

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

Statements of Commitment to the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty

General section

1. Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) hereby voluntarily *joins the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty* and states its dedication to pursue the Alliance's mission, objectives and principles, as *expressed* in the Global Alliance's Terms of Reference and Governance Framework, and to collaborate with other members to achieve lasting solutions to poverty and hunger worldwide, as expressed below.

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA):

2. *Recognizes* that hunger and malnutrition are the perverse manifestations of persistent, structural poverty and inequality, and recognizes the need to end poverty and hunger in all their forms and dimensions and to fully and effectively implement the 2030 Agenda.
3. *Acknowledges* the alarming growth in the number of people facing food insecurity and poverty in recent years, noting that, despite all significant past and current efforts, the world is not on track to meet SDG 1 and 2 targets, inequality is also on the rise (SDG 10), and a significant increase in collective ambition, as well as improvement in collective alignment and coordination for the fight against hunger and poverty, is urgently needed.
4. To that effect, *endorses* the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty and its mission to *support and accelerate efforts to eradicate hunger and poverty (SDGs 1 and 2) while reducing inequalities (SDG 10), contributing to revitalize global partnerships for sustainable development (SDG 17) and to the achievement of other interlinked SDGs, and championing sustainable, inclusive and just transitions.*
5. *Notes* that it is crucial for the world to unite behind large-scale, integrated approaches combining international, regional, national, and local levels, that recognize the interconnected nature of challenges and solutions to hunger and poverty and pair social protection with access to goods and services that can help the poor and vulnerable populations to overcome structural barriers and drive responsible investment in their productive capacity. These complementary services include but are not limited to interventions for poverty reduction, food security and nutrition, early childhood support, education and skills development, employment services, health and care services, as well as family farmers and smallholders' access to finance, extension services, research and/or agricultural inputs, in line with international commitments and obligations.

6. *Particularly recognizes* the high value and positive impact of quality implementation of national and local country-owned, inclusive policy instruments and programmes, focused on the poorest and most vulnerable, in the fields of poverty reduction, social protection, food security and nutrition, gender equality, decent work in the agri-food sector, skills development, family farming and smallholder agriculture, food systems transformation, health and care services and resilience building.
7. Also *acknowledges* the Global Alliance's reference basket of such policies as a collectively built, ongoing collection of examples with robust evidence to reduce hunger and poverty, and as a useful basis to guide joint action and increase alignment of the international community at country level. This acknowledgement is applicable to the policy basket approach as a general guide to action and does not imply endorsement of any specific policy instrument or programme contained in the basket.
8. Therefore, by joining the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty, *commits* to do its best efforts, in its own field of action, and according to its own mandate, capacities, priorities, preferences, procedures, and legal arrangements and framework, to support the implementation of policy instruments and programmes at country level as appropriate, including by the promotion of shared learning and the mobilization of resources, public and private, at scale.

In particular:

Financial support commitments

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA):

Commits to make its best efforts to improve the destination, allocation and alignment of the use of its resources, including through coordination and cooperation facilitated by the Global Alliance, to support member countries to implement, improve, or scale-up the implementation of select programmes or policy instruments in the Alliance's reference basket to drive the fight against hunger and poverty, in line with sustainable country-led financing and implementation strategies.

Knowledge support commitments

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA):

Commits to make its best efforts to co-create and provide technical assistance, capacity building and strengthening, training and/or knowledge-sharing on voluntary and mutually agreed terms in response to requests by Global Alliance member countries that choose to implement policy instruments and programmes in the Alliance's policy basket that are compatible with its areas of expertise.

Commits to make its best efforts to improve the alignment of its actions, including through the Global Alliance's coordination mechanisms, leveraging, and partnering with other actors to better support large scale, country-owned implementation of policies and programmes in the reference basket by Global Alliance member countries, aiming at enhancing country-level outcomes.

Commits to collaborate with other Alliance members to develop innovative solutions and share good practices in learning and knowledge exchange and dissemination on voluntary and mutually agreed terms, data collection and analysis, including by leveraging existing local, national, and international knowledge networks, coalitions, communities and other fora related to aspects relevant to the fight against hunger and poverty.

[1] Informs its capacity and readiness to support Alliance member governments in implementing, improving or scaling-up the following policy instrument types, referenced in the Global Alliance's basket of policy instruments:

Depending on the actual (articulated) needs of the specific countries, this support can entail activities in relation to the following policy basket areas:

- **Social protection** (e.g. child and family support/benefits, conditional cash transfers, job placement/intermediation, maternity protection/benefits, public works, employment guarantee schemes and direct job creation including community development programmes, social care services, social pensions, subsidized health insurance, subsidized/tailored access to social insurance (monotax, reduced contribution level), support to livelihood diversification, particularly for rural population (i.e. ultra-poor graduation), training (vocational, life skills, cash for training, entrepreneurship), unconditional cash transfer, unemployment benefits).
- **Access to basic services:** Access to basic health care (via health insurance coverage).
- **Nutrition:** Promotion and access to healthy diets, including through education and affordable/subsidized prices.
- **Integrated programmes:** Integrated programmes for climate and shock resilience, including programmes related to anticipatory, adaptive and shock-responsive social protection; integrated programmes for gender equality and empowerment (esp. in terms of unpaid care and domestic work).
- **Cross-cutting instruments:** Interoperability of social information systems, social registry.
- **Funding:** Progressive tax and fiscal reforms; climate/SDGs Debt Swap for development.

[2] Informs and commits to implementing the following actions, programmes, and other activities in support of the Global Alliance's objectives:

Key support modalities in view of planning and implementing the above-mentioned policy basket themes in partner countries – amongst others – are:

- Direct policy and technical advice (taking advantage of ESCWA's interdisciplinary structure and expertise);

- South-south exchange and curated peer-learning (esp. regarding knowledge transfer of effective LAC policy options and approaches of relevance for the countries of the Arab region);
- Development and institutionalization of (digital) tools and applications for more effective and efficient policy planning and implementation (e.g. multi-dimensional poverty indices and their optimization at country level; automated forecasting of social assistance (budget) needs, poverty reduction budget optimization etc.);
- Systems diagnostics (e.g. social protection systems and reform needs).

Within its mandates and available resources and in response to articulated demand, ESCWA will strive to support countries of the Arab region in their respective efforts to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of their poverty measurement and reduction efforts and – relatedly – their food, social protection, and financial systems.

General acknowledgments

Recognizes the possibility to, including through the mechanisms available to Global Alliance members, coordinate, partner with and/or seek support from the Global Alliance's other members, within their respective capacities, availability, and fields of activity, to carry out the present commitments with greater effectiveness.

While recognizing that the above commitments are voluntary and non-legally binding, being subject to and carried out under its own capacities, regulations, priorities, and modalities, as well as to the availability of appropriate resourcing, *strives* to seriously consider, as appropriate, and according to its own legal frameworks and governance process, to review its procedures and priorities as found necessary to better deliver on the present commitments, enhance synergies and joint efforts with other entities and initiatives, and improve outcomes on the collective fight against hunger and poverty.