



**UNITED NATIONS SPECIAL PROGRAMME FOR THE ECONOMIES OF CENTRAL ASIA
(SPECA)**

SPECA WORK PLAN FOR 2018-2019

**(Ongoing, planned and possible UNECE and ESCAP activities in support of
the UN Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA))**

The activities to be carried out by the SPECA Thematic Working Groups are demand-driven, focused on a limited number of priority topics and matched with available resources.

SUPPORT TO GENERAL ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE SPECA FRAMEWORK		
Ongoing and planned activities with funding secured		
Name of Project/Activity	Timeframe	Budget
Strengthening the capacity of SPECA countries for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals	2016-2018	US\$ 547,000 (Funded by the Russian Federation)

WATER, ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT

Representatives of the SPECA participating countries agree on importance of the SPECA as a platform to address water, energy and environment in the SPECA region. The Programme is particular important as it provides an opportunity for SPECA countries to coherently address the water and energy challenges, issues that are highly interrelated and interdependent in the region. The Declaration adopted at the 10th session of the SPECA Governing Council highlighted the role of SPECA as a platform to support progress towards achieving the SDGs through, among others, capacity-building, implementation of regional projects, sharing of best practices and experience. The areas of water, energy and environment are addressed through the Working Group on Water, Energy and Environment. The areas covered by the Group include promotion and facilitation of integrated water resource management; improving national and transboundary water and water quality management challenges, strengthening dam safety national policies and strategies.

The 3rd phase of the UNECE Project on capacity-building for cooperation on dam safety will aim at strengthening national and regional capacities of Central Asia countries for development and implementation of the institutional, regulatory and technical frameworks for dam safety. It will also continue building on previous phases of the project, contributing to: improving legislation,

conducting training sessions, strengthening transboundary cooperation and safer operations of individual dams.

Building on success of previous years the UNECE project on Strengthening cooperation on hydrology and environment between Afghanistan and Tajikistan in the upper Amu Darya River basin will continue strengthening long-term transboundary cooperation over the Pyanj River. It will contribute to the practical implementation of the existing cooperation frameworks on hydrology and environment.

Improving the regional water cooperation will remain core activity under the SPECA. Efforts will aim at empowering the countries of the region: to develop and implement mutually acceptable, long-term solutions to improve cooperation on transboundary water resources; to support SPECA countries in developing practical approaches for sustainable regional water management; and to improve capacities of regional institutions responsible for water management.

Within the foreseen perspective, fossil fuels in several SPECA countries will continue to dominate energy balances, while other countries will remain reliant on hydropower. At the same time, the necessity to accelerate a move towards a more sustainable energy system based on diversified energy mix was widely acknowledged. Widespread adoption of clean coal technologies, broader use of renewable sources of energy, increase energy efficiency, and hydropower capacities' upgrades can make a significant contribution towards increasing sustainability.

The implementation of the UNECE project "Application of biogas technology model for rural areas in Kyrgyzstan" will introduce a cost-effective green technology biogas model in the rural area of Kyrgyzstan. The project delivers concrete renewable energy solutions for rural application and targets the rural community near the Kant town in Kyrgyzstan. The outcome of the project will be conveyed through capacity-building workshops on small-scale renewable energy solutions in Central Asian countries to improve knowledge of experts from SPECA countries.

Identification of best practices, measures and procedures relevant to prepare a sustainable energy transition, with a particular focus on the cross-cutting nature of energy efficiency, renewable energy and energy access will assist Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan in development of their national action plans for energy for sustainable development. It will be done through the project "Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All) in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia" and will help to convert national plans into effective national policy frameworks.

Supporting SPECA countries in tracking progress towards the achievement of SDG 7 will remain one of the key activities of the Working Group. Information and data on sustainable energy indicators, policies and energy infrastructure development in SPECA countries will be further updated and presented from the ESCAP the Asia-Pacific Energy Portal - a "one stop shop" aggregator of open-access energy information for the region. It is a web-based, interactive information platform designed to increase the accessibility and use of Asia-Pacific regional energy information to support research, analysis, and, ultimately, informed decision-making. The English and Russian versions of the Portal interface are available.

The activities to promote transboundary power trade and interconnection in SPECA region will be continued in 2018-2019 with focus on in-depth analysis to assess social, economic, and environmental benefits of better power interconnection and revitalization of the Unified Electric Power System of Central Asia.

A pilot project conducted in Tajikistan in December 2016 by the Interstate Commission for Water Coordination (ICWC) with support from ESCAP, looked at promoting an integrated approach to the Sustainable Development Goal planning, focusing on SDG 6 on water and sanitation and its interlinkages with other SDGs at the target level. The pilot project used a new ESCAP analytical tool using the system thinking approach. The comprehensive methodology assisted policymakers in mapping the linkages between the SDGs, mapping the institutional architecture and stakeholders for the implementation of these SDGs. This led to the identification of leverage points for effective and impactful interventions at the policy level, namely Water Quality (SDG 6.3) and Water Governance (SDG 6.a).

The project on “Enabling Transboundary Cooperation and Integrated Water Resources Management in the Chu and Talas River Basins”, funded by the Global Environmental Facility, started in 2015. It aims to broaden the bilateral cooperation, including on environmental issues. UNDP and UNECE are responsible for project implementation. The project delivered a comprehensive Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and developing a Strategic Action Program (SAP) containing concrete actions to support transboundary cooperation between Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan. Design and planning of climate change adaptation activities, included in the SAP, are supported through the project “Enhancing climate resilience and adaptive capacity in the transboundary Chu-Talas basin” funded by the Government of Finland. A number of pilot adaptation measures related to ecosystem restoration and agricultural water-use efficiency are supported through the project with the aim to perform costs-benefits analysis and compile important lessons.

WATER, ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT		
Name of Project/Activity	Timeframe	Budget
Ongoing and planned projects/activities with funding secured or expected. These activities would be implemented in mutually reinforcing way. Additional support from interested partners would expand the scope and the number of beneficiaries of these projects/activities.		
Organization of regular sessions of the SPECA WG	One per year	UNECE and ESCAP regular budget and extrabudgetary funds
Capacity-building for cooperation on dam safety in Central Asia (phase 3)	2017-2020	US\$ 302,000 (Funded by the Russian Federation)
Enabling transboundary cooperation and integrated water resources management in the Chu and Talas River Basins	2015-2018	US\$ 1,000,000 (Funded by Global Environmental Facility)
Enhancing climate resilience and adaptive capacity in the transboundary Chu-Talas basin	2015-2018	Euro 330,000 (Funded by Finland)
Regional dialogue and cooperation on water resources management in Central Asia	2017-2018	US\$ 100,000 (being mobilized)
Water quality in Central Asia	2015-2018	Euro 175,000 (Funded by Finland)
Strengthening cooperation on transboundary watershed management between Afghanistan and Tajikistan in the upper Amu Darya River basin	2017-2020	US\$ 160,000 (Funded by the Russian Federation)

Promoting renewable energy investments for climate change mitigation and sustainable development	2014-2018	UNDA project
Strengthening cooperation on energy security and sustainable use of energy in North and Central Asia	2014-2018	Funded by the Russian Federation
Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All) in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia (Beneficiary countries: Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan)	2016-2018	UNDA project US\$ 188,000 (per country)
Application of biogas technology model for rural areas in Kyrgyzstan	2017-2018	US\$ 100,000 (Funded by the Russian Federation)
Promoting an integrated approach to the Sustainable Development Goal planning, focusing on Goal 6 on water and sanitation, in SPECA countries (in cooperation with ICWC)	2018-2019	ESCAP extrabudgetary funds (to be confirmed)

SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT, TRANSIT AND CONNECTIVITY

The annual sessions of the Working Group on Sustainable Transport, Transit and Connectivity serve as an effective cooperation mechanism to address the specific problems of transit transport from, in and through SPECA countries. Improvement of international transport infrastructure and services will facilitate further integration of SPECA countries into the world economy.

The 22nd session of the SPECA Working Group on Sustainable Transport, Transit and Connectivity (WG-STTC) was held on 1-2 November 2017 in Astana, Kazakhstan. During the session, Programme of Work for 2018-2019 was adopted, including: assistance to SPECA countries in SDGs achievement; organization of regular sessions of the SPECA WG; implementation of subregional projects of common interest to SPECA countries, identification of transport bottlenecks both physical and non-physical, accession to and efficient implementation of UN transport legal instruments, technical assistance for development of efficient transport system, transport infrastructure development promotion, making more efficient transport corridors through simplification/harmonization of border-crossing procedures (including through ICT), and improvement of road safety in SPECA countries.

SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT, TRANSIT AND CONNECTIVITY		
Name of Project/Activity	Timeframe	Budget
Ongoing and planned projects/activities with funding secured or expected. These activities would be implemented in mutually reinforcing way. Additional support from interested partners would expand the scope and the number of beneficiaries of these projects/activities.		
Organization of regular sessions of the SPECA WG	One per year	UNECE and ESCAP regular budget and extrabudgetary funds
<p>Development and implementation of regional project proposals of common interest to SPECA countries to address transport issues in and across the SPECA region and to promote investment in transport infrastructure, efficient operation of transport corridors in the SPECA region, and sustainable development of transport system, through</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancing regional connectivity through geographical information system (GIS). The project will comprise four different components, including establishment of a GIS database, preparation of the list of potential investment projects and their prioritization, and two regional studies on “benchmarking of transport construction and maintenance costs” and “establishment of multi-donor RCI financing facilities”; • “Strengthening connectivity of countries in South and Central Asia, particularly Landlocked and Least Developed Countries, to link with, subregional and regional transport and trade networks”. Executing Entity: ESCAP, Cooperating Agency: UNECE; The project seeks to contribute to the capacities of the stakeholders in the countries of South and Central Asia, especially in the landlocked and least developed countries to strengthen their links with the subregional and regional transport and trade networks. • Project “Logistics and transport competitiveness of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan”. The aim of project is to improve regional connectivity and competitiveness of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan transport sector. 	<p>2018-2019</p> <p>2015-2018</p> <p>2018-2019</p>	<p>US\$ 240,000 (total project cost)</p> <p>US\$ 632,000 (UNDA Project)</p> <p>US\$ 60,000</p>
<p>Transport statistics and database (road-rail-intermodal) development through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical assistance to SPECA countries in transport data collection and harmonization 	2018-2019	US\$ 30,000

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in activities related to the International Transport Infrastructure Observatory. The Observatory will operate on GIS platform. It will bring together information about corridors, new transport infrastructure projects, benchmarking studies as well as operational aspects such as tariffs, time schedules, border crossings facilitation issues, etc. 	2018-2019	
<p>Operationalization of transport corridors in the SPECA region through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshop on deployment of Intelligent Transport Systems and UNECE Road Map on ITS 	2018-2019	US\$ 30,000
<p>Simplification/harmonization of border-crossing procedures and documentation for international transport and the application of new technologies, including ICT. Assistance in building capacity for carrying out more effective customs controls at border crossings in the SPECA region, and for implementing the provisions of the Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods Under Cover of TIR Carnets (TIR Convention, 1975) and the International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods, 1982:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TIR Seminar on control of vehicles (Beneficiary Country: Uzbekistan) Workshop on the implementation of UNECE border crossing conventions (Beneficiary Country: All SPECA countries) 	2018-2019	US\$ 10,000 (TIR fund)
	2018-2019	US\$ 20,000 (TIR fund)
<p>Increased awareness and understanding of road safety issues, and improved collaboration in the SPECA region, of which</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seminar on UN Regulations on vehicle safety and on periodical technical inspection of vehicles in view of accession of SPECA countries to UNECE Agreements (1997 Agreement and 1958 Agreement) Road Safety Performance Review for Kazakhstan 	2019	US\$ 30,000
	2018-2019	US\$ 80,000
<p>Possible projects/activities in areas where UNECE/ESCAP have considerable experience and in-house expertise and which could be implemented if supported by interested donors/partners. These projects could be implemented in addition to and in coordination with projects/activities listed above.</p>		
Technical assistance to SPECA countries in the field of international transport of perishable foodstuff and dangerous goods	2018-2019	US\$ 30,000
Pilot projects for implementation of “SafeFITS” and “Strengthening of the national road safety	2018-2019	US\$ 80,000 (per country)

management capacities of selected developing countries and countries with economies in transition” project results – Road Safety Performance Review		
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TRADE DEVELOPMENT

At its eleventh session, which took place in Geneva on 10 July 2017, the SPECA Working Group on Trade (WG on Trade) identified the following areas for SPECA work on trade: trade and sustainable development in the SPECA subregion; trade facilitation (continue work on a regional trade facilitation strategy); integration into the global rules-based trading system (SDG 17.10); implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA); overcoming obstacles to cross-border supply chains in the subregion; regional and national studies on non-tariff barriers to trade, benefits from regional trade, the economic impact of WTO membership, and trade with major partners outside the region. The WG Programme of work includes the following projects:

TRADE DEVELOPMENT

Name of Project/Activity	Timeframe	Budget
Ongoing and planned projects/activities with funding secured or expected. These activities will be implemented in mutually reinforcing way. Additional support from interested partners could expand the scope and the number of beneficiaries of these projects/activities		
Organization of regular sessions of the SPECA WG	One per year	UNECE and ESCAP regular budget and extrabudgetary funds
Evidence-based trade facilitation measures for economies in transition in the SPECA region: support the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan in implementing 4 items of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement	2018-2021	US\$ 490,000 UNDA project
Strengthening the capacity of the Central Asian countries to implement trade facilitation measures and better integrate into the international rules-based trading system	2018-2020	US\$ 351,900
Strengthening capacity of trade support institutions in Kyrgyzstan	2016-2018	US\$ 190,000
Supporting the removal of regulatory and procedural barriers to trade in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan	2016-2018	US\$ 190,000
Supporting the removal of regulatory and procedural barriers to trade in Tajikistan	2017-2018	US\$ 111,983

STATISTICAL CAPACITY-BUILDING

Official statistics are essential tools for evidence-based policymaking, ensuring transparency and accountability in the process of economic, social and environmental reforms and enabling decision makers to formulate policies and to monitor and evaluate their deliveries.

Over the last years, SPECA countries were confronted with the necessity, but also with the opportunity, for a rapid and complete transformation of their national statistical systems. Although official statistics in these countries have developed considerably, the broadening of the scope of traditional statistical measures to include emerging users' needs for integrated social, demographic, economic and environmental data will require further improvement of their organizational and technical capacities to collect, process and disseminate official statistics.

This will be achieved by promoting the exchange at subregional level of national good practices, undertaking benchmark studies and stimulating the establishment of an active network of experts. Advisory missions and training workshops will be conducted in response to specific request for assistance to improve the statistical capacity of SPECA countries in all relevant statistical areas, such as statistics for SDGs, economic and business statistics, demographic and social statistics, gender statistics, migration statistics, environment statistics and environmental-economic accounting. In addition to specific statistical areas, support will also be provided, on request, on organizational and managerial topics, such as modernising statistical production, risk management and human resource management.

The activities under the SPECA WG on Statistics will strongly rely on findings and recommendations provided in recent Global Assessment Reports of national statistical systems conducted jointly by the UNECE, Eurostat and EFTA. One of the major expected accomplishments is that countries systematically integrate these recommendations into their National Strategies for the Development of Statistics, developed by the World Bank, jointly with national statistical authorities and the UNECE. These national strategies will serve as a framework for international and bilateral assistance and will be used to mobilise resources from various multilateral and bilateral partners.

The major expected accomplishments of the 2018-2019 SPECA statistical programme of work will be to improve the efficiency of statistical production, and to increase the coverage and accuracy of statistical indicators for SDGs.

Regular UNECE resources will be complemented by Development Account resources, as well as extrabudgetary funds. To ensure the effective delivery of the technical cooperation activities on statistics UNECE with ESCAP will continue to forge partnerships with major international and bilateral partners in the subregion, in particular with the World Bank, CIS-STAT, Eurostat, Eurasian Economic Commission, EFTA, OECD, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNDP, ILO and the IMF.

STATISTICAL CAPACITY-BUILDING

Name of Project/Activity	Timeframe	Budget
Ongoing and planned projects/activities with funding secured or expected. These activities would be implemented in a mutually reinforcing manner. Additional support from interested partners would expand the scope and the number of beneficiaries of these projects/activities.		
Organization of regular sessions of the SPECA WG	One per year	2 x US\$ 50,000 EFTA (expected) and the Russian Federation
Enhance coherence and integration of economic and social statistics in support of the implementation of the 2008 System of National Accounts (2008 SNA)	2017-2020	US\$ 900,000 World Bank (ECASTAT)
On request, advisory services, training seminars and workshops	2018-2019	RPTC and extrabudgetary funds (depending on availability of funds)
Strengthening statistical and inter-institutional capacities for monitoring the SDGs	2017-2019	US\$ 710,000 UNDA 10 th tranche
Possible projects/activities in areas where UNECE/ESCAP have considerable experience and in-house expertise and which could be implemented if supported by interested donors/partners. These projects could be implemented in addition to and in coordination with projects/activities listed above.		
Capacity-building to support the development and implementation of statistics for SDGs	2018-2019	US\$ 200,000

KNOWLEDGE-BASED DEVELOPMENT

ACTIVITIES ENVISAGED FOR 2018-2019

1. Capacity-building on policy options and practical instruments to promote knowledge-based development

Objectives: To strengthen the national capacity of the SPECA countries to advance knowledge-based development by developing relevant substantive skills, increasing the organizational capacity of the institutions involved, promoting regional cooperation and fostering investment in modern infrastructure.

Proposed activities:

- (i) Organization of a regional/subregional capacity-building event on knowledge-based development, possibly in conjunction with the annual session of the WG on KBD (tentatively envisaged for 2019);
- (ii) Participation of experts from SPECA countries in UNECE policy-oriented meetings and capacity-building events on promoting knowledge-based development for policymakers and practitioners; and
- (iii) Policy advisory services and other events promoting knowledge-based development at the request of Governments of SPECA countries.

2. Implementation of the UNECE project on Innovation for Sustainable Development Reviews of selected countries

Objectives: To increase the role of innovation in promoting further economic development of the SPECA countries.

Proposed activities: Undertaking Innovation for Sustainable Development Reviews and supporting implementation of policy recommendations in selected countries of the SPECA region (envisaged for 2018 and 2019).

3. Support to SPECA countries to foster innovation to deliver the SDGs

Objectives: Policy advisory support to SPECA countries to stimulate the private and public sector innovation required to deliver the SDGs.

Proposed activities: Capacity-building activities upon request from SPECA countries, for example, on integrating innovation policies into national strategies for sustainable development and supporting participation of SPECA countries in wider UN initiatives in support of Agenda 2030.

4. Implementation of ESCAP activities in support to the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway initiative

Objectives: To enhance regional cooperation and strengthen connectivity through implementation of the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway initiative.

Proposed activities:

- (i) Participation of stakeholders (policymakers, senior officials and private sector) from SPECA countries in the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway Steering Committee meetings;
- (ii) Participation of stakeholders (policymakers, senior officials and private sector) from SPECA countries in subregional Steering Group meeting(s) of the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway;
- (iii) Participation of stakeholders (policymakers, senior officials and private sector) from SPECA countries to the Expert Group Meeting;

- (iv) Participation of stakeholders (policymakers, senior officials and private sector) from SPECA countries in the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway online communities; and
- (v) A study on trans-border terrestrial cable networks, including mechanisms for telecom operators to construct and operate trans-border terrestrial cables jointly, to enhance the quality and efficiency of international transmission.

5. Enhancing national capacities to use ICT for socio-economic development

Objectives: To enhance the capacities of policymakers, government officials and other relevant stakeholders to promote, adopt and utilize ICT and innovative technology for achieving national sustainable development goals.

Proposed activities:

- (i) Conduct capacity-building workshops on APCICT's flagship ICT for development programmes;
- (ii) Development of localized versions of the APCICT training modules, targeted at SPECA countries;
- (iii) Conduct subregional training-of-trainers workshops. These workshops aim to strengthen the pool of national resource persons capable of delivering the various training modules;
- (iv) Provide advisory services to SPECA countries in areas related to ICT for socio-economic development, subject to funding and resource availability; and
- (v) Conduct capacity-building workshops on the application of ICT tools for renewable energy resource assessments at the national level in SPECA countries, subject to funding and resource availability (APCTT).

6. Capacity development on the utilization of ICT and space technology applications for disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation

Objectives: Develop knowledge-based tools for disaster risk management, and build resilience into development policy and planning of SPECA countries.

Proposed activities:

- (i) Assist SPECA countries to access regional cooperation mechanisms such as the Regional Space Applications Programme for Sustainable Development (RESAP);
- (ii) Conduct activities on measuring resilience; and
- (iii) ESCAP continued support on DRR and climate change adaptation in the context of the Ministerial Regional Conference on disaster risk reduction.

7. Support to SPECA countries to monitor and report the progress of disaster-related SDGs implementation

Objectives: Develop statistical geospatial guidelines to monitor and report gaps and progress of disaster-related SDGs implementation in the SPECA region.

Proposed activities:

- (i) Establish an advisory working group, consisting of around six to eight regional and national experts from UN entities, regional organizations, and governments of concerned countries, with the aims to develop draft statistical geospatial guidelines; and
- (ii) Organize expert group meetings, workshops and advisory service meetings to enhance knowledge and capacity of SPECA countries in using statistical and geospatial data.

KNOWLEDGE-BASED DEVELOPMENT		
Name of Project/Activity	Timeframe	Budget
Ongoing and planned projects/activities with funding secured or expected. These activities would be implemented in mutually reinforcing way. Additional support from interested partners would expand the scope and the number of beneficiaries of these projects/activities.		
Organization of regular sessions of the SPECA WG	One per year	UNECE and ESCAP regular budget and extrabudgetary funds
Capacity-building on policy options and practical instruments to promote knowledge-based development	2018-2019	Subject to the availability of UNECE extrabudgetary funds
Implementation of the UNECE project on Innovation for Sustainable Development Reviews of selected countries	2018-2019	Subject to the availability of UNECE extrabudgetary funds
Support to SPECA countries to foster innovation to deliver the SDGs	2018-2019	Subject to the availability of UNECE extrabudgetary funds
Implementation of ESCAP activities in support to the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway initiative	2018-2019	Subject to the availability of ESCAP extrabudgetary funds
Enhancing national capacities to use ICT for socio-economic development	2018-2019	Funded by APCICT, ESCAP extrabudgetary funds to be

		mobilized
Capacity development on the utilization of ICT and space technology applications for disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation	2018-2019	ESCAP extrabudgetary funds
Support to SPECA countries to monitor and report the progress of disaster-related SDGs implementation	2018-2019	ESCAP extrabudgetary funds

GENDER AND ECONOMY

Activities of the SPECA Working Group on Gender and Economy (WGGE) will continue to focus on the promotion of gender mainstreaming into economic policies. Special attention will be paid to policies, programmes and measures aiming at the achievement of SDG 5 and contributing to other SDGs in the economic area.

Capacity-building

Building on the successful cooperation of UNECE with the Centre for International Cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Israel and the Golda Meir Mount Carmel International Training Centre since 2006, training workshops in support of women's entrepreneurship development in Central Asia will continue in 2018 and 2019. These workshops will focus on aspects of women's economic empowerment in Central Asia, and on the use of information and communication technologies targeted at women entrepreneurs in Central Asia.

Fundraising for new project activities

Funds are currently sought for two projects proposals outlined below which could be implemented in close collaboration with the Working Group:

1. Strengthening institutional support for the achievement of SDG 5 in the economic area; and
2. Enhancing the capacity of governments in Central Asia and the South Caucasus to mainstream gender in economic policies supporting the implementation of the SDG 5.

Both project proposals are important for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda through a gender lens in the SPECA region.

The project would develop and provide tailored gender trainings for economic policymakers on the implementation of gender-transformative policies. Special attention will be given to SDG 5 and how the achievement of gender equality could be enshrined into policy actions and programmes. While gender trainings have become more wide-spread across the region, they are often only offered on an ad hoc basis and provide general framework on women's participation in the policymaking process. In order to achieve gender-transformative policies, it is important to integrate gender trainings into existing training curricula for policymakers on a permanent basis. This project would address this challenge in three steps: first, by developing a training module which is tailored to the practical needs of economic policymakers on the achievement of SDG 5; second, by delivering trainings to government trainers to use the module, who would then, in a

third step, train economic policymakers to formulate and implement gender-transformative policies.

GENDER AND ECONOMY	
Name of Activity	Timeframe
Ongoing and planned activities with funding secured or expected. These activities would be implemented in mutually reinforcing way. Additional support from interested partners would expand the scope and the number of beneficiaries of these projects/activities.	
Organization of regular sessions of the SPECA WG (one per year)	2018-2019
Strengthening institutional support for the achievement of SDG 5 in the economic area	2018-2019
Enhancing the capacity of governments in Central Asia and the South Caucasus to mainstream gender in economic policies supporting the implementation of the SDG 5	2018-2019
Two training workshops on aspects of women's economic empowerment in Central Asia and on the use of information and communication technologies targeted at women entrepreneurs in Central Asia	2018-2019
Fundraising for new project activities	2018-2019

OTHER ACTIVITIES OF INTEREST TO THE SPECA COUNTRIES

SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT

In 2018-2019, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in cooperation with the UNFF, UNDP, UNEP and GIZ will continue to implement the 10th Tranche United Nations Development Account project "Accountability Systems for Sustainable Forest Management in the Caucasus and Central Asia" with the aim to strengthen the national capacity of countries, inter alia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan to identify appropriate criteria and indicators that are practicable, communicative, measurable, feasible and relevant to assess sustainable forest management. In 2018, the activities will focus on: preparation of the first draft of national criteria and indicator sets per country, organization of the regional mid-term workshop and national workshops in each country. In 2019, the activities will include: finalization of national criteria and indicator sets per country, organization of the regional conclusion workshop, and preparation of the project publication.

The new UNECE project "Strengthened sustainable forest management monitoring and assessment in the Caucasus and Central Asia" will be implemented in 2017-2018. It will build on, supplement and extend work done under the UNDA 10th Tranche project "Accountability Systems for Sustainable Forest Management in the Caucasus and Central Asia". Beneficiary SPECA countries are Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The objective of the project is to strengthen the capacity of these countries to monitor and assess sustainable forest management.

In 2017-2018, UNECE will implement the project “Strengthening capacity of Caucasus and Central Asia to restore deforested and degraded lands in support of the international Bonn Challenge and the achievement of SDGs 13 and 15”. Beneficiary SPECA countries are Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The project will be carried out to increase knowledge of the beneficiary countries on forest degradation and opportunities for restoration as well as enhance awareness of these countries on sustainable forests management towards the restoration of deforested and degraded lands in support of the international Bonn Challenge and the achievement of SDGs 13 and 15.

Ongoing and planned activities with funding secured		
Name of Project/Activity	Timeframe	Budget
Accountability systems for sustainable forest management in the Caucasus and Central Asia	2016-2019	USD 501,000 UNDA project
Strengthened sustainable forest management monitoring and assessment in the Caucasus and Central Asia	2017-2018	Euro 100,000 (Funded by Switzerland)
Strengthening capacity of Caucasus and Central Asia to restore deforested and degraded lands in support of the international Bonn Challenge and the achievement of SDGs 13 and 15	2017-2018	Euro 100,000 (Funded by Germany)