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# ESCAP ANNUAL REPORT 2014

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# EXECUTIVE SECRETARY'S MESSAGE

The Annual Report 2014 chronicles the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific's (ESCAP) achievements and future goals, against a backdrop of major global shifts sweeping across the economic, social and environmental landscape.

Although our region continues to drive the global economic recovery, regional growth has entered a challenging phase. As elaborated in the 2014 edition of ESCAP's flagship publication, the Economic and Social Survey for Asia and the Pacific, this is due to several factors. On the domestic front, these include high and rising income inequality, lack of adequate social protection systems, low quality of education, inadequate access to credit and land, weak labour market institutions, environmental degradation and climate change. On the external front, these include the financial and monetary implications of the normalization of monetary policy in the United States and non-tariff trade restrictive measures imposed by developed economies.

In this environment, ESCAP held the inaugural Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development and launched the first-ever Asia-Pacific Outreach Meeting for Sustainable Development Financing, with our member States contributing critical guidance in both these areas. In turn, the resulting regional perspectives and priorities were provided to the High Level Political Forum, convened during the recent ECOSOC sessions in New York.

The Asia-Pacific region is diverse, with a wide range of perspectives on sustainable development, but this should not preclude a leadership role for the region in the global dialogue and in turn, the implementation of agreed Sustainable Development Goals and targets. As the post-2015 development agenda continues to take shape, Asia and the Pacific can and must play a key role in that process. To be more inclusive and to get a deeper

appreciation of Asia-Pacific diversity, ESCAP has been enhanced to offer dedicated subregional platforms.

A critical element of a transformative agenda is the need to fast-track the closure of physical infrastructure gaps and social development deficits. This will harness the region's potential for sustainable and inclusive growth. For that purpose, it will be critical to unlock fiscal space by strengthening tax revenues, deepen capital market development, encourage private-public partnership, foster financial inclusion and innovative climate finance solution, among other policy measures – which were also key messages of the 2014 Survey.



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Aligned with these developments, and with the preferences of our member States, ESCAP is also sharpening its focus on regional connectivity which will be critical for shared and sustainable prosperity in Asia and the Pacific.

This will entail enhancing the work of the Commission in areas such as transport, energy, ICT and people to people networks, in an integrated manner to realize effective synergies in tandem with moves to harness finance and new technologies. This will especially benefit our least developed, landlocked and small island developing economies, a key priority for ESCAP.

Laying the foundation, this year's 70th Commission session explored the relationship between regional connectivity and shared prosperity, particularly the mechanisms through which regional connectivity affects and contributes to prosperity, identifying and linking types of benefits to regional connectivity.

With these and other pressing issues in the region as the backdrop, I am leading a process of organizational transformation in the secretariat, to assess our strengths and weaknesses and to make ESCAP a more effective organization serving our member States.

Based on these internal deliberations and consultations with member States, three core priority areas have emerged that will anchor our work and sharpen our ability to deliver higher-impact results for the year ahead:

First, solidifying ESCAP's role as a regional knowledge hub, particularly in generating innovative research and analysis to support evidence-based policies to address inclusive and sustainable development challenges, including financing, will help ESCAP support our member States in taking a stronger leadership role in the development of the global post-2015 agenda.

Second, enhancing ESCAP's role as the preeminent regional intergovernmental platform for building consensus on norms, agreements and policies will enable us to yield an even stronger Asia-Pacific voice in global debates.

Last, as a regional hub for development knowledge and technical cooperation, ESCAP will seek innovative partnerships between government and civil society, including the private sector, to support the region's development agenda.

As ESCAP undertakes these changes, we look forward to working together with our members to deliver an inclusive, sustainable and resilient Asia-Pacific region that will bring prosperity and stability to the lives of all the people whom we serve.



Dr. Shamshad Akhtar  
United Nations Under-Secretary-General  
and Executive Secretary, ESCAP

# ABOUT ESCAP



## VISION

ESCAP envisions a resilient Asia and the Pacific, based on shared prosperity, social equity and sustainability. It contributes to these goals through its comprehensive multilateral platform for promoting cooperation and development among its member States.



## WHO WE ARE

ESCAP is the regional arm of the United Nations, playing a unique role as the only intergovernmental forum for all countries and territories of Asian and the Pacific region. Established in 1947, ESCAP today has 53 members and 9 associate members covering more than 60 per cent of the world's population or 4.1 billion people.



## OUR WORK

From its headquarters in Bangkok, ESCAP provides a forum for its member States that promotes regional cooperation and collective action, assisting countries in building and sustaining shared economic growth and social equity.



## OUR OUTCOMES

In pursuing its vision, ESCAP provides various forms of assistance to member States:

ESCAP promotes rigorous analysis and peer learning through its seven core areas of work: macroeconomic policy and development, trade and investment, social development, transport, statistics, environment and development, information communications technology and disaster risk reduction.

ESCAP translates these findings into policy dialogues and recommendations.

ESCAP provides good development practices, knowledge-sharing and technical assistance to member States in the implementation of these recommendations.

The norm setting and policy work of ESCAP ultimately affects people's lives in a positive way by assisting countries to shape and implement a more balanced and inclusive development agenda for the region.

## Executive Secretary

Dr. Shamshad Akhtar

## Headquarters

Bangkok, Thailand

## Founded

1947



**53**  
members

**4**  
subregional  
offices

**9**  
Associate  
members

**over 60%**  
of the world's  
population

**4.1**  
billion  
people

ESCAP enables stronger participation for the smaller and the often left-out voices of the region, the least developed countries, the small island States and the landlocked States.

### MAY<sup>13</sup>

Asian and Pacific Energy Forum

Asia-Pacific Water Summit

Opening of East and North-East Asia subregional office in Incheon

### JUN<sup>13</sup>

6th Forum for East Asia-Latin America Cooperation meeting

### JUL<sup>13</sup>

ECOSOC dialogue with Regional Commissions on the post-2015 agenda

### AUG<sup>13</sup>

High-level preparatory conference on regional integration

Asia-Pacific Ministerial dialogue from the MDGs to the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015

### SEP<sup>13</sup>

Sixth Asian and Pacific Population Conference (APPC)

Launch of the 2013 MDG progress report

### OCT<sup>13</sup>

Committee on Environment and Development

### NOV<sup>13</sup>

Trade and Investment Week

10th Asia-Pacific Business Forum

Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction

Launch of Statistics 2013 Yearbook

Forum of Asian Ministers of Transport (second session) including Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports signing

Opening of ESCAP's Subregional Office for North and Central Asia

SPECA Governing Council

### DEC<sup>13</sup>

Ministerial Conference on Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific

Presentation of the 2013 Sasakawa Disability Awards

## YEAR IN REVIEW

MAY 2013 - JULY 2014



# DID YOU KNOW ?

Data covers period  
1 Jan 2013 - 31 Dec 2013



## JAN<sup>14</sup>

High-level Seminar “Future of the World Economy and Globalization in the aftermath of the Global Financial Crisis: Implications for Developing Economies”

Launch of the United Nations Zero Hunger Challenge in Timor-Leste

## FEB<sup>14</sup>

Inaugural meeting of the Working Group of the Asia and the Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities (2013-2022)

Dr. Shamshad Akhtar takes charge of ESCAP

## MAR<sup>14</sup>

Meeting in Chile of Executive Secretaries of all Regional Commissions

High-level Panel on Evaluation and the Post-2015 Development Agenda at UN Evaluation Week

## APR<sup>14</sup>

Workshop on Promoting Energy Efficiency Investments for Climate Change Mitigation and Sustainable Development

## MAY<sup>14</sup>

Phase 1 of the 70th Commission

Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD)

## JUN<sup>14</sup>

Launch of the Sustainable Energy for All Decade (SE4ALL) and Regional Hub in Asia-Pacific

Asia-Pacific Outreach Meeting on Sustainable Development Financing

## JUL<sup>14</sup>

Forum on Drought Monitoring and Early Warning in Asia-Pacific

Meeting of Civil Registrars

10th ADB-ESCAP Annual Consultation Meeting

High-level Panel on Sustainable Development at ECOSOC

# ESCAP INTERGOVERNMENTAL PLATFORM

Established in 1947, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) draws its mandate from the Economic and Social Council resolutions 37 (IV), 414 (XIII), and the General Assembly resolution 32/192, to serve as the main economic and social development centre within the United Nations system in the Asia-Pacific region. The resolutions give ESCAP the power to serve as an executing agency for inter-sectoral, subregional, regional and interregional projects.

In the Asia-Pacific region, home to two-thirds of the world's population, ESCAP provides the most comprehensive multilateral intergovernmental platform for promoting cooperation among countries to achieve inclusive, sustainable, economic and social development. ESCAP's convening authority, regional mandate and geographic coverage enable it to assess and provide regional trends and overviews, adding strength to its intergovernmental position and facilitating the adoption of regional approaches for addressing regional issues.

An illustrative example of ESCAP's role is the recent signature of the Asia-Pacific Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports, which draws from two other relevant agreements built through the ESCAP platform: the Asian Highway and the Trans-Asian Railway agreements. The Dry Ports agreement was signed under the auspices of ESCAP and has the aim of facilitating sustainable trade and transport in the region through international recognition of dry ports, as well as improving their infrastructure and operational efficiency.

ESCAP's membership includes 53 member States and nine associate members in a geographic scope stretching from the island nation of Kiribati in the East to Turkey in the West, and from New Zealand in the South to the Russian Federation in the North. ESCAP membership also goes beyond regional boundaries by including members States in Europe and North America.

The ESCAP conference structure comprises several actors. The Commission constitutes the supreme legislative body, which convenes at the highest political level every year for a period of five days, to set the region's development agenda. Eight subsidiary committees discuss and recommend actions to the Commission on issues under their respective scope. Several ministerial and high-level intergovernmental meetings and conferences are mandated by the Commission and report to it. The structure also includes the governing councils of ESCAP's five regional institutions, and the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives (ACPR) and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission, which advises the Executive Secretary on intergovernmental and program matters, and serves as the main channel of regular communication between the secretariat and its member States.



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## 70th SESSION OF THE COMMISSION

4 TO 8 AUGUST 2014

With an overarching focus on sustainable development, the seventieth session of the Commission was organized under the theme “Regional Connectivity for Shared Prosperity.” At its conclusion, the Commission adopted 14 resolutions and 28 decisions on vital issues for the region, ranging from strengthening regional cooperation and economic integration, and fostering sustainable development, to promoting regional connectivity and addressing the development challenges of least developed countries and Pacific island developing countries.

The session also included ministerial panels on the perspectives of countries with special needs on development cooperation in the post-2015 era; regional connectivity for shared prosperity; and sustainable development and development financing. The session was chaired by H.E. Mr. Tshering Tobgay, Prime Minister of Bhutan. H.E. Mr. Kay Rala Xanana Gusmao, Prime Minister of Timor-Leste, H.E. Lord Tuivakano, Prime Minister of Tonga, and twenty-six ministerial-level officials were among the more than 400 participants at the session.

A two-day regional consultation on accountability for the post-2015 development agenda was also organized in conjunction with the session. The consultation fed the perspectives of the region into the global discourse on a future monitoring and accountability framework by exploring key issues

on accountability, existing regional mechanisms and possible new mechanisms, and an architecture that could enable a simple, efficient, flexible and transparent results-oriented regional accountability framework.

For its part, the secretariat continued to move intergovernmental meetings towards a more environmentally friendly and paper smart model. Touchscreens, dedicated websites and kiosks were arranged for participants to access documents and other relevant information, reducing the paper footprint and wastage, as well contributing to an increase the efficiency of ESCAP meetings. Compared to the sixty-eighth session (prior to the introduction of the papersmart model), the amount of paper used at the seventieth session was reduced by almost 74 per cent.

The session concluded with the Commission providing a strong voice to bolster regional economic cooperation and integration, as well as regional connectivity, through strengthened financial cooperation, greater trade facilitation, and an emphasis on developing links in transport, ICT, energy and people-to-people connectivity. The session also saw a renewal of the region’s commitment to collectively address the development challenges of the most vulnerable in Asia and the Pacific, particularly its least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, and small island developing States.





# MACROECONOMIC POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT

HARNESSING DEVELOPMENT FINANCE AND REGIONAL ECONOMIC  
COOPERATION TO REDUCE POVERTY AND STRENGTHEN INCLUSIVE GROWTH



# MACROECONOMIC POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT

## HARNESSING DEVELOPMENT FINANCE AND REGIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION TO REDUCE POVERTY AND STRENGTHEN INCLUSIVE GROWTH

Countries in the Asia and the Pacific region face a challenging task of sustaining growth and productive and decent employment in a complex and uncertain global economic situation. Prolonged recession in the developed world and slowdown in major emerging market economies further hampered export prospects. Possible normalization of monetary policy in the US and domestic inflation pressure have triggered capital flight and market volatility in some regional economies.

Structural impediments remain persistent, leading to rising and persistent inequality and poverty, slow productivity improvement, financial vulnerability and insufficient productive and decent job creation. It has therefore become more urgent to deploy forward-looking and targeted policies to unleash domestic demand, increase productive capacities, enhance fiscal space, address institutional and infrastructure bottlenecks and broaden the base for future growth.

In this context, in 2013 ESCAP prioritized the issues of sustainable development finance, in particular public finance, regional economic cooperation, and the special needs of least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked developing

countries (LLDCs) and the Pacific islands developing economies in its work on macroeconomic policy and inclusive development. Through analytical studies, policy advisory services and capacity-building, it provided extensive support to countries in the region in fostering an enabling economic condition for poverty reduction and the achievement of internationally agreed development goals.

**Countries need forward-looking  
macroeconomic policies to  
balance between the short-run  
stabilization objective and  
long-term inclusive and  
sustainable development goals.**



Kibae Park

## HIGHLIGHTS

■ ESCAP's flagship annual publication, the *Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2014*, provided an assessment of developments in the global economy and their possible impacts on the regional economies and analysed their macroeconomic performance. It also emphasized the importance of mobilizing domestic resources and examined various options for raising government revenues, including a regional tax forum under the aegis of ESCAP to share best practices and deal with illicit fund transfers, as well as tax competition.

■ The 2012/13 *Regional Asia-Pacific Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)* report, prepared under the regional partnership between ESCAP, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the Asian Development Bank (ADB), presented regional perspectives on the development agenda beyond 2015, as well as an assessment of progress and challenges in achieving the MDGs.

■ ESCAP facilitated the final regional review of the Almaty Programme of Action, which resulted in the Vientiane Consensus endorsed by the Commission in its resolution 69/2 and the regional discussion on the post-2015 development agenda that resulted in the Bangkok Declaration on the Development Agenda beyond 2015, endorsed by the Commission in its resolution 69/3.

■ ESCAP in collaboration with the Government of Indonesia organized the Asia-Pacific Outreach Meeting on Sustainable Development Financing in Jakarta, 10-11 June 2014. The background study reported that the region's financing need could be as much as \$2.5 trillion per year for closing development gaps. The meeting emphasized various policy measures to raise the required financing and underscored the need for new and innovative sources of financing for implementing sustainable development goals.



# CASE STUDY

## GROWING TOGETHER

The First Ministerial Conference on Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration, held in December 2013, was an important achievement of countries in the Asia and Pacific region and also a telling example of the complementarities between the analytical and normative work of ESCAP in supporting countries in the region. The origins of the Conference date back to the *ESCAP Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2011*, which advocated for the need for enhancing regional connectivity to meet the challenge of rebalancing the region's economies in favour of domestic and regional investment and consumption.

The 67th session of the Commission took note of the report and requested it to be expanded to the theme study of the 68th session, entitled Growing Together. The theme study triggered the adoption of resolution 68/10 on regional economic integration, which called for the organization of the First Ministerial Conference on Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration.

In line with the four-pronged strategy recommended in the theme study Growing Together – namely, integrated markets, seamless connectivity, financial cooperation and cooperation to address shared vulnerabilities and risks – the Ministerial Conference unanimously adopted the Bangkok Declaration that requested ESCAP to establish four area-specific working groups and convene the Second Ministerial in 2015.

Under regional financial cooperation, ESCAP has been advocating for a new large-scale infrastructure investment facility to complement existing regional institutional mechanisms and mobilize the region's large savings for regional investment needs. This, together with national efforts to mobilize government revenues, could provide a renewed momentum to financing for sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific region.







# TRADE AND INVESTMENT

INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE TRADE AND INVESTMENT





# TRADE AND INVESTMENT

## INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE TRADE AND INVESTMENT

Following a strong recovery in exports in 2012 after the 2009 crisis, the Asia and Pacific region overtook Europe as the world's largest trading region. However, developments in 2012 and 2013 showed that regional demand is not immune to the persisting weak economic performance of major developed economies. This points to the need for countries to reform in order to strengthen domestic demand and increase efficiency and productivity in order to raise competitiveness.

Trade-restrictive measures introduced since the financial crisis continue to hamper trade and growth. As tariffs on average have generally fallen over the longer-term, non-tariff barriers – such as various standards and regulations including slow and cumbersome customs procedures – now present the largest obstacles to the efficient flows of goods and services across borders. Non-tariff barriers make exports and imports slower and more expensive, reducing the competitiveness of companies and presenting obstacles to growth.

ESCAP continues to assist member countries with analyses to understand the need to reduce non-tariff barriers to trade. With skills and

knowledge to negotiate trade agreements, ESCAP also promotes South-South trade and investment cooperation through the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA), conducts policy-relevant empirical research on trade and investment issues, facilitates the increased transfer of sustainable technology, promotes the integration of Small and Medium Enterprises into regional and global value chains and encourages the adoption of more responsible business practices.



**Achieving region-wide cross-border paperless trade would generate over \$257 billion in additional trade annually.**



# HIGHLIGHTS

■ Aided by advisory services from ESCAP on Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) development, Myanmar has developed a new SME law through a multi-stakeholder process. The SME law is in its final stage of preparation. Linked to this, the first ever business survey to gauge the business climate and needs of business is also currently underway, supported by ESCAP and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

■ Set up by the ESCAP Business Advisory Council, the Sustainable Business Network has steadily expanded and now consists of six task forces addressing issues on sustainable development from a business perspective. Among others, the Network has set up an SME connectivity platform and adopted a charter on responsible business practices.

■ Following the launch of the ESCAP-World Bank international trade cost database in 2013, many organizations have made use of the new dataset to advocate for increased trade facilitation and connectivity. In particular, OECD successfully used the database, as well as some of the results of the ESCAP Trade Facilitation Implementation Survey 2012, to promote the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement finally adopted by WTO members in December 2014.

■ Following the advisory services provided to Mongolia, the land-locked developing country has completed accession negotiation procedures to join the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA), pending national ratification. The 4th round of tariff concession negotiation has been successfully completed, pending the implementation of the negotiation outcomes following the 4th session of the APTA Ministerial Council. The APTA Framework Agreements of Trade Facilitation, Investment and Trade in Services have been duly ratified, respectively, by all participating States of APTA.

■ The 2013 Asia-Pacific Trade and Investment Report introduced the new concept of “inclusive trade,” examining the circumstances under which trade, investment and trade facilitation – the three pillars of international openness – can support inclusive growth. The report concluded that to avoid worsening inequalities, complementary policies are needed to better spread the gains from trade and investment. In particular, more attention should be given to impacts on productivity, access to productive employment and wages at the design stage of trade and investment policies

■ As part of the implementation of ESCAP Resolution 68/3, several studies related to paperless trade – the conduct of trade transactions on the basis of electronic, rather than paper documents – were released in 2013/14. The studies confirmed that complex technical and legal barriers to the cross-border exchange and recognition of electronic trade documents existed and found that a regional treaty for the facilitation of cross-border paperless trade would provide the strong and specialized institutional framework needed by interested member States to address them. Achieving region-wide cross-border paperless trade would generate over \$257 billion in additional trade annually.

■ The Third Asia-Pacific Trade and Investment Week was held in late 2013 under the theme “Promoting Inclusive Trade and Investment,” gathering close to 500 participants for a range of events ranging from high-level policy dialogues to training sessions on trade and investment policymaking, including the ESCAP Committee on Trade and Investment, and the Asia-Pacific Business Forum 2013.

■ The first ESCAP-convened Myanmar Business and Development Week was held on 23-27 September 2013, gathering participants from 20 United Nations and other agencies, for a one week joint programme of capacity-building on trade and investment issues for representatives of the public and private sector in Myanmar.



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ESCAP Photo

## CASE STUDY

### KNOWLEDGE SHARING - ARTNeT

Growing trade and investment flows in Asia and the Pacific have been a major driver of the economic dynamism that has lifted millions from poverty in recent decades. But not all countries and individuals have been able to benefit. Too many countries still face significant obstacles, whether in the form of geographic isolation, infrastructure deficits, low institutional capacity, inadequate supply capacity or frequently closed markets.

For countries to make the most of the advantages available from international trade and investment, it is essential that policymakers have access to high-quality research and analysis. This research can help with understanding the impact of barriers to trade and investment and also with designing policies that ensure the benefits of trade and investment are widely spread.

To support the provision of quality and relevant trade research in the region, the Asia-Pacific Research and Training Network on Trade (ARTNeT) was established in 2004. ARTNeT is an open regional network composed of leading trade research institutions across the ESCAP region. The activities of ARTNeT continue to be focused on three pillars, namely: production of demand-driven and home-grown research of the region; building of research capacity in the

region, particularly that of least developed countries; and dissemination of knowledge and information to key stakeholders.

Having reached its tenth anniversary, ARTNeT continues to grow. The network now has 42 member institutions, five core partners and 18 associate members, reaching a community of over 1,200 researchers and attracting growing numbers of visitors to its website.

Since its first publication in early 2005, ARTNeT has issued a total of 12 research-based books, 145 working papers, 41 policy briefs, and various other publications. More than 60 workshops and dissemination events have been held, with close to 1,000 researchers and policy makers participating in ARTNeT trainings.

ARTNeT creates public good by making data and tools available to researchers. These offerings were recently enriched by an addition of the updated ESCAP-World Bank Comprehensive Trade Cost Database.

Phase III of the ARTNeT was completed in 2013 under funding commitments from the International Development Research Centre, Canada. Phase IV of ARTNeT is envisaged to begin later in 2014.





# TRANSPORT

PROMOTING TRANSPORT LINKS FOR PEOPLE AND PRODUCTS

LYXOR

ESCAP Photo



# TRANSPORT

## PROMOTING TRANSPORT LINKS FOR PEOPLE AND PRODUCTS

Transport plays a critical role in supporting sustainable economic growth, improving the social welfare of people and enhancing regional integration in Asia and the Pacific region.

Under the framework of the Regional Action Programme for Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific, Phase II (2012-2016), ESCAP's Transport Division continues to foster regional cooperation among member countries towards the vision of an international integrated intermodal transport and logistics system for the region. It strengthens the momentum built up with the Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway networks by promoting integrated and sustainable approaches which provide safe, clean, efficient and affordable mobility solutions, including intermodal integration with dry ports of international importance and increased transport facilitation measures particularly at border crossings.

“

**Developing and implementing sustainable transport solutions is a key objective for ESCAP.**

”



ESCAP Photo

## HIGHLIGHTS

In November 2013, ministers from the ESCAP region gathered in Bangkok for the second session of the Forum of Asian Ministers of Transport. By adopting the Ministerial Declaration on Transport as a key to sustainable development and regional integration, the ministers made a strong commitment to the development and implementation of transport policies and strategies at the national and regional levels that will support sustainable development and regional integration.

In July 2013, ESCAP convened the High-Level Meeting on Strengthening Inter-island Shipping and Logistics in the Pacific Island countries, where the Suva Declaration on improving Maritime Transport and Related Services in the Pacific was adopted. The declaration is aimed at improving the economic feasibility of the provision of regular and predictable inter-island shipping services in the Pacific subregion.

In order to support the implementation of the Regional Strategic Framework for facilitation of international road transport, ESCAP developed four transport facilitation models that are being implemented in many countries to comprehensively address non-physical barriers in international road transport in the region. A regional network of legal and technical experts on transport facilitation has also been established to assist member countries in building a more efficient legal regime for international transport in the region.

The Forum of Asian Ministers of Transport endorsed the regional sustainable accredited

training system for freight forwarders, multimodal transport operators and logistics service providers developed by ESCAP, and expressed the commitment of the member countries to a regionally coherent and mutually recognized framework of professional qualifications in logistics.

Developing and implementing sustainable transport solutions is a key objective for ESCAP. In line with this, the ForFITS (For Future Inland Transport Systems) model developed by the Secretariat in collaboration with other Regional Commissions was piloted in Thailand to help participating countries estimate their inland transportation of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and compare different policy options for mitigating them.

The Secretariat provided technical assistance to member countries to develop and refine national road safety goals, targets and indicators in support of the Decade of Action. The commitment of countries to reduce the level of road traffic fatalities at the global, regional, national and local levels was reaffirmed through the adoption of a joint statement on improving road safety in Asia and the Pacific.

As part of the Secretariat's effort to promote Public-Private Partnership structures for closing the infrastructure gaps and for building productive capacities, the Commission at its 69th session adopted resolution 69/6 on the implementation of the Tehran Declaration on Public-Private Partnerships for infrastructure development in Asia and the Pacific.



Kibae Park

# CASE STUDY

## INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT ON DRY PORTS

The Secretariat has been actively collaborating with member countries to develop a network of dry ports that would enable greater integration between infrastructure networks and increase the efficiency of transport and logistics in the region. Dry ports will also open up a new investment potential and stimulate growth in inland areas, as seaports have brought prosperity to coastal areas.

Following deliberations at a number of subregional and intergovernmental meetings, the Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports was adopted by the Commission at its 69th Session through resolution 69/7 dated 1 May 2013. At the special signing ceremony in Bangkok, in 7 November 2013, during the second session of the Forum of Asian Ministers of Transport, fourteen members of the

Commission signed the Agreement with Thailand then becoming the first party to ratify and agree the text through its national structure. Signing of the Agreement is subject to ratification, acceptance, or approval, and non-signatory States may take part.

The adoption of the Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports is a significant achievement of ESCAP as it, combined with the in-force Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network and Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network, will upon entry into force give new impetus to the development of intermodal facilities in the region and facilitate the emergence of a harmonized and efficient logistics industry.





# ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

GREENING ECONOMY TO SUSTAIN GROWTH, REDUCE POVERTY



# ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

## GREENING ECONOMY TO SUSTAIN GROWTH, REDUCE POVERTY

Resource constraints, as manifested by the “triple F” (food, fuel and financial) and climate crises are threatening to reverse the development gains achieved through economic growth in Asia and the Pacific.

In order to address these challenges, ESCAP pursues a development agenda that focuses on integrating environmental sustainability into development policy, in particular by turning resource constraints and the climate crisis into an economic opportunity.

This prospect generates a double dividend of higher economic growth necessary to reduce poverty, with lower environmental impact by improving the efficiency of resource use and increasing investments in human and natural capital.

**“ ESCAP pursues a development agenda that focuses on integrating environmental sustainability into development policy. ”**



# HIGHLIGHTS

Asian and Pacific perspectives and priorities on the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015 and the Sustainable Development Goals were identified through dialogue among the region's governments, civil society, private sector and other major groups. The inaugural Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development in May 2014 in Pattaya, Thailand, provided regional input to the post-2015 global debate at the High-Level Political Forum.

ESCAP laid the foundation for regional cooperation on energy security and the sustainable use of energy at the first intergovernmental Asian and Pacific Energy Forum, where member States adopted the Ministerial Declaration and Plan of Action on Regional Cooperation for Enhanced Energy Security and Sustainable Energy in Asia and the Pacific.

In response to the challenges faced by cities in the region, ESCAP is working in partnership with Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ), local and national governments to develop effective policies and institutional arrangements that holistically manage water, energy and food security through an integrated urban nexus approach to sustainable cities in the region.

In support of capacity building for low, carbon green growth in Asia and the Pacific, ESCAP delivered on-line and in person training activities to over 700 participants, bringing the total number of persons trained to 1,500, saving over 1,500 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

Regional leadership and political commitment to water security and universal access to sanitation were strengthened through the Chiang Mai Declaration, adopted at the second Asia-Pacific Water Summit (2nd APWS) convened in partnership with the Royal Government of Thailand, under the theme 'Water Security: Leadership and Commitment, with special focus on water disaster challenges.'







ESCAP Photo

## CASE STUDY

### PROMOTING INTEGRATED RESOURCE RECOVERY CENTRES FOR PRO-POOR SUSTAINABLE SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

Mitigating the environmental and health risks associated with the increasing quantities of domestic and industrial solid wastes generated in a rapidly urbanizing Asia and the Pacific region is a serious challenge for sustainable development. Governments in the region are faced with increasing costs of solid waste disposal, decreasing availability of landfill space, and rising impacts on public health and the environment from the damaging effects of untreated solid wastes.

By promoting the use of decentralized Integrated Resource Recovery Centres (IRRCs), the 'Pro-poor and Sustainable Solid Waste Management in Secondary Cities and Small Towns' project implemented by ESCAP in partnership with Waste Concern is helping cities in the region to effectively manage their waste in a pro-poor, environmentally sustainable and economically viable way.

Using the low-cost simple technology of the IRRCs, the city of Matale, Sri Lanka is now able to treat up to 90 per cent of its organic waste, reducing the local government's financial burden in collecting and disposing of waste, while all concurrently generating green jobs.

ESCAP is working with regional governments to implement programmes that replicate and scale up this successful integrated waste management approach by supporting the development of nationally appropriate mitigation actions (NAMAs) in the waste sector as a means to leverage climate financing towards solid waste management in cities.





# ICT AND DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

BUILDING RESILIENCE, DEEPENING CONNECTIVITY



# ICT AND DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

## BUILDING RESILIENCE, DEEPENING CONNECTIVITY

In 2013, natural disasters in the region affected more than 85 million people and caused \$62 billion in damages. Rapid economic growth and population expansion, along with the impacts of climate change, will increase the exposure and vulnerability of the region to disasters.

At the same time, technological innovations provide unprecedented opportunities to build resilience and deepen connectivity. Space technologies have proven effective in monitoring, providing early warning and assisting emergency responses during disasters. Broadband internet in particular has opened up vast opportunities for the poor, transforming the delivery of education, health and financial services and changing the way people connect. Through multi-sectoral policy analysis, capacity-building, and demand-driven regional advisory services, ESCAP supports member States to build resilience and deepen connectivity.

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**At ESCAP's 69th Commission Session, member States unanimously agreed that building resilience is one of the most pressing development challenges facing the region.**

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## HIGHLIGHTS

ESCAP produced the path-breaking study on *“Building Resilience to Natural Disasters and Major Economic Crises”* that outlined a multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral framework for addressing multiple shocks. At ESCAP’s 69th Commission Session, member States unanimously agreed that building resilience is one of the most pressing development challenges facing the region.

During 2013, ESCAP operationalized the Regional Cooperative Mechanism for Drought Monitoring and Early Warning in five pilot countries. The mechanism aims to identify and monitor high-risk areas that are prone to drought and build capacity for effective response. Specialized training aimed at developing drought indices and models and preparing space-based drought data has been conducted in Mongolia and Sri Lanka.

The ESCAP Multi-Donor Trust Fund for Tsunami, Disaster and Climate Preparedness in Indian Ocean and Southeast Asian Countries strengthened the capacities of member States in multi-hazard early warning and coastal resilience-building. For example, the Trust Fund enhanced the capability of the Governments of Cambodia and Timor-Leste to forecast severe weather systems and supported the Government of Myanmar in its efforts to share data from seismic stations with the regional tsunami warning system.

In partnership with the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), ESCAP developed a set of regional maps of information superhighways in Asia and the Pacific region. The interactive maps show detailed internet pathways in the region and provide policymakers with a key tool to identify opportunities for cross-sectoral infrastructure development.

The ESCAP Regional Space Applications Programme for Sustainable Development (RESAP) strengthened the capacities of member States in the effective use of space technology and geo-referenced information systems for disaster risk reduction. Over the past two years ESCAP has trained nearly 400 policy-makers and practitioners from more than 30 member States, and in 2013 ESCAP provided more than 150 near real-time satellite imagery and damage maps to disaster affected countries.



**BEFORE AND AFTER TYPHOON HAIYAN, PHILIPPINES**

Comparative map of damage caused by Typhoon Haiyan, Philippines

# CASE STUDY

## MONITORING DROUGHT FROM SPACE

Over the past three decades, it is estimated that droughts in the region have affected more than 1.3 billion people, causing damages of over \$53 billion. The Regional Cooperative Mechanism for Drought Monitoring and Early Warning (the “Regional Drought Mechanism”) enhances the capacity of governments to use space-based data for effective drought monitoring, allowing countries to issue early warnings before a drought is visible to the human eye.

Participating countries benefit from enhanced access to space-based data, drought-monitoring products and services, as well as strengthened institutional coordination at the country and regional level.

Afghanistan, Cambodia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal and Sri Lanka have requested participation in the Regional Drought Mechanism as pilot countries, and two regional service nodes have been put in place in China and India to provide the technical support needed by pilot countries.



ESCAP Photo



ESCAP Photo

## ASIAN INFORMATION SUPERHIGHWAY

Asia and the Pacific is the most digitally divided region in the world, with less than 10 per cent of the population connected to affordable and reliable high-speed internet. The Asian Information Superhighway initiative aims to increase the availability and affordability of broadband internet in Asia and the Pacific by strengthening the underlying infrastructure in the region.

The set of regional 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 policy-makers to identify weak points in terrestrial broadband infrastructure as well as opportunities for cross-sectoral infrastructure development.

Through technical and policy analysis, capacity building, and measurement of ICT indicators, ESCAP supports countries in their efforts to develop a seamless information and communication space across the region.



A young girl with long dark hair is smiling and sitting against a textured, light-brown wall. She is wearing a bright orange short-sleeved blouse with a decorative silver pendant and a blue sari with a gold border. Her hands are clasped in front of her.

# SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

PROTECTION, EMPOWERMENT AND EQUALITY



# SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

## PROTECTION, EMPOWERMENT AND EQUALITY

Despite dynamic economic growth helping to lift millions out of poverty, across the Asia and Pacific region, over 740 million people – including those in middle-income countries – still live in extreme poverty.

In the decades to come, emerging challenges may further strain the fabric of societies and undermine social cohesion from rising socioeconomic disparities within and between countries, to rapid population ageing, youth unemployment, increasing migration and the impact of climate change.

Against this backdrop, ESCAP supports member States in shaping more inclusive societies that protect, empower and ensure equality for all groups. Particular focus is given to the rights and needs of women, youth, persons with disabilities, older persons and people living with HIV.

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Over 740 million people  
across Asia and the Pacific  
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# HIGHLIGHTS

In 2013, twenty years after the adoption of the pioneering International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action, calling on Governments to address critical population issues, Ministers from 47 ESCAP member States met in Bangkok to assess progress in the implementation of commitments. At the Sixth Asian and Pacific Population Conference, held decennially, a landmark Declaration was adopted, putting forth a rights-based, gender-sensitive and non-discriminatory approach to population and development strategies for the subsequent 10 years, and stressing the importance of accelerating progress in sexual and reproductive health and rights, as well as calling to eliminate discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity. The Declaration served as a critical regional input into global discussions on implementation of the ICPD beyond 2014.

Across Asia and the Pacific region, women encounter barriers to labour-force participation, earning equal wages to men and establishing their own businesses. The gender gap persists, with women's wages, on average, constituting between 70 to 90 per cent of men's wages, and, in parts of the region, labour force participation being 25 per cent less than that of men. Conscious of this inequality, ESCAP worked with governments across the region to address this challenge by fostering enabling policy and legal environments for women's economic empowerment, with a particular focus on entrepreneurship.

To prevent persons with disabilities from being unseen, unheard and uncoun- ted, ESCAP spearheaded regional efforts to develop a common roadmap for implementing the Incheon Strategy to "Make the Right Real" for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific region (2013-2022). The evidence base was strengthened by formulating regional guidelines to track progress in meeting the 10 Incheon Goals and 27 Targets and initiating a data repository.

With 717 million youth, or 60 per cent of those aged 15 to 24 globally, Asia and the Pacific holds a vast cohort capable of positive socioeconomic change. Yet youth face numerous challenges, from the school-to-work

transition to participating in decision-making. ESCAP, in research and publications, identified such challenges and formulated policy recommendations, while establishing a comprehensive research agenda to address exclusion and promote youth development.

Migration is of significant importance to the region's development. Some 53 million migrants live in Asia and the Pacific, while millions of people leave their countries to work abroad, generating remittances of US\$ 228 billion annually. However, inadequate data and information on international migration prevail. This prompted ESCAP to increase regional cooperation on international migration, particularly on promoting migration statistics and strengthening the links between the regional consultative processes on migration and subregional mechanisms on labour migration and preventing human trafficking.







Kibae Park

# CASE STUDY

## THE SOCIAL PROTECTION TOOLBOX

Governments and development practitioners in the Asia and Pacific region are supported by ESCAP to build more comprehensive and robust social protection systems to reduce poverty, economic and social risks and vulnerability.

The Social Protection Toolbox, launched by ESCAP in 2013, is a futuristic e-platform for knowledge sharing and capacity-building in social protection.

The Toolbox contains a database of global and regional good practices and includes an extensive network of social protection experts to facilitate South-South cooperation and the building of consensus in moving forward towards broader universal coverage.

Using multimedia and data visualization techniques, the Toolbox provides a dynamic and interactive platform to help users

navigate the complex environment of social protection policymaking.

The Toolbox has been successfully launched at the national level by governments in Bhutan, Fiji, India and the Philippines.

As a living and dynamic archive, the Toolbox is providing new ideas and practices on how to promote efficient labour markets, mitigate people's exposure to risks, and enhance their capacity to manage economic and social risks, such as unemployment, exclusion, sickness, disability and old age.



[www.socialprotection-toolbox.org](http://www.socialprotection-toolbox.org)





# STATISTICS

A DATA REVOLUTION FOR DEVELOPMENT



# STATISTICS

## A DATA REVOLUTION FOR DEVELOPMENT

Understanding the social, economic and environmental circumstances that people live in is key to addressing the region's challenges. However, development, policy-making and accountability continue to be hindered by a lack of the most basic data to provide this knowledge.

ESCAP believes in the power of a data revolution for development. Steered by the Committee on Statistics and in collaboration with a wide range of development partners, ESCAP helps member States to harness this power through regional cooperation and building the capacity of national statistical systems to produce reliable, relevant and powerful statistics.



**Millions of people in Asia  
and the Pacific  
live and die without a  
legal identity or leaving  
an official trace.**







ESCAP Photo

## HIGHLIGHTS

Based on a management seminar organized by SIAP and the Statistics Division in November 2013, ESCAP presented the Asia-Pacific perspective on the role of data in the post-2015 development agenda in a report to the UN Statistical Commission. The report contributed to mobilizing the international statistical community to influence the post-2015 development agenda for a greater role for statistics as an enabler of development and accountability.

ESCAP partnered with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), the European Free Trade Association and Statistics Norway to assess Mongolia's whole national statistical system. The assessment has resulted in revision of the statistics law and other institutional reforms to align with the fundamental principles of official statistics endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly.

In support of the Lao PDR Government's efforts to develop a national civil registration and vital statistics strategy, ESCAP partnered with the Thailand Bureau of Registration Administration to provide training to officials from six ministries on legal frameworks, practices and infrastructure for civil registration and national identity cards.

ESCAP worked with regional experts to collaborate and transfer knowledge on how to utilize emerging data sources for official statistics, such as Big Data, and to realize the data revolution. The initiative is supported by the Committee on Statistics' Strategic Advisory Body for the modernization of statistical production and services.

With support from the Russian Federation, ESCAP advanced implementation of the Regional Programme for Economic Statistics in North and Central Asian countries, Afghanistan and Mongolia, delivering training to macroeconomic statisticians on the latest methods for compiling national accounts to improve the quality and timeliness of gross domestic product data.

ESCAP developed a capacity assessment tool for the core set of population and social statistics. Bhutan and the Philippines piloted the tool, generating national dialogues between data producers and users and identifying steps to strengthen capacity and make statistics more relevant to policy-makers.



Kibae Park

## CASE STUDY

### A REGIONAL ACTION FRAMEWORK TO GET EVERY ONE IN THE PICTURE

Millions of people in Asia and the Pacific live and die without a legal identity or without leaving an official trace. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) estimates that 135 million children in the region aged under five have not had their birth registered. Roughly two-thirds of deaths are not registered, or the causes incorrectly determined.

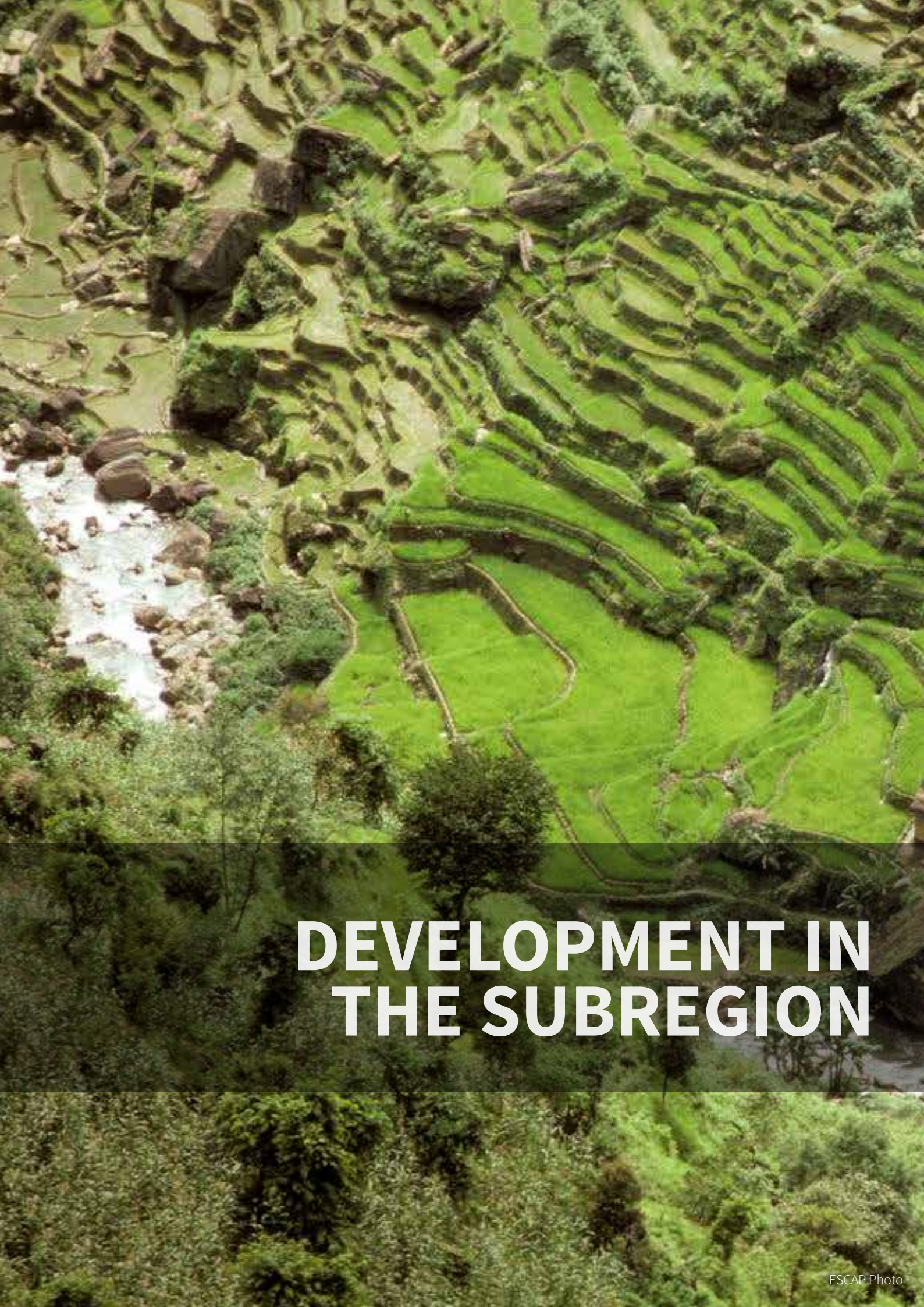
Registering people's life events is the responsibility of a national civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) system. Since 2012, ESCAP, in partnership with UNICEF, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, the High Commission for Refugees, the World Health Organization, the Asian Development Bank, Plan International and other development partners, has been driving an initiative to improve CRVS in Asia and the Pacific through regional cooperation, technical assistance and advocacy.

At the request of member States in Commission resolution 69/15, ESCAP established a steering group to guide regional efforts on this critical development issue, the first such group to exist in the world. Chaired by Dr. Neil Sharma, the Fiji Minister of Health, and comprising other high-level government and development partner representatives, the steering group has overseen the development of a ground-breaking regional action framework to focus and accelerate the improvement of CRVS systems through seven action areas, three goals, including universal civil registration, and nationally-set targets for an 'Asian and Pacific CRVS Decade 2015-2024'.

The regional action framework will be presented for endorsement by governments of the region at the first Ministerial Conference on CRVS in Asia and the Pacific convened by ESCAP during 24 to 28 November 2014. The Ministerial Conference is co-organized with seven partners.

[www.getinthepicture.org](http://www.getinthepicture.org)



An aerial photograph showing a vast landscape of terraced rice fields. The terraces are carved into the slopes of mountains and hills, creating a series of green, stepped platforms. A river flows through the lower left portion of the image, its white water contrasting with the green fields. The overall scene is lush and vibrant, showcasing traditional agricultural practices in a mountainous region.

# **DEVELOPMENT IN THE SUBREGION**





# ESCAP PACIFIC OFFICE

While approximately 10 million people from Pacific island developing countries have experienced improved economic performance overall, compared to five decades ago, significant development gaps remain. More than 20 per cent of the populations in several Pacific islands are unable to meet their basic needs. Violence against women is high, while women's representation in politics is extremely low in most Pacific islands. Increasing reliance on imported foods has contributed to an 'epidemic' of obesity and non-communicable diseases. Youth unemployment is high and most Pacific islands are heavily dependent on fossil fuel for household energy, production processes and transportation. The situation is compounded by low and uneven economic growth, lower agricultural productivity, growing populations and the increasing threat from climate change and natural disasters.

Against this backdrop, the ESCAP Pacific Office supports Pacific islands in building resilience as the centre of their sustainable development agenda. In particular, the Office focuses on promoting regional cooperation for sustainable development, including support for development strategies, statistical services, social inclusion and climate-vulnerable nations and communities.

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**The ESCAP Pacific Office supports Pacific islands in building resilience as the centre of their sustainable development agenda.**

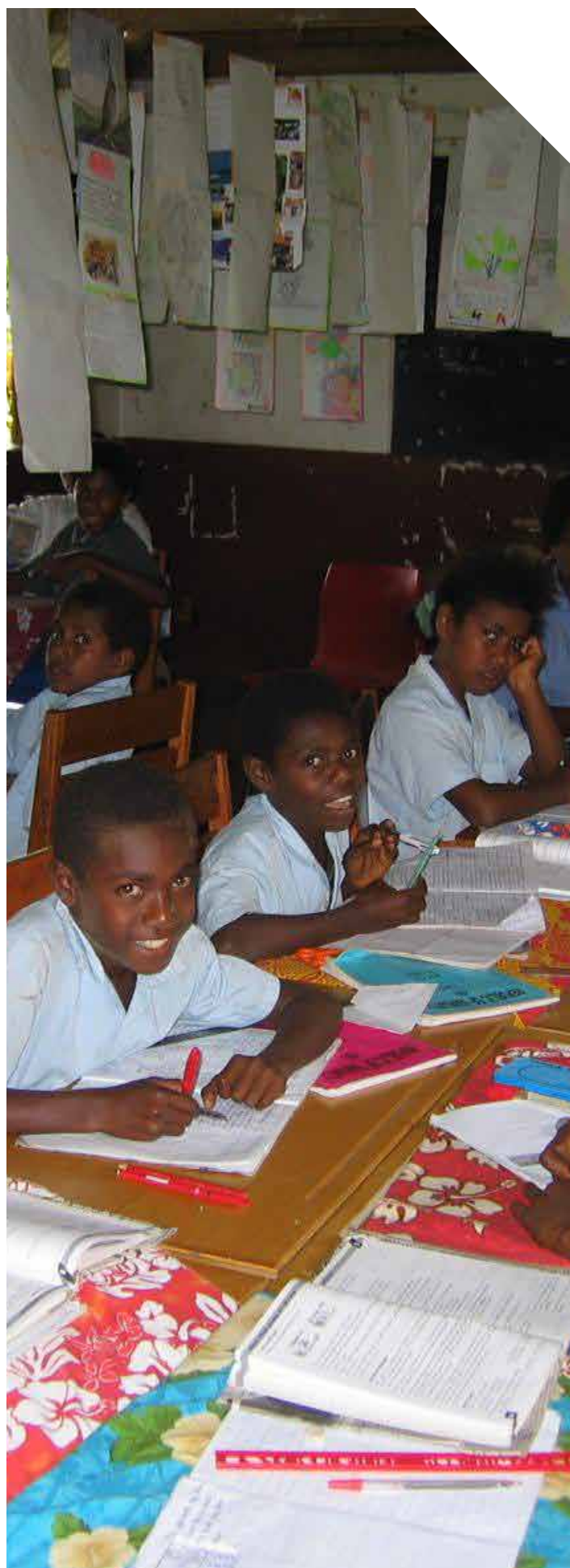
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## HIGHLIGHTS

Following the signing of a leaders Declaration on the 'Pacific Regional Data Repository' (PRDR), in support of 'Sustainable Energy for All' with United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on 27 September 2013, the Pacific Ministers of Energy and Transport Meeting approved the ESCAP technical proposal for the PRDR, and the PRDR was established with the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC).

The ESCAP Pacific Office's regional advisory services provide policy advice in collaboration with regional organizations (Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat and Secretariat of the Pacific Community) on the development of national disability policies in Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, Cook Islands, Republic of Marshall Islands and Tonga. With the exception of Tonga, which has already endorsed its policy, these Pacific countries are now in the process of conducting internal consultations on these draft policies.

Addressing the importance of integrated, high-quality statistics for evidence-based national sustainable development policymaking, the Pacific Office organized two back-to-back seminars in collaboration with partners, on 'Developing Programmes for Implementation of the System of National Accounts' and 'Supporting Statistics and the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting 2012,' in Apia, Samoa, in August 2013. This seminar resulted in improved awareness of the demand for integrated statistics, including those compiled using the SNA and SEEA, and a commitment among partners and countries to collaborate in the areas of national accounts and environmental-economic accounting statistics.







ESCAP Photo

## CASE STUDY

### CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

The United Nation's third international conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS) was held from 1-4 September 2014 in Apia, Samoa. The conference focused global attention on the unique characteristics and particular vulnerabilities of SIDS and particularly the impact that climate change has, and will have, on small islands.

In the build up to the third international conference on SIDs, the ESCAP Pacific Office facilitated the regional preparatory meeting for the Pacific SIDS region, held in Nadi, Fiji from 10 to 12 July 2013. The meeting provided a regional forum for dialogue between Pacific islands on regional priorities and issues of importance and produced a Pacific SIDS outcome document which will feed into the third international conference. The outcome document acknowledged that climate change and sea-level rise are undermining progress

towards sustainable development, threatening livelihoods and the security of coastal communities, and the survival, viability and territorial sovereignty of some Pacific island countries.

For some Pacific islanders, the impact of climate change will mean relocation and migration both internally and externally. The ESCAP Pacific Office is currently implementing a European Union-funded project titled 'Enhancing the Capacity of Pacific Island Countries to address the Impacts of Climate Change on Migration.' The objective of the project is to enhance the capacity of Pacific island countries to address the impacts of climate change on migration through well-managed, rights-based migration schemes and policy frameworks, supported by comprehensive research and knowledge building.





# ESCAP SUBREGIONAL OFFICE FOR EAST AND NORTH-EAST ASIA

In 2013, the East and North-East Asia subregion faced strong economic headwinds, affected by sluggish recovery in developed markets. Although slightly better than in 2012, growth remained slower than pre-crisis rates for most of the economies in the subregion. The resource-intensive economy and ongoing concern about social well-being along the path of economic growth accentuates the need to find new approaches and strategies that would help the subregion adopt sustainable development approaches.

In that sense, the ESCAP Subregional Office for East and North-east Asia Office has been assisting member States in the subregion to address social, economic and environmental development priorities. Also serving as the Secretariat for the North-East Asian Subregional Programme for Environmental Cooperation, the Office continued to support member States in strengthening environmental cooperation through knowledge-sharing, capacity-building and joint field projects.

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**The resource-intensive economy and ongoing concern about social well-being along the path of economic growth accentuates the need to find new approaches and strategies that would help the subregion adopt sustainable development approaches.**  
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## HIGHLIGHTS

■ An Expert Group Meeting on regional integration marked the beginning of a regional cooperation and integration study for the East and North-East Asia subregion, for the first time, across the three pillars of sustainable development. It is expected that this study will be published in the second half of 2014.

■ In the area of low carbon cities, the work on developing a subregional partnership received support from member States. An international symposium was held to further elaborate the partnership and the proposal to launch a subregional platform for information sharing and communications, joint studies and assessments, and capacity-building was welcomed by all.

■ Working with the subregional partner Greater Tumen Initiative, the North-East Asia Forum on Trade Facilitation promoted active dialogue and cooperation among public and private sector stakeholders in the subregion on issues such as trade financing and facilitation.

■ On the issue of marine environment, in consultation with key stakeholders, the Secretariat developed the programme and institutional arrangement and initiated the North-East Asia Marine Protected Areas Network. This serves as an effective and functional representative network of Marine Protected Areas (MPA) in the subregion for conservation of marine and coastal biodiversity and increases the efficiency of MPA management.







Marie Ange Sylvain-Holmgren

## CASE STUDY

### POLICY INITIATIVES TACKLING DROUGHT IN MONGOLIA

Mongolia has perennially been prone to drought and desertification, dzud, severe snow and dust storms which often cause immense human, environmental and economic losses. In 2011 for example, drought and ensuing dzud resulted in the loss of approximately three per cent of the country's 44 million livestock. As evidenced, these disasters often result in catastrophic losses of livestock and mass migration of impoverished herder families to the larger cities. With climate change, the incidence and severity of drought and dzud may increase, adding to the challenges of poverty alleviation and food security in Mongolia.

In this regard, it is vital that Mongolia has the capacity for timely detection of drought and

dzud which can bring about early policy responses to mitigate the impact. To build this capacity, the Secretariat, together with regional institutions and the National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC) of Mongolia launched a joint initiative in 2013

The project will be implemented in 2014 and 2015 with components including a two-month long training for NRSC staff to identify the best performing indicators of drought, followed by field verification and the development and installation of a drought monitoring system. The project in Mongolia will also serve as a pilot for operationalizing and utilizing the Regional Space Applications Programme for Sustainable Development.





# ESCAP SUBREGIONAL OFFICE FOR NORTH AND CENTRAL ASIA

The strategic importance of North and Central Asia makes it a unique region, highlighted by the significant role it plays in the energy security of Europe and Asia, along with its potential as a transport and transit hub between two continents and its active role in the fight against such global security challenges as terrorism and drug trafficking.

The prolonged global economic crisis, commodity price volatility and extreme weather conditions slowed down economic growth in the region and exacerbated challenges such as the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, barriers to trade and transport connectivity and diversification of the economy, along with the management of water and energy resources, environment degradation and risks of disasters. Additionally, most member States in North and Central Asia are also landlocked, with divergent economic development and a rapid growing gap between the income levels of energy-exporting and non-energy exporting States.

The ESCAP Subregional Office for North and Central Asia Office works closely with ESCAP's divisions and stakeholders to address development priorities of member States, strengthening regional cooperation and integration for accelerating progress towards attaining internationally agreed development goals. It aims to achieve inclusive and sustainable development in strong partnership with major stakeholders by tackling challenges in transport, trade and connectivity along with efficient use and management of water and energy resource.

The transition to 'green economy,' disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation are also key focus areas of the Office. In addition, the Office coordinates the activities of the Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA), serving as an important link between member States, ESCAP and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE).

## HIGHLIGHTS

In the area of trade facilitation, the Office continued implementation of the project ‘Strengthening Economic Ties Between Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries,’ aimed at promoting networking between Afghanistan and its neighbouring countries to identify key barriers for more intensive regional economic cooperation and to propose realistic economic projects to promote joint ventures. As a result, the links between entrepreneurs were enhanced and projects for joint implementation, including production of cement and construction material and processing of agricultural products have already started.

Water resources management remains a key focus of the Office’s work. During the training seminar on Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) for Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan in October 2013 the member States recommendations included the coordinated management of water resources and land use aimed at improving social and economic development without harming the sustainability of vital ecosystem elements.

In the area of disaster risk reduction, the project on ‘Strengthening Cooperation for Disaster Risk Reduction in North and Central Asia,’ was implemented. Two meetings were organized with hydrometeorological experts of Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan July 2013 in Kyrgyzstan and October 2013 in Dushanbe, Tajikistan.

A report on ‘*Development Prospects and Challenges for the SPECA Countries: Some Selected Perspectives*,’ an analysis and assessment of national socio-economic policies, including MDG-related indicators was presented to government officials and other stakeholders at the 2013 SPECA Economic Forum.

At the subregional seminar entitled ‘From Rio+20 to Real Outcomes: Strengthening Regional Cooperation in Water Management in North and Central Asia’ held in 2013, member States developed recommendations and proposals for further strengthening of cooperation in the field of distribution and management of water resources.

The United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA) remains a priority of the Office. The 2013 SPECA Economic Forum, “Inclusive and Sustainable Development through Regional Cooperation” discussed ways to implement the outcomes of the Rio+20 conference, and ways to accelerate deeper regional cooperation, aimed at effective integration of the economic, social and environmental pillars of sustainable development. The Forum adopted the Joint Statement which supports recognition of the importance of strengthened regional cooperation for the successful implementation of the post-2015 development agenda.

The Office has been closely involved in promoting energy security in North and Central Asia through regional cooperation and in improving access to clean and efficient forms of energy for sustainable and inclusive growth. During the Subregional Expert Group Meeting on “Energy for Sustainable Development: Policy Dialogue on Opportunities for Cooperation in North and Central Asia” held in 2013, member States discussed the current economic situation and the priorities of the energy sector for development in their respective countries, including the contribution of the energy section to the social and economic development of the country.



ESCAP Photo

## CASE STUDY

SPECA was launched in 1998 by member States to strengthen subregional cooperation in Central Asia and its integration into the world economy. It is supported by ESCAP and ECE and includes Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

SPECA serves as a platform for member States to discuss and formulate various approaches towards the development of a cooperation framework. By participating in working groups the SPECA Economic Forums and SPECA Governing Council sessions, member States have the opportunity to share experiences and lessons learned in areas, such as transport, trade, water and energy resources, knowledge-based development, statistics, gender and the economy.

In late 2013, ESCAP and ECE co-organised SPECA Week in Almaty, Kazakhstan which brought together more than 250 senior government officials, representatives of intergovernmental organizations, international financial institutions and experts from the subregion. Under the framework of the Week, the SPECA Economic Forum, under the theme of 'Inclusive and sustainable development through regional cooperation', and the 8th session of the SPECA Governing Council, delivered the adoption of a recommendation on strengthening regional cooperation in support of sustainable and inclusive development in Central Asia, with regards to the Rio+20 Conference outcomes and the post-2015 development agenda. Strengthened regional cooperation, improved regional trade relations, transport, border crossing and intra-regional investment are central to sustainable development of SPECA countries and successful implementation of the post-2015 development agenda.





# SUBREGIONAL OFFICE FOR SOUTH AND SOUTH-WEST ASIA

South and South-West Asia is a populous subregion accounting for nearly a quarter of the world's population. Despite its dynamism and structural transformation, the subregion remains the home of the largest concentration of persons suffering from poverty and hunger in the world and has lagged behind in MDG achievement.

The subregion is a geographically contiguous landmass but due to poor surface transport links and facilitation, it has not been possible to exploit the potential of regional economic integration, and so it is often characterized as the world's least integrated subregion.

ESCAP's work has shown that the intraregional trade potential of the area is substantial and can be harnessed through better transport connectivity and facilitation. Against that background, ESCAP-SSWA's strategic interventions for the subregion have focused on analytical and policy support, technical assistance and capacity-building for strengthening transport connectivity and regional cooperation to foster inclusive and sustainable development, especially with a focus on least developed countries and land locked developing countries of the subregion.

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**Strategic interventions for the subregion have focused on analytical and policy support, technical assistance and capacity-building for strengthening transport connectivity.**

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## HIGHLIGHTS

Food security is an important issue for South Asia, which is home to a third of the world's food insecure people. Convened in August 2013, the South Asia Policy Dialogue on Regional Cooperation for Food Security brought forward a 10-point policy agenda to leverage regional cooperation for greater food security in the subregion, including promoting joint research and development and establishing regional knowledge networks for sharing good practices. As a follow-up, ESCAP-SSWA is now launching a subregional knowledge network to facilitate knowledge-sharing.

Building on earlier work on India, ESCAP-SSWA hosted the South Asia Policy Dialogue on Women's Entrepreneurship in Delhi in November 2013, in collaboration with the SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation Chambers), Women Entrepreneurship Council and female chambers from all the SAARC countries. The Policy Dialogue called for subregional mechanisms to share information and resources to support women's access to finance, markets and skills. ESCAP-SSWA has been invited to support the SAARC Gender Policy Advisory Group.

ESCAP-SSWA partnered with the ILO's South Asia Decent Work Team and the think tank Institute of Human Development to launch the South Asia Research Network on Employment and Social Protection for Inclusive Growth (SARNET), with the support of the International Development Research Centre. Working with think tanks and researchers in the subregion, SARNET seeks to contribute through its research, policy advocacy and capacity-building activities to a better understanding of the policy options to enhance the creation of productive jobs in the economic growth process.

ESCAP-SSWA organized a meeting of experts on MDG-consistent planning models for South Asia in Kathmandu in October 2013 jointly with Nepal's National Planning Commission and the SAARC Secretariat, as part of the request made by the delegation of Nepal at ESCAP's 69th Commission Session. It sought to strengthen the technical capacity of South Asian countries to enhance MDG-consistency in their development planning process through sharing of good practices between officials of development planning bodies.

ESCAP-SSWA continued to assist Afghanistan, a fragile least developed and landlocked economy coming out of conflict, in its bid for World Trade Organization accession jointly with the International Trade Centre, with two more workshops held in October 2013 and March 2014. ESCAP-SSWA also supports the Istanbul Process on Heart of Asia and prepared a report on 'Doing Business in Afghanistan: Harnessing Afghanistan's Productive Potential,' which informed an investor's meeting hosted by India in November 2013.

As a part of its regional think tank and knowledge-sharing platform role, ESCAP facilitated the interaction in the subregion with renowned thinkers on contemporary development and the policy challenges it faces. Seminars organized by ESCAP-SSWA included Nobel Laureate Professor Joseph Stiglitz (Columbia University), Professor Jose Antonio Ocampo (former United Nations Under-Secretary-General), Dr. Andrew Sheng (Fung Global Institute), Professor Adil Najam (Boston University) and Professor Thomas Pogge (Yale University). The themes of these interactions covered the implications of global trends for South-South cooperation, South Asia's vision 2060, and global partnership for the post 2015 development agenda.





ESCAP Photo

## CASE STUDY

### TRANSPORT CONNECTIVITY AND REGIONAL ECONOMIC INTEGRATION OF SOUTH AND SOUTH-WEST ASIA

In 2013, the ESCAP-SSWA office launched a policy analysis and advocacy programme jointly with the Transport Division, on strengthening transport connectivity and transit facilitation in SSWA to leverage strengthened connectivity for deepening regional economic integration. High-level policy dialogues organized in Dhaka, Bangladesh (June 2013), New Delhi, India (November 2013), and Lahore, Pakistan (December 2013) attracted the participation of senior transport policy makers, including ministers from eight countries, besides other stakeholders including SAARC, the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), the World Bank, ADB and logistics operators. The proposed connectivity masterplan by ESCAP for a broader transport corridor to link South Asia to Central Asia and Europe, such as the Istanbul-Tehran-Islamabad-Delhi-Kolkata-Dhaka (ITI—DKD) container train corridor, with

feeder links to landlocked developing countries in South and Central Asia received strong support. ESCAP-SSWA also issued an e-book, *“Towards Seamless Transport Connectivity in South and South-West Asia,”* based on these dialogues. Another policy dialogue organized in Shillong, India (December 2013), jointly with the Transport Division of ESCAP and ADB, focused on the role of strengthened transport connectivity in the development of border areas in the east of South Asia with the participation of senior officials and other stakeholders from Bangladesh, Bhutan, North-Eastern Indian states and Nepal. In the coming months, ESCAP will build on the momentum generated on connectivity-related issues and assist the subregion in developing its transport connectivity masterplan in consultation with key stakeholders.





# ESCAP REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS





# REGIONAL INSTITUTES PROGRAMME OF WORK

The Asia-Pacific region is home to the largest number of hungry people in the world, with the demand for food and other agricultural products continuing to increase as a result of rapid population growth and urbanization.

To meet this challenge, there is a growing need to develop agricultural mechanization to help attain sustainable intensification of crop and animal production and improve rural livelihoods, against the background of labour and natural resources constraints, land and soil degradation, and the impact of climate change. Regional co-operation can help ensure that farmers have improved access to the machinery needed to increase production.

The Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization (CSAM) assists member countries in improving institutional and technical capacity through targeted policy advisory services and the development of regional forums and networks to promote technology transfer, knowledge and best practice sharing on agricultural mechanization.

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**Regional cooperation  
facilitates farmers' access  
to suitable, quality,  
safe, and efficient machinery  
for increased production.**

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ESCAP PHOTO

## HIGHLIGHTS

The inauguration of the Regional Forum on sustainable agricultural mechanization in October 2013, provided a regional platform to generate and share information and knowledge, facilitate policy dialogue and technology transfer, and nurture regional cooperation and intraregional trade and investment on sustainable agricultural mechanization.

Governments are increasingly paying attention to the role of testing and standardization in promoting sustainable agricultural mechanization for human, food and environmental safety. Supporting this, the Asian and Pacific Network for Testing of Agricultural Mechanization (ANTAM), a regional network to facilitate trade in safe, efficient and environmentally friendly agricultural machinery, was launched in at the end of 2013.

In collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, a draft sustainable agricultural mechanization strategy for Asia and the Pacific was prepared to provide tailored policy tools for member countries to address challenges of sustainable agricultural mechanization.

With the Institute's advocacy and support, many countries have formulated national action development plans for agricultural mechanization or have included agricultural mechanization as an important component in their comprehensive food and agricultural action plans.





# ASIAN AND PACIFIC CENTRE FOR TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY

## A SPECIALIZED INSTITUTION OF ESCAP

Technology is increasingly important for countries in the Asia and Pacific region and is a key enabler for achieving regional sustainable development goals. From the globalization of technologies to the shift in emphasis to knowledge-based and innovation driven economies, the changing business environment sets up new challenges for the region. The key response is to strengthen the national science, technology and innovation capacities of member States to develop and manage evidence based policies, effective institutional frameworks and efficient delivery mechanisms that will increase the competitiveness of small and medium enterprises. In turn, their increased capacity to develop, access and adapt relevant technological innovations can help realize sustainable development goals and also provide opportunities for technological leapfrogging by developing countries.

With nearly four decades of servicing member countries in the region as a specialized agency focusing on strengthening technology-driven inclusive and sustainable development, the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology (APCTT) continues to re-focus its work programme to meet emerging regional challenges. APCTT assists member States through strengthening their capabilities to develop and manage national innovation systems, develop, transfer, adapt and apply technology, improve the terms of transfer of technology, and identify and promote the development and transfer of technologies relevant to the region.

# HIGHLIGHTS

In partnership with ESCAP's Trade and Investment Division and ESCAP's Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture (CAPSA), APCTT facilitated knowledge transfer through sharing of best practices in sustainable agriculture and trade facilitation for the benefit of smallholder farmers, small scale traders and other key value chain stakeholders. Through this initiative, APCTT helped establish the first ever Biological Control Unit in Bhutan to assist the country to advance its organic agriculture roadmap.

During 2013-14, APCTT trained over 350 policy makers, researchers, research managers and industry stakeholders of Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Malaysia on critical aspects of nanotechnology research and development management, increasing their ability to develop and commercialise innovative nanotechnology applications. In support of this effort the Centre developed a manual on critical issues in nanotechnology research and development management and established an online resource platform on Asia-Pacific nanotechnology research and development Management Network' with databases of nanotechnology opportunities, research and development institutes and researchers.

APCTT carried out Nepal and Lao PDR science, technology and innovation diagnosis and strategy development studies in cooperation with the Science and Technology Policy Institute (STEPI) of Republic of Korea and shared its findings among key actors of national information systems. Following the Centre's capacity building activities in Lao PDR in the area of national innovation systems and STI diagnosis, Lao PDR is currently drafting the technology transfer decree and a policy on investment in high technology for consideration by its national assembly.

In collaboration with ESCAP's Environment and Development Division, APCTT assisted Indonesia and Lao PDR to conduct assessment studies of their current national enabling environment and technology innovation ecosystem for the promotion and adoption of sustainable energy technologies. These assessment studies led to the development of national strategies to strengthen their national enabling environment and technology innovation ecosystem for the promotion and adoption of sustainable energy technologies to increase affordability with an emphasis on South-South cooperation.







# ASIAN AND PACIFIC TRAINING CENTRE FOR INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT

Information and communication technology (ICT) has been identified as an important tool in addressing the challenges of the post-2015 agenda by the Action Agenda for Sustainable Development. However, looking beyond positive indicators of connectivity, the digital divide in Asia-Pacific continues to be one of the widest in the world. In particular, the capacity to use ICT in the region has not kept pace with the rise of ICT's importance in development and the general economy.

Recognizing the importance of human and institutional capacity building in using ICT to address current and emerging development challenges, the United Nations Asian and Pacific Training Centre for ICT for Development (APCICT) strengthens the efforts of ESCAP member States to leverage and integrate ICT in national development strategies and programmes. The Centre has adopted a programmatic approach in its ICT for Development (ICTD) capacity building work to ensure sustainability and maximize development impact, targeted to two distinct groups: one for government leaders and policymakers, and one for today's youth who will be tomorrow's leaders.

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**Combined with its APCICT Virtual Academy (AVA) for online learning, the Centre's capacity building activities have now reached over 38,000 people from 149 countries.**

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## HIGHLIGHTS

■ The Academy of ICT Essentials for Government Leaders is now composed of 11 modules, with the most recent on social media for development introduced in June 2014. The Academy was launched in Bangladesh, China and Nepal, bringing the total number of countries to 29. The Academy is institutionalized in national civil service training frameworks and partners have localized the modules into 14 languages.

■ The Primer Series, part of the Turning Today's Youth into Tomorrow's Leaders programme, has been rolled out in 13 countries and introduced in two sub-regions. It is strengthening ICTD education in over 130 universities and has reached more than 20,000 students. Partners have localized the Primer Series into five languages.

■ The Centre organized 23 capacity building events, bringing the total to 235. Combined with its APCICT Virtual Academy (AVA) for online learning, the Centre's capacity building activities have now reached over 38,000 people from 149 countries.

■ APCICT collaborates with regional development banks, United Nations Regional Commissions, its host country government and other partners to extend the impact of its ICTD capacity building to regions beyond Asia-Pacific. In June 2014, a new ICTD capacity building center for Latin America and the Caribbean was established in Nicaragua after benchmarking APCICT programmes and translating the Academy into Spanish.







# CENTRE FOR THE ALLEVIATION OF POVERTY THROUGH SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

Asia and the Pacific remains the fastest growing region globally, and an anchor of stability in the world economy. Yet, the region still accounts for a vast majority of the poor and undernourished. Poverty in Asia and the Pacific region is characterised by its rural phenomenon: high dependency on unsustainable agricultural practices contributing to environmental degradation. Thus, sustainable agriculture is key to poverty alleviation and food security.

The Centre for the Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture (CAPSA) engages in policy advocacy for sustainable agriculture, promotes institutional strengthening and capacity building among stakeholders, and contributes to an enhanced understanding on the interdependencies between sustainable agriculture, poverty reduction and food security.

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**Poverty in the Asia and Pacific region is characterised by its rural phenomenon: high dependency on unsustainable agricultural practices contributing to environmental degradation.**

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## HIGHLIGHTS

Under the CAPSA-led SATNET Asia project, 35 in-country and regional workshops to promote sustainable agricultural practices and trade facilitation were organized reaching out to over 900 participants from government and civil society organizations. The workshops strengthened national and institutional capacities with over half of the participants in follow-up surveys confirming actual utilization of all or most of the knowledge and skills gained, and over 70% of them training others or sharing their knowledge.

A framework for assessing sustainable agriculture technologies was developed in collaboration with the Food Security Centre (FSC) of the University of Hohenheim in Germany. Over 100 technologies have been collected, and field studies on selected promising technologies are being conducted to examine their social, economic and environmental impact.

CAPSA collaborated with the National Institute of Agricultural Research in Papua New Guinea and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in Lao PDR to strengthen the capacity of researchers to undertake evidence-based policy analysis. The collaboration resulted in imparting knowledge on policy analysis techniques and joint research on smallholder market participation for inclusive and sustainable growth.

The Expert Consultation on ‘Strengthening Linkages between Research and Extension to Promote Food and Nutrition Security,’ organized in Bangkok on 11-12 December, 2013, in partnership with the FAO, enabled over 40 delegates to identify and develop an Action Framework for strengthening research-to-extension links to enhance food and nutrition security.





# STATISTICAL INSTITUTE FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Increased recognition of the fundamental role of statistics in development and accountability required for good governance has placed great expectations on national statistical systems to produce and disseminate timely and reliable data and statistics for measuring progress in achieving sustainable and inclusive development goals.

Despite progress from the intensive efforts of a large number of stakeholders, many statistical systems of member and associate member States still lack capability in producing basic data.

Addressing this, the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP) strives to improve the use of statistics for evidence-based decision-making and to produce and disseminate quality statistics for inclusive, sustainable and resilient societies in the ESCAP region. In line with this, ESCAP values human capital - placing it at the core of capacity building priorities through, among others, providing targeted training to statistical systems that need these most.

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**The fundamental role of statistics in development and accountability required for good governance has placed great expectations on national statistical systems.**

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## HIGHLIGHTS

■ Harnessing web-based technologies to expand access to training through e-learning, SIAP delivered 31 statistical training courses across the region. Over 979 officials from 44 member States are now applying acquired knowledge and skills in producing MDG indicators, analyzing census data, compiling national accounts and implementing quality assurance frameworks.

■ With targeted support to countries with special needs, over 100 government officials and statisticians of Myanmar trained 28 officials, mostly new entrants to the statistical workforce, of Timor-Leste participated in a three-week training course on basic statistics.

■ Through an innovative six-week training course on production and statistical analysis of monitoring indicators in support of inclusive development policies, SIAP trained 19 government statisticians from 10 developing countries to analyse disparities and explain inequalities in development outcomes in their countries by applying statistical techniques to household survey micro-data.

■ At the end of 2013, SIAP trained 122 officials in change management for the impending merger of the four main national statistical agencies into the new Philippines Statistics Authority. The training design has been replicated by the interim leadership to prepare for the completion of the merger by mid-2014.





# **INCLUSIVE PARTNERSHIPS FOR RESULTS**



# PROMOTING PARTNERSHIPS

Achieving results through our inclusive partnerships is a key driver for ESCAP's mandate, role and work. Results-based management underscores the work of ESCAP's subprogrammes, as the organisation strives to make a lasting difference in the lives and future of people in Asia and the Pacific.

## TECHNICAL COOPERATION

The Secretariat's technical cooperation programme continued to focus on capacity development and institutional strengthening in 2013 with a key focus on (a) policy advocacy and dialogue on critical and emerging issues, including follow-up to global and regional commitments; (b) regional knowledge networking aimed at enabling the members and associate members of ESCAP to share and discuss information and experiences on good and innovative practices; and (c) training, advisory services and other forms of technical assistance aimed at strengthening the ability of the members and associate members to formulate and implement effective policies and programmes in a range of key development areas.

With South-South cooperation core to our mandate, a key emphasis for ESCAP's development work is the achievement of results through strengthened results-based management, monitoring and evaluation and strong partnerships with a range of stakeholders.

In 2013, the ESCAP technical cooperation programme was funded from both the regular budget of the United Nations and extrabudgetary resources. The regular budget comprised the regular programme of technical cooperation and the United Nations Development Account. Extrabudgetary resources included voluntary contributions – as cash or assistance in-kind – provided by individual governments, entities of the United Nations system and other intergovernmental organizations, the business sector and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs).





Kibae Park

## CREATIVE APPROACHES TO PARTNERSHIPS

Creative approaches to partnerships, pulling in financial resources while tapping into synergies, knowledge and skills, have become critical for the delivery of the ESCAP technical cooperation programme in times of decreasing levels of Official Development Assistance (ODA). The Secretariat endeavoured to maximize the impact of the resources, experience, skills and linkages that partners bring to the implementation of the work of ESCAP in all its subprogrammes. The diversity and scope of these partnerships are detailed here.

In cooperation with the Republic of Korea as a major partner, together with the Governments of Japan, China and Australia, and business partners such as the Nippon Foundation, ESCAP established the Working Group on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022. Comprising representatives of 15 Governments and 15 civil society organizations, the Working Group adopted a five-year road map for the implementation of the Incheon Strategy, which outlines milestone actions to be carried out by governments at the national level to meet their commitments under the Incheon Strategy.

Partnership with and support from the Russian Federation were instrumental in promoting the policy, normative and capacity-development work of ESCAP mainly in support of the energy and transport sectors, as well as in other joint priority areas, such as migration, statistics, information and communications technology and disaster risk reduction. ESCAP established the Asian and Pacific Energy Forum, which in its first session, held in Vladivostok, the Russian Federation, adopted two significant outcome documents – the Ministerial Declaration and the Plan of Action – both of which underline the need for strong regional cooperation to enhance energy security and the sustainable use of energy in the Asia and Pacific region.

■ The Russian Federation and ESCAP further collaborated in order to support the development, adoption and implementation of the milestone Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports. After the ESCAP Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway agreements, this is the third intergovernmental agreement paving the way for enhanced transport connectivity, and thereby greater trade, economic development and the movement of people in the region.

■ In collaboration with China, ESCAP has been implementing a regional programme to promote the economic empowerment of women, based on the South-South cooperation model. The programme promotes integration of a gender perspective into national development strategies with a particular focus on gender-responsive budgeting, women's economic empowerment and gender-sensitive poverty eradication. The participating countries include Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia and the Philippines. Policymakers, planners and experts from a range of sectors, including planning, finance, public works and women's affairs, enhanced their knowledge through the sharing of experiences on gender mainstreaming in policymaking and planning, and in implementing strategies to advance women's economic empowerment.

■ Partnering with the government of Germany, in particular the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), ESCAP initiated the multi-year project on "Integrated Resource Management in Asian Cities: The Urban Nexus." The project supports 10 cities in six countries, namely China, Indonesia, Mongolia, the Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam, by providing policy options, technical advice and examples of good practice in the utilization of the nexus linkages among water, energy and food security at the city level and the potential additional benefits arising from integrated resource management and planning for cities.

GIZ and ESCAP also teamed up in support of the ESCAP Multi-Donor Trust Fund for Tsunami, Disaster and Climate Preparedness in Indian Ocean and Southeast Asian Countries. The Fund helped to build tsunami early warning capacity at various levels in a number of countries, including Indonesia, Maldives, Myanmar and Timor-Leste.

■ In partnership with the European Union, ESCAP advanced promotion of sustainable agriculture and food security in member States through the

"Network for Knowledge Transfer on Sustainable Agricultural Technologies and Improved Market Linkages in South and Southeast Asia" (SATNET Asia) and by building technical and analytical capacity through technical cooperation in the area of food security and poverty reduction. As part of its initiative to improve monitoring and evaluation, the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture (CAPSA) also developed a knowledge-attitude-practice assessment method, which is now being applied and used for all training events to analyse how much of the knowledge gained from training events is actually being put into practice.

■ With the support of the Government of Japan, ESCAP promoted the implementation of the Asia-Pacific Plan of Action for Applications of Space Technology and Geographic Information Systems for Disaster Risk Reduction and Sustainable Development 2012-2017. ESCAP provided a platform for policymakers to come up with solutions for better use of space technology for disaster risk reduction and management, and sustainable development; the sharing of knowledge and good practices at both regional and national levels; and identification of needs, gaps and challenges on practical and technical issues in implementing the Asia-Pacific Plan of Action.

■ Working with the Goldman Sachs 10,000 Women initiative, ESCAP established a programme promoting an enabling policy and legal environment for women's entrepreneurship through primary research and in-depth analysis of barriers and challenges, as well as a series of national consultations and a regional forum to develop strategies and policy options.

■ In collaboration with the Hilti Foundation and local non-governmental organization, the Homeless People's Federation Philippines, ESCAP piloted a housing development project in the Philippines that promotes environmentally friendly, eco-efficient, disaster-resilient and affordable housing.

■ In collaborating with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, ESCAP developed a solution for cities in Asia to collect and recycle solid urban waste, introducing a revolutionary waste-disposal system in small communities using a method where up to 95 per cent of the collected waste is recycled or composted.

# DID YOU KNOW?

 **\$14.1 million**

The total cash contributions received by ESCAP in 2013 for technical cooperation, from sources within and outside the United Nations, amounted to \$14.1 million, representing an increase of 12 per cent over that of 2012.



Bilateral voluntary cash contributions by ESCAP member and non-member States remained the main extrabudgetary source of funding, representing 51.4 per cent of the total financial contributions in 2013.

**\$10 million**

The bilateral donor country contributions amounted to \$10 million, of which approximately 73.5 per cent was received from developing member countries.

**\$5.4 million**

In addition, ESCAP received \$5.4 million from special technical cooperation funds of the United Nations.



The largest overall bilateral donors include the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, Japan, Germany and China.



The largest multilateral donor is the European Union.





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