

**32nd Meeting of the**

**ECO Regional Planning Council (RPC)**

**Working Paper on Human Resources and Sustainable Development (HRSD)**

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# Executive Summary

The Human Resources and Sustainable Development (HRSD) Directorate is mainly responsible for human development issues including Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), Health, Education, and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as covered under *“Sector F: Social Welfare and Environment”* of the ECO Vision 2025. The Establishment of the Directorate for Human Development at the Secretariat first proposed under ECO-UNDP Capacity Building programme which was implemented in two phases during 1998-2003.

The 13th Council of Ministers (COM) held in June 11, 2003, in Bishkek, set up Eminent Persons Group (EPG) to submit their recommendations on the measures to promote efficiency and effectiveness of ECO. The EPG on section D on subject of consideration of new priorities and new issues highlighted by international organizations such as UN Millennium Development Goals etc. recommended that “the issues of the human resource development, poverty alleviation, environment, agriculture and industry should receive increased attention from member states at national and regional levels.” EPG report was submitted to 14th COM meeting in Dushanbe, Tajikistan where the report was endorsed and referred to Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR) for further consideration. EPG report was deliberated upon thoroughly by the CPR and a Working Group created by it in several sessions. As a result of discussions, the CPR recommended the establishment of a new directorate entitled “Directorate of Human Resources and Sustainable Development” to be in charge of Human Resource Development, Social Development, Drug Control Affairs, Health, Poverty Alleviation, etc. These recommendations were approved by the 15th COM held in Astana in October 1, 2005. The COM also instructed CPR to make necessary adjustments to the Organizational Chart of the Secretariat based on the above decision. In this regard, 105th CPR held in October 19, 2005 approved the Organizational Structure of ECO Secretariat with necessary adjustments, effective from 1st January 2006.

On Priority Area I: Disaster Risk Reduction, the 8th ECO Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (March 17, 2021) adopted the "ECO Regional Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction" and the Roadmap of Implementing ECORFDRR (2021-2025) and the Member States were encouraged to join the Protocol on "Real-time Seismological Data" as proposed by the Republic of Turkey. The 1st Senior Officials/Heads for Disaster Insurance Authorities was held on December 14,2021 where Member States discussed the establishment of the (a) ECO Regional Disaster Information System and (b) ECO Disaster Insurance System.

On **Priority Area II: Health**, the adoption of the ECO Action Plan on Health after more than a decade was a big step forward in harmonizing policies on Health within the region. The effective implementation of the ECO Action Plan on Health, through the active participation of Member States is the next step in ensuring health cooperation especially on non-communicable diseases as well as universal health coverage system.

On **Priority Area III: Education**, the Training workshop on “Disaster Risk Transfer through Insurance” held on December 13, 2021 sought to create a common understanding on disaster and climate risk among ECO member states, strengthen risk governance and resiliency on insurance and disaster and climate risk transfer through insurance.

On **Priority Area IV: Sustainable Development**, the preparation of the ECO Sustainable Development Performance Index in collaboration with Member States can assist countries of the region in assessing the quality and planning of national departments and agencies working toward sustainable development and the fulfillment of their current targets.

# Priority Area I: Disaster Risk Reduction

## ECO Vision Approach and Target

1. The ECO Vision 2025 envisages that “a regional integrated disaster risk reduction system/network will be established with the ultimate aim of preventing and reducing disaster losses in lives, and in social, economic, and environmental assets of people of ECO Member Countries"(Section F, Expected Outcome (vii), p. 9)

## Background Information

1. The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 outlines seven clear targets and four priorities for action to prevent new and reduce existing disaster risks: (i) Understanding disaster risk; (ii) Strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk; (iii) Investing in disaster reduction for resilience and; (iv) Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response, and to "Build Back Better" in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction.
2. ECO Vision 2025 envisages the establishment of regional; (1) Disaster Information System and (2) Disaster Insurance System. The ECO Secretariat, based on the above, organized the first Experts Group Meeting for the ECO Regional Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (October 26-28, 2016) in Tehran where the draft ECO Regional Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction was prepared with support from Member States, IDB and UNESCAP. The Draft framework was finalized in the second Experts Group Meeting (October 11-12, 2017) in Ankara, Turkey.
3. The 9th ECO Summit (2006) highlighted the importance of regional cooperation on the issues of disaster risk reduction and recommended consideration of regional programmes and projects for early warning, preparedness and management of natural disasters and the need for strengthening collaboration within and beyond the Region in this regard.
4. The ECO Regional Center for Risk Management of Natural Disasters (ECO-RCRM) was established in Mashhad (Iran) in March 2007 for the purpose of conducting the functions and discharging the responsibilities in weather-related disaster.
5. The ECO Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction (March 15, 2015 -Sendai, Japan) was held to explore enhanced regional cooperation on disaster risk reduction in post-2015 and discussed the imperative of implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction in the ECO Region.
6. 16. The 1st Expert Group Meeting for ECO Regional Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (October 26-28, 2016 –Tehran, Iran) with the support of UNESCAP, formulated a draft ECO Regional Framework for DRR that serves as a roadmap for the implementation of Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.
7. The 2nd Experts Group Meeting for ECO Regional Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction” (October 11-12, 2017 – Ankara, Turkey) finalized the text of “ECO Regional Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction”. The Regional Framework contains 7 sections addressing, among others, current situation of disasters in the ECO Region, the purpose, rationale, goals and objectives and timeframe of the Framework. It also includes some priority actions and flagship programmes which are defined in line with the 7 targets and 4 priorities of the Sendai Framework, taking into account the specific needs of the ECO Region.
8. The 28th RPC (December 2017) adopted the ECO Regional Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and its related programs and also requested the Secretariat to present the Framework to the 8th ECO Ministerial Conference on DRR and next Council of Ministers (COM) Meeting for approval.

## Recent Developments since the 31st RPC Meeting

1. The 8th ECO Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (March 17, 2021) adopted the "ECO Regional Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction" and the Roadmap of Implementing ECORFDRR (2021-2025).
2. The meeting also mandated the ECO Secretariat to ensure effective implementation on the decisions/commitments contained in the (i) Ankara Declaration, (ii) ECO Regional Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction, and (iii) the Roadmap of Implementing ECORFDRR (2021-2025).
3. The Ministerial also encouraged Member States to join the Protocol on "Real-time Seismological Data" as proposed by the Republic of Turkey as a means to an effective framework for cooperation in the field of earthquake observation. The protocol has been distributed among Member States for their comments. The protocol seeks to address the regional need for improved collaboration among Member States on seismological information. The protocol along with any feedback from Member States will be discussed at the 9th Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in 2022. The Secretariat via Note HRSD/DRR/2021/564 dated May 31, 2021 has re-circulated the Protocol and requested Member States to provide their views and comments, enabling the Secretariat to finalize the document for consideration of the 9th DRR Ministerial Conference.
4. The Secretariat via Note HRSD/DRR/2021/545 dated May 26, 2021 has requested Member States to provide the Secretariat with the updated particulars of their national focal points on Disaster Reduction for more coordination and cooperation within the region.
5. The Secretariat via Note HRSD/DRR/2021/546 dated May 26, 2021 has requested Member States to provide the relevant information on activities, good practices and regulations on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) for circulation among Member States.
6. The First Meeting of the senior officials/Heads of the Disaster Insurance Authorities under the Chairmanship of the Islamic Republic of Iran was held virtually on December 14, 2021. The aim of the meeting was to analyze the spread of insurance for the coverage of damages deriving from natural disasters and the variables that may affect the decisional process of underwriting or not an insurance contract.
7. The Secretariat and UNESCAP subsidiary, the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management (APDIM) have conducted negotiations on a joint project on the “Strategic Action Plan for managing cascading risks from natural and biological hazards and guideline for implementation”. A consultant has been hired by APDIM for production of the appropriate documents and a training/workshop will be organized virtually for the ECO Member States, upon completion of the research in 2022.

## **Expected Outcomes and Secretariat’s Recommendations**

1. The Council may request Member States to consider hosting the 8th ECO Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction within their territories or in virtual mode in 2022.
2. The Council may request Member States to provide the Secretariat with the implementation status of the "ECO Regional Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction" and the Roadmap of Implementing ECORFDRR in 2022.
3. The Council may request Member States (except for the Islamic Republic of Pakistan) to provide the Secretariat with feedbacks and comments on the Protocol on "Real-time Seismological Data".
4. The Council may request Member States to regularly submit information on their activities on disaster risk management and related regulations to the ECO Secretariat for further circulation to the Member States in order to increase public awareness on the importance of the Natural Disaster Management.
5. The Council may request the Member States (except for the Kyrgyz Republic) to expedite nominating their focal points on Disaster Risk Management, giving all relevant particulars, including Name, Position, Tel, and E-mail addresses at the earliest and regularly update the information regarding their focal points.
6. The Council may request the Secretariat to coordinate all the matters/activities related to Disaster Risk Management through HRSD Directorate and returning coordination on the ECO Regional Center for Risk Management of Natural Disasters in Mashhad to the HRSD Directorate.
7. The Council may request Member States to consider hosting the 2nd Meeting of the senior officials/Heads of the Disaster Insurance Authorities in 2022.
8. The Council may request the Secretariat to continue collaboration with the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management (APDIM) on the “Strategic Action Plan for managing cascading risks from natural and biological hazards and guideline for implementation” in 2022.

## Area Conclusion

1. The adoption of the (i) Ankara Declaration, (ii) ECO Regional Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction, and (iii) the Roadmap of Implementing ECORFDRR (2021-2025) has paved the way for the establishment of the regional systems of Disaster Information System and Disaster Insurance.
2. The Protocol on "Real-time Seismological Data" can assist Member States in creating a framework for platform for regional earthquake early warning systems.

# Priority Area II: Health

## ECO Vision Approach and Target

1. ECO Vision 2025 encourages *“Cooperation, focusing on non-communicable diseases as well as universal health coverage system.” "*(Section F, Expected Outcome (iii), p. 9)

## Background Information

1. According to its Charter, ECO’s basic mandate is “to promote conditions for sustainable development and to raise the standard of living and quality of life in the Member States through mobilization of economic and social potentials of the region”.
2. The First High Level Experts Group Meeting (HLEG) (December 2006 -Ankara, Turkey) identified areas for ECO cooperation in the field of human and sustainable development. The Meeting encouraged Member States to contribute towards regional efforts to reduce poverty and promote human development in the Region.
3. The Second HLEG (February 11-12, 2008 – Islamabad, Pakistan) discussed the progress made in human development and recommended that Millennium Development Goals 4 (Reduce Child Mortality), 5 (Improve Maternal Health), and 6 (Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other diseases) become the main priority areas of ECO activities in the health sector.
4. The 19th RPC Meeting (January 12-14, 2009 – Tehran, Iran) called on the Secretariat to seek assistance from the relevant United Nations bodies on the preparation of a detailed report/concept paper on the proposed priority areas. Accordingly, the Secretariat approached the UNFPA, WHO and UNICEF which resulted in UNICEF allocation of 40000 US Dollars for this purpose. The Institute of Public Health affiliated to Tehran University of Medical Science was assigned to prepare the "Regional Report on Millennium Development Health Related Goals in ECO Countries". The Report was finalized in June 2010 and discussed in the first ECO Health Ministerial Meeting (February 4-5, 2010 - Baku, Azerbaijan).
5. The 1st ECO Health Ministerial Meeting underlined the importance and the necessity of a Plan of Action to promote health cooperation among Member States through harmonized policies. The Meeting also called for project proposals based on findings and recommendations of the Report.
6. The 3rd Meeting of the "ECO High Level Experts Group Meeting on Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as well as Post MDGs era" (January 21-22, 2015 –Tehran, Iran) discussed the draft outline for the ECO Plan of Action on Health. The main objectives of this meeting were to discuss the progress made and the challenges encountering health-related MDGs in the ECO Region and to prepare the ground for an optimal ECO plan of action to deal with the health related issues in the time of emerging post-2015 global development agenda, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The proposed outline was subsequently circulated by among Member States.
7. The 2nd ECO Health Ministerial (May 19, 2015 - Geneva, Switzerland) adopted the outline for an ECO Plan of Action on Health Cooperation to be developed in line with the emerging SDGs, taking into account the immediate needs and requirements of our countries and ECO Region as a whole.
8. The 3rd HLEG (January 21-22, 2015 – Tehran, Iran) deliberated on a draft outline for Plan of Action as proposed by the Islamic Republic of Iran. The draft document was circulated among the Member States for their consideration and feedback.
9. The final draft was submitted to the 3rd ECO Ministerial Meeting on Heath, convened on the sidelines of the 69th session of the World Health Assembly on May 24, 2016 in Geneva. During the session the Ministers/Heads of Delegations requested the Secretariat to make necessary adjustments into the draft text in the light of the views expressed during the Meeting.

## Recent Developments since the 31st RPC Meeting

1. The 4th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Health was held virtually on June 2, 2021. The Meeting adopted the “Tehran Declaration on Health”, which calls for the implementation of the document are decisions and commitments according to the aims and objectives under the relevant initiatives and programmes.
2. The Meeting also adopted the 4th Version of ECO Action Plan on Health for ECO Region and mandated the Secretariat to ensure effective implementation of the ECO Action Plan on Health.
3. The Secretariat via Note HRSD/2021/641 dated June 15, 2021 and HRSD/2021/1191 dated November 2, 2021 has circulated the report of the small sized project of “Regional Capacity on Intra-Trade of Pharmaceuticals” and requested Member States to provide their views and feedbacks on the report.
4. The Secretariat via the same Note requested Member States to provide their nominations for the establishment of a Task Force dedicated to scrutinizing the report and developing a Plan of Action on the trade of pharmaceuticals within the region.
5. The Secretariat via Note HRSD/2021/660 dated June 21, 2021 has requested the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to develop a project proposal under the ECO Advocacy Program for Afghanistan (EAPA) to enhance the capacity of a hospital in Herat.
6. The Secretariat via Note HRSD/2021/560 dated June 30, 2021 has requested Member States to provide their updated list of national focal points for effective coordination and cooperation on the implementation of relevant health programs and activities.

## Expected Outcomes and Secretariat’s Recommendations

1. The Council may request Member States to consider hosting the 5th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Health within their territories or in virtual mode in 2022.
2. The Council may request Member States to provide the Secretariat with the implementation status of the “Tehran Declaration on Health” and the ECO Action Plan on Health.
3. The Council may request the Secretariat to report on the implementation of the “Tehran Declaration on Health” and the ECO Action Plan on Health by the end of 2022.
4. The Council may request Member States to prepare regional project proposals taking into consideration the priority areas, which were recommended by the “Tehran Declaration on Health” and the ECO Action Plan on Health.
5. The Council may request Member States (except for Republic of Azerbaijan, Republic of Kazakhstan, Republic of Turkey and Republic of Uzbekistan) to provide their updated list of national focal points for effective coordination and cooperation on the implementation of relevant health programs and activities.
6. The Council may request Member States (except for the Republic of Azerbaijan) to provide their views and feedbacks to the Secretariat on the report of the small sized project of “Regional Capacity on Intra-Trade of Pharmaceuticals” and (except for the Republic of Azerbaijan) to provide their nominations for the establishment of a Task Force dedicated to scrutinizing the report and developing a Plan of Action on the trade of pharmaceuticals within the region.
7. The Council may request the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to develop a project proposal under the ECO Advocacy Program for Afghanistan (EAPA) to enhance the capacity of a hospital in Herat.
8. The Council may request the Secretariat to approach the IDB and relevant UN Agencies including UNDRR, UNESCAP and WHO for their support in preparing and implementing regional project proposals.

## Area Conclusion

1. The adoption of the ECO Action Plan on Health after more than a decade was a big step forward in harmonizing policies on Health within the region. The effective implementation of the ECO Action Plan on Health, through the active participation of Member States is the next step in ensuring health cooperation especially on non-communicable diseases as well as universal health coverage system.

# Priority Area III: Education

## ECO Vision Approach and Target

1. ECO Vision 2025 calls for “Regional mechanisms/frameworks … to support education, training, vocational needs and other capacity enhancement”. (Section F, Expected Outcome (i), p. 9)
2. It also calls for regional networks on higher education, regional exchange and scholarship programmes/mechanisms; and also training/vocational programmes in the ECO region, to be developed with international institutions. (Implementation Framework, Section F(i), p. 29)

## Background Information

1. The Treaty of Izmir calls for the promotion of active regional collaboration and mutual assistance in economic, social, cultural, technical and scientific fields and exchanges in educational, scientific, technical and cultural fields. (Principles of Cooperation, Article iii (e)(g), P 4)
2. In line with the above, the Directorate has facilitated the organization of various training programs and workshops on the three priority areas of Disaster Risk Reduction, Health and Sustainable Development. The Directorate has also strived to encourage Member States to extend scholarships to other Member States in the priority areas.
3. The “ECO School Earthquake Safety Review” (June 1-2, 2006 - Istanbul, Turkey) was held to evaluate the risk to life and property and the development and application of safety standards and construction codes for schools in the ECO region against earthquakes, identify and describe the scope for national action on earthquake safety in schools and develop a programme or system to provide guidance, technical expertise, support and resources for ECO countries on school safety. The participants recommended Member States to hold a ECO Workshop aimed at devising a “Plan of Action for Improving School Earthquake Safety”, and forming a “High Level Expert Group on School Earthquake Safety”.
4. The Workshop on Prevention of HIV/AIDS related to Drugs (May 21-23, 2007 - Tehran, Iran) was held to advance knowledge on policies & programs relevant to management of high risk behaviors and the evaluation of policies & programs relevant to high risk behaviors.
5. The First ECO Regional Workshop on Irregular Migration and Human Trafficking (March9 – 11, 2008- Kish Island-Iran), in collaboration with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), at the Iranian resort of Kish Island.
6. ECO-ISDR workshop: Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction (July 1-2, 2008 –Tehran, Iran) was held with the participation of ISDR, ECO, UNOCHA, UNDP, WHO, UNICEF, IOM, UNESCO, UNHCR and ECO Member States to discuss the DesInventar Program that was developed by United Nations Development Program (UNDP) as one of the tools that can fill the gap of information among Countries (especially developing countries) disaster risk reduction.
7. Voluntary Blood Donor Recruitment” and “Quality System in Blood Transfusion” (May 10-12, 2010-Tehran, Iran) was held to review and exchange experiences of the voluntary non-remunerated blood donor & quality system programmes and identify constraints, discuss various strategies for donor recruitment, selection and retention and active community participation in promoting voluntary non-remunerated blood donation and develop plans for a national voluntary non-remunerated blood donor programme and guidelines on how to implement quality system essentials in testing sites.
8. Workshop on “Pharmacovigilance”  and  “Drug Quality Control” (July 19-21, 2010- Tehran, Iran) was held to assist Member States in developing National Adverse Drug Reaction Monitoring Centers and implementing a Spontaneous Reporting System. It also sought to provide information on the means for identifying and evaluating adverse drug events through better reporting systems, skilful technical investigation of incidents and responsible sharing of data and develop capacity to anticipate adverse events and to probe systemic weaknesses that might lead to problems.
9. The Workshop on Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) (May 10-11, 2017- Tehran, Iran) was held to provide a comprehensive overview on Goods Manufacturing Practices (GMP) policies and principles in the area of health in order to improve and ensure the quality of pharmaceutical and health projects.
10. The ECO-UNESCO Workshop on “School Safety” (October 22-24, 2017-Tehran, Iran) was held with the aim of paving the way for the development of a regional programme on School Safety and pilot testing of the VISUS methodology to contextualize the methodology in ECO Region and “Training of Trainers” (ToT) training module for teachers of the Member States and piloting the joint school safely drills in the ECO Region.
11. The ECO-UN Habitat workshop on “Urban Resilience, Habitat Improvement, Disaster Risk Management and Built Environment” (November 11-14, 2018-Tehran, Iran) was held to promote sustainable development and mitigation of disasters in all its forms within the region.
12. The 27th RPC (para 6) called on Member States to inform the Secretariat on the availability of the academic scholarships in health related areas by the end of January and end of August to enable timely application by the interested nationals of the Member states.
13. The same RPC also called on interested Member States will nominate their candidates for the scholarships offered by the Turkish Cypriot State (observer).In 2016; three nominees from the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan were accepted for the scholarship of the Turkish Cypriot Government.

* **Recent Developments since the 31st RPC Meeting**

1. The Ministry of Health of the Republic of Turkey designed a website named “Distance Learning System” on an online training platform with the aim of sharing Turkey’s experience gained during Covid-19 pandemic as well as information exchange with health workers from other Member States through leading scholars in Turkey. The platform is available through <https://diles.saglik.gov.tr/> and the program aims to offer training to 30 health workers from each Member State.
2. The Secretariat via Note Verbal HRSD/2021/692 dated July 01, 2021, HRSD/2021/934 dated August 26, 2021 and HRSD/2021/1061 dated October 4, 2021 has requested Member States to provide the pertinent needs and requirements related to their education sectors enabling the Secretariat to coordinate the development of a Plan of Action on Education.
3. The Secretariat via Note Verbal HRSD/2021/1061 dated October 4, 2021 has requested the ECO Educational Institute to provide a draft Plan of Action on Education regarding the promotion of regional collaborative engagements for the acceleration of activities on education and related trainings.
4. The Workshop on Disaster Risk Transfer through Insurance in the ECO region was held virtually on December 13, 2021 with the presence of delegates from the Member States and the ECO Secretariat. The event hosted by the Islamic Republic of Iran sought to create a common understanding on disaster and climate risk among ECO member states, strengthen risk governance and resiliency on insurance and disaster and climate risk transfer through insurance.

## **Expected Outcomes and Secretariat’s Recommendations**

1. The Council may request Member States to propose and host workshops on the main priority areas of Disaster Risk Reduction, Health and Sustainable Development in 2022.
2. The Council may request Member States to consider hosting the 2nd Workshop on Disaster Risk Transfer through Insurance in the ECO region in 2022.
3. The Council may request Member States (except for the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Turkey) to provide the pertinent needs and requirements related to their education sectors enabling the Secretariat to coordinate the development of a Plan of Action on Education.
4. The Council may request Member States to extend scholarships to other Member States in health related topics. The relevant information may be sent to the Secretariat including the objective/s of the courses; terms and conditions for admission; detailed curriculum of the courses; and any other necessary information.

## Area Conclusion

1. The organization of the Workshop on Disaster Risk Transfer through Insurance in the ECO region paved the way for a common understanding on disaster and climate risk among ECO member states, strengthened risk governance and resiliency on insurance and disaster and climate risk transfer through insurance.

# Priority Area IV: Sustainable Development

## ECO Vision Approach and Target

1. The ECO Vision 2025 refers to “the goals and targets defined by the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit in September 2015 as enshrined in its outcome document "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development". (Core Principles, a. Sustainability, p. 1)

## Background Information

1. All ECO Member States have adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2015, which provides a detailed plan for peace and prosperity for people and the planet. Under this Agenda, there are 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are an urgent call for action by all countries in a global partnership.
2. The Organization is mandated by the Izmir treaty to enhance the economic cooperation and integration among Member States through main areas of Trade, Transport and Connectivity, Energy, Tourism, Economic Growth and Productivity and Social Welfare and Environment, which all contribute to attaining SDGs within the Member States.

## Recent Developments since the 31st RPC Meeting

1. The Secretariat via Note Verbal HRSD/2021/609 dated Tuesday, June 08, 2021 and HRSD/2021/1188 dated November 1, 2021 has requested Member States to provide their respective data/documents developed to achieve sustainable development goals along with their updated implementation status in order for the Secretariat to prepare a consolidated regional report in this regard.

## **Expected Outcomes and Secretariat’s Recommendations**

1. The Council requested the Member States to introduce/regularly update the information of their focal points on SDGs.
2. The Council may request the Secretariat to prepare ECO Sustainable Development Performance Index upon receiving the requested information from Member States and in collaboration with The Division for Sustainable Development Goals (DSDG) in the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA).

## Area Conclusion

1. The preparation of the ECO Sustainable Development Performance Index in collaboration with Member States can assist countries of the region in assessing the quality and planning of national departments and agencies working toward sustainable development and the fulfillment of their current targets.

### Annex I: Draft Project Proposals

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Disaster Risk Reduction** | **1. Project Category:** |
| **HRSD1/Info/SSP/2020** | **2. Project Code:** |
| Feasibility Study for Developing Disaster Risk Information Management System. | **3. Project Title:** |
| To set up knowledge management tool on DRR for Member States. | **4. Project Objective(s):** |
| 10,000 USD | **5. Project Budget (US$)** |
| - ECO Feasibility and General Purpose Fund (FGPF).  - Development Partners, APDIM | **6. Project Funding Source:** |
| International Institute of Earthquake Engineering and Seismology and or APDIM or any related agency from MSs | **7. Coordinating Country / Organization:** |
| APDIM (ESCAP), UNDRR, ECO-RCRM | **8. International / Regional Partner:** |
| 6 months | **9. Duration of Project (Months):** |
| 2022 | **10. Project Starting Time (M/Y):** |
| December 2023 | **11. Expected Project Completion Time (M/Y):** |
| **12. Background**:  ECO Vision 2025, Sector F serial (vii), contains the activity to establish an ECO regional disaster information system. The draft ECO Regional Framework, developed under the said Vision in October 2017, has reflected the priority for *Knowledge Management and Web Portal Development* under paragraph 35 with the following details:  "*A central, standardized and integrated Management Information System Platform, which is GIS enabled, an all-encompassing system capable of rendering required information at the right time should be established. It may be populated with disciplines like meteorology, hydrology, seismology, geology, climatology, health and social aspects of disasters. In addition, data and information would be accessible for and used at emergency services and also for use of academics, researchers, development practitioners, disaster managers and general public users, taking into account user friendliness and data security considerations*".  HRSD has received a proposal feasibility study for establishment of a Regional Disaster Information System from Iranian International Institute for Earthquake Engineering and Seismology, which can be considered.  The total cost of the Management Information project depends on the details, such as inclusion of GIS systems, data range and its sources, etc. | |
| **13. Current Status:** ECO Secretariat has requested Member States to consider establishing "ECO Regional Disaster Information System" as envisioned in the ECO Vision 2025. The 8th ECO Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (March 17, 2021) adopted the "ECO Regional Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction" and the Roadmap of Implementing ECORFDRR (2021-2025).  The revised ESCAP-ECO MOU as endorsed by the 257th Meeting of the Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR) is expected to be signed at the upcoming Council of Ministers. After the signing of the newly revised UNESCAP-ECO MOU, the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management (APDIM) may be approached on the subject. | |
| **14. Necessary Actions and Assistance Needed:**  The objective of the proposed project is to carry out a feasibility study of the requirements and various aspects of design and implementation of ECO Regional Disaster Information Systems. The output of this feasibility study will be used to raise awareness on the technical aspects, relevance, and benefits of collecting and using disaster information; set the stage for convincing potential international donors to finance and support the design and establishment of ECO Regional Disaster Information Systems; promote disaster risk assessment and management within the ECO region; and improve the efficiency of South- South regional cooperation. | |
| **15. Expected Outcomes of the Project:**   * Reviewing international mandates and frameworks relevant to disaster information management such as Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Paris Agreement on Climate Change, Addis Ababa Action Agenda (financial sustainability), and Agenda of Humanity, * Carrying out research on the existing regional and international disaster data systems, types of data they collect and share, how they operate, and how disaster data is used to inform development decision-making in the partner countries, * Reviewing the existing natural disaster risk profiles in the Member States within the ECO region, assessing general gaps in production, management and use of disaster data in each state, and determining how incorporating regional disaster information data into decision-making could prevent, control, or reduce risk associated with disasters, * Estimating costs and time required for designing, implementing a regional disaster information system in the ECO territory. | |

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| --- | --- |
| **Health** | **1. Project Category:** |
| **HRSD2/H/2020** | **2. Project Code:** |
| “**Regional capacity on Intra-trade of pharmaceuticals (RCIP)**” | **3. Project Title:** |
| **To do a holistic study on prerequisites and conditions in ECO region for promoting intra-trade of medicines between ECO Member States,**  **To outline how trade and transport agreement between Member States could facilitate the medicine and Pharmaceutical trade in our region,**  **To propose practical solution for "one application, one assessment, one market authorization" for the whole of ECO region.** | **4. Project Objective(s):** |
| **USD 60,000** | **5. Project Budget (US$):** |
| **At least 20% from ECO Budget (in-kind), the rest (in-cash) from the partner/s,** | **6. Project Funding Source:** |
| **ECO Secretariat** | **7. Coordinating Country/Organization:** |
| **IsDB and WHO** | **8. International/Regional Partner:** |
| **One year** | **9. Duration of Project (Months):** |
| **2020** | **10. Project Starting Time (M/Y):** |
| **Quarterly** | **11. Project Progress Ratio (%):** |
| **One year** | **12. Expected Project Completion Time (M/Y):** |
| **13. Background**:  Given the ECO commitment to SDGs and as specified in the founding documents of the Organization, uplifting the standards of living, quality of life, economic welfare and wellbeing of people of the region constitute the very aim of regional cooperation in this part of the world. ECO countries have organized several meetings, conferences, workshops, seminars and symposiums on Health with regional and international organizations. These events aimed at making sound assessment of variety of health issues in the region through identifying the needs, defining the level of health risk to people’s lives and livelihoods as well as the capacity and commitment of these countries and governments to health sector and its pillars.  Due to identical economic and social conditions in most of the ECO Member States, there is a similarity of issues and problems faced by health sectors of ECO Countries. At the same time, there is a vast scope to benefit from each other’s experiences in strengthening trade of pharmaceutical and medicines for the benefit of the people in the ECO region.  Promotion of regional health and pharmaceutical cooperation can be considered as one of the key objectives of ECO for which the Member States attach high importance. However, pharmaceutical cooperation can't be sustainable unless the member states move toward establishment of ECO Medicines Agency to contribute to facilitation of regional medicine regulatory.  From the ECO regional point of view, the ECO countries totally have exported $1.03 Billion drug and medicines to international markets which shares about 0.03% of the global trade of pharmaceutical products, in 2017. Amongst the ECO Member States, Turkey stand on the top of exporters of pharmaceutical products to international market. The Pakistan and Iran have the next ranking in exporting these products to foreign markets. Meanwhile the Republic of Turkey was main importer of medicines and drugs during 2017 followed by Iran and Kazakhstan.  ECO countries have imported more than $6 billion during 2017 which is equal to more than 5% of worldwide dollar worth of drugs and medicines in the same year.  The worldwide market for pharmaceuticals is projected to grow from around $1 trillion in 2015 to $1.3 trillion by 2020, representing an annual growth rate of 4.9 percent. | |
| **14. Current Status**: The report of the small sized project was circulated amongst the Member States for their consideration. Member States have been requested to nominate their relevant representatives for the establishment of a Task Force dedicated to scrutinizing the report and developing a Plan of Action on pharmaceuticals’ trade within the region. | |
| **15. Expected Outcomes of the Project:**   * Analysis of the current situation of ECO Members in Pharmaceuticals; * Identification of (1) non-trade challenges and barriers (regulatory, marketing, policies and practices) to market expansion; and (2) trade related challenges and obstacles (pricing, localization, tariffs); * Assessment of existing ECO agreements which can ease or rebate pharmaceutical trade along with new suggestions to facilitate the case; * The feasibility of establishing an ECO regional Medicines Agency. | |

## Annex II: Proposed Calendar of Events/Meetings 2022

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| **No.** | **Event/Activity** | **Venue** | **Date** |
|  | 9th ECO Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction | Secretariat/ Member States | 2022 |
|  | 5th ECO Health Ministerial Meeting | Secretariat/ Member States | 2022 |
|  | ECO Experts Group Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction and Implementation of the ECO Regional Framework for DRR | Secretariat/ Member States | 2022 |
|  | 2nd Senior Officials Meeting/ Heads Meeting for Disaster Insurance Authorities | Secretariat/ Member States | 2022 |
|  | 2nd Training workshop on “Disaster Risk Transfer through Insurance” | Secretariat/ Member States | 2022 |
|  | ECO-APDIM Workshop on the “Strategic Action Plan for managing cascading risks from natural and biological hazards and guideline for implementation” | Secretariat/ Member States | 2022 |

**Non- ECO Events**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No.** | **Event/Activity** | **Venue** | **Date** |
| 1 | The seventh session of the Global Platform (GP2022) | Bali, Indonesia | May 23-28, 2022 |
| 2 | 14th World Conference on Injury Prevention and Safety Promotion | Adelaide, Australia | November 27-30, 2022 |
|  | UNESCO World Higher Education Conference (WHEC2022) | Barcelona, Spain | May 18-20, 2022 |

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