

United Nations Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism Terms of Reference

Thematic Working Group on Sustainable Societies (TWG-SS)

June 2016

Objective

This TWG aims to support countries of the Asia-Pacific region to address critical regional socio-demographic trends including youth bulge, population ageing, migration including human trafficking, urbanization, along with the dimensions of health and well-being in these areas, which have important implications on the achievement of the SDGs in the region and beyond.

It will undertake activities to advance regional cooperation and action in support of the countries' implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, most notably, SDGs 1, 3, 5, 8, 10, 11, 16 and 17, as well as complementary global and regional frameworks, including those listed below.

The TWG will work on:

Ensuring regional policy and thematic coherence, synergy and optimized impact from the combined efforts of the UN system with a focus on aligning operational work on ageing, youth, migration and the social dimensions of urbanization.

Providing regional inputs to normative and analytical work undertaken at the global level and translate global mandates and norms to regional mandates through coordination of the work of the UN at the regional level on, inter alia: the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the outcome of the sixth Asia-Pacific Population Conference; the World Programme of Action on Youth; Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing; the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD); the Asia-Pacific Urban Forum (APUF); and Habitat III.

Supporting regional/sub-regional initiatives in specific areas which require coordinated effort by multiple agencies, with a specific focus on ASEAN, SAARC and Pacific sub-regions.

Selecting and implementing regionally oriented activities that will have the greatest impact toward moving forward the 2030 Agenda at country level and working with the regional UNDG Peer Support Group for integration of common global and regional priorities, commitments and good practices in national and UN country team planning processes including UNDAFs, as may apply or be requested.

Contributing to the coordination efforts of the TWG on Statistics on strategy, process and mechanisms for statistics and data inputs for regional inputs to the global processes, and for regional implementation of global mandates, including follow-up and review of SDG progress.

In recognition of the 2030 Agenda's approach for integration of three pillars, but also of the fact that the regional trends the TWG addresses are interlinked, the TWG will focus on the most vulnerable and most marginalized in line with the SDG's overarching theme of 'no one left behind.' The TWG will mainstream a human-rights based approach and gender, closely working with other TWGs (e.g. TWG-GEEW).

Functions

1. The main functions that may be undertaken by the TWGs are: regional analyses and knowledge products that can be used for policy and advocacy work at the global, regional and country levels; information sharing and mapping of programmes and activities across the region; joint programming, including support to regional sectoral coordination mechanisms and organization of regional meetings; mobilize partners, including at the country level, in the development of and support to countries for utilization of regional analytical, normative and advocacy products as appropriate.¹
2. The expected core functions of the TWG-SS will be:
 - a. To serve as a mechanism for information-sharing and mapping of programmes and activities across the region related to demographic changes and seek to build synergies among the capacity building activities of the RCM members.
 - b. To produce joint analytical products, including in the area of statistics in collaboration with the TWG-Statistics, to support policy development and advocacy by highlighting good practices and identifying challenges, and supporting the follow-up and review of the SDGs.
 - c. To coordinate the UN engagement, joint actions and the partnership with key sub regional, intergovernmental frameworks such as ASEAN among others.
 - d. To coordinate the preparations and review of analytical inputs to the progress of the related themes for the regional SDGs reports and fora including the Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD).

¹ RCM chapeau text on TWG TORs, 26 April 2016

Organization

3. ESCAP, UNFPA and IOM will serve as Co-Chairs, and act as the joint secretariat to the TWG-SS. The Co-chairs will chair the TWG meetings in rotation. The Co-chairs can make decisions on behalf of the TWG-SS if required, within the parameters of these Terms of Reference, summary record of previous meetings, and the TWG-SS Annual Work Plan [Annex 1].
4. The core members/participants of the TWG-SS include: ESCAP, ILO, IOM, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN-Habitat, UNICEF, UNHCR, UNISDR, UNODC, UNV, UN-Women and WHO (to check with UNHCHR). The TWG may decide to open participation to representatives of other concerned UN agencies, intergovernmental bodies, NGOs, and bilateral and multilateral agencies, which should be decided at the TWG meeting.
5. Each member agency will designate a focal point and an alternate at the highest level possible to facilitate collaboration. The cost of participation will be met by each participating agency. Member agencies may send observers to TWG-SS meetings if they wish. Observers for the TWG-SS meetings may also be invited on a case-by-case basis by the Co-chairs. The focal points represent their agency and are responsible for providing updates on their environment, related activities and plans. The focal point is also responsible for keeping their colleagues in the respective agencies informed on the activities of TWG-SS.
6. The TWG will meet as deemed necessary, but at least two times a year. The agenda of each meeting will be circulated to members in advance by the TWG secretariat, including relevant background documents. A summary record of each TWG-SS meeting, reflecting recommended actions and outcomes, will be prepared by the secretariat, endorsed by the members and submitted to the RCM Secretariat for centralized records.
7. The TWG will prepare an Annual Work Plan [Annex 1] with responsibilities, success indicators and projected timelines for activities, at the first quarter of each calendar year. The TWG-SS Co-chairs will report on implementation of planned activities at the meetings of the Regional Coordination Mechanism (RCM) as required.
8. The TWG-SS could decide to establish mechanisms such as Working Groups and Task Forces, drawing on its members, to focus on longer term areas of shared work as well as time-bound specific tasks. These mechanisms will report on their work, including

recommendations for consideration where appropriate, to the TWG-SS on a regular basis. Reports may also be made available to the Co-chairs between TWG-SS meetings as required. Cost of participation will be met by each participating agency.

Monitoring and Evaluation

9. The TWG-SS will regularly assess its organization and functioning, including the mandates, relevance and responsibilities of its task forces and working groups. The TWG will prepare an annual work plan at the beginning of each year with the identification of a specific agenda for discussion at each TWG meeting. Implementation of the annual work plan will be monitored through meetings and reporting. Towards this end, the TWG will produce a summary record of each TWG meeting (prepared by the agency chairing the meeting) which will be circulated to RCM members. A detailed assessment of the TWG's relevance and effectiveness will be conducted after two years.

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2016 to 2017 Work plan

	Activity Description	Success Indicators	Responsible Lead Agency	Delivery time line	Resources/ Budget
1.	Mapping exercise on TWG members regional or multi-country activities related to youth, population ageing, migration including human trafficking and urbanization	Mapping conducted		End of 2016	N/A
2.	Discussion paper on long term implications of demographic change on sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific	Discussion paper finalized and presented to RCM	UNFPA ESCAP IOM ..	Mid 2017	
3.	Report on “Migration in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”	Report validated by working group members	ESCAP	Process underway Draft prepared for review by 1 September, 2016 Report is expected to complete within the first quarter of 2017	US\$10,000 (provided by interested TWG members)
4.	Regional workshop on strengthening the collection and use of international migration data for sustainable development (Joint activity with TWG-Statistics)	More than 70 per cent of participants report their knowledge of methods for the collection and use of international migration data for sustainable development has been strengthened	ESCAP, UNDESA, IOM, ILO	Discussions being undertaken with TWG Statistics Meeting tentatively scheduled for end of 2016	US\$40,000 (may be provided by UNDESA supplemented by in-kind contributions from select members)
5.	Follow-up events to	The successful	All	10 – 12 August 2016	

	RCM/UNDG Regional Youth Report "Switched on: Youth at the Heart of Sustainable Development for Asia-Pacific", to highlight advocacy and knowledge sharing on SDG and youth, relevant initiatives, actions and progress in the region	organization of two events, aimed at building capacity of youth and policy makers: 1. 4th Asian Youth Forum: Youth for Global Goals, ADB, Manila 2. Asia-Pacific Youth and SDGs (TBC)	members	Early 2017	
6.	Ad hoc collaboration on Habitat III New Urban Agenda	Joint regional policy response to address the social dimensions of the urban agenda in the work of the HIII task team formed under the TWG –REG	UN-Habitat	Up to October 2016	