

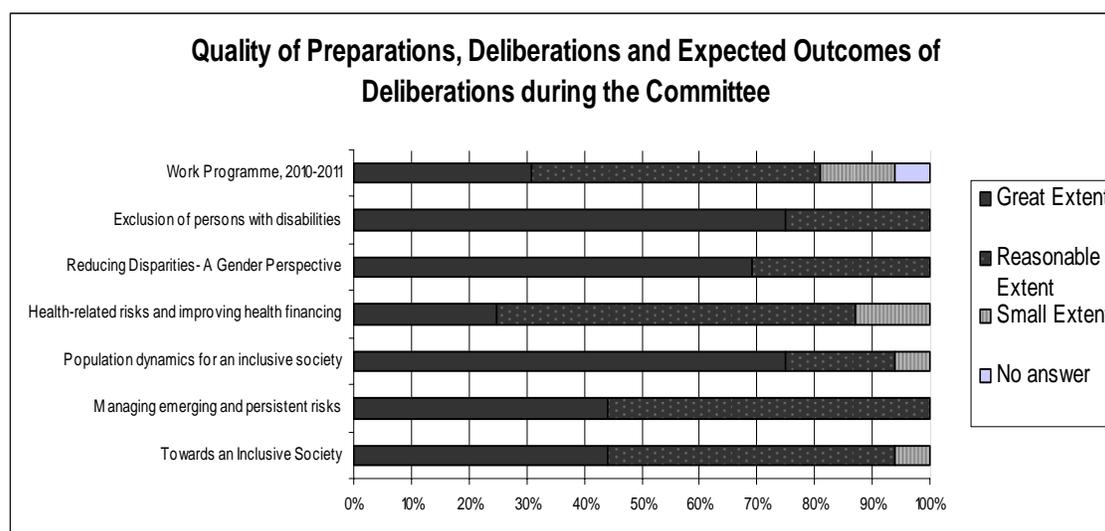
**Evaluation summary of the outcome of the first session of the  
Social Development Committee  
24-26 September 2008  
Bangkok**

**OVERALL ASSESSMENT**

The first session of the Social Development Committee was held from 24-26 September 2008 in Bangkok and was attended by 25 ESCAP member countries and associate members. In order for the secretariat to obtain feedback on the process and outcome of the session, an evaluation questionnaire was distributed to heads of delegations. Responses, which constitute the basis for the following assessment, were received from 16 of the 25 attending countries (64.0%). Results are expressed as a percentage of the delegations that responded.

**PART I: QUALITY OF PREPARATIONS, DELIBERATIONS & OUTCOME**

**Section 1: Effectiveness**

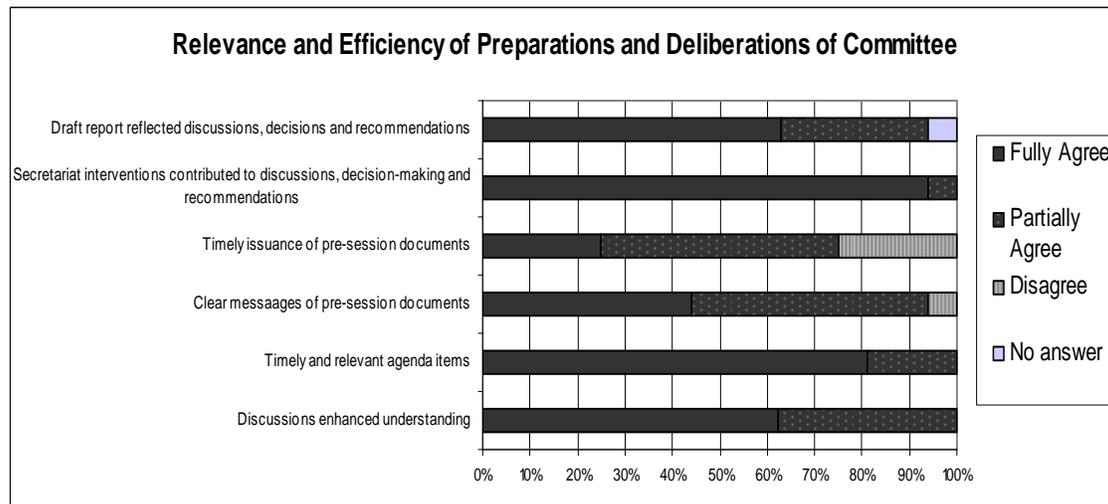


1. Half of the delegations (50%) indicated that the Committee achieved the expected outcomes through its deliberations on agenda item 4 'towards an inclusive society: a framework for action' 'to a reasonable extent', 44% of the delegations thought the expected outcomes were met 'to a great extent' and 6% to a 'lesser extent'. One delegation stated that the deliberations and document prepared were general and strongly recommended that more up-to-date information on poverty elimination be made available.
2. The feedback was positive concerning deliberations under agenda item 5 on emerging and persistent risks to ensure inclusive social development. With regard deliberations on 'Managing risks posed by food insecurity through inclusive social policy and social protection interventions', under this agenda item over half of delegations (56%) felt deliberations met expected outcomes 'to a reasonable extent', and the remainder 'to a great extent'. One delegation commended the deliberations on food security.
3. Under the same agenda item, the majority of delegations (75%) indicated that deliberations on 'Seizing opportunities and tackling challenges arising from

population dynamics to build an inclusive society', had achieved the expected outcomes 'to a great extent', and 19% 'to a reasonable extent'. One delegation considered that the agenda item to have achieved this 'to a small extent'.

4. Over half (63%) of delegations indicated that the Committee achieved the expected outcomes through its deliberations on health-related risks and improving health financing 'to a reasonable extent', and 31% 'to a great extent'. Two delegations indicated it had done so 'to a small extent'. One delegation commented that the presentation would have benefited from examples of concrete mechanisms on health financing.
5. With regard agenda item 6 on 'Towards an inclusive society through reducing disparities and exclusion', over two thirds of delegations (69%) considered the deliberations on 'Towards an inclusive society through reducing disparities: A gender perspective' to have met the expected outcomes 'to a great extent', and the remainder 'to a reasonable extent'. One delegation commented that the discussions reflected the diverse perspectives on gender among the delegations present.
6. Under the same agenda item, the majority of delegations (75%) considered deliberations on 'Building an inclusive society-addressing the exclusion of persons living with disabilities' to have achieved the expected outcomes 'to a great extent', and the remainder to 'to a reasonable extent'.
7. On matters concerning outputs for the proposed programme of work for the biennium 2010-2011 in respect of the subprogramme on social development, feedback was generally positive, with half (50%) of respondents considering that deliberations provided guidance to the secretariat 'to a reasonable extent', 31% 'to a great extent' and 13% 'to a small extent'. Some delegations considered that this item was not clearly positioned in the agenda and adequately deliberated upon during the Committee session. One delegation stressed the importance of the strengthening the link between the outcomes of the Committee session and the programme of work of the subprogramme.

## **Section 2: Relevance & Efficiency**

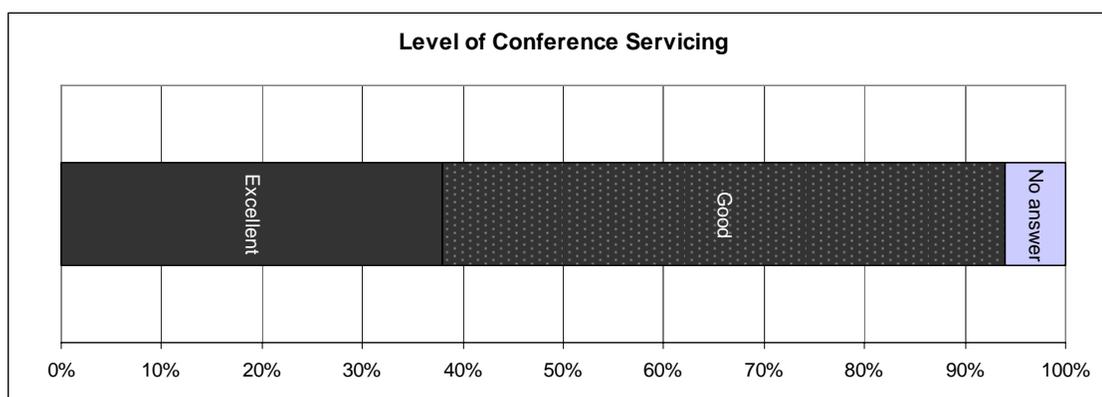


8. The feedback on the general substantive servicing of the meeting by the Secretariat was largely positive. All delegations "fully agreed" (63%) or "partially agreed" (38%) that

their understanding of regional experiences and policy options related to social development had significantly benefited from the discussions during the Committee session.

9. A high majority of delegations (81%) 'fully agreed' that the agenda items were timely and relevant to issues and trends regarding social development issues in the ESCAP region and the remainder (19%) 'partially agreed'.
10. Under half of delegations (44%) 'fully agreed' that the pre-session documents conveyed clear messages concerning the issues placed on the agenda, while 50% 'fully agreed' and 6% disagreed. One delegation commented that the documents would benefit from a clearer link to the programme of work. Whilst noting the late issuance of the pre-session documents, another delegation commended the quality of the documents drafted.
11. With regard the timely submission of pre-session documents, 25% 'fully agreed' on their timely submission, but the majority 'partially agreed' (50%) or disagreed (25%). One delegation commented that document had been submitted late.
12. Almost all delegations (94%) fully agreed that the secretariat's in-session interventions contributed to productive discussion and effective decision-making and recommendations by the Committee, with the remaining 6% 'partially agreeing'. One delegation commented that more guidance could be provided from the secretariat to facilitate decision-making and recommendations by the Committee.
13. Over half of delegations (63%) 'fully agreed' that the draft report adequately reflected the discussion, decisions and recommendations of the Committee, with the remaining 31% 'partially agreeing'. One delegation commented that the report could benefit from an overarching reflection to tie together all agenda items discussed.

## **PART II: FORMAT AND ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICING BY THE SECRETARIAT**



14. All delegations (100%) indicated that the agenda items on 'Towards an inclusive society: A framework for action' and 'Managing emerging and persistent risks to ensure inclusive social development' were the 'appropriate' length.
15. Almost all delegations (94%) found the duration of the agenda item on 'Towards an inclusive society through reducing disparities and exclusion' to be an 'appropriate length' with one delegation indicating that it was 'too long'.

16. Over half of delegations (56%) found the level of conference servicing by the secretariat to facilitate smooth conduct of the session to be good and 38% found it to be excellent. Several delegations commended the informative value of the presentations made by the ADB, SDD and ILO under the agenda item on 'Framework for action: towards an inclusive society' and suggested that further such presentations be made at future Committee sessions.

### **PART III: IMPROVEMENT OF FUTURE SESSIONS**

17. 10 of the 25 delegations provided additional comments and suggestions on how future sessions of the Committee could be improved. The comments can be summarized as follows:
- Several delegations noted that pre-session documents should be submitted as early as possible in order that delegations are able to prepare and consult with their capitals on responses. One delegation suggested that the information and announcements be disseminated by email.
  - One delegation noted that the broad nature of topics covered by the Committee made it difficult to ensure participation from all the relevant line Ministries.
  - With regard the agenda, one delegation suggested that the provisional agenda should be discussed at the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Associate Members (ACPR) in advance of the Committee session. One delegation suggested that a separate agenda item be allocated to deliberate on programme issues and also suggested that more time be allocated to allow for in-depth deliberations on substantive agenda items, in particular under the agenda item 'managing emerging and persistent risks to ensure inclusive social development'.
  - Two delegations noted the low level of country representation and stressed the need for the secretariat to encourage participation from capital. One delegation suggested broadening State participation by inviting representatives not only from Government, but also from Parliament.
  - One delegation suggested that workshops or working groups could strengthen the expertise of participants and thereby lead to more productive and in-depth discussions.

.....