-3 November 2017, Bangkok, Thailand
<http://www.unescap.org/events/escap-eif-capacity-building-workshop-emerging-priorities-least-developed-countries-trade-and>
6. Reshaping Business Engagement for Achieving SDGs (ESBN), 30 October 2017, Bangkok, Thailand
<http://www.unescap.org/events/reshaping-business-engagement-achieving-sdgs-esbn>
7. Regional Consultation on eCommerce for Sustainable Development, 30 October 2017, Bangkok, Thailand
<http://www.unescap.org/events/regional-consultation-ecommerce-sustainable-development>
8. ASEAN Economic Integration Forum 2017, 14-15 September 2017, Bangkok, Thailand
<http://www.unescap.org/events/asean-economic-integration-forum-2017>

9. National workshop on Negotiating Preferential Trade Agreements, 29-31 August 2017, Bangkok, Thailand
<http://www.unescap.org/events/national-workshop-negotiating-preferential-trade-agreements>
10. Regional Workshop on Least developed countries and leveraging trade as a means of implementation for the 2030 Agenda, 2-4 August 2017, Bangkok, Thailand
<http://www.unescap.org/events/regional-workshop-least-developed-countries-and-leveraging-trade-means-implementation-2030>

Agriculture

ESCAP has 2 regional institute that work on sustainable agriculture: Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization (CSAM) in Beijing, China and Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture (CAPSA) in Bogor, Indonesia. Both institutes have contributed to SDG mainstreaming in sectoral strategies and policies. Some examples are as follows:

Regional Forum on Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization in Asia and the Pacific

The Regional Forum on Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization in Asia and the Pacific is a strategic annual event of CSAM for high-level policy dialogue and regional cooperation towards integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development into policies, strategies and frameworks of sustainable agriculture/agricultural mechanization in Member Countries. It also plays a role as an incubator of ideas for guiding CSAM's new activities since it was initiated in 2013.

The 4th Regional Forum on Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization in Asia and the Pacific was held in Hanoi, Viet Nam on 23-25 November 2016. Focusing on the theme of "Leading the Way for Climate-Smart Agriculture through Machinery and Practices", the Forum focused on how low-carbon technologies and innovative practices available across the Asia-Pacific region are distributed and applied, including conservation agriculture, biochar, direct rice seeding, straw management, and so forth. Meanwhile, a panel discussion on "How can mechanization contribute better to climate-smart agriculture?" was conducted and concluded that agricultural mechanization can play a positive role in achieving climate-smart agriculture in the realms of both adaptation and mitigation.

CSAM organized the 5th Regional Forum on Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization in Asia and the Pacific on the theme of 'Promoting Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization Strategy' (SAMS) in collaboration with the Ministry of Agricultural Development of Nepal on 12-14 December 2017 in Kathmandu, Nepal. The Forum facilitated discussion on national policy formulation, strategy development, and identification of innovative solutions for sustainable agricultural mechanization. The Forum successfully reached out to around 50 agricultural mechanization officials and experts from 16 countries and other pertinent stakeholders.

CAPSA's work on climate-resilient agriculture focused on taking local plans as the framework. The main outputs of this work were a Training Manual on 'Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) to Support Local

Planning for Climate-resilient Agriculture’ (translated into Burmese, December 2016) and 3 provincial **Workshops on ‘Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) to Support Local Planning for Climate-resilient Agriculture’** in September 2016.

In collaboration with the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP), CAPSA also organized a Policy Analysis Workshop: ‘Transition towards Sustainable Agriculture in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – Strategic Implementation, Follow Up and Review’, in November 2016 in Bogor, Indonesia.

c) Data and statistical capacity building;

Normative work for SDGs

ESCAP supported SDG data and statistics through substantive inputs and facilitation of the formulation of a collective vision and framework for multi-stakeholder action in the Asia-Pacific region to transform official statistics for the SDGs. This was achieved through organizing a regional conference for consultation with a wide range of stakeholders, as well as a series of sub-regional events for further inputs. The resulting ‘collective vision and framework for action by the Asia-Pacific statistical community’, which particularly emphasizes related capacity strengthening, was also consulted with the Governing Council of SIAP at its 12th session, and subsequently endorsed by the Committee on Statistics at its fifth session in December 2016. In March 2017, a regional conference was conducted to discuss with a mix of senior officials and experts, regional strategies for successful implementation of the collective vision and for developing and implementing national comprehensive indicator frameworks.

ESCAP has further aligned its work in all domains of statistics with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs.

1. Civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS)

The Regional Action Framework (RAF) on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) in Asia and the Pacific sets the framework for the regional initiative to ‘Get Every One in the Picture’ during the Asia Pacific CRVS Decade (2015-2024). As part of the reporting structure of the RAF, 38 members and associate members have submitted baseline report to the ESCAP Secretariat by the end of 2017. Information on national targets and baseline data was made available on www.getinthepicture.org and fed into a regional synthesis report which was presented to the 72nd Commission session in May 2016. The key findings were condensed into an advocacy brochure labelled ‘CRVS Decade in Asia and the Pacific -The situation at the beginning of the CRVS Decade’. ESCAP continued to advocate for the “Get Every One in the Picture’ initiative by regular dissemination of news on CRVS, advocacy materials developed in collaboration with partners as well as continuous improvements to the regional platform for CRVS www.getinthepicture.org. In addition to the regular dissemination efforts, a side event to the Fourth Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development was held in March 2017. The event focused on the importance of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) to eradicate poverty in Asia and the Pacific was held together with

UNHCR, Secretariat for the Pacific Community (SPC), World Vision and the Thai Health Information Standards Development Centre in the Ministry of Public Health.

The second and third meeting of the Regional Steering Group on Asia and the Pacific was convened in September 2016 and October 2017. The second meeting reviewed the achievements and main challenges from the baseline and national target reports from 37 countries (submitted at the time) on the implementation of the Regional Action Framework on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific, and made recommendations to governments and development partners to maintain the momentum and accelerate progress by leveraging the emphasis on the SDGs. The Third meeting focused on the preparations for the mid-term review of the CRVS Decade in 2019 as well as on establishing task forces to develop materials in a range of technical areas related to CRVS. The Regional Steering Group further reviewed guidance notes for countries on the link between CRVS and electoral registrars, how to establish CRVS Coordination mechanisms and develop national CRVS strategies.

2. Economic statistics

ESCAP's economic statistics work is organized within the framework of the Regional Programme for the improvement of Economic Statistics (RPES) which was endorsed by the member States at the second session of the Committee on Statistics in 2010. The substantive scope of the Programme is delineated by the Core Set of Economic Statistics which was endorsed by the Commission in resolution 67/10. The regional coordination of the Programme is led by the Steering Group comprising member countries (NSO and Central Bank representatives), development partners and ESCAP Statistics Division as ESCAP. The Steering Group meets yearly as part of the Asia-Pacific Economic Statistics Week to review the implementation of the Regional Programme.

Four Steering Group Task Forces were formed in 2016 to work on: (i) Capacity Screening 2017; (ii) Asia-Pacific Economic Statistics Week 2017; (iii) Quality Assurance Frameworks for Economic Statistics; and (iv) Statistical Business Registers. The members of these task forces are ESCAP, development partners and countries. The Capacity Screening is a survey conducted in accordance with the milestones of the Regional Programme across the national statistical systems of the region to monitor the implementation of the Regional Programme for the improvement of Economic Statistics.

3. Population and social statistics

The implementation plan of the Regional Strategy to Improve Population and Social Statistics in Asia and the Pacific under the guidance of a Friends of the Chair Group reflects the reformulation of the goals and targets and priority areas for regional collaboration, in alignment with the regional collective vision and framework for action by the Asian-Pacific statistical community to transform national statistical systems to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The implementation plan was endorsed by the Committee on Statistics at its 5th session in December 2016. Tasked by the Committee on Statistics, ESCAP also established a Regional Steering Group (RSG) on population and social statistics to provide directions and guide implementation of the Regional Strategy. The first meeting of RSG was held in August 2017.

4. Disaster statistics

In 2014, ESCAP adopted resolution 70/2, on Disaster-related Statistics, which established an expert group involving statisticians and experts on disaster management. During 2016 and 2017, the Expert Group conducted a series of pilot studies and consultations with expert group members and developed a disaster-related statistics framework (DRSF) and guidelines for implementation, including the specifications for a basic range of disaster-related statistics, as a resource for members states for improving disaster-related statistics. DRSF provides a key reference for harmonization and improved comparability of data that are used to produce indicators for the international monitoring frameworks (SDGs and Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction). The final draft DRSF and guidelines, is the main and final output from this Expert Group. Although it was developed under a regional mandate, the group received feedback that the output has relevance and value added globally. The DRSF will undergo further review, internationally, during 2018 and the Expert Group will submit its final report to the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific in May 2018. Future work by ESCAP in this domain is expected to focus on providing further support to national institutions with implementation of the new framework.

Data and analytical work for SDGs

The ESCAP Statistical database contains time series data for over 400 statistical indicators on development issues, including Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) indicators for which data are currently available. Data are disseminated online and through various ESCAP reports, mainly through the Statistical Yearbook for Asia and the Pacific.

In 2016, the Statistical Division initiated the re-development of its statistical information system to improve user interface and enhance dissemination. The re-structuring of the core statistical database also increased flexibility and use by allowing multiple indicators frameworks such as the SDGs and to disseminate data through a range of data products. The statistical database, including the newly added SDG indicators, served as basis for the preparation of the SDG baseline report component of the Statistical Yearbook 2016 with data extracted from the database and shared with the team of experts to draft analytical inputs to be prepared. A new aggregation was also developed as part of the system to make more regional aggregates available based on limited country data. A set of tools (SQL queries, pivot tables) and procedures have been developed to prepare tables on data availability for SDG indicators.

The 2016 edition of the Statistical Yearbook was devoted to assessing the baseline status of the region and the sub-regions against Agenda 2030 goals and targets. The report was launched on 10 July 2017 during the High-Level Political Forum, in New York. It consists of three different parts namely, regional snapshot, goal-by-goal progress assessment, and conclusions. The report establishes a baseline, assesses regional progress since 2000 and identifies the gaps which need to be closed if the SDGs are to be achieved by 2030.

The 2017 edition of the Statistical Yearbook for Asia and the Pacific is structured around 3 core components: (1) the online databases (ESCAP and SDG subset); (2) Country SDG datasheets; and (3) a review of SDG data availability in the Asia-Pacific region.

Technical assistance and capacity building for SDGs

ESCAP initiated and tested a consolidated approach to SDG implementation in Mongolia (October 2017) and Pakistan (November 2017). The approach combines ESCAP's systems approach to assessing SDG linkages and stakeholder engagement with its approaches to benchmarking progress on the SDGs and a Diagnostic Tool for developing statistical work plans.

ESCAP's technical assistance and capacity building in sectoral statistics has been aligned with the 2030 Agenda and monitoring requirements of the SDGs. ESCAP has programmes in the following domains of statistics:

1. Civil Registration and vital statistics (CRVS)

The Project to Strengthen the National Capacity in Producing and Disseminating Vital Statistics from Civil Registration Records in Asia and the Pacific (December 2016 to December 2017) was implemented with funding from the Bloomberg Philanthropies Data for Health Initiative and will be followed up by a second phase in 2018-2019. The Project included two sequential training workshops for 8 countries in Asia, as well as the follow-up technical guidance to project countries to help process and analyze data from civil registration records, leading to the drafting and completion of national vital statistics reports. The workshops used the Draft Guidelines and Template for Developing a Vital Statistics Report developed by Statistics Norway in collaboration with ESCAP and ECA. The Project also supported the development of the second version of the guidelines for setting and monitoring the goals and targets of the Regional Action Framework on CRVS in Asia and the Pacific as well as missions to Bhutan, Mongolia and Viet Nam to advise the national CRVS focal points and other relevant stakeholders on implementation of the Regional Action Framework.

ESCAP, as a member of the Brisbane Accord Group (also including UNICEF, UNFPA, SPC, WHO, Universities and the Pacific Civil Registrar's Network) on CRVS in the Pacific (BAG), collaborated with ESCAP of the Pacific Community and other BAG members to conduct a training workshop on data analysis and report writing for civil registration data and vital statistics. The BAG and ESCAP also co-organised a workshop for small Pacific island states to share experiences and identify ways forward to improve national CRVS systems in March 2017. In October 2017, ESCAP collaborated with BAG partners on a workshop on Disaster Preparation and Response for 20 members of the Pacific Civil Registrars Network leading to improved planning for disasters by civil registrars in the Pacific.

National grants were disbursed to 5 countries and a regional workshop on outcomes and lessons learnt from these technical assistance projects was held in April 2016. The workshop included training on how to establish a national coordination mechanism and develop national strategies for CRVS.

In December 2017, ESCAP organized a workshop for national CRVS focal points from 11 countries, focusing on developing national CRVS strategies and setting up national CRVS coordination mechanisms.

2. Economic statistics

The economic statistics activities of ESCAP Statistics Division have focused further on analytical capacity building and engagement of member States in the delivery of regional knowledge products such as national studies and reports as part of the outputs of the newly established Steering Group task forces. Papers that were presented at the Asia-Pacific Economic Statistics Week 2016 and 2017 are available on the ESCAP Communities website as a resource and the report of the Week has identified priority issues for improving the quality of economic statistics were discussed.

As a result of the economic statistics, regional project support meetings and country-level economic statistics technical assistance were delivered for Cambodia, Lao PDR, Maldives and Viet Nam, planned for Bhutan and Sri Lanka. Draft proposals for national studies were also produced for 8 countries. The national studies by Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Tajikistan and Vietnam were also developed in preparation for and during project support meetings.

3. Population and social statistics

Disseminating internationally agreed classifications and standards in key domains of population and social statistics:

ESCAP partnered with other agencies to organize and/or substantively contributed to: (i) the 2nd Regional Meeting on Crime and criminal justice statistics in Asia and the Pacific (in collaboration with UNODC, the Korean Institute of Criminology, and the Thai Institute of Justice); (ii) UNSD/ESCAP regional meeting on Disability Measurement and Statistics in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 2020 World Population and Housing Census Programme (in collaboration with UN Statistical Division); (iii) United Nations Expert Group Meeting on the Guidelines and Principles for Disability Statistics; (iv) High-level Intergovernmental Meeting (HLIGM) on the Midpoint Review of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022; and (v) ESCAP/UNSD regional workshop on strengthening the collection and use of international migration data for the achievement of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development in January 2017. These workshops brought together statistical and policy experts from member States who reviewed and shared national experiences in applying internationally agreed classifications and measurement standards as well as ways forward to further national capacity strengthening in these areas.

Providing technical support to governments on improving data and statistics related to socially inclusive policy priorities:

ESCAP partnered with relevant agencies to support: i) the national statistical office of Timor-Leste in further consultations on data for promoting social inclusion through the national disability policy (in collaboration with UNESCO and Trinity College) in May 2016; ii) the National Institute of Statistics of Cambodia on consultation organized by the Disability Affairs Council with 24 government ministries and institutions, provinces and municipalities as well as non-governmental organizations to strengthen data and statistics related to disability (in collaboration with UNESCO and Trinity College); iii) project teams from selected countries in South Asia in their continued work on data analysis through co-organizing the

Second Technical Working Session on Child Deprivation Profiling (in collaboration with UNICEF); and iv) ESCAP, UNODC, Thai Institute of Justice and Korean Institute on Criminology co-organized a Regional Training on Victimization Surveys in May-June 2017.

4. Gender statistics

ESCAP in collaboration with the Economic Commission of Europe and the Economic and Social Commission of West Asia, organized a workshop “Improving gender statistics for advancement of gender equality and women’s empowerment” in June 2016 that brought together 36 participants from 15 countries to review achievements in jointly implementing an inter-regional project to strengthen gender-responsive statistics, share good practices and identify options for sustaining and building on the achievements.

5. Environment statistics

The capacity building work of the Statistics Division in environment statistics focused on supporting countries in the initiation and improvement of their environment statistics programmes in response to demands arising from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to support policy decisions in achieving national development priorities.

In 2016, the Division initiated a series of sub-regional workshops on environment statistics to strengthen capacity of National Statistical Systems on basic approaches to environment statistics, including the Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics (FDES) and the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA), and strategic planning for improving environment statistics. Sub-regional workshops were held for the Pacific countries (September 2016), South-East Asian countries (November 2016), South and South-West Asian countries (February 2017), East and North-East Asian countries (March 2017) and North and Central Asian countries (November 2017).

The Division continued the implementation of the United Nations Development Account project entitled “Strengthening Statistical Capacities for Building Macroeconomic and Sustainable Development Indicators in Latin America, the Caribbean and Asia-Pacific countries”. A letter of agreement was signed between ESCAP and the Central Bureau of Statistics, Nepal to support its first compilation of land and forest accounts. ESCAP reviewed Nepal’s pilot land accounts and the work plan for the forest account (May 2017). Assessment/training/work-planning missions were conducted in the Maldives (May 2016) and in Vanuatu (October 2016). Vanuatu released the assessment report and workplan (February 2017) and initiated pilot land accounts. In collaboration with the ESCAP’s subregional office for the Pacific, energy accounts were piloted with the Federated States of Micronesia (May 2017).

In collaboration with Environment and Development Division, a project on improving the sustainable use of oceans (SDG 14) was initiated. This will address both ocean governance (coherence and comprehensiveness of policies and institutions) and data and statistics (ocean accounts). A concept note was developed on this approach and a scoping report was completed for Indonesia.

Technical advisory services, including hands-on training sessions, were provided to many countries in the region to strengthen environment statistics in accordance with FDES and SEEA:

- Technical assistance and training on SEEA in Fiji on Water, Energy and Waste Accounts in collaboration with United Nations Statistics Division in September 2016; the accounts were finalized in February 2017;
- Assessment and training mission to Malaysia in collaboration with United Nations Statistics Division (focus on Water) in September 2016;
- Scoping mission to Myanmar Central Statistical Organization in collaboration with the World Wildlife Foundation to assess priorities and capacity for strengthening environment statistics in November 2016; a work plan and inventory of relevant forest statistics was initiated in February 2017; A technical advisory mission to inventory and compile data for pilot forest accounts was conducted in August 2017;
- Training/work planning mission to BPS Statistics Indonesia in preparation for pilot ecosystem, energy, material flows, land and water accounts in March 2017; Training on FDES was provided in July 2017;
- Assessment, training and work planning mission to Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics in collaboration with UNEP/UNDP Poverty Environment Initiative (PEI) to assess data availability, conduct training and work planning in support of a pilot project linking environment and poverty in May 2017;
- Technical assistance to Thailand National Statistical Office in support of the preparation of a Natural Resources and Environment Statistics Development Plan in Q2 2017;
- An FDES stakeholder training workshop in the Philippines in collaboration with the Philippines Statistical Authority (PSA) in June 2017;
- An Regional Expert Workshop on Land Accounting for SDG Monitoring and Reporting was convened in Bangkok in September 2017. This brought together countries at various stages of implementing their SEEA land accounts. Participants benefited from sharing technical and institutional solutions as well as discussions with other agencies on opportunities for collaboration;
- In collaboration with UN Environment, a training/work planning mission was conducted in Kabul, Afghanistan October 2017). This resulted in initiating work on land and water accounting. As well, advice was provided on establishing an environment statistics unit in the NSO and on creating an environmental data center; and
- SD, jointly with SIAP, conducted a week-long Regional Training Course on Climate Change-Related Statistics (Chiba, Japan, November 2017). This brought together existing SEEA and FDES modules (e.g., energy, air emissions, water, land) adapted to the needs for monitoring climate change drivers, impacts, mitigation and adaptation.

6. Modernizations of statistical information systems

ESCAP, in collaboration with The Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data organized an event in April 2016 to help address the challenge of data revolution for 2030 Agenda by presenting the aims and functions of the Global Partnership to participants at the Asia Pacific Forum for Sustainable Development

in April 2016. The Global Partnership aims to sustain political attention, connecting people, institutions and initiatives, build trust around data sharing, and bring people together to solve problems related to data capacity, gaps, access and use. ESCAP is a member of the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data.

ESCAP held the Forum on Innovative Data Methods for SDGs in May 2017 in Incheon, Republic of Korea. The meeting brought together key innovators in the areas of machine learning, artificial intelligence, remote sensing and satellite imagery, the use of unstructured data for the construction of knowledge graphs and other types of data linking, crowdsourcing algorithms for social good, and open algorithms and secure computational platforms, among others. The SD portion of the meeting focused on the role that modern analytical methods, analytical infrastructure, and data management approaches can have in the region's developing economies. The meeting concluded by establishing a need for a regional data science collaboration platform, to enable knowledge sharing, training, and scaling-up and validating new research methods within country contexts. The proposed platform became known as the "SDG Data Hub."

In summary, ESCAP's work on statistics has contributed to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs in the following ways:

SDG 17: In 2016, Member States and development partners agreed to the Collective Vision and Framework for Action by the Asia-Pacific Statistics Community to enable and empower national statistics systems to lead development and delivery of innovative, trusted and timely products and services for urgent and evolving statistical requirements of Agenda 2030. Consensus was established through a series of subregional and regional consultations organized by ESCAP, under the guidance of the Committee on Statistics.

Guided by this collective vision, regional initiatives in the areas of economic statistics, population and social statistics, civil registration and vital statistics, gender statistics, environment statistics, disaster-related statistics and modernization were adjusted and realigned to contribute directly to the 2030 Agenda. ESCAP statistical products and services, including the database and statistical yearbook, provided critical insights on the baseline status and progress of SDG implementation for enhanced awareness of effective strategy and policy options for inclusive and sustainable development. These products also guided the development of statistical work plans and national strategies for development of statistics through improved understanding of the current data availability, gaps and capacity needs.

SDG 16: The Asia Pacific CRVS Decade from 2015 to 2024 supports enhanced registration of vital events including birth registration (SDG 16.9). 38 Asia-Pacific countries have submitted national targets and baseline reports as part of the requirements of the Regional Action Framework on CRVS in Asia and the Pacific; at least 30 countries have set up national CRVS coordination mechanisms; and at least 15 countries have developed national CRVS strategies with 14 more countries are currently in the process of developing strategies. The progress in the implementation of the Regional Action Framework and the broader strengthening of national CRVS systems demonstrated the effectiveness of regional consensus and coordination for national action.

d) Science, technology and innovation for the SDGs;

According to ESCAP's conference structure, there is one unified committee on Information and communications technology and Science, technology and innovation. However, the work programmes on information and communications technology and, science, technology and innovation fall under 2 separate subprogrammes. Therefore information on normative, analytical and technical cooperation work will be provided as they relate to the separate work programmes.

Information and communications technology work is implemented in close coordination with work on disaster risk reduction and management in ESCAP. Disasters in Asia-Pacific are becoming increasingly complex, tending to affect multiple countries, and bringing about cascading socio-economic impacts. In addition, despite the considerable progress made in using modern technology applications by some advanced economies in the region, the nature and scope of the growing digital divide in information and communications technology (ICT) and in the operational use of space applications remain challenges for the region. This disparity is exacerbating gaps in access to innovative technologies for disaster risk reduction and sustainable development. Given the interconnected nature of ICT, space applications and disaster risk reduction, supporting member States through strengthened regional cooperation in these areas should be considered as a matter of urgent priority.

Opportunities exist in strengthening regional cooperation. Until recently, innovations in ICT, space applications and disaster risk reduction and management were expensive and inaccessible to many countries in the Asia-Pacific region. However, over the past several years, the cost of access to innovative technologies and their applications has been reduced significantly. Spurred on by this digital revolution and intensifying extreme and transboundary weather events, countries have recognized common opportunities and challenges. The need to develop regional approaches in seamless ICT connectivity, using space technology and its applications, sharing of geospatial information, disaster information management and risk reduction has moved up in the policy-setting agenda of the region.

Normative work

The Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway initiative, which directly contributes to the achievement of SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure, aims to increase the availability and affordability of broadband Internet across Asia and the Pacific, by strengthening the underlying Internet infrastructure in the region. The initiative, administered by ESCAP, encompasses regional Internet maps and policy analysis to support countries in their efforts to develop a regional seamless information and communication space. The set of Internet maps developed by ESCAP and the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) feature terrestrial Internet infrastructure, including optical fiber and wireless networks, as well as the various segments of the Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway. This multi-sectoral mapping tool allows policymakers to identify weak points in terrestrial broadband infrastructure, as well as opportunities for cross-sectoral infrastructure development.

Member States endorsed the AP-IS Master Plan and the Regional Cooperation Framework Document, at the Commission Session in 2017, through the adoption of resolution 73/6 entitled the Implementation of the AP-IS through Regional Cooperation. In addition, 87 external events, media coverages and other stakeholder interests mentioned the AP-IS initiative. Furthermore, the Government of Bangladesh financed the 1st session of the AP-IS Steering Committee in Dhaka in November 2017. It also proposed an amendment to the Agreement on the Asian Highway for ICT infrastructure co-deployment, and a working group discussed this further in December 2017.

Under the ESCAP-led Regional Drought Mechanism, officials from four member States benefitted from training on GIS and remote sensing with support from the Regional Service Nodes in China and India, respectively. Five member States expressed, through letters, their appreciation for ESCAP support on skill and institutional development on setting up and operating geo-portals, geo-database and geospatial data management for multi-hazard warning systems in the Pacific region. In addition, a declaration was adopted by the space leaders at the Asia-Pacific Space Leaders' Forum on Applications of Space Technology for Disaster Risk Reduction in New Delhi held in November 2016 and the vision and mission for the Asia-Pacific Plan of Action for Space Applications (2018-2030) was agreed at 21th session of the Intergovernmental Consultative Committee (ICC) on the Regional Space Application Programme for Sustainable Development (RESAP) held in October 2017.

Analytical work for SDGs

To improve knowledge and awareness of member States for effective strategies and policy options, the key publications, among others, included the following:

- State of ICT in Asia and the Pacific 2016;
- Artificial Intelligence and Broadband Divide: State of ICT Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific 2017; and
- Asia-Pacific Disaster Report 2017: Leave No One Behind – Disaster Resilience for Sustainable Development.

In addition, to foster regional knowledge sharing the following papers and reports were developed:

- Disasters in Asia and the Pacific: 2015 Year in Review;
- Building a Resilient Digital Economy: Fostering SMEs in Central Asia;
- Promoting Investment in the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway;
- The Impact of Universal Service Funds on Fixed-Broadband Deployment and Internet Adoption in Asia and the Pacific;
- A Study of ICT Connectivity for the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI): Enhancing the Collaboration in China-Central Asia Corridor;
- Planning processes, policies and initiatives in ICTD education at institutions of higher learning (IHLs) in Asia and the Pacific;
- Updated Analysis of the Broadband Infrastructure in Asia Pacific;
- A Pre-Feasibility Study on the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway in the ASEAN Sub-region;

- Towards a new Asia-Pacific strategy using space applications to support the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: an opportunity for the space community to shape a sustainable future;
- ASEAN-ESCAP study on drought in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Viet Nam; and
- Summary Response Survey 2017 (of RESAP).

Utilizing these knowledge products as the basis to build capacities of member States the following events were organized:

- Building Regional Tsunami Awareness (May 2016);
- First Pacific Regional Workshop on Multi-Hazard Risk Assessment and Early Warning Systems with Applications of Space and Geographic Information systems (September 2016);
- Regional Workshop on Resilient ICT Connectivity for the Knowledge Economy, SDGs and the WSIS Goals (September 2016);
- Eighth session of the SPECA Thematic Working Group on Knowledge-based Development (September 2016);
- Asia-Pacific Regional Internet and Development Dialogue (October 2016);
- Meeting on the Regional Review of the World Summit on the Information Society Action Line Implementation (October 2016);
- 20th Meeting of the Regional Interagency Working Group on Information and Communication Technology (November 2016);
- Intensive one-month training on national geo portal and geo database for disaster risk reduction and sustainable development (February/March 2017);
- Building resilience to water-related disaster risks: the case for regional cooperation (May 2017);
- First Expert Group Meeting for development of a Pacific strategy on regional knowledge hubs for early warning systems (June 2017);
- First session of the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway (AP-IS) Steering Committee (November, 2017);
- Twenty-First Meeting of the Regional Interagency Working Group on Information and Communication Technology (December 2017); and
- AP-IS Steering Group Meeting (December 2017).

Gender dimensions of strategies and policies were addressed in many events organized during the biennium. In particular, Mainstreaming Gender in Internet and Development in the Asia-Pacific Region was organized, jointly with the Internet Society (ISOC), in Bangkok, Thailand in October 2016. Furthermore, 5 country-level reports on Planning processes, policies and initiatives in ICTD education at institutions of higher learning (IHLs) in Asia and the Pacific were published which specifically examined gender disparity in ICTD education in IHLs in selected countries.

The ICT and DRR Gateway, an online platform for sharing knowledge and information was also updated with new features.

Technical assistance and capacity building for SDGs

Through its Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development (APCICT) located in Incheon, Republic of Korea, ESCAP has continued to strengthen its work of building the human and institutional capacities of member States on using ICT for sustainable development through its flagship capacity building programmes. In response to the need to support women and women entrepreneurs on ICT access and usage, APCICT launched in June 2016 the Women ICT Frontier Initiative (WIFI). WIFI aims to strengthen the capacity of women entrepreneurs in the region to utilize ICT in support of their business as well as strengthen capacity of government leaders to create an enabling environment for ICT-empowered women entrepreneurs. APCICT's work over 2016-2017 contributed to the SDGs in the following ways:

SDG 4: APCICT sensitized the youth on the enabling role of ICT in sustainable development by strengthening the coverage of ICTD in higher education. The Centre promoted the “Engaged Learning” initiative that links ICTD classroom learning with community development among institutions of higher learning in Asia and the Pacific.

SDG 5: APCICT enhanced gender-related knowledge and strengthened policy skills of policymakers in support of ICT-empowered women entrepreneurs. APCICT also directly supported women entrepreneurs through skill development in ICT-enabled planning, managing and expanding their businesses.

SDG 16: APCICT's Academy programme contributed to the creation of effective, accountable and inclusive institutions, sound policies and good governance at all levels. In strengthening the ICT capacities of civil servants, the Academy supported the enhancement of public service delivery, transparency and accountability, and citizen engagement. Ultimately, this also strengthened the capacities of member States to develop and implement strategies and programmes that would enable them to achieve the other SDG goals and targets.

Science, technology and innovation work is conducted in close coordination with work on Trade and Investment at ESCAP.

Normative work SDGs

Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) Advisory Board of the Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Executive Secretary of ESCAP was set up and held its first two meetings (7 March 2016 and 3-4 October 2016), providing advice on issues, challenges and opportunities for STI in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals; and how ESCAP can best support regional STI collaboration and cooperation.

The first session of the Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation, was held in Bangkok on 5-7 October 2016, discussing how to best to share best practices and on facilitating knowledge-sharing and collective action through the possible establishment of an Asia-Pacific innovation forum, and ways of facilitating knowledge-sharing between the various subregional

science, technology and innovation cooperation mechanisms (<http://www.unescap.org/events/committee-information-and-communications-technology-science-technology-and-innovation-first>).

In addition, to link regional expertise and needs to global United Nations STI initiatives, ESCAP convened panels at the Comprehensive High-level Midterm Review of the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 in Antalya, Turkey in May 2016 and at the Third Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development in Bangkok in March 2017, that included regional members of the High-level Panel on Technology Bank for Least Developed Countries and the 10 Member Group to support the Technology Facilitation Mechanism.

Analytical work for SDGs

A theme study on Harnessing Science, Technology and Innovation for Inclusive and Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific (http://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/STI_Theme_Study.pdf) was produced for the 72nd Commission session. The publication is a call to action for regional collaboration on Science, Technology and Innovation (STI), highlighting the breadth and dynamism of the STI agenda in the region and underscoring a diverse range of opportunities for private sector innovation, grassroots innovation, international technology transfer, frugal innovation, impact investment, enabling research excellence and supporting mass entrepreneurship.

Some examples of analytical outputs on science, technology and innovation are the following:

- ESCAP Trade Insight Series. No. 15-20
<http://www.unescap.org/resource-series/trade--insights>
 - Issue 16: Impacts of Imported Technology in Asia-Pacific Developing Countries: Evidence from Firm-Level Data
 - Issue 17: Trade in the Digital Age: Can e-Residency be an enabler for Asia-Pacific Developing Countries?
- Trade, Investment and Innovation Working Paper Series,
<http://www.unescap.org/resource-series/tiid-working--papers>
 - No. 3/2017, Science, technology, and innovation in international investment agreements in the Asia-Pacific region, October 2017
- Innovative Financing for Development in Asia and the Pacific,
<http://www.unescap.org/resources/innovative-financing-development-asia-and-pacific>
- Artificial Intelligence in Asia and the Pacific,
<http://www.unescap.org/resources/artificial-intelligence-asia-and-pacific>
- Digital and Virtual Currencies for Sustainable Development,
<http://www.unescap.org/resources/digital-and-virtual-currencies-sustainable-development>
- ARTNeT Policy Briefs, No. 49-50:
 - The role of ICT in implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement: some preliminary reflections

In 2016-2017, APCTT developed the following reports, online periodicals and analytical outputs:

- Report on the activities of the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology (2016)
- Asia-Pacific Tech Monitor: APCTT developed 8 issues of Tech Monitor featuring articles on relevant special themes such as: Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) to achieve 2030 sustainable development agenda (Jan-Mar 2016) in support to the theme of the 72nd ESCAP Commission Session held in 2016; Technology transfer through foreign direct investment: policy approaches in the Asia-Pacific region (Apr-Jun 2016); Social innovation for inclusive and sustainable development: current practices and challenges (Jul-Sep 2016); Digital technology and economy fostering inclusive development (Oct-Dec 2016); Sustainable energy technologies: challenges and opportunities for the Asia-Pacific (Jan-Mar 2017), in support to the theme of the 73rd ESCAP Commission Session held in 2017; Science technology and innovation for achieving SDGs in the Asia-Pacific (Apr-Jun 2017); Innovation, technology transfer and management for safe and sustainable water (Jul-Sep 2017).; and Big Data innovation for sustainable development and humanitarian action (Oct-Dec 2017). (<http://www.apctt.org/technology-intelligence>)
- Value Added Technology Information Service (VATIS) Updates: APCTT published 30 issues of VATIS Updates on biotechnology (8), food processing (4), new and renewable energy (8), ozone layer protection (6), and waste management (4) which disseminated information on latest technological innovations with potential commercial applications and important technological events. (<http://www.apctt.org/technology-intelligence>)
- National Innovation System (NIS) training manual - “NIS Diagnosis and STI Strategy Development to Achieve National Sustainable Development Goals”: The training manual describes the process of adopting a NIS framework, and strategies to strengthen the process of creating and diffusing new technologies and innovation within a nation’s economy. (<http://apctt.org/nis/sites/all/themes/nis/pdf/NIS%20Training%20Manual.pdf>)
- Case Study on Policies, Institutions and Processes to Support Value Chains for Seed Development for Pulses, Legumes and Oil Crops in the Dry Zone of Myanmar: The case study highlights the critical issues and barriers for seed industry development in Myanmar and supports policymakers in making informed decisions related to strengthening the value chain for seed industry. (http://www.satnetasia.org/sites/default/files/apctt_pip_case_study.pdf)
- Policy Brief on Supporting Value Chains for Seed Development of pulses, legumes and oil crops in Myanmar’s Dry Zone: The policy brief highlights the barriers and constraints to seed enterprise development in Myanmar’s dry zone. (http://uncapsa.org/sites/default/files/Factsheet_Seed-value-chain_0.pdf)

Technical cooperation and capacity building for SDGs

A Workshop on using technology in support of Trade for Micro, Small and Medium Sized Enterprises was held in Bangkok on 30 November–1 December 2016. The workshop contributed to (i) conceptualize and develop concrete and specific development solutions that will help Asia-Pacific’s SMEs adopt and use e-commerce and online payment systems to grow sales in international markets, tap into global supply chains, and fuel their overall growth and competitiveness; (ii) governments’ understanding of the necessary policy environment to allow SMEs to engage meaningfully in online commerce; and (iii) concrete initiatives and public-private partnerships in such areas as e-commerce logistics and trade

facilitation, and online payments, for SME capacity-building. (<http://www.unescap.org/events/escap-sustainable-development-goals-week-2016-workshop-using-technology-support-trade-micro>)

The workshop was preceded by an ADBI, ESCAP and UNCTAD meeting on Trade in the Digital Economy, held in Bangkok, Thailand on 28-29 November 2016. This meeting focused on how the digitization of products and processes is impacting the trade-development relationship. For more information, please visit the event's website: <https://www.adb.org/news/events/trade-digital-economy>

In collaboration with the World Intellectual Property Organization, ESCAP organized the Strategic Use of Intellectual Property Institutions and System for Invention, Innovation and Technological Capacity Building for Economic Competitiveness and Development in the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) of Asia and the Pacific Region on 13 and 14 December 2016 in Bangkok. The main focus of the meeting was to assess capacity of the LDCs of the region in strategic use of the intellectual property systems for the benefit of national development and economic competitiveness. The meeting discussed various initiatives of WIPO and ESCAP to support the innovation ecosystems and technological capacity building of LDCs.

In partnership with the Asia Venture Philanthropy Network, BMW Foundation, Credit Suisse and the British Council, ESCAP organized the Asia Policy Forum: Enabling the Growth of Social Economy in Asia in Bangkok on 5 June 2017. The objective of the forum was to offer a convening platform to support governments to build an enabling environment for the social economy to flourish and support policymakers in the region to foster social enterprise and impact investment for SDG progress.

ESCAP and the British Council jointly organized UNESCAP-British Council Policy Dialogue on Social Enterprise and Social Impact Investment, 27-28 September 2017, Christchurch, New Zealand, in conjunction with the Social Enterprise World Forum (SEWF) meeting. Over 40 senior government officials from 17 countries as well as key private sector figures at SEWF meeting acknowledged that social enterprises and impact investment were critical drivers of innovation for sustainable development that can play a catalytic role in advancing inclusive and sustained economic growth, shared prosperity and decent work for all.

Regional Consultation on e-Commerce for Sustainable Development was organized in Bangkok, 30 October 2017. The meeting, which was opened by H.E. Sujeewa Senasinghe, State Minister of International Trade, Sri Lanka, brought together over 25 experts and government officials to discuss ways in which to make e-commerce more inclusive and accessible to all. The meeting focused on issues such as access to finance for SMEs; fintech; paperless trade; use of online platforms for inclusive digital trade; and implementing the appropriate legal and regulatory frameworks. It was noted that e-commerce is an opportunity for including often marginalized groups and that strategies should be put in place to ensure that no one is left behind.

ESCAP organized in collaboration with WIPO a workshop on Building the Innovation and Technological Capacities of Least Developed Countries in Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok, 6-7 November 2017. It was a good opportunity to present ESCAP's work in this area (including APCTT's work) to delegates from the department of intellectual property, the ministry of science and technology and to representatives of the private sector from Bhutan, Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Nepal.

The Asia-Pacific Forum on Science and Technology Parks, Hefei City, Anhui Province, China, 27-29 November 2017 was organized by ESCAP and Hefei municipal government, in collaboration with Anhui provincial government and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, China. The Forum was attended by 74 participants from China and 43 participants from other 21 countries.

The High-Level Seminar on the Creative Economy and Copyright as Pathways to Sustainable Development was held in Bangkok, 6-8 December 2017. This seminar introduced policymakers to some of the key measures and regulatory frameworks required to benefit from opportunities presented by the creative economy. Emphasis in this seminar was given to copyright-based creative industries. The seminar discussed the contributions of the creative sector to job creation, trade and sustainable development of participating countries; shared information on the role of copyright as a key enabler for creative economy and sustainable development; and discussed the international copyright framework and its benefits for developing countries. Over 40 senior level officials and experts, including Deputy Ministers, Permanent Secretaries, Director Generals from Cambodia, Cook Islands, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kiribati, Malaysia, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Myanmar, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Thailand, Tuvalu and Viet Nam attended the seminar.

APCTT assisted member States to strengthen their national innovation systems (NISs) through enhancing innovation capacity, promoting technology transfer and deployment, enhancing competitiveness of enterprises and promoting new technology entrepreneurship. Following are some activities carried out during 2016-2017:

- NIS Phase II project: In 2016, APCTT completed implementation of the NIS Phase II project supported by the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR) of the Ministry of Science and Technology, India. Through this project, APCTT assisted the participating countries in strengthening their key NIS components through capacity-building activities for policymakers, industries, universities, R&D institutions and other relevant stakeholders in relevant areas such as: formulating and implementing strategic policies and programmes; managing technology business incubators; strengthening the enabling environment and strategies for sustainable energy options; promoting technology-based entrepreneurship; and working on new and emerging technologies. Under the NIS Phase II project, APCTT developed a NIS training manual entitled “NIS Diagnosis and STI Strategy Development to Achieve National Sustainable Development Goals”. The manual describes the process of adopting a NIS framework, and evolves strategies to strengthen the process of creating and diffusing new technologies and innovation within a nation’s economy. The manual would be useful for policymakers working within the government ministries and institutions that support technological change, as well as to researchers in and students of the economics and policy regimes of technological change. (<http://apctt.org/nis/sites/all/themes/nis/pdf/NIS%20Training%20Manual.pdf>)
- In cooperation with Yunnan Academy of Scientific and Technical Information (YASTI), China, APCTT serviced and participated in the 4th China-South Asia Expo and 2nd Forum on China-South Asia Technology Transfer and Collaborative Innovation, 12-14 June 2016, Kunming, China.
- International Workshop on Science, Technology, Innovation and Management for Water Sustainability, New Delhi, 19-20 April 2017. APCTT organized this international workshop in partnership with National Institute of Science, Technology and Development Studies (NISTADS), Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of India. Representatives and experts from five member countries namely,

Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal and Sri Lanka attended the meeting and shared their country experiences. Resource persons from Asian Institute of Technology (AIT), Thailand, and SDG Accelerator Asia Pacific, Singapore also participated and actively contributed to the workshop. Over 25 participants including policymakers, researchers, experts and practitioners from the water sector attended the meeting. The workshop provided a platform for policymakers, experts, researchers and business representatives to share knowledge and best practices on innovative technologies, their commercialization and use for providing affordable and safe water. Innovative and affordable technologies and analytical tools for sustainable water management were presented and discussed to assess their potential applications.

- International Conference on Nanotechnology for Safe and Sustainable Development and Consultative meeting on proposed ASEAN Nanosafety Networking Platform, Putrajaya, Malaysia, 2-4 May 2017. Organized in partnership with National Nanotechnology Centre (NNC), Ministry of Science, Technology, Innovation (MOSTI), Government of Malaysia, the conference aimed at identifying areas of cross-country cooperation in various critical areas of nanotechnology innovation, commercialization and safety in the Asia-Pacific, particularly in the ASEAN countries. Experts and resource persons from Indonesia, Pakistan, Philippines, Malaysia, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam presented on nanotechnology policies, innovation strategies, research commercialization, technology transfer, safety and risk governance. The conference was attended by 112 participants representing various stakeholder groups of the nanotechnology sector such as policymakers, researchers, industry and nanotechnology promotion organizations. The meeting proposed for establishing a Nanosafety networking platform for stakeholders in the ASEAN countries and to facilitate cross-border sharing of methodologies and testing procedures related to Nanosafety. As a strong outcome of this conference, APCTT received a proposal from Vietnam requesting support with regard to developing a labelling and certification system for certifying nano-products in Vietnam based on Thailand's NanoQ certification system in cooperation with NANOTEC Thailand, and for organizing a Nanosafety capacity building workshop in Vietnam for their stakeholders.
- APCTT organized a Regional Consultation on Innovation Strategies for Sustainable Development through Water-Energy-Food Nexus on 28-29 June 2017 at the United Nations Conference Centre (UNCC), Bangkok, Thailand. This Regional Consultation was a joint initiative of APCTT and Thailand Institute of Scientific and Technological Research (TISTR) of the Ministry of Science and Technology of the Royal Thai Government. The Consultation brought together over 100 technical experts, government officials, representatives from the private sector as well as officials from intergovernmental and international organizations to deliberate on opportunities, challenges and suggest relevant strategies for sustainable management of water, energy and food resources. The countries that participated and actively contributed in this regional consultation are China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam. The regional consultation concluded with specific policy recommendations for effective formulation of water, energy and food sector policies based on a “Nexus” approach. The consultation meeting also provided valuable suggestions on how to leverage existing tools, platforms and networks to facilitate regional cooperation among countries in the Asia-Pacific region on the sustainable management of food, water and energy resources thereby contributing to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2,6 and 7.
- International Innovation Fair and International Workshop on Supporting Innovative Entrepreneurs and Role of Technology Transfer, Vishakhapatnam, India, 9-11 September 2017. APCTT in partnership with Government of Andhra Pradesh, India and the Indian Innovators Association organized this international workshop. The workshop discussed the challenges and

opportunities for technology commercialization, technology transfer and adoption, intellectual property rights management and policy frameworks for technology transfer and innovation-led entrepreneurship. The workshop brought together 104 participants from academic institutions, research and development institutions, small and medium enterprises, grassroots innovators and entrepreneurs. International delegates in the workshop included senior representatives from APCTT's partner organizations in India, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakhstan and the Philippines. The participating countries included Bangladesh, Bahrain, India, Lebanon, China, Republic of Korea, Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakhstan, Morocco, Pakistan, Indonesia, Philippines, Singapore, Switzerland, Syria and Ukraine.

- International Workshop on “Promoting Biotechnology Education, Research and Knowledge Transfer in Asia and the Pacific”, Faridabad, India, 15-16 October 2017. APCTT organized the workshop jointly with United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Regional Centre for Biotechnology (RCB) of UNESCO and the Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of India and in partnership with the Ministry of Education, Culture, Science and Technology, Government of Japan. Representatives and experts from Cambodia, Indonesia, India, Japan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam, ASEAN Secretariat's Science and Technology Division shared their experiences and best practices in promoting biotechnology education and knowledge transfer. The workshop deliberated on the lessons learnt, outcomes and key take-aways for the UNESCO Biotechnology School in Asia and its Programmes. The experts discussed the necessary mechanisms for multi-lateral biotechnology research and scientist mobility in Asia and the Pacific region. The deliberations resulted in identifying the critical gaps, challenges as well as key recommendations for the biotechnology sector to deliver on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific region.
- International Conference on Green Technologies for Achieving Sustainable Development Goals, Manila, Philippines, 28 November 2017. APCTT organized this international conference as the high-level substantive segment of the APCTT's thirteenth session of Governing Council (GC), in partnership with Technology Application and Promotion Institute of the Department of Science and Technology (TAPI-DOST), Philippines. The conference deliberated on international best practices and lessons learnt in the development, transfer and adoption of green technologies. Such technologies play a critical role in fostering economic development while ensuring sustainable management of natural resources and balancing the three pillars of development - social, economic and environmental.

For further information on the above and other activities please visit <http://www.apctt.org/>

e) Multi-stakeholder partnerships

ESCAP, together with United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (UNU-IAS) has developed the “Guidelines for Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships for Sustainable Development Goals Implementation in Asia and the Pacific”. The draft guidelines are submitted for discussion to the fifth session of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (2018).

f) Sub-national plans/strategies and implementation for the SDGs

ESCAP's work on urban development covers sub-national activities related to the SDGs.

Projects:

Localizing SDGs: Sustainable Resource Management (Development Account Project- beginning 2018)

This ESCAP-led project is expected to start implementation in March/April 2018 for 4 years. With UN Habitat as a partner, the project aims to conceptualize and operationalize “localizing” (or integrating) the SDGs into urban development planning, implementation and evaluation in up to six cities in the region. It will focus on two key areas: i) Development of a process to localize SDG planning by promoting inclusive, participatory and systemic approaches; and ii) Development of substantive areas for cities to localize SDGs for the thematic sub-set on sustainable resource management (consisting of SDGs 6 clean water and sanitation; 7 affordable and clean energy, 11 sustainable cities and communities, 12 responsible consumption and production and 17 partnerships), taking into account local contexts. ESCAP will lead overall project coordination and organize regional-level activities, and will be responsible for developing conceptual frameworks and technical information and training materials – with substantive support from UN Habitat.

Urban Nexus: Sustainable Resource Management

In partnership with GIZ and ICLEI, ESCAP has been implementing the project “Integrated Resource Management in Asian Cities: the Urban Nexus” since 2013. The project will end in December 2018. The nexus approach aims to sustainably manage the critical resources of water, energy and food/land through an integrated and participatory approach that promotes innovative technologies and decentralized cross-sectoral infrastructure within the framework of a circular economy (return/reuse/recycle/recover). ESCAP, as the ‘political’ partner, coordinates regional work – such as holding regional policy dialogues –and seeks to mainstream the nexus approach into national and local strategies for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the New Urban Agenda. GIZ is the lead executing agency and ‘technical’ partner. ICLEI works with partner cities to implement nexus initiatives on the ground. The project supports twelve cities in China, India, Indonesia, Mongolia, Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam.

Mainstreaming Climate Change Concerns into National Urban Policies

Since 2014, in partnership with UN Habitat, the project has been looking at how to mainstream climate change at the national policy or framework strategy level. The project work will continue throughout 2018. UN Habitat is the project lead, while ESCAP leads regional coordination and regional comparative analysis work – namely convening regional workshops and currently the development of a regional guide that takes country-level experiences and tries to abstract lessons learned to a regional level. Based on that guide, ESCAP will lead the development of training materials. UN Habitat has been the main implementer of the project doing the country level work, backstopping analysis and actual support for mainstreaming into national urban policies/ strategic frameworks. This project is related primarily to SDGs 11 and 13, and seeks to integrate sub-national actions and national government coordination.

Publications and Knowledge Platforms

The State of Asia Pacific Cities Report:

The State of Asian and Pacific Cities report has previously been jointly developed and published by UN-Habitat and ESCAP. So far there have been 2 editions: 2011 and 2015. In capturing the region's rapid urban transformation, the report highlights the growing gaps between current urbanization patterns and what

is needed to shift to a more inclusive and sustainable urban future, in which the region's cities are unquestionably tied to national, regional and global development prospects. The Report also draws upon the most recent urban data from The World Urbanization Prospects. The next report in 2019 will be rebranded the *Future of Asia Pacific Cities Report*, and will take into account the localization of SDGs in the region.

Urban SDG Knowledge Platform:

ESCAP, the Seoul Metropolitan Government and CityNet have established the Urban SDG Knowledge Platform <http://www.urbansdgplatform.org/> to promote and support knowledge sharing and city-to-city cooperation for sustainable urban development. The Platform supports local action for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the up-take and replication of successful initiatives and good practices, by (i) providing a repository of policies, initiatives and good practices at the city level by municipal governments and other stakeholders; (ii) facilitating north-south, south-south, and triangular cooperation by linking cities that have developed specific policies, initiatives and good practices with other cities interested in learning from and replicating them; and, (iii) facilitating regional follow-up and review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through a platform for local governments to share progress and lessons learned.

The SDG Help Desk

ESCAP has developed the SDG Help Desk, as a one-stop online platform which serves as a gateway to SDG data portals; knowledge and analytical products; expertise, advice and opportunities for peer learning and regional South-South cooperation; and toolboxes. Sustainable urbanization is one of the thematic areas in the knowledge hub, and will be populated with best practices and lessons from projects (ESCAP and others) which aim to localize SDGs. <https://sustdev.unescap.org/thematicarea/category?id=4>

g) Leveraging interlinkages across SDG goals and targets

ESCAP launched a methodology that takes stock of the “indivisible” nature of the 2030 Agenda and the three dimensions of sustainable development—economic prosperity, social justice and environmental protection—; and applies systems thinking approach to the integration of the SDGs into national planning. Further illustrating the application of integrated and systems thinking approaches is a selection of case studies. Country case studies describe the applications in Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, and Fiji with SDG 6 on water and sanitation planning at the core. A case study on SDG 11 on sustainable urban development applies systems thinking principles including best practices from Japan, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, and Thailand in relation to urban metabolism and natural resource efficiency. Regional case studies highlight emerging, persistent, and systemic issues, including microplastics, wastewater management, and gender-sensitive access to sanitation. The theme of the integrated approach will be featured on ESCAP's SDG Help Desk through interactive methodologies, tools and various knowledge products to further assist member States in integrating the SDGs into national planning.

The Seoul Initiative Network on Green Growth (SINGG) project has supported enhancing understanding of member states in interlinkages between the cluster of SDGs and showcased integrated approaches to

support sustainable use of environmental resources. The project raised awareness of member States with a holistic perspective on environmental, economic, and social aspects of sustainable development, especially focusing on integrated approaches to environment-related SDGs. The SINGG will continue working with member States regarding follow-up projects in Indonesia and Mongolia to support their implementation of integrated approaches to SDGs.

4. The high-level political forum (HLPF) is the central platform for the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. Has your organization participated in the work of the HLPF in the 2016-2018 cycles, convened under the auspices of ECOSOC? If yes, please specify your involvement in the following areas:

- a) Supporting the intergovernmental body of your organization in contributing to the thematic review of the HLPF;**
- b) Contributing to policy/background briefs for the HLPF;**
- c) Helping organize SDG-specific events in the preparatory process;**
- d) Organizing side events or speaking at the HLPF;**
- e) Supporting VNR process**

a) Supporting the intergovernmental body of your organization in contributing to the thematic review of the HLPF;

ESCAP's Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD) is an annual, inclusive intergovernmental forum. It supports preparations for the high-level political forum on sustainable development in the context of both the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly. The Forum serves as a regional platform for:

- (i) Supporting countries, in particular countries with special needs, including through enhancing their capacity for implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
- (ii) Providing a regional perspective on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by identifying regional trends, and consolidating and sharing best practices and lessons learned, taking into account the contributions of other United Nations system bodies at the regional level, other regional and subregional organizations and relevant stakeholders;
- (iii) Supporting follow-up and review of progress on the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals at the regional level through: assessing progress and providing opportunities for peer learning related to the theme and goals that will be reviewed at the high-level political forum; supporting the presentation of voluntary national reviews; and undertaking periodic review of progress of the road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific.

For information on the latest session of the APFSD, please visit <http://www.unescap.org/events/apfsd5>

b) Contributing to policy/background briefs for the HLPF;

ESCAP contributed to the 2017 SDG review reports, especially for SDGs 2 and 5.

(i) Helping organize SDG-specific events in the preparatory process;

ESCAP organized the third and fourth sessions of the Asia-Pacific Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development, which is the regional follow-up and review forum for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in 2016 and 2017. These sessions were supported with the preparatory subregional consultation meetings that took place in East and Northeast Asia, North and Central Asia, the Pacific, South and Southwest Asia and Southeast Asia. For more information on the events please visit <http://www.unescap.org/events/apfsd3> and <http://www.unescap.org/events/apfsd4> respectively.

(ii) Organizing side events or speaking at the HLPF;

- ESCAP organized a side event on Financing for Development to Ensure that No One is Left Behind in 2016, <http://www.unescap.org/events/apffd-nyc-hlpf>
- ESCAP organized 2 side events in 2017 <http://www.unescap.org/events/accelerating-achievement-sustainable-development-goals-asia-and-pacific-un-escap-high-level>:
 - a. “Regional Response to Global Goals: Regional Road Map for Implementing the 2030 Agenda in Asia-Pacific” in cooperation with the PM of Pakistan and PM of Fiji, where the Asia-Pacific SDG Baseline Report was launched.
 - b. “Accelerating Sustainable Development: Translating Voluntary National Reviews into Action on the Ground”, in cooperation with the Regional Commissions
- The Executive Secretary of ESCAP participated as a speaker in the regional session of the HLPF senior officials segment “Implementation at the regional and sub-regional levels” in July 2016
- The Executive Secretary of ESCAP participated as a speaker in the regional session of the HLPF senior officials segment “Implementation at the regional and sub-regional levels” in July 2017.
- ESCAP ES and staff have participated in several events as speakers in 2016 and 2017.

e) Supporting VNR process

- ESCAP provided direct support to the VNR process in 2018 for Kiribati, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Vietnam and Sri Lanka.
- ESCAP prepared a synthesis report of Asia-Pacific VNRs [2018 APFSD]
- ESCAP organized, in cooperation with the other Regional Commissions, a side event on the VNRs in HLPF 2017
- ESCAP organized a VNR learning café’ at the 4th session of the APFSD in 2017
- ESCAP organized substantive sessions on VNRs at the third and fourth sessions of the APFSD in 2016 and in 2017
- ESCAP organized a joint regional VNR workshops with DESA in 2016 and 2017

5. How has your organization cooperated with other UN system organizations to achieve coherence and synergies in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs? In this regard, has your organization launched or intend to launch any joint programmes or projects in collaboration with other UN entities? Are there any results or lessons you would like to highlight that might help improve the design and impact of such efforts? Has your organization participated in any of the following coordination system-wide mechanisms or any other relevant platform - CEB, UNDG, EC-ESA Plus, RCMs, UN-Energy, UN-Water, UN-Ocean, IAEG, IATT? Please specify which and indicate any suggestions you may have about improving collaborations within and across these mechanisms/platforms.

Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism

ESCAP has been serving as the convener of the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism, which comprises of 31 United Nations and affiliated entities including the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank. Following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and SDGs, efforts have been made to enhance policy coherence and coordination among UN agencies and development partners through the reformulation of the Regional Coordination Mechanism thematic working groups. New thematic working groups have been established in seven areas, which correspond to the relevant clusters of the Sustainable Development Goals. These thematic working groups include: (a) statistics; (b) resource-efficient growth; (c) sustainable societies; (d) inclusive development, including poverty eradication; (e) disaster risk reduction and resilience; (f) gender equality and empowerment of women; and (g) education for all. The newly established thematic working groups have adopted their terms of reference and action-oriented work plans for the period of 2016-2017 to support coherent regional implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

During 2016-2017, the Thematic Working Groups have jointly launched projects on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Some of the achievements resulted from collaboration are highlighted below:

(a) Under the Thematic Working Group on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, a multi-donor trust fund has been established under which the thematic working group members pool financial resources for the implementation of jointly agreed activities. Joint initiatives carried out with support from the Trust Fund include research and analysis, inter-governmental consensus building, and stakeholder engagement towards advancing gender equality in the Asia-Pacific region. Notably, the Thematic Working Group provided inter-agency support to the organization of special sessions and side events during the Asian and Pacific Conference on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Beijing+20 Review (17-20 November 2014) to focus attention on critical gender concerns (such as women's economic participation, violence against women; women, peace and security), and the Conference resulted in a Ministerial Declaration to accelerate the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. The TWG has also undertaken joint advocacy including on prevention of violence against women and children.

(b) The Thematic Working Group on Sustainable Societies has worked together with the Thematic Working Group on Statistics and the Statistics Division, New York, on strengthening the collection and use of

international migration data in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development for countries in the region, including through a regional workshop organized in 2017.

(c) At the Asia-Pacific Forum for Sustainable Development (APFSD) in March 2017 – the region’s preparatory meeting for the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in July 2017, the Thematic Working Group on Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience presented its joint work on developing a guidance note for policymakers that outlines the coherence among the global agendas for building resilience to disasters in the region.

(d) In addition, the Thematic Working Group on Resource Efficient Growth organized three roundtables during the APFSD in 2017, which covered the in-depth regional review of three of the Goals that will be reviewed in-depth during the HLPF: Goals 2 (hunger/food/agriculture) 9 (industrialization) and 14 (Oceans). The roundtables enabled countries to exchange their early experiences and challenges in the implementation of the SDGs and to develop their positions for the in-depth reviews to be held at the HLPF. The outcomes of the three roundtables have also been recorded in three summary documents and included in the APFSD report.

(e) The Thematic Working Group on Statistics (TWG-STAT) is undertaking an inventory of ongoing and planned statistical capacity development assistance for the SDGs in Asia and the Pacific in order to identify areas that require additional support by the UN system and facilitate collaboration among the UN system in providing the required support. TWG-STAT’s work plan for 2018 includes:

- Support to Viet Nam for the VNR and beyond, with a view to strengthening the national statistical system (NSS) for the 2030 Agenda;
- Joint delivery with UNDG of a pilot data literacy workshop and decision on future engagement based on this first experience;
- Draft common tools for provision of data and statistics support – for VNR and longer-term plans to strengthen the ability of NSSs to provide data and statistics for the 2030 Agenda, based on Viet Nam experience;
- Draft rules of engagement on the provision of data and statistics support to SDG implementation (aiming for better coordination among partners), based on Viet Nam experience.

UN-Energy

ESCAP is a member of UN-Energy. ESCAP together with DESA, the secretariat to UN-Energy hosted the Global SDG 7 Conference in February 2017 in Bangkok, in preparation for the high-level political forum.

The website of UN-Energy is not up-to-date.

UN-Water

ESCAP is co-chairing UN-Water together with ESCWA.

UN-Oceans

ESCAP is a member of UN-Oceans.

IAEG-SDGs

ESCAP and the Committee on Statistics have taken an active role in the establishment of the IAEG-SDGS and have facilitated the nominations of the regional IAEG-SDGs members and regional meetings. ESCAP has also taken part in the meetings of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDGs (IAEG-SDGs).

ESCAP has developed close partnerships with many of the IAEG members and SDG indicator custodian agencies. For example, ESCAP and UNISDR establish the Global Partnerships for Disaster-related Statistics. The aim of this partnership is to merge efforts towards development of agreed statistical conventions for disaster-related statistics considered by the United Nations Statistical Commission, with a view to establishing global statistical standards and guidance, which will contribute to achievement of the relevant SDG targets and to improved reporting, monitoring and analyses of SDG indicators.

6. How has your organization engaged with stakeholder groups, both in supporting implementation at the country, regional and global levels, and within your own organization? If yes, please provide main highlights, including any lessons learned

ESCAP has made significant efforts to include stakeholders especially in the context of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development. In each APFSD, civil society organizations are represented in panel discussions and are given opportunities to make statements on the agenda items. These statements are made available on ESCAP website for public. For more information, please visit <http://www.unescap.org/events/asia-pacific-forum-sustainable-development>

In the case of private sector engagement, the ESCAP Business Advisory Council (EBAC) consisting of executives and representatives of leading businesses in a wide range of industries and sectors, from across the Asia-Pacific region, has been active since 2004. EBAC's establishment took place at the first ever Asia-Pacific Business Forum (APBF), which is the only region-wide multi-stakeholder business forum, organized by ESCAP. Since EBAC's establishment, EBAC members have provided substantive support and in-kind contributions which have continued to enhance APBF's reach and platform for engaging on development issues affecting the region. In 2012 the ESCAP Sustainable Business Network (ESBN) was set up under the guidance of the ESCAP Business Advisory Council (EBAC), to promote the active engagement of the business sector in addressing the issues of environmental sustainable and social inclusiveness in business, in the Asia and Pacific region. For more information, please visit <http://ebac.unescap.org/>

7. Has your organization organized any conferences, forums or events designed to facilitate exchange of experience, peer and mutual learning? If yes, please provide a brief summary below and include lessons learned and gaps identified based on the outcomes of these events. Please also include any events you plan to organize in the coming years.

ESCAP, by virtue of being a regional organization, uses modalities that foster sharing of experiences as well as peer-to-peer learning. ESCAP's outputs, even those at the country-level, need to be designed in such a way that they can be used by other countries that have similar development issues.

The Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development is the regional mechanism for follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, and brings together member States, civil society, the private sector and a wide range of development partners from in the organization and delivery of the Forum. Hence, APFSD facilitates exchanges not only among peers but also across various sectors of society in line with the philosophy of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The upcoming and concluded events organized by ESCAP can be accessed at <http://www.unescap.org/events/upcoming>

8. Is there any other information you would like to share, including annual reports of your organization and any impact assessment or evaluation reports? If yes, please use the space below and attach the document(s). Please also use this space to provide any other information, comments or remarks you deem necessary.

The input documents for APFSD sessions provide the regional memory of the progress made thus far in formulating the region's response and modalities for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Goals. The documents for APFSD 2018 and other sessions can be accessed at <http://www.unescap.org/intergovernmental-meetings/apfsd5>

The Advocacy Reports of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) provide an overview to member States and other ESCAP stakeholders of organizational accomplishments and objectives from the past year. The reports since 2015 have been focusing on ESCAP's transformative initiatives to be fit-for-purpose to support member States in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In order to access the Advocacy reports please visit <http://www.unescap.org/media-centre/advocacy>

9. In your view, what should a strategic plan for the UN system in support of the 2030 Agenda and SDGs look like? What key elements should it include and major challenges address in such a road map?

The 2030 Agenda and SDGs are as much a strategic plan for the UN as for its member states. What is needed is an implementation plan but this is best approached not in one over-arching document but rather through a three-tiered strategic implementation plan, cascading from the national to regional to global levels.

At the **national level** the UNDAFs should be aligned with the 2030 Agenda and become de facto the UN's national strategic plan for supporting implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In line with the UNDS reforms, these "SDG ready" UNDAFs would help to bring the UNDS together (resident and non-resident) and ensure alignment of the UN's operations with country priorities. Better involvement of Regional Commissions as per the UNDS reform would help the SDG UNDAFs to reflect cross boarder and transboundary issues. Regional Commissions can also ensure UNDAFs are better aligned with and support regional and globally agreed processes like ones on migration, disability, ageing etc. The official sign off between the UN and the country is important to formalize this national level strategic plan.

Similarly, at the **regional level**, a regional strategic plan should match the offer of the UNDS with the regional needs of member States. Again, the official sign off between the UN and the member states in the region it is an important part to formalize this national level strategic plan it would need to be discussed and ultimately adopted through a regional intergovernmental process. In the Asian and Pacific region, member States of ESCAP adopted the Regional Roadmap for implementing the 2030 agenda for sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific with the following objectives: (a) strengthened regional cooperation on priority issues as identified by member States; (b) continued and more efficient and coordinated support for member States provided by the secretariat, United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies and regional organizations through the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism; and (c) more effective knowledge sharing among countries. This document now provides the definitive framework for assistance to be extended to countries on implementation of the SDGs in the region. The Roadmap was adopted by the ESCAP Commission and is reviewed annually at the Asia Pacific Forum for Sustainable development.

At the **global level** a strategic plan could bring together the national and regional plans and provide the linkages with relevant global processes such as on migration, social development etc.

10. Please indicate one or two endeavor or initiatives you suggest that the UN system organizations could undertake together to support the implementation of the SDGs between now and 2030.

- **Financing for SDGs** requires that various sources of funding, public and private, are mobilized to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The UN System has networks and

expertise that cover these different sources of funding and coordinating around the goals of the financing agenda would help increase effectiveness of the raising and use of these funds.

- **Voluntary National Reviews [VNRs]** can be the component connecting global, regional and national levels. As an example of good practice, ESCAP worked together with UN Country Teams in supporting national follow up and review including through Voluntary National Reviews in the context of the “Rapid Response Facility” (RRF) project in 2017. Lao PDR, which will present its VNR at the High-level Political Forum in 2018 was one of the countries that benefited from this coordinated UN support. ESCAP is also supporting Pacific Island Countries in developing data sets which would help them report effectively in their VNRs.
- **Data and statistics for SDGs:** Data and statistics for SDGs is an area that requires collective action from the UN and the member States at the level of national statistical systems. For national statistical systems to be able to respond to the increasing demands for data and statistics in the context of the 2030 Agenda, statistical business processes need to be modernized and the role of national statistical offices as coordinators of national statistical systems have to be strengthened. The UN has an established system for developing and maintaining international statistical standards where the UN Statistical Commission is the main body and is supported by the work of regional Committees on Statistics. Statistical support, however, is provided by a multitude of UN entities with various subject matter expertise and entry points in the national statistical system. In order to achieve the required transformation of national statistical systems, , coordinated UN support linking global and regional statistical standards with national policies and capacity building, is necessary. Recognizing this need, member States and development partners in Asia and the Pacific have agreed on a collective vision and framework for action for advancing official statistics for the 2030 agenda within the ESCAP Committee on Statistics. The implementation of this framework in partnership by UN entities and beyond would be an ideal way of coordinating support to national statistical systems for data and statistics for SDGs.