EVALUATIVE REVIEW OF THE OMNIBUS DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNT (DA) PROJECT 06/07/B 'STRENGTHENING SOCIAL INCLUSION, GENDER EQUALITY AND HEALTH PROMOTION IN THE MDGs'

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List of Acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AECID	Spanish International Development Cooperation Agency
AIDS	Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome
AP-MDG-Social	Asia-Pacific Millennium Development Goals Social
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CoP	Community of Practice
DA	Development Account
DESA	Department of Economic and Social Affairs
EA	Expected Accomplishment
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECE	Economic Commission for Europe
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
EGM	Experts Group Meeting
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
ESCWA	Economic and Social Commission for West Asia
HIV	Human Immuno Virus
ILO	International Labour Organisation
KM	Knowledge Management
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
M & E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MSN	Multi-Stakeholders Network
ProDoc	Project Document
PWD	Persons with Disability
RB	Regular Budget
RC	Regional Commissions
RINSALC	Network of Social Institutions of Latin America and the Caribbean
SPECA	Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNECESA	United Nations Executive Committee for Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Progamme
UNIFEM	United Nations Fund for Women
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population
WHO	World Health Organisation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project background
Development Account projects are regional and inter-regional initiatives which aim at capacity-building through innovation and economic and technical cooperation among developing countries. They are implemented as individual projects that seek to achieve distinct development impact. The DA project (06/07/B) which is reported here has been implemented by all UN Regional Commissions and led by ESCAP.

A wide range of economic, social and environmental factors affect the health, gender equality and participation of socially vulnerable groups in society. The Millennium Development Goals need to be complemented with targets and indicators that are more reflective of region-specific issues and emerging trends relating to these groups. Socially vulnerable groups need to be more fully included in the mainstream development process. It is with these views in mind that the DA Project06/07/B was formulated in 2005 and implemented during 2006-09. The overall objective of the project is to increase the capacity of Governments in the five regions to promote the social inclusion of vulnerable groups, gender equality and health dimensions in national development plans through development of contextualised indicators that can also be of relevance to the MDG process.

Purpose and scope of the evaluation
The purpose of the evaluation is to identify lessons learned from the conduct of this project for organizational learning that can be used for the design, development and implementation of future omnibus Development Account projects. As the evaluation was conducted upon the completion of activities, it was still early to assess impact. The success of the project was assessed in terms of achievement of the Expected Accomplishments stated in the ProDoc and the extent to which the omnibus component was successful in fostering collaboration between Regional Commissions. .

Evaluation methodology
The evaluation was essentially a desk exercise by employing three methods viz. review of documents, mailed questionnaire and face-to-face or telephone interviews. Information gathering was confined to the DA project focal points – past and present – in all the five RCs. Analysis of information gathered was primarily qualitative in view of the limited number of respondents. The evaluation was carried out over ten weeks during December 2009 – February 2010. The biggest limitation of the review is that it only captures the views of one sector/stakeholder group viz. RC staff. It was considered to be an inward looking exercise, mainly to learn from the project experiences and improve future management practices.

Main findings and conclusions
Overall
   ➢ The project has generated additional region-specific indicators on the themes addressed (by 4 out of 5 RCs) which requires strong advocacy for adoption by member states as well as a large number of valuable knowledge products (all

RCs). Knowledge hubs through Community of Practice (CoP) and web portal exist in all the regions with varying levels of success. .

➢ The project has succeeded in underscoring one of the major shortcomings of the MDGs process i.e. that national averages mask differentiated development outcomes for different social groups and regions.

➢ The review has yielded adequate evidence to show that the project has made some unique contributions in the field of social development. Some of the salient features of this project would include:

- Innovation in exploring the concept and factors of Social exclusion (ESCAP, ESCWA and ECA) and barriers faced by excluded groups in accessing basic health and social services and the existing policy gaps (ESCAP)

- Attempts to make the invisible/less visible groups and communities visible and empowered (ESCWA and ECA),

- Unique experiences in the realm of gender and economy (ECE), removal of health inequities (ECA) and health promotion in later life (ECLAC)

- Has a strong emphasis on much needed social equity enabling the marginalised and excluded groups to have their rightful share in the national development plans and progress

- Strengthens the on-going MDG monitoring processes in the region on issues related to poverty alleviation (ECLAC) and gender equality (ECE)

➢ However, the project is not complete in its true sense. There is still a long way to go to achieve the overall objective of the project. Efforts have to be continued and the momentum sustained with existing resources and/or extra-funding from outside sources.

Specific
➢ The themes chosen are extremely relevant and important but too broad and wide
➢ The project approach was found effective and relevant but the results could have been far greater if the project had been aligned with the official UN processes for MDG revision
➢ The project allowed for diversity of regional foci. It was a strength, as the project was able to respond to the specific context and demands of the region to further the MDG related work. It was a weakness because it weakened the potential for inter-regional comparability and omnibus dimension of inter-regional collaboration.

Key recommendations
➢ The focus of DA projects should be specific and much narrower with clearly defined methodology.
➢ A more careful and participatory planning stage is required to create ownership
➢ There is a need to develop much stronger partnerships with the rest of the UN system/agencies in pursuing the broader objectives of such projects
➢ M&E systems, milestones and activities have to be specified in the ProDoc
➢ There has to be agreement by all RCs at the beginning of the project on minimum omnibus components and outputs to be accomplished for comparison purposes
➢ Commitment at higher management level is critical to avoid disruption and ensure smooth implementation of the project.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.   The Development Account is an integral part of the technical cooperation activities of the Economic and Social entities of the United Nations under the umbrella of the United Nations Executive Committee for Economic and Social Affairs (UNECESA). Development Account projects aim at capacity-building through sub-regional, regional and interregional economic and technical cooperation among developing countries. The project on strengthening social inclusion, gender equality and health promotion in the MDG process has been undertaken by all five UN Regional Commissions (Asia and the Pacific, Africa, Europe, Latin America and the Carribbean, Western Asia), with ESCAP being the lead agency.

Project background

2.   As inequalities among the regions and within countries in the regions remain unabated, and are even rising in some cases, it is vital that national and international development goals capture horizontal patterns of inequality and the higher incidence of disadvantage and processes that exclude certain subgroups. Policies need to address key barriers to equal opportunity for these groups in order to achieve stronger development outcomes. Hence the project under evaluation seeks to increase the capacity of Governments in the five regions to promote the social inclusion of vulnerable groups, gender equality and health dimensions in national development plans through development of contextualised indicators that can also be of relevance to the MDG process. In view of the pivotal role the MDGs play in monitoring development goals, the project laid particular focus on the MDGs and in developing complementary indicators around the MDGs. The project concept was drafted in 2006 and the project was implemented over the period 2006-2009 by all UN Regional Commissions (RC).

Evaluation context

3.   The purpose of the evaluation is to identify lessons learned from the conduct of this project for organizational learning that can be used for the design, development and implementation of future omnibus Development Account projects. The evaluation results are targeted at UN officials involved in the design, implementation, monitoring and review of omnibus DA projects, including: DESA Development Account Programme Management officials, future Development Account project managers and Executive and Programme Management officials in the Regional Commissions.

Objectives and expected outputs of the evaluation

4.   The evaluation was carried out with the following objectives:
- Identify lessons learned in achieving the project objectives and develop concrete recommendations regarding activities and processes for future DA projects
- Assess the extent to which the project achieved the stated Expected Accomplishments
- Assess the extent to which the omnibus component was successful in terms of fostering collaboration between Regional Commissions

The outputs of the evaluation include:
- Evaluation report
- Lessons learned to guide future omnibus Development Account projects

Scope of the evaluation

5.   As the evaluation was conducted upon the completion of activities, it was still early to assess impact. The success of the project was assessed in terms of achievement of the Expected Accomplishments stated in the ProDoc. The evaluation was primarily guided by the following areas of inquiry:
- ➢ To what extent was the methodology outlined in the ProDoc a relevant and effective way to address the topic?
- ➢ To what extent did the project approach, in particular the omnibus component, take into account the comparative advantages of each Regional Commission?
  - o To what extent was the omnibus component the most suitable approach, given the issues tackled by the project?
- ➢ To what extent were the selected activities outlined in the ProDoc a relevant way to achieve the two indicators of achievement?
  - o To what extent did the project outputs contribute to the Expected Accomplishments?
- ➢ To what extent did the project management arrangements, including finance and budgeting, allow for flexibility in terms of implementation of the project by all Regional Commissions?
  - o To what extent did the management arrangements facilitate an effective collaboration between the Regional Commissions?

2. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

6.   The evaluation was essentially a desk exercise by employing the following three methods:
- review of project documents, study reports, conference/meeting reports, presentation materials, website information, flyers, manuals/guides etc. The evaluator had read and reviewed about 70 documents covering all the five RCs (details are given in Annex 5)
- mailed questionnaire (as in Annex 4) to the project focal points in all RCs to elicit their views and responses in a structured manner (administered to 9 staff - 5 in ESCAP and one each in the other 4 RCs – details are given in Annex 6)
- face-to-face interview with ESCAP staff (8 of them) and telephone interview with other RC staff (4 joint telephone calls) who responded to the questionnaire

E-mail was used as the common mode of communication with the RC focal points. Analysis of information gathered was primarily qualitative in view of the limited number of respondents.

Activities carried out and timeline

7.   The evaluator commenced his task in the middle of December 2009. The first two weeks were spent in literature review, getting introduced to the Project focal

points in all RC and developing and mailing the questionnaire to the RC. January 2010 was largely spent in receiving and processing the information gathered through the questionnaire besides continuing the review and analysis of project documents. Face-to-face/telephone interviews (all but one) were held in the last week of January and the beginning of February. The second half of February was devoted for synthesising the information gathered and drafting the full report.

Stakeholders involved

8.   The scope of the evaluation did not permit involving multi stakeholders in the review process. It was confined only to the UN staff who had been actively engaged in implementing and coordinating the project in all the five RCs. It was considered to be an inward looking exercise, mainly to learn from the project experiences and improve future management practices. As the evaluator was working from ESCAP secretariat, he had the benefit of meeting with more number of staff who were involved in DA project in one way or the other and in accessing more information through documents review. However, it should be pointed out here that accessing information from other RCs was not an issue at all. They were readily available through several documents. Four out of five RCs submitted one questionnaire each while five filled in questionnaires were returned by ESCAP staff. Even though only one questionnaire was filled in by each of the four RCs, they made every effort to gather inputs from all staff who had involved in the DA project implementation during the life of the project. It was a joint and coordinated response. Similarly, the telephone interviews were held simultaneously with two people in three out of the four RCs.

Limitations of the evaluation

9.   Due to time constraints and competing priorities of the project staff from ESCAP it was not possible to cross-check the information gathered from different sources. It was originally planned to have a focus group through video conferencing at the end of the evaluation exercise but it had to be dropped due to shortage of funds under the project communication budget in ESCAP. There were no progress reports from the RCs for the year 2009 as they will be subsumed in to their end of project report shortly. But it caused some difficulty to gather information on activities carried out in 2009 and their respective outputs/outcomes. The evaluator had to ask for these details from individual RCs separately. Lastly, the evaluator did not have the benefit of reviewing some of the final products of the project (such as the project terminal report, Regional reports and/or policy guidelines of a couple of RCs) as they were expected to be ready in the beginning of March.

Difficulties encountered

10.   The evaluation, by and large, went smoothly and successfully. There was excellent cooperation and support from all the RCs. Information was readily forthcoming and on time. There was some delay in receiving response from a RC due to staff leave. Also there was some difficulty in telephone communications towards the end of the evaluation period due to budget constraint at ESCAP.

3. EVALUATION FINDINGS

3.1. Assessment of the Project Methodology:

Relevance of the project theme

11.　　　　There is a broad consensus that the MDGs cover certain important developmental areas inadequately, or do not take certain areas into account at all. This is a demand of many groups and the project attempted to address a key weakness in the MDGs. The identification of a set of supplementary indicators to the MDGs with a focus on social dimensions was a very relevant idea at the time it was envisaged. However, there is a unanimous view that the scope of the project is too wide and broad by combining all the three major themes/concepts into one project. It is both an advantage and a disadvantage. As the three subjects are cross-cutting themes, they bring different perspectives. But it can be very challenging to find commonalities. Perhaps, the project would have been more practical and created much more impact if it was restricted to one theme/subject, according to several of the review respondents. .

Relevance of the project approach

12.　　　　The project sought to draw from development-oriented research findings, inputs of experts from wide-ranging disciplines, experiences and lessons learned by various development stakeholders, UN agencies and countries and it synergized the outcomes from these activities with EGMs and a knowledge management platform. This approach was indeed relevant and critical to the successful implementation and achievement of the project objectives. However, there was lack of clarity on concepts such as social exclusion. The review also finds a view that if the focus of the project was on developing additional technical indicators, it would have been necessary to align it with the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on the MDGs

Effectiveness of the methodology

13.　　　　The methodology was largely able to produce the desire results viz. additional indicators. However, the lack of link with the formal UN process for revision of MDG indicators meant a missed opportunity to mainstream the results of the work on indicators. As the ProDoc lays greater emphasis on strengthening national policy planning processes by addressing the barriers that keep certain groups and communities excluded from the development plans and programmes, the methodology has proved to be sound and feasible. .

Flexibility of the methodology

14.　　　　This is an inter-regional project with greater flexibility to allow for regional variations and specificities. The wide scope of the project allowed for diversity of regional foci with regard to project implementation. The project built on existing expertise by taking into account the capacity and needs of each regional commission. However, having greater flexibility accompanied by frequent staff changes should not undermine the agreed project framework and the expected accomplishments. The review has noted the following modifications made by the RCs:

ESCWA

Half way through the project it became apparent that it was neither meaningful nor feasible to burden governments in the region with additional ad-hoc indicators at this stage. As social exclusion is an under-examined area in West Asia, much ground work was needed to build and scale the concept before developing statistical tools to measure its prevalence.

ECLAC

Since additional region-specific targets and indicators in some areas had been already identified under other projects, the focus was on the policy side of the project issues. It was considered necessary to advance work in specific areas within the broad field of promotion of the MDGs such as support important policy publications on social inclusion that represented the basis for intergovernmental bodies as well as conduct specific studies on gender and health.

ESCAP

The first phase of the project had already identified indicators and was in the process of setting up a Community of Practice. One component that was felt, that would add value at this stage was to strengthen the policy-context for these indicators. The second phase of the project took a more policy/analysis of issues orientation

ECE

In line with the ECE mandate and expertise, ECE project implementation concentrated on the topic of gender equality, particularly focusing on how to contribute to mainstreaming gender into economic policies to reach the Millennium Development Goals.

Appropriateness of omnibus component

15.   Given the global nature of the MDGs and the fact that they are a priority for every region, it was inevitable that the coverage of the project was omnibus and involved all Regional Commissions. However, the diversity in socio-economic development among regions is understandable and the work of individual commissions on the project would necessarily reflect the differences. But there needs to be a common purpose and reasons for RCs to collaborate. What is the common thread of this project? The implication for the omnibus component of this project was two-fold: on the one hand it provided a useful platform for inter-regional learning and sharing of information as different Regional Commissions emphasised different topics ranging from social inclusion, gender equality to health promotion. On the other hand, the regional diversification in project implementation meant that there was only a limited degree of common ground between the regional projects.

Capitalising on comparative advantage of each RC

16.   The project gave each regional commission the freedom to focus on issues that were of particular interest for them or where they had a clear strength and/or experience.

ECA: Focused on social inclusion, health inequities and gender; Delineation of new indicators which better capture the socially excluded groups with an African perspective.
ECE: The project implementation concentrated on gender equality, particularly focusing on how to contribute to mainstreaming gender into economic policies to reach the Millennium Development Goals. Special attention was given to measuring gender equality in the economy through additional indicators for monitoring progress towards gender equality and its economic impacts in line with the ECE expertise in the gender and economy area.
ESCWA: Decided to focus mainly on social exclusion through qualitative research rather than quantitative analysis. There was no real focus on health promotion as ESCWA does not have this expertise
ECLAC: Focused on economic and social disparities, health promotion and social exclusion.
ESCAP: Focused on social inclusion, gender, health promotion as well as social integration.

Thus, each regional commission worked on areas where they had a niche and in line with their on-going Regular Budget activities.

Alternative ideas on project approach for similar projects in future
17.   The review has enlisted a number of suggestions on methodology for future projects which include:
- The focus of the project should be kept much narrower
- Some issues lend themselves better to an omnibus approach while others do not. A more careful planning stage is required to select the most appropriate methodology for the particular topic at hand.
- There is a need for further advocacy on issues of exclusion, in particular in regions where exclusion risks being used as a political tool.
- DA projects focusing on RCs that share a clear and common vision on a determined subject should be given priority, rather than projects that get everybody on board without having done substantive preparatory work

3.2. Assessment of achievement of the project's expected accomplishments

Expected Accomplishment A:
Additional region-specific targets and indicators pertaining to health, gender equality, population and development, and socially vulnerable groups are identified or developed that facilitate the formulation of more comprehensive development strategies in the context and spirit of the MDGs.

Indicator of Achievement
EA A. By the end of the project, region-specific targets and indicators pertaining to health, gender equality, population and development and socially vulnerable groups are identified or developed and aligned with the MDG process.

Relevance of the activities outlined in the project document to achieve the EA. A

18.   Activities were quite clear and directly related to the expected accomplishment viz. Desk research and collation of existing research in the region supplemented by country level studies, if necessary; holding Expert Group Meetings; further research based on the recommendations of the EGM; and preparation of final Regional Report outlining region-specific supplementary indicators on social inclusion, gender equality and health promotion.

Modifications in the activities by the RCs

19.   During the course of the project implementation, the RCs realised the need to modify and/or add a few activities in response to the situation and demands of the region as outlined below:.

ESCAP
In the second phase of the project, some more activities were added in order to provide a substantive context to the use of the indicators (two national studies to strengthen the focus on social inclusion and another two national studies to look at the barriers for vulnerable groups and communities in accessing health care services, policy guidelines on five topics, etc.)

ESCWA
Instead of developing additional indicators, ESCWA decided to look in more depth at the issues of exclusion through three country studies, besides the regional level desk research, focussing on specific excluded groups (street children, persons with disabilities, migrant domestic workers) followed by policy consultations at the country level. These consultations aimed to identify policy gaps and challenges in tackling exclusion and aid national governments in addressing issues of discrimination and inequity facing excluded groups.

ECE
Activities focused on countries in Central Asia and the Caucasus which was justified by the fact that in the ECE region, reaching MDGs is most challenging for this group of Member States.

ECA
Questionnaire was developed and administered and mission consultations were conducted in 5 selected case study countries to get country specific suggestions on additional indicators (perhaps the only RC to go to the countries directly for consultations besides engaging the consultants).

Significant achievements under EA. A

20.   The review has captured a number of achievements of each of the RCs in terms of attaining the expected accomplishment A as described here under:

ESCAP

- Region-specific new targets and indicators were evolved which can track progress or lack of progress with respect to women and other vulnerable social groups such as older persons and persons with disabilities.
- The activities under this EA have succeeded in underscoring one of the major shortcomings of the MDGs process i.e. that national averages mask differentiated development outcomes for different social groups and regions.
- In-depth analysis of selected issues at the country level highlighted specific barriers facing vulnerable groups and policy gaps that can be brought to the attention of policy-makers.
- Case studies were identified that can serve as useful reference for advocacy with policy-makers
- Policy guidelines on five selected issues developed (to be finalised shortly)

ECLAC

The formulation of more comprehensive development strategies in the context and spirit of the MDGs was fostered by:
- the publication of two MDG-related documents that served as the basis for discussion at two high-level intergovernmental meetings
- the harmonization of a conceptual framework linking up the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the MDGs, in order to facilitate governments to develop policies. Emphasis was put in the development of one particular indicator (the percentage of women between 25 and 59 with no income of their own) where poverty and autonomy are linked up to show the relevance of women's autonomy for the eradication of poverty.
- the production of a methodological guide on indicators and a set of questions for the promotion and monitoring of health in old age

ECE
- Conceptual and methodological work leading to the identification and compilation of relevant statistical indicators in the gender and economy area to provide a comprehensive understanding of the situation and progress related to MDG 1 and 3 in particular.
- Assessment of data availability for these indicators in three countries (Moldova, Georgia and Kazakhstan)
- Guidelines for assessing the business environment for women's entrepreneurship development in collaboration with ILO
- Report on "Achievements and perspectives of women's entrepreneurship development in the Republic of Uzbekistan", by using the guidelines developed

ESCWA
- Qualitative studies produced a list of lead determinants of social exclusion where social, political, legal, institutional, and cultural factors intersect to create the experience of exclusion. They contributed to a classification of Triggers of Exclusion, Enablers of Exclusion and Manifestations of Exclusion.
- The intergovernmental Committee on Social Development reviewed the study reports and adopted a resolution on the necessity to spawn further work on social

exclusion in the region, including the preparation of analytical studies and the support of social inclusion initiatives/programmes.
- Policy briefs produced on Disability in Yemen and Street Children in Egypt

ECA
- A report was prepared using desk assessment of existing literature on Social exclusion, and analysis of a questionnaire developed for country missions,
- Additional indicators specific to Africa were developed. The report and these indicators fed into the UN-DESA Expert Group Meeting on "Promoting Social Integration" Helsinki, Finland 8 to 10 July, 2008 and the information was used in preparing the Secretary Generals' Report: Promoting Social Integration (E/CN.5/2009/2 – of 17 November 2008).

(More details of project activities, key outputs and significant outcomes of each RC are provided in the Annex 2)

Constraints and challenges faced in achieving the EA. A

21. The RCs were confronted with several challenges and constraints in achieving the EA.A. What follows here is a brief list of some of the major challenges faced by them:

ESCAP
- The scope of the project was very wide and required study in vastly differing areas such as population, health, gender, vulnerable groups and social inclusion.
- Certain critical social development objectives such as "inclusion" and "equality" are difficult to conceptualize and measure. Identifying a core set of indicators is a difficult exercise.
- There was no scope in the project for reality check on additional indicators developed. Do they respond to the ground realities? Can the data be collected, given the lack of capacities of the National Statistical Commissions? These are questions raised by the project for future consideration.
- Given the significant differences between the countries of the ESCAP region, it is very difficult to come out with "region-specific" indicators. Many indicators may be relevant for some countries but not for others

ECLAC
To influence countries to formulate "more comprehensive development strategies in the context and spirit of the MDGs" – the second part of the expected accomplishment - is difficult to reach without closer and more direct technical assistance to countries, which was not foreseen in the project.

ECE
- The project has not yet reached the stage of country consultations to agree on adopting additional indicators & data collection in the women and economy area and to agree on targets. More time and resources are needed to work with governments, both in terms of methodology for implementation and capacity building in the relevant statistical entity

- Due to the specificity of the project topic and in the absence of dedicated divisions, there was only limited possibility to draw on existing programmes of work in this area (a notable exception being gender statistics) in the development of project activities

ESCWA
- While ESCWA was not strictly able to come up with indicators, it currently believes that such an EA was too premature and ambitious for a region where limited consistent data exists on social exclusion in general, and socially excluded groups in particular. EA.A should have been projected as a potential goal emanating from a much more modest EA
- One of the main difficulties encountered was the lack of budgetary resources to conduct quantitative research in the region. While this was not envisaged as part of the activities under EA. A, it proved to be necessary to lead to the kind of indicators projected in the EA.
- Intermittent disruptions were recorded during the study on foreign domestic workers in Lebanon due to the unstable political environment.

ECA
- Inadequate budget allocation
- Shortage of human resources in the section

Expected Accomplishment B:
A stronger foundation for knowledge management in 5 regions is established for collecting and analyzing information and data related to additional MDG targets and indicators.

Indicator of Achievement
EA. B A network of MDG knowledge hubs is created that undertakes management in 5 regions is established through collecting and analysing information and data related to additional region-specific MDG targets and indicators.

Relevance of the activities outlined in the project document to achieve the EA. B
22.   The activities were appropriate for a Knowledge Management (KM) strategy, i.e. website, Community of Practice (CoP), and knowledge products. They proved to be useful tools in creating a stronger knowledge management foundation in the regions and beyond.

Modifications in the activities by the RCs
23.   ESCAP added an online EGM in the second phase of the project (2008-09) while ECLAC did not focus explicitly on "knowledge hubs", as they had already set up communities of practice such as the network of social institutions of Latin America and the Caribbean (RISALC).

Significant achievements under EA. B

24.   Several achievements have been recorded by the review as shown below:

ESCAP
- Community of Practice on Social Inclusion, Gender Equality and Health in the MDGs (AP-MDG-Social) is now functioning with the support of ESCAP mailing list
- Design, development and launch of online website and workspace for COP
- In addition to spontaneous discussions, structured discussions were held on specific topics such as the feminisation of poverty. There are two documents on consolidated replies on discussions through this forum
- A virtual EGM was conducted
- Generation of knowledge products

ECLAC
The project has led to the creation of two databases and the publication of documents that are contributing to dissemination of knowledge on social inclusion, gender equality and health promotion in the MDGs in the region
- The database on "Poverty in Latin America", jointly sponsored by the Development Account project and the Spanish Cooperation (AECID) is available on the ECLAC website
- The countries in Latin America and the Caribbean have updated information available through an integrated database on the state of ratification of CEDAW and its protocol as part of the set of additional indicators for the follow up of the MDGs and the regional conferences on women.

ECE
- A Knowledge Hub on the Economics of Gender was created, which covers all UNECE Member States, has a strong policy orientation and aims to facilitate implementation of gender mainstreaming beyond the collection and dissemination of MDG-related statistics. It links users to gender statistics databases both at the national and international level
- The Multi-Stakeholder Network (MSN) and Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA) Working Group on Gender and Economy proved a very useful platform for information sharing in Central Asia and Caucasus
- Proposed indicators to monitor and assess gender equality in the economy were discussed by the working group on gender statistics which is part of the Conference of European Statisticians at their bi-annual work session

ESCWA
- Knowledge Network Inventory which was created during second half of 2009 provides a good overview of the group of potential regional stakeholders in the area of social inclusion
- The Knowledge Hub on social exclusion was established in December 2009 on an independent website

ECA

- Web-site of the project activities developed
- CoP set up through confluence software and distribution of user guide
- Reports on e-discussions held and policy briefs produced and posted on the following areas:
  - Gender equality
  - Orphans and vulnerable children
  - People living with HIV/AIDS
  - Older persons
  - Youth

Constraints and challenges faced in achieving the EA. B

25.	The above listed achievements do not mean that the RCs had no challenges or constraints in achieving the expected accomplishment. In fact several challenges have surfaced during the review process as indicated here below:

ESCAP

- selecting the appropriate technological platform for hosting the CoP;
- project budget allowed hiring a dedicated facilitator only for six months duration.
- sustaining it within the bigger MDG+ project (ESCAP-UNDP-ADB) became an issue once the bigger project came to an end
- keeping the discussions alive, sustained and focused on the objectives of the project.

ECE

Keeping web based discussions lively and exchange on-going was difficult as it is resource intense to maintain network activity over time

ESCWA

From an institutional perspective, the management of such a website and community of practice is consuming in terms of both time and human resources and requires constant updating and upgrading. Its sustainability would require either institutionalizing it outside ESCWA or allocating the necessary human resources to moderate discussions and update information

ECA

- Insufficient budget allocation
- Shortage of human resources
- Difficulty in integrating the five regions

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Alternative ideas for similar projects in future

26.	The RCs have come up with several suggestions for similar DA projects in future which are enumerated below:

ECA

DA projects aim at enhancing national capacities and hence more resources need to be allocated for country missions.

ESCAP
- Formulate the EAs in a manner that make the project and activities more focused
- Need to have much stronger partnerships with the rest of the UN system/agencies
- More funding for knowledge management activities.
- Better integration with activities of other agencies such as UNDP and ADB.
- It could be useful to pair-up with an academic institute or observatory that works on these issues and collects/analyses data to ensure sustainability

ECLAC
Should countries find the proposals related to additional targets and indicators of interest, technical assistance should be offered in order to operationalize them at the country level

ECE
- Ensure systematic use of the Conference of European Statisticians and associated working groups as a platform for discussion of targets and feasibility of integration of proposed additional indicators in national statistical frameworks. This allows for better and explicit reach to the decision-makers within national governments in addition to Multi-Stakeholder platforms in the context of EGMs.
- Design the project to include a component of technical cooperation through capacity-building to train policy makers and statisticians on gender statistics and additional MDG related indicators.
- More technical cooperation between RCs on the "how to do" of effective knowledge management, sharing experiences and lessons learnt

ESCWA
- The project is innovative in the region and thus requires more groundwork than previously anticipated, thereby requiring more concentration of resources for focused research on selected areas.
- Establishing an inter-regional web-portal, hosted by one of the Regional Commissions, would be a possible way to (i) attract necessary attention to the issue of social inclusion/integration worldwide and in line with the focus of the recent session of the Global Commission on Social Development. At the same time, it would be (ii) more time efficient than for each single Regional Commission to maintain its own web site.
- UN-hosted global web portal on social inclusion will be better instead of each individual RC having its own web portal

Sustainability of Project activities

27.   Although serious concerns have been raised about sustaining the momentum and interest generated through this project, it is gratifying to note that efforts have been made by the RCs to ensure the sustainability of some of the activities as shown below:

ESCAP

The project has now succeeded in migrating AP-MDG-Social from an external server to an ESCAP server for hosting. This will help ensure smooth functioning and sustainability of the Community.

ECLAC

Building on the previous DA project and coordinating with the on-going activities related to the MDGs in the region contribute to the sustainability of the project activities. Much more work still remains to be undertaken and ECLAC will continue all these works with the support of existing resources and getting additional resources. Knowledge dissemination will continue through the ECLAC's website and the RISALC. The databases set up with project support will be maintained with other extra-budgetary sources of financing.

ECE

Sustainability of results of the project is ensured by the MSN which supports synergies among economic policy-makers, statisticians, gender machineries, as well as NGOs and academia, and contributes to the capacity building in the countries in Central Asia and Caucasus. It is supported by the SPECA Working Group on Gender and Economy (one of several Working Groups under SPECA), in cooperation with ESCAP. Also the knowledge management component –A Knowledge Hub- is part of the ECE web and as such its maintenance will involve minimum costs.

ECA

Information exchange software, *Confluence,* will serve as a platform to continue and further knowledge and experience sharing in poverty reduction strategies and the MDGs in an efficient and user- friendly manner.

ESCWA

ESCWA is engaging member countries on issues of social inclusion and integration by disseminating the findings of the project in the progress report on the Activities of the Commission which will be submitted to ESCWA 26th Ministerial Session (May 2010). In addition to that it will use findings from the 3 country studies in forthcoming publications and advocacy material on social integration. There is also mandate to follow up on work on social inclusion policies, in light of the recommendation of the 7th Committee on Social Development (October 2009) to continue the work in this area.

Follow-up plans

28.   Both ESCAP and ECE have come up with clear follow-up plans to maximise the impact of the project even after its completion.

ESCAP

As ESCAP took a different approach from the other RCs in engaging the national governments in the project, it is faced with a tremendous challenge of taking the

experiences and policy recommendations to the member states in the region. It remains to be seen in what form ESCAP wishes to share it with them. However, they have come up with certain plans as indicated below to disseminate the findings of the project to the primary stakeholders of the project viz. the national governments.

- Use the forum – Committee for Social Development, Asia-Pacific region – which meets in October 2010
- Annual ESCAP session in May 2010
- Use the evidence from the project through reports and research papers at high level regional meetings on disability, ageing, gender etc. and in inter-governmental fora to disseminate the findings and recommendations.
- Use the knowledge products for building the capacity of UN staff and UN agencies in the region
- Initiate follow up on the recommendations of working groups of expert group meetings and take the proposals for additional indicators to wider UN fora for further and more-in depth examination, discussion and action.

ECE
- Use project indicators and insights to inform further development of gender statistics database and to inform gender statistics training workshops for national statistical offices.
- Build upon project outputs through further activities by SPECA working group on gender and economy
- Promote proposed indicators in meetings with statistical offices in the region and policy makers
- Advocate including these indicators in national data collection (long-term process)
- Inform further activities of UNECE Statistics Division (development of MDG database, capacity-building activities)

3.3. Assessment of the Project Management mechanisms/practices

Project design/planning

29.   There is very little institutional memory on the conceptualisation and formulation stage of this project. The project was not designed by the staff members that ended up managing and coordinating the project eventually. There is a strong impression that DA project proposals are conceived with weak consultations, mostly by e-mail communication as there is no money for pre-project planning meeting or any similar activity. The omnibus component was decided without much consultation. Comments and amendments were invited from all RCs but the lead agency had to wait too long to receive comments. Due to the nature (variety of issues) and complexity (number of agencies involved) of the project, more time should have been given to the planning stage. "The designing and planning was inherited by us as we had no role. We had no say in the budget. The ProDoc and budget was already finalized and fixed before we met", a view expressed by one of the RCs reiterates the need for more transparent and participatory project planning process. .

30.   It was highlighted during the review that there are no official guidelines that identify and ensure a transparent and participatory mechanism for project formulations. Processes should have been clarified and people should know what to expect and when. Apparently the decision-making is a long and political process as there are several players involved in it.

Implementation arrangements

31.   The project had a decentralised approach with regard to implementation, although was centralised for budget monitoring and reporting purposes. All RCs were fully compliant with the requests for information and coordination from the lead agency, ESCAP and had more than one staff member involved in the project implementation as representatives of different sections or divisions related to the issues of social inclusion, gender equality and health promotion. They functioned as a cohesive team to a large extent.

32.   Due to the delay in the release of funds, the project implementation could not commence until October 2006. In addition, political uncertainties in ESCWA region and staff changes in several of the RCs also led to some more delay in the implementation of project activities. Hence an extension of two years was sought and granted to complete the project activities.

33.   Project implementation at the ECE regional level was a challenging process as ECE has no social development division, only one regular post of Senior Social Affairs Officer who is the gender focal point for ECE and only a small number of staff working on gender issues across different divisions.

Monitoring

34.   Standard monitoring procedures were used for monitoring this project globally viz. annual progress reports and e-mail and (to a less extent) telephone communication for stock- tacking and tracking progress. A couple of video-conferences were held with the participation of all regional commissions which was an excellent tool of information sharing and inter-regional communication and feed-back. Not much information is available as to how each RC carried out monitoring of their own activities within their respective regions. Frequent changes of project coordinators and the consequent change in focus of the project were cited as problems in effective monitoring of the project.

Evaluation

35.   The project followed standard evaluation procedures. Not much information is available on the specific evaluation activities within each region even though there are clear M&E policy and guidelines issued by each RC. Standard evaluation forms are generally administered to elicit evaluative comments from the participants of conferences and meetings. Only ECA had made a mention about such an evaluation exercise and shared the comments.

36.   The regional commissions were actively involved in the planning process of the end-of-project external evaluation system and welcomed the multi-method approach to the project evaluation. The ToR of the evaluation of the project were shared during the inter-regional wrap-up meeting held in Bangkok and open for comments by Regional Commissions.

Reporting

37.   All RCs were fully compliant with the reporting requirements of the project. End-of-year reports were duly prepared as requested, and collated by ESCAP. The reports did not have much information on M&E activities despite the requirement.

Alternative ideas for improved project management in future

38.   A number of suggestions have been received during the review for better management practices in future. The significant ones would include:

- It would be useful to identify more systematic management practices for interaction and coordination with RCs, particularly at the planning stage.
- M&E systems, milestones and activities have to be specified in the ProDoc together with clear roles and responsibilities of the focal points in doing this.
- It would be useful to have more frequent, informal monitoring (without excess reporting burdens) between the RCs to ensure they are on track. However, at the operational level there is a need to monitor the project at more regular intervals than the current annual progress reports.
- Improving evaluation systems and practices of collecting feedback at the end of EGMs, workshops etc. from the participants. Gather information from them systematically by using specially designed questionnaires.
- DESA's management of development account projects could be more effective if there are clear guidelines and guidance at the very conceptualisation stage.
- Most importantly, commitment and cooperation from Section/Division Chiefs is needed, especially in terms of supporting the overall objectives of the project beyond the specific topics relevant to their immediate area of work.

3.4. Assessment of Project Administration systems and practices

Efficiency of the project administration systems and procedures

39.   The review notes that there is certain element of bureaucracy within the UN system which is not tuned to efficient project management. There was a delay in the disbursement of funds in the first phase of the project. There were several disruptions due to change in human resources and other internal management matters. As RB staff undertake the DA responsibilities on top of their work programme, they may be less able to dedicate the time resources required within the short timeframe of the project.

Budget adequacy

40.   The review has evoked mixed response to the aspect of budget adequacy. While a couple of respondents feel that the funds were quite adequate for the activities, the majority of them strongly feel that they were barely adequate, given that the project covered five regions and three main topics (social inclusion, gender and health),. The

task of convincing a member state to adopt additional MDG related indicators necessitates dedicated resources which are not covered by the project budget; this is a constraint to the follow-up work necessary if the project goal is to be achieved. However, it was also found that not all funds were utilised by the RCs at the end of the project.

Flexibility with regard to activity plans, budgets and timeline

41.	All the RCs wanted to have some flexibility in shifting funds across budget lines taking into account specific needs of each Region. The "institutional contracts" budget line proved too difficult to manage, especially given the lack of flexibility in moving across budget lines. It was reported that a revision of the distribution of budget among different project lines was possible (through a formal request sent to New York office via ESCAP). This is further being simplified according to the latest information received that New York office will no longer control the budget.

42.	There was sufficient flexibility in granting of extension time for the completion of the project even though it involved a lengthy procedure. However, there is also an opinion that extension is necessary for almost all DA projects for various reasons and the two year extension for this particular project was due to the biennial planning system.

Alternative ideas on improved administration of future projects

43.	It would be ideal if there clear demarcation between the management of the substantive activities and the management of the administrative matters. But it would be unrealistic to expect it to happen in the near future, given the facts of UN system. What is therefore required is to equip the concerned project staff with adequate tools and skills to handle both the substantive activities and administrative and financial matters. life, it is not going . There is also a strong need for shifting the project administration and management responsibility from person (staff)-based to position-based or structure/organization-based to avoid disruptions and increase efficiency. .

44.	It would be useful to have either guidelines, or in the interim operational advice/one-pagers on e.g. budget management (how budget is transferred and where it is recorded/ where you can access information on the budget); programme M&E with timelines etc.

45.	There is always a huge transaction cost for omnibus projects which needs to be carefully planned and factored in the ProDoc.

3.5. Assessment of collaboration between and among the Regional Commissions

Coordination among and between staff, sections and divisions

. 46.	The project coordination meant involving staff from at least three Sections or Divisions of each RC. At ECE the project activities were coordinated by the Senior Social Affairs Officer (Gender Focal Point) and implemented in cooperation with the statistics division and the division for economic cooperation and integration. Closer cooperation with the statistical division, the centre for women and the team working on

population and demographic issues from inception and throughout would have been beneficial for the project in ESCWA region to devise methodologies of research and measurement that are able to deliver viable data for statistical analysis. ECA reported of a cohesive and harmonious team throughout the project period.

47.   At the ECLAC level, there were not too many chances for cross-fertilization of experiences among the three areas (social inclusion, gender and health) after setting up broad guidelines for the project. At ESCAP, the project involved all three sections of the Social Development Division and coordination among project team was reasonably good, specially during the first phase of the project (2006-07). However, there could be improvement in the level of support and coordination from other staff of the Division as well as other relevant Divisions of ESCAP such as the Statistics Division In an overall context, the inter-divisional collaboration remains a challenge within ESCAP as there is a lack of systematic sharing of information between Divisions.
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Intra and inter-regional communications

48.   There was good communication between the focal points of the five regional commissions. Mainly email, telephone and video conferences that are standard for many DA accounts were used as means of communication. Inter-regional communication was facilitated by the use of video-conferences which proved to be a useful and effective tool of information sharing. However, there were not many chances to get in touch with the other RCs, with the exception of rare videoconferences and the final inter-regional meeting. Except for e-mail other communications was lacking.

49.   Communication via e-mail with other RCs and the New York office sometimes took long periods of time. For a period that coincided with staff changes at ESCAP, communications with the lead agency was not smooth. Limitations due to time and space coordination among the various regions were also cited as a barrier for effective communications between the RCs. It was only ECE which has reported on Intra-regional communication which strongly benefited from close cooperation with the Working Group on Gender and Economy that operates under .SPECA.

Extent of collaboration between and among the Regional Commissions

50.   Inter-regional cooperation was identified as being critical for successful implementation of the project. The inception workshop through video conferencing marked the beginning of inter-regional cooperation and discussion of substantive issues. The review has recorded a few events that saw the interaction and collaboration between RCs. For example, the ESCAP Division chief attended the EGM of ESCWA and ECA staff participated at ESCAP EGM 1 in 2007. ESCWA staff had a joint mission with ECA to Sudan to share their experiences of qualitative research through compiling monographs and at the same time learn from ECA's experience. Exchange of best practices through on-line community of practice, sharing of reports and outputs from time to time gave the opportunity to exchange knowledge and identify areas and ways for further collaboration.

51.   Participation of RCs at other regional expert group meetings was constrained by time and budget limitation, with the exception of the Expert Group

Meeting held in Bangkok in 2009 in which all regional commissions could participate as it was scheduled back-to-back with the Inter-regional workshop for which staff travel was budgeted. This provided an excellent opportunity for sharing project findings. Inter-regional exchange of ideas and knowledge has been limited. Tele/Video conference should have been held at least once a year. All RCs should have had more opportunities for interaction and input sharing.
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52.　　　　The project opened up possibilities for bilateral collaboration between and among the RCs.　For example, a project proposal between ESCAP and ECLAC was prepared and is waiting for funding. ECE project outputs, notably the additional MDG related indicators on gender equality in the economy could be relevant for colleagues working on gender equality in other regional commissions. Equally, ECE noted with the work done on gender by ESCAP where there was thematic overlap.　ESCWA and ESCAP could have had more collaboration in the area of disability and social exclusion as well as gender dimension of social exclusion. This would have made the project focus on social exclusion a bit stronger.

Successfulness or otherwise of omnibus component/aspect of the project

53.　　　　It is difficult to rate the success of the omnibus component, given that there was no specified purpose for that component against which to rate it. The differences between the regions and the variety of issues covered made it very difficult for the omnibus component to work more effectively. On the other hand, it did offer excellent learning opportunities. It produced some interesting exchanges of information and knowledge between the regional commissions but it made it very difficult to have a coherent set of results. It would have been useful if the project had clearly set out from the beginning what activities would be particularly suitable for bringing out the inter-regional dimensions and seek to make optimal use of potential synergies. This could allow regional commissions to find a reasonable balance between activities with the largest regional impact and activities that may strengthen the inter-regional dimensions of the project.

54.　　　　The diversity partly resulted from regional specificities and added to the rich diversity of results. A stronger integration and collaboration of the Regional Commissions during implementation, however, could have provided more opportunities for inter-regional learning. Cooperation during project implementation was too weak to allow for capitalizing on these different approaches. The comment from a RC that the project ended where it could have started illustrates the point that the project has provided a platform for further learning through a follow-up project.

55.　　　　Inter-regional Workshop held in Bangkok in 2009 was the only main omnibus activity under this project. Each Regional Commission implemented their project in isolation. One area however, where RC collaboration in implementation could have been strengthened was in the area of Knowledge Management, where, for example, the RCs could have pooled their funds or share a platform that could strengthen the sustainability of the KM component. This idea was floated at the final inter-regional workshop.

Assessment of the performance of ESCAP as the lead agency of the project

56.   ESCAP has proved to be an effective coordinator of the project at the managerial level. Support was always prompt, timely and forthcoming. They were very cooperative and understanding team players. The organization of the final inter-regional meeting was excellent. The only problem was during the time when changes in staff made communications somewhat less smooth.

Alternative ideas for future omnibus DA projects

57.   The Management needs to articulate the substantive rationale for an omnibus project- how inter-regional collaboration and implementation of the project can strengthen Secretariat activities in that area/can strengthen their services to member States. Before deciding whether a project can be done as an omnibus project, there should a careful substantive analysis to determine whether the subject lends itself to this approach.

58.   If the different Regional Commissions have decided to pursue the omnibus strategy, then the project managers developing the project concept should be provided more guidance as to the purpose/rationale and process surrounding omnibus projects. Most importantly, find a subject which is of interest to all RCs. But if the purpose is to strengthen international collaboration, one would think that this should be limited to certain issues and certain regions where the trans-boundary impact and incentive for collaboration are clearly spelt out.

59.   An inter-regional workshop before the finalization of the project document and also half way through the project would be beneficial to (i) strengthen the omnibus component of the project and (ii) keep track of the progress of various commissions and to address any necessary changes in direction. Provide at least minimum opportunity for the RCs to provide input and clarify the purpose of an omnibus project

Alternative ideas on effective collaboration among the RCs for future inter-regional DA projects

60.   The review has recorded a number of suggestions from the RCs to enhance cooperation and collaboration in future DA projects that are inter-regional. They include:

- For projects involving more than one Regional Commission, it would be advisable to conduct a common workshop before finalizing the project document in order to (i) share existing literature and knowledge on the topic, (ii) agree more closely on approaches and intended results.
- Linkages between regional project activities need to be more systematically identified in order to maximise synergies.
- Representatives of each RC need to have opportunities and resources to meet face to face at least once a year.
- There is a need to factor in translation cost to overcome the language barrier for sharing information
- Continuous sharing and discussion be done electronically, through setting up an electronic discussion group where the project coordinators/implementers in each

RC can circulate documents, and discuss issues pertaining to but substance and modalities of project implementation. In addition, it would be useful for each RC to participate in each others' communities of practice/regional e-discussions. Adequate budgetary resources need to be earmarked for the use of video-conference facilities to bring Commissions together to discuss key issues

4. CONCLUSIONS

Specific

Project focus
61.   The themes chosen are extremely relevant and important in the current development scenario but the project scope was too broad and wide as it had packed three major themes into one. It was too ambitious and unrealistic to achieve the objectives within such a short time frame. Perhaps, the project would have faired much better if it was confined to one theme.

Project approach
62.   Effective and relevant approach to achieve the project objective and expected accomplishments but the results could have been far greater if the project strategy had been aligned with the official UN processes for MDG revision

Flexibility of the project scope and approach
63.   The wide scope of the project allowed for diversity of regional foci with regard to project implementation which has proved to be both strength and a weakness. It was a great strength in responding to the specific context and demands of the region to further the MDG related work. It was a weakness because it weakened the potential for inter-regional comparability on certain common grounds. This is something that the future DA Project Managers should keep in mind.

Omnibus dimension
64.   Given the global nature of the MDGs and the fact that they are a priority for every region, it was inevitable that the coverage of the project was omnibus and involved all regional Commissions. However, the diversity in socio-economic development among regions is understandable and the work of individual commissions on the project would necessarily reflect the differences. On the one hand it provided a useful platform for inter-regional learning and sharing of information as different regional commissions emphasised different topics. On the other hand, the regional diversification in project implementation meant that there was only a limited degree of common ground between the regional projects.

International partnerships and linkages with other initiatives
65.   Other UN entities such as UNDP, UNFPA, WHO and UNIFEM were not officially engaged in this project. They were recognized in a tokenistic way for their expertise in their respective areas by inviting them for EGMs. Similarly the review notes the absence of or inadequate link up with other international initiatives - official and unofficial - related to MDGs revision/developing additional targets and indicators

Staff turnover

66.   As the project spanned over several biennia from inception to completion, there was a high turn-over of focal points involved in the project. The project lost steam to some extent in a couple of RCs due to staff changes and the consequent delay in the implementation of project activities.

Project design/planning

67.   There is a strong impression that DA project proposals are conceived with weak consultations. There are no official guidelines that identify and ensure a transparent and participatory mechanism for project formulations.

Overall

68.   The project has generated additional region-specific indicators on the themes addressed (by four out of five RCs) which requires strong advocacy for adoption by member states as well as a large number of valuable knowledge products as a result of desk reviews and field research studies carried out at regional and national levels (all RCs). ESCWA felt that social exclusion was an under-examined area in West Asia and so much ground work was needed to build the concept before developing additional indicators. Strong knowledge hubs through Community of Practice and Web portal exist in all the regions with varying levels of success and stability. .

69.   The project has succeeded in underscoring one of the major shortcomings of the MDGs process i.e. that national averages mask differentiated development outcomes for different social groups and regions.

70.   The review has yielded adequate evidence to show that the project has made some unique contributions in the field of social development. Some of the salient features of this project would include:
  - Innovation in exploring the concept and factors of Social exclusion (ESCAP, ESCWA and ECA) and barriers faced by excluded groups in accessing basic health and social services and the existing policy gaps (ESCAP)
  - Attempts to make the invisible/less visible groups and communities visible and empowered (ESCWA and ECA),
  - Unique experiences in the realm of gender and economy (ECE), removal of health inequities (ECA) and health promotion in later life (ECLAC)
  - Has a strong emphasis on much needed social equity enabling the marginalised and excluded groups to have their rightful share in the national development plans and progress
  - Strengthens the on-going MDG monitoring processes in the region on issues related to poverty alleviation (ECLAC) and gender equality (ECE)

71.   Though the project is complete it requires much more work in some regions to build on what has been accomplished by the project to achieve the overall objective of the project. Efforts have to be continued and the momentum sustained with existing resources and/or extra-funding from outside sources.

5. LESSONS LEARNED

It is important to capture important lessons leaned from the project. This is to reinforce the value of organisational learning and continuous quality improvement in the way DA projects are conceived, designed, implemented, managed and experiences and knowledge shared within and across the regions. Some of the significant lessons learned from this project are illustrated below:

72.   The project experience proves the fact that a DA project could maximise its impact by linking DA activities with relevant ongoing programmes of the regional commissions. This is what the project in ECLAC region conveys to the outside world. The project built on the outcomes of the "Strengthening the capacity of Latin American and Caribbean countries to fulfil the Millennium Development Goals" which was a fourth tranche development Account project. It also benefited from interactions with the ongoing activities related to MDG monitoring, such as the inter-agency MDG reports on gender and health in Latin America and the Caribbean and the activities carried out in the framework of a project on the first MDG target sponsored by the Spanish International Development Cooperation Agency (AECID). The same holds true with ECE experience which managed to dovetail the project into the on-going SPECA activities.

73.   A DA project that develops synergies with other projects/activities of the Division/Commission has a greater impact. ECA has an illustrating example to testify the efficacy of this approach. A study on Mainstreaming health equity in the development agenda of African countries was carried out under the Commission's regular programme, not under DA project: The DA project supported in presenting this technical report on evidence of inequities in accessing and utilizing health services in ten selected African countries to the African Economic Conference and ESCAP's EGM in November 2007. The report, published in 2009, was taken to the African Parliamentarians Meeting held in Nairobi during October 2009. Similarly, the first African Social Development Report (under the Commission's regular programme), which focused on socially excluded groups in Africa, was released in January 2010 to which the DA project study on social exclusion had made significant contributions.

74.   Activities that are focused on specific issues of interest to member states may have the largest impact. Here again the example from ECLAC best illustrates this point. A study on "Defeating poverty through social inclusion" was carried out in response to a request of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Peru and the report was presented as a contribution to the fifth Summit of Heads of State and Government of Latin America and the Caribbean and the European Union, held in Lima on 16 May 2008.

75.   Future DA projects to be implemented jointly by the regional commissions should take into account prior experiences and ongoing work programmes of the RCs in the issues to be addressed. The commissions are already doing what is most relevant from a regional perspective. Deepening that work is likely to have the largest impact and may be the most effective use of DA project funds, in particular when relevant experience is

shared with the other commissions. This is precisely what the experience of the project in ECE on gender and economy suggests. .

76.   The project could have yielded better results if all the RCs agreed to have an appropriate balance between regional and global/interregional objectives at the time of project inception. Unfortunately the RCs laid more emphasis on regional objectives and priorities and hence the project missed an opportunity for comparability of results for further learning. This was clearly not intended as per the ProDoc.
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77.   Involvement of all relevant stakeholders, particularly the member states in ECA, ECLAC and ECE, augurs well for achieving the project objectives. This is particularly important for this project as it seeks to influence the national planning processes to strengthen social inclusion, gender equality and health dimensions.

78.   Frequent changes in project personnel and coordinators – this is something that the management needs to learn from as staff turn over takes a heavy toll on DA omnibus projects. Continuity of staff working on the project is important, especially the core staff in charge of management and leading substantive issues; however, it is not always possible in the UN system and hence what could be considered for future projects is to ensure that staff transitions are better planned and well-managed. "Mobility without affecting project stability" should be the guiding principle for future projects, with due respect to the UN as an employer who values mobility….

79.   The project has also clearly demonstrated that the focus needs to be specific and much narrower in order to achieve the results within the project lifespan. Bringing three broad themes within one project coupled with unlimited flexibility in the project approach and activities has led to wide variations among the various regions and diluted the seriousness of the issues being addressed. The project experience suggests that gender was perhaps the most common theme as it was addressed by all the RCs one way or the other, followed by social exclusion which was handled by four out of five RCs,

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The ESCAP Management [U1]notes the lessons learned and will share them with future project managers and UN focal points where relevant. Some of the recommendations are vague and in some cases do not contain any actionable points.

80.   Based on the suggestions/alternative ideas received from the evaluation respondents and also taking into account the conclusions and lessons learned as outlined earlier in this report, the review makes the following set of recommendations for due consideration for future DA projects:

Future DA Projects – omnibus or inter-regional
- DA projects focusing on RCs that share a clear and common vision on a determined subject should be given priority, rather than projects that get

everybody on board without having done substantive preparatory work on the theme/subject

- The Management needs to articulate the substantive rationale for an omnibus project- how the implementation of the project can strengthen inter-regional collaboration and learning and contribute to global objectives. Before deciding whether a project can be done as an omnibus project, there should a careful substantive analysis to determine whether the subject lends itself to this approach.

- If the different Regional Commissions have decided to pursue the omnibus strategy, then the project managers developing the project concept should be provided more guidance in the inception stage as to the purpose/rationale and process surrounding omnibus projects. Most importantly, find a subject which is of interest to all RCs. But if the purpose is to strengthen international collaboration, one would think that this should be limited to certain issues and certain regions where the trans-boundary impact and incentive for collaboration are clearly spelt out.

Management Response: Management agrees with the guiding principles suggested above. It would like to point out that the themes and lead agency for DA projects are set and agreed upon by all Executive Secretaries of the five Regional Commissions to reflect their common vision.

- The focus of DA projects should be specific and much narrower. Ensure the formulation of the EAs is in a manner that make the project and activities more focused. More clearly define the methodology to be followed in the project to maximise comparability between regional project outputs.

Management Response: Management agrees with this observation on project formulation and will share this finding with future project managers.

- New York office overseeing DA projects should provide support and guidance particularly at the inception stage by providing a systematically compiled lessons learned and good practices from other DA projects.

Management Response: Management does not understand is meant by 'New York office'. Management suggests that this could be a role for the Regional Commission New York Office (RCNYO), as it is responsible for coordinating the work of all Regional Commission. It will share this finding with the RCNYO and identify ways in which such practices could be systematically shared among RCs.

- For projects involving more than one Regional Commission, it would be advisable to conduct a common workshop before finalizing the project document in order to (i) share existing literature and knowledge on the topic, (ii) agree more

closely on approaches and intended results. Linkages between regional project activities need to be more systematically identified in order to maximise synergies.

Management Response: Within the current set up of DA projects, the above recommendation is not actionable as funding for activities is only released after the project document is finalised. However, Management suggests a way to ensure a participatory mapping of project activities and sequencing would be to set aside funds for an interregional coordination workshop as one of the first project activities. The purpose of the workshop would be to discuss the scope and map out and coordinate in more detail approaches of the RCs to achieve the Expected Accomplishment.

- The experiences and evidences of DA projects should feed into regional and global processes through regular sharing in order to enhance institutional learning

Management Response: Management agrees with this guiding principle. It can suggest to DESA to post the project reports on the DA website.

Project Management
- A more careful, transparent and participatory planning stage is required to create ownership by the participating RCs. Perhaps, DESA could clarify the protocol involved in the planning processes.

Management Response: Management agrees with the guiding principle of participatory planning. However, it does not understand the second sentence and the role of DESA in this process or what 'protocol' means and how it is relevant to the planning process.

- M&E systems, milestones and activities have to be clearly spelt out in the ProDoc together with clear description of roles and responsibilities of the RC focal points in doing this.

Management Response: Management agrees with the importance to integrate M&E systems into project implementation. It will share this lesson learned with future programme managers.

- There is a need for shifting the project administration and management responsibility from person (staff)-based to position-based or structure/organization-based to avoid disruptions and to increase efficiency. The project should continue irrespective of the staff involved. What is needed is a good management of the transition phase when there are staff changes

- Commitment and cooperation from Section/Division Chiefs is essential, especially in terms of supporting the overall objectives of the project beyond the specific topics relevant to their immediate area of work. This higher level commitment will ensure smooth and successful implementation of DA Projects.

Management Response: Management agrees with the importance of managing transition for project continuity and will bring it to the attention of the Programme Management Division for organisational learning.

- A follow-up project should be considered by DA Project system to mainstream the findings of this project within the ongoing development initiatives which would be essential to ensure sustainability

Management Response: Management would like to point out that four of the Regional Commissions have indicated they would take follow-up actions. We therefore consider this recommendation implemented. For further information, please refer to the Terminal Report.

- Further impact analysis of the project is recommended as part of a separate exercise after two years

Management response: Consultations between the project implementing office and the Evaluation Officer of ESCAP resulted in agreement that further impact analysis may not be suitable or feasible Upon consultations with PMD on this proposal, Management does not consider it a suitable action for this particular project. The project was intended as more an analytical exercise on policy and indicators that did not engage member States directly and thus is not considered to lend itself to impact analysis. We therefore do not agree with this recommendation.

Knowledge Management
- For some recurrent activities in most DA projects, such as the establishment of CoPs, appropriate and standard technological platforms could be identified and suggested for use. Establishing either an inter-regional web-portal, hosted by one of the Regional Commissions, or an UN-hosted global web portal on social inclusion would be a possible way to attract necessary attention to the issue of social inclusion/integration worldwide and in line with the focus of the recent session of the Global Commission on Social Development. At the same time, it would be more time efficient than for each single Regional Commission to maintain its own web site

Management response: Management notes that the proposal to align a global web portal on social inclusion with the Global Commission on Social Development is not directly drawn from the findings of the report. While we do not agree that the identification of a standard technological platform would necessarily increase efficiency, it could be suggested to the fund manager Management feels that is not practical and effective that a standard technological platform be identified for DA projects. However, one suggestion could be for DESA(DESA) that the DA website also be used for coordination purposes among implementing agencies.

Building partnerships/linkages

- There is a need to develop much stronger partnerships and better integration with the activities of other UN system/agencies in pursuing the broader objectives of such projects

Management response: Management agrees with this guiding principle and will share it with future programme managers.

In addition to the above response to recommendations, Management would like to make some remarks on the following paragraphs of the report:

9.   ***Due to time constraints and competing priorities of the project staff from ESCAP it was not possible to cross-check the information gathered from different sources.*** It was originally planned to have a focus group through video conferencing at the end of the evaluation exercise but it had to be dropped due to shortage of funds under the project communication budget in ESCAP. There were no progress reports from the RCs for the year 2009 as they will be subsumed in to their end of project report shortly. But it caused some difficulty to gather information on activities carried out in 2009 and their respective outputs/outcomes. The evaluator had to ask for these details from individual RCs separately. Lastly, the evaluator did not have the benefit of reviewing some of the final products of the project (such as the project terminal report, Regional reports and/or policy guidelines of a couple of RCs) as they were expected to be ready in the beginning of March.

Management Remarks: It is not clear what is meant by the first sentence. It is not clear whether and how ESCAP was required to cross-check information for the evaluation. It was noted that some information seems to have been taken at face-value and thus ESCAP requested the Consultant to cross-check information gathered in order to clarify and verify its accuracy.

32.   ***Due to the delay in the release of funds, the project implementation could not commence until October 2006. In addition, political uncertainties in ESCWA region and staff changes in several of the RCs also led to some more delay in the implementation of project activities. Hence an extension of two years was sought and granted to complete the project activities.***

Management Remarks: Although ESCWA may have experienced delays in project implementation, it should be clarified which extension this refers to.

45.   There is always a huge transaction cost for omnibus projects which needs to be carefully planned and factored in the ProDoc.

Management Remarks: It is not clear what the basis of this statement is. The transaction and communication costs had been taken into account in the financial planning of the project and as budget was outstanding under the relevant budget lines at the end of the project, can be considered sufficient.

* * * * * * * *

Annex I

DA PROJECT EVALUATION (06/07B): PROJECT RESULTS IN A NUTSHELL

Expected Accomplishment 1: *"Additional region-specific targets and indicators pertaining to health, gender equality, population and development, and socially vulnerable groups are identified or developed that facilitate the formulation of more comprehensive development strategies in the context and spirit of the MDGs."*
Objectively Verifiable Indicator: By the end of the project, region-specific targets and indicators pertaining to health, gender equality, population and development, and socially vulnerable groups are identified or developed and aligned with the MDG process.
Sources of verification: Targets and indicators are developed and are disseminated through reports and websites of all regional commissions.

Activities	Significant outputs	Key outcomes	Comments
ESCAP 1/ Inception workshop (24 participants) 2/ Regional studies by consultants 3/ Expert Group Meeting: 13-15 November 2007 (43 participants) 4/ In-depth country level case study of social exclusion – Nepal and Fiji 5/ In-depth country level case study of barriers to accessing health care services in Vietnam and Thailand 6/ Inter-regional video conference in January 2009 7/ Expert Group Meeting: 29 September – 1 October 2009 (47 participants) 8/ Inter-regional wrap-up workshop – 2 October 2009 (8 participants) 9/ Preparation of policy guidelines – on social exclusion, gender equality, health promotion, disability and ageing	**Knowledge products generated:** 1. Supplementary Population and Health Targets and Indicators Relevant for Tracking Progress on the Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in the ESCAP Region 2. Promoting Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in the Asia-Pacific: Linking the Millennium Development Goals with the CEDAW and Beijing Indicators 3. Issues in measuring and assessing progress and obstacles encountered in achieving internationally agreed development goals from the disability perspective 4. A gender perspective on ageing in Asia-Pacific: social inclusion and health promotion in the Millennium Development Goals *Recommendations of the Expert Group Meeting on developing supplementary targets and indicators* **Country level studies:** 1. Fiji Islands Country Profile on Excluded Groups 2. Country profile of excluded groups in Nepal 3. Review of Barriers to Access Health Services for Selected Vulnerable Groups in Thailand : A Case Study 4. Review of Barriers to Access Health Services for Selected groups in Vietnam: A case- study **Expected by end of February 2010** Report on EGM 2 Regional Report Policy guidelines on 5 topics/areas	1/ Review of indicators to monitor progress and policy gaps in the three thematic areas viz. social inclusion, gender equality and health promotion 2/ Identification of additional indicators and targets 3/ Besides indicators, the project has developed key recommendations that can help developing countries in placing their national MDGs efforts within the broader social development agenda. The recommendations also provide guidance for improving data collection and analysis. 4/ In-depth analysis of selected issues at the country level	Working Groups were set up and tasked to consider: • Strengthening MDG monitoring systems • Interventions to tackle barriers in the thematic areas • Recommendations for policy options

ECLAC 1. Preparation of documents on MDGs contributing to Government summits in the region 2. Studies on the contribution of social assistance programmee to the achievement of the MDGs 3. Regional seminar on the "Contribution of Social Programmes to Achieving the Millennium Development Goals", 8-9 September 2008 4. Develop indicators to measure poverty and gender & monitor the implementation of the CEDAW 5. "Expert Group Meeting on Indicators to monitor the implementation of the CEDAW", Santiago, Chile, 3-4 July, 2007 6. Production of video clips to promote campaign against gender- based violence 7. Preparation of methodological documents on measuring health promotion in old age 8. A study on the application and monitoring of the new MDG target in the region on universal access to reproductive health	**Social inclusion** 1/. A summary report of "The Millennium Development Goals: A Latin American and Caribbean perspective" 2/* A report on "The Millennium Development Goals and the challenges facing Latin America and the Caribbean in making progress towards higher levels of well-being, better human capital, and more equal opportunities". 3/ ** A study report on "Defeating poverty through social inclusion" 4/ A document titled "Towards the broadening of the second Millennium Development Goal: A proposal for Latin America and the Caribbean". 5/ Publication of case studies evaluating social programs for poverty reduction and monitoring Millennium development goals and targets in Colombia and Ecuador and a study report on poverty reduction programmes in Uruguay 6/ The report on poverty and social policies towards indigenous people in Panama is being used as an input for other publications **Gender equality** 1/ Harmonization of a conceptual framework linking up CEDAW and the MDGs 2/ Audio-visual material contributing to the promotion of empowerment measures for women **Health promotion** 1/ A methodological guide for the qualitative evaluation of policies and programmes for the promotion of health in old age and its contribution to the achievement of the MDGs. 2/ A document employing the above qualitative methodological guide to evaluate the impact of a home care program intended to promote better health and quality of life among the elderly in Argentina. 3/ ***"A methodological manual on indicators and a set of questions for the monitoring of health promotion in old age within the framework of the MDGs" 4/ A theoretical-methodological document on basic indicators to measure the MDG on the promotion of sexual and reproductive health of adolescents and youth from a	1. Publication of documents has contributed to dissemination of knowledge on social inclusion, in the MDGs 2. A set of region-specific targets and indicators was developed in order to better monitor the gender equity in the MDGs. 3. Methodological guides and documents have disseminated knowledge with respect to health promotion among older adults	* This was commissioned by the Government of Guyana and presented at the XIX Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Rio Group, which took place in Georgetown, from February 28th to March 3rd, 2007. ** In response to a request of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Peru as a contribution to the fifth Summit of Heads of State and Government of Latin America and the Caribbean and the European Union, held in Lima on 16 May 2008. *** The 33 indicators proposed for the monitoring of health promotion in old age cover 8 broad themes. This manual was presented to the Social Protection Bank of Uruguay, in order to be used as a model for a national survey, and was also distributed to the University of Costa Rica, which is advising the National Association of Older Persons in this county

	human rights perspective (to be published in March 2010)		
ECE 1/ Expert Group Meeting in Geneva: 9-11 July 2007 (30 participants) 2/ Follow-up EGM in Berlin: 12 November 2007 (12 participants) 3/ Stocktaking study of the trends and concerns related to economic aspects of gender equality and an analysis of policy responses as reflected by National Development Strategies (NDS) and activities of international organizations, involving eight countries of Central Asia and Caucasus. 4/ Assessment of data availability for the proposed indicators in Georgia, Kazakhstan and the Republic of Moldova 5/ Uzbekistan case study on women's entrepreneurship development.	**Knowledge products generated:** (1) Mainstreaming Gender into Economic Policies to Reach the Millennium Development Goals in Central Asia, Stocktaking Study 2008 (2) Mainstreaming Gender into Economic Policies: Trends and Challenges for Central Asian and Caucasian Countries, Research Report 2009 (3) Measuring Gender Equality in the Economy, Research Report 2009 (4) Guideline for assessing the business environment for women's entrepreneurship development in collaboration with ILO (5) Achievements and perspectives of women's entrepreneurship development in the Republic of Uzbekistan - Country Report 2009 (*Informal English Translation*)	1/ Through research conducted in Central Asia and the Caucasus, it transpired that gender was predominantly conceptualised as a social issue 2/ Contributed to raise awareness as to why gender should be mainstreamed in economic policies to reach Millennium Development Goals. 3/ Provided concrete tools and recommendations to policy makers on how gender can be mainstreamed in economic policies thus facilitating policy action to strengthen gender equality in the economic realm	1/ The study was discussed at two expert meetings of the Project Working Group on Gender and Economy of the UN Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA) and revised in light of the feedback received 2/ The proposed indicators to monitor and assess gender equality in the economy were discussed by the Working Group on gender statistics which is part of the Conference of European Statisticians at their bi-annual work session on 6-8 October 2008 in Geneva and by SPECA Working Group
ESCWA 1/* Literature reviews on social Inclusion/exclusion and vulnerable groups in the ESCWA region and in the general development debate; Analysis of existing material on how to engender the MDGs and identify dis-empowering barriers to gender equality in the region 2/ In-house seminar on 24 April 2007 3/** Country studies on social exclusion in Lebanon, Egypt, and Yemen (representing a conflict-ridden society; a diversified economy and a highly populous country; and a Least Developed Country respectively).	**Knowledge products generated:** 1. Social Development Bulletin 3: Social Exclusion (November 2007) 2. Study Report on social exclusion in the ESCWA region. August 2008 3. Review Report on engendering the millennium development goals and identifying barriers to gender equality in the ESCWA region 4. Report on the Experts Group Meeting on social exclusion 5. Brochure: Social Exclusion and Women's Disempowerment in the ESCWA Region 6. Policy briefs on Disability in Yemen and Street Children in Egypt 7. A paper on "Follow-up on priority issues in the field of social development in the ESCWA region viz. Social inclusion" - presented at the Seventh Session of the	1. The Committee on Social Development adopted a resolution on the necessity to spawn further work on social exclusion in the region, including the preparation of analytical studies and the support of social inclusion initiatives/programmes. 2. Part of the research in Yemen brought much needed visibility to the plight of the Akhdam and the Hjur, largely invisible in the area. The EGM in	* ESCWA's Literature Review on Social Exclusion was reported by *Eldis* (a well known International organization on development policy, research and practice) ** 36 in-depth monograph interviews which contributed to a classification of Triggers, Enablers and Manifestations of Exclusion *** Attended by experts from London, Jordan, Egypt and Lebanon to

4/ A joint mission with ECA to Sudan to learn from ECA's different approach and to demonstrate ESCWA's field methodology in interviews (April 2008) 5/ Mission to Finland to participate in EGM on Social Integration organized by UNDESA and Government of Finland (July 2008) 6/ Experts Group Meeting on social exclusion, Beirut, 1-2 August 2008 (attended by 21 experts from 9 ESCWA countries, an expert from the UK, 7 participants from UN sister organizations) 7/*** Three-day workshop on Methodology for national level policy consultations, Beirut, Lebanon, February 24-26, 2009 8/ Country consultations to identify policy gaps and challenges in tackling exclusion of persons with disabilities in Yemen, of street children in Egypt and of foreign migrant workers in Lebanon	Committee on Social Development, Beirut, 26-27 October 2009 8. **** Brochure on Social Integration in Western Asia (4 pages), outlining ESCWA's activities and national strategies in the area of social integration and social inclusion. 9. Regional Synthesis Report 2009 consolidating the findings of the policy analysis in the three countries (currently being enhanced).	particular, raised a lot of interest among researchers in the plight of these groups 3. Work on the DA project has also fed into ESCWA's work on integrated social policy through emphasis on addressing the discrimination and barriers faced by groups and the call for linking unequal opportunity and social injustice to group-based discrimination.	define a common methodology to interview and consult with policy makers in various ministries and government units, major NGOs and independent researchers in the 3 countries **** This was disseminated at the 48th Commission on Social Development in NY, February 2010 and was well received by the governments delegates and participating UN entities.
ECA 1/* Regional study on social inclusion, gender equality and health equity (including direct missions and consultations in five countries representing each of the five sub-regions in Africa) 2/ Expert group meeting, held in Addis Ababa, 7 to 9 May 2008 (27 experts from 15 countries and representatives from UNDP, UNICEF, UNAIDS, WHO and HelpAge International and the Centre for Land	1. EGM report on supplementary MDG targets and indicators on gender equality (1 target & 22 indicators); social inclusion of youth (11 indicators); social inclusion of older people, persons with disabilities, people living with HIV/AIDS (2 targets & 20 indicators); health equity; and sexual and reproductive health (17 indicators) 2. Participants of the EGM were sensitized of the importance of promoting and monitoring social inclusion in national development plans and policies. 3. Regional Report on "Strengthening social inclusion, gender equality and health promotion in the MDGs in Africa (ready for printing) 4. Synergy with the ECA's regular programme on social	1. The report and these indicators fed into the UNDESA Expert Group Meeting on "Promoting Social Integration" Helsinki, Finland 8 to 10 July, 2008 and the information was used in preparing the Secretary Generals' Report: Promoting Social Integration E/CN.5/2009/2 – of 17 November 2008. 2. Awareness on use of	* Methods used: i) Desk review of existing information; ii) Guided interviews with key informants who were experts from government and non government institutions in selected countries: Sudan, Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana and Mali; iii) Online discussions

Economy & Rights of Women for East and Southern Africa)	development: Mainstreaming health equity into the development agenda of African countries; contribution to First African Social Development Report, 2010, which focused on excluded groups	supplementary indicators and increased resources towards monitoring of social inclusion.	

Expected Accomplishment 2: *"A stronger foundation for knowledge management in 5 regions is established for collecting and analyzing information and data related to additional MDG targets and indicators."*

Objectively Verifiable Indicator: A network of MDG knowledge hubs is created that undertakes policy-oriented research and analysis on region-specific MDG-related targets and indicators.

Sources of verification: MDG knowledge hubs are functioning at the end of the project and working closely with regional commissions.

Activities	Significant outputs	Key outcomes	Comments
ESCAP 1/ Setting up of web-based Community of Practice and promotion of e-mail based discussions 2/ virtual EGM (online) 3/ Designing DA web pages for the ESCAP website and a user-friendly layout for the DA policy guidelines	1. E-mail based CoP on Social Inclusion, Gender Equality and Health Promotion in the MDGs (on-going since 2008) 2. Series of on-line discussions during March – May 2009 3. AP-MDG-Social as a sub-portal of ESCAP web site 4. DA web pages (expected by the end of February)	1/ The KM tools enabled wide participation of experts to exchange information and experiences 2/ The online discussions helped to identify policy gaps and obstacles that could be used as a reference for policy options	The on-line discussion on feminization of poverty had participation from governments of more than 10 countries, and interregional sharing of best practices from four regions
ECLAC 1. Plan, develop content and maintain DA project website 2. Set up on-line database on disaggregated poverty in the region 3. Create an observatory for gender equality with database on the state of CEDAW and its protocol in the countries of the region	1/ Disseminated regional studies on the MDGs carried out together with other United Nations agencies, where both official and region-specific MDG indicators are analyzed 2/ Statistics on poverty in 18 countries in the region, disaggregated by gender, urban and rural areas, age, educational level, type of family, ethnic origin and labor are available on line 3/* Updated information available on the state of ratification of CEDAW and its protocol as part of the set of additional indicators for the follow up of the MDGs and the regional conferences on women	Between April 2008 and December 2009, the poverty database has received more than 23,000 external visits on the web, at an average of 1,124 per month, making it the third most visited ECLAC's online database	* An updated list of countries where the CEDAW Convention is used in their national constitutions and legislation is available on line; existing institutions to protect women's rights such as parliamentary commissions, ombudsman and others are also available
ECE 1/ Setting up Multi-Stakeholder Network (MSN) comprising experts from academia, policy makers in charge of gender issues and statisticians from Central Asia and Caucasus	1/ Knowledge Hub on the Economics of Gender has been developed to become a tool for information dissemination, policy sharing and advocacy in the ECE region. It has four parts: information by country, information by topic, resources and UN global processes 2/ A project webpage for the dissemination of project documents has been created on the UNECE website	1. Created synergies with ongoing ECE support to Member States in gender activities and gender statistics in particular. 2. Made an important contribution to strengthen	The Knowledge Hub, which covers all UNECE Member States, has a strong policy orientation and aims to facilitate implementation of gender mainstreaming beyond the collection and

2/ Setting up Working Group on gender statistics which is part of the Conference of European Statisticians	alongside the Knowledge Hub on the Economics of Gender.	MDG-related work and expertise at ECE.	dissemination of MDG-related statistics. It links users to gender statistics databases both at the national and international level
ESCWA 1/* Creation of Knowledge Network inventory 2/ Setting up a Social Exclusion Knowledge Hub	1. Knowledge Network Inventory created (second half of 2009) 2. The Knowledge Hub was established in December 2009 on an independent website (A decision is being debated as whether to institutionalize it outside ESCWA or integrate it within ESCWA's existing electronic information dissemination systems, such as ESCWA homepage).	1. Provides a good overview of the group of potential regional stakeholders in the area of social inclusion 2. Website provides information and documents related to social exclusion and a forum to share experiences and lessons learned in the region	* The inventory aims at feeding into a website that would allow users to access information on organizations, groups, countries, and different types of documents related to social exclusion and to allow external users to contribute resources and documentation to the portal.
ECA 1/ Electronic discussion fora on the promotion of social inclusion of women and gender equality, of Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVCs), of youth, of People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) and of the elderly in the MDGs 2/ Developing website of the project 3/* Setting up a Community of practice (CoP)	1. Confluence software has been installed and a user guide on Confluence has been developed and distributed to all members 2. Summary report generated on each of the five e-discussions 3. Policy briefs produced based on each e-discussion	1.Up-to-date website and knowledge network available 2. *Confluence* tool serves as a platform to continue and further knowledge and experience sharing in poverty reduction strategies and the MDGs in an efficient and user- friendly manner	* Has a membership of 90 experts from 29 countries who have previously participated in Expert group meetings; workshop, trainings, including some members of the PRSP-LG

Annex II

LIST OF DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

Project documents
1. Final approved ProDoc dated 12 July 2006: 06/07/B Inter-regional cooperation to strengthen social inclusion, gender equality and health promotion in the Millennium Development Goals
2. Final approved ProDoc Annex dated 12 July 2006
3. ESCAP's proposal dated 4 September 2008 for the second phase of the DA project
4. DA Project Guidelines dated 19 February 2009
5. UN DA Projects Website material on DA Project 06/07/B

Progress reports
6. Consolidated Progress Reports for the year 2006, 2007 & 2008
7. Region Specific Progress Reports for the year 2007 & 2008
8. Progress update reports by RCs, September 2008
9. Brief report on the activities of 2009 by ESCWA
10. ECE end-of-project report

Region-specific study reports and documents
ECA
11. Report of the Ad Hoc Experts Group Meeting on Developing supplementary targets and indicators to strengthen social inclusion, gender equality and health promotion in the Millennium Development Goals in Africa
12. EGM synthesis report
13. Evaluation of EGM
14. E-discussion report on gender equality
15. Policy guidelines on gender equality
16. Health inequities as a form of social exclusion in Africa
17. Questionnaire for Study on Strengthening Social Inclusion of the Socially Excluded in the Millennium Development Goals
18. Confluence User Guide
19. Confluence – Lessons learned

ECE
20. Mainstreaming gender into economic policies to reach Millennium Development Goals – Stock taking study report 2008
21. Expert Group Meeting Report
22. Information Notice on EGM
23. Knowledge hub on economics of gender

ECLAC
24. Report on "Defeating Poverty through social inclusion"
25. The Millennium Development Goals: A Latin American and Caribbean Perspective

26. The Millennium Development Goals and the challenges facing Latin America and the Caribbean in making progress towards higher levels of well-being, better human capital, and more equal opportunities

ESCWA
27. Experts Group Meeting Report
28. Study report on social exclusion in the ESCWA region
29. Report on "Follow-up on priority issues in the field of social development in the ESCWA region", October 2009
30. Literature review on social exclusion in the ESCWA region
31. Literature review on engendering the Millennium Development Goals and identifying barriers to gender equality in the ESCWA region
32. Pilot study in Lebanon: Executive Summary Report (draft)

ESCAP
33. Promoting Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in the Asia-Pacific: Linking the Millennium Development Goals with the CEDAW and Beijing Indicators
34. Report of a gender perspective on ageing in Asia Pacific: social inclusion and health promotion in the Millennium Development Goals
35. Issues in measuring and assessing progress and obstacles encountered in achieving internationally agreed development goals from the disability perspective
36. Supplementary Population and Health Targets and Indicators Relevant for Tracking Progress on the Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in the ESCAP Region
37. Young People in the East Asia and Pacific Region: Indicator and Data Issues
38. Regional Partnerships for the Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific
39. A Review of Barriers in Access to Health Services for Selected Vulnerable Groups: Case Studies from Thailand
40. The Review of Barriers to Access Health Services for Selected groups in Vietnam: A case-study
41. Fiji Islands Country Profile on Excluded Groups
42. Country profile of excluded groups in Nepal
43. Knowledge Management in support of MDGs: Asia-Pacific MDG Community of Practice
44. Draft Concept Note for Building the Asia-Pacific MDG Community of Practice (CoP)
45. Proposal for the Use of Fund under the Knowledge Management Component of the Development Account Project

Video Conference/Experts Group Meeting Reports
46. Report on the inception workshop, October 2006
47. Report on EGM 1 held in Bangkok in November 2007: Recommendations of the Expert Group Meeting on developing supplementary targets and indicators on social inclusion, population, gender equality and health promotion to strengthen the MDG process
48. ECLAC's presentation at the video conference in January 2009
49. Draft Report on EGM 2, held in Bangkok in September 2009
50. Summary of Gender and Equality Working Group Discussions and Output

51. Interregional Wrap-up Workshop, October 2009: Summary of Discussion

Presentations at the Inter-regional workshop, Bangkok, October 2009
52. Confluence Collaboration Tool - ECA Electronic Forum Platform: Experience and Lessons Learned
53. Strengthening social inclusion, gender equality and health promotion in the Millennium Development Goals in Africa
54. Gender and Economy by ECE
55. Strengthening Health Promotion in the Millennium Development Goals: A view from Latin America and the Caribbean
56. Socio-Economic Challenges and Policies to fight exclusion in Latin America and the Caribbean
57. Social exclusion in the ESCWA region

Reading materials
ECE
58. Mainstreaming gender into economic policies Trends and challenges in Central Asian and Caucasian countries
59. Measuring gender equality in the economy, Research Report 2009
60. Achievements and perspectives of women's entrepreneurship development in the Republic of Uzbekistan, Country Report 2009
61. UNECE Weekly Newsletters

ESCWA
62. Pamphlet on DA Project in the ESCWA region
63. Measuring the processes and dynamics of social exclusion: Report on ESCWA by ELDIS

ESCAP
64. State of indicators for linking gender equality with the MDGs in selected Southeast Asian countries
65. Scanning UN MDGs with Gender Lens
66. Measurements to Assess Progress in Rights and Livelihood of Persons with Disabilities: Implications Drawn from the IDE PIDS Socio Economic Survey of PWDs
67. Evaluative Review of the Development Account Project "Capacity Building in Trade and Environment"
68. Flyer on AP-MDG-Social
69. Sharing Knowledge Achieving Goals
70. Communities of Practice: Definition, Indicators & Identifying characteristics

Other
71.Resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly - 60/131: Implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons: realizing the Millennium Development Goals for persons with disabilities.

Annex III
List of Respondents and their background

Name	Gender	Current Position	Organisation	Region	Role in the DA project	Questionnaire	Interview
Srinivas Tata	Male	Section Chief	Social Integration Section, Social Development Division (SDD)	ESCAP	Drafted ProDoc First Project Coordinator Managed the Project for more than a year	Yes	Yes
Marie Sicat	Female	Associate Social Affairs Officer	Gender Equality and Empowerment Section, SDD	ESCAP	Member of the Coordinating Team for the project during 2007-2008	Yes	Yes
Seiffe Tadesse	Male	Statistician	Statistics Division, DESA	UN New York	Member of ESCAP project team from inception until July 2008	Yes	No
Jorge Carrilo	Male	Social Affairs Officer	Social Integration Section, SDD	ESCAP	Coordinating the project since July 2008 together with other staff	Yes	Yes
Sayuri Cocco Okada	Female	Associate Social Affairs Officer	Social Policy and Population Section, SDD	ESCAP	Coordinator of DA Project in ESCWA from 2006 until November 2007 Coordinator of DA Project in ESCAP since August 2008	Yes	Yes
Cai Cai	Female	Social Affairs Officer	Social Policy and Population Section, SDD (Formerly with PMD))	ESCAP	Gave a general briefing on DA projects and the role of PMD	No	Yes

Edgar Dante	Male	Programme Management Officer	Programme Management Division	ESCAP	PMD Focal point for DA projects	No	Yes
Sabrina Lenoir	Female	Associate Programme Evaluation Officer	Programme Management Division	ESCAP	Shared her views on the evaluation work plan and annotated outline of the evaluation report	No	Yes
Lorenzo Santucci	Male	Environmental Affairs Officer	Environment and Development Division	ESCAP	Has been managing DA Projects on Trade and Environment since 2006	No	Yes
Simone Cecchini Maren Andrea Jimenez	Male Female	Social Affairs Officer Associate Population Affairs Officer	Social Development Division Population Division	ECLAC	Coordinator of DA Project since October 2006	Yes (combined response)	Yes (joint telephone call)
Malinka Koparanova	Female	Senior Social Affairs Officer and Gender Focal Point	OES	ECE	Joined ECE in September 2009 and took over the DA Project	Yes (with inputs from former Project Coordinator Ms. Ewa Zimmy)	Yes
Maisaa Youssef	Female	Programme Officer	Programme Planning and Technical Cooperation Division	ESCWA	Focal point of DA Project as the Associate Social Affairs Officer in the Social Policy Section, Social Development Division from January 2008 to June 2009	Yes	No
Gisela Nauk.	Female	Section Chief	Social Policy Section	ESCWA	Took over the DA project from Maisaa in June 2009	Yes (combined	Yes (joint

Dina Tannir	Female	Associate Social Affairs Officer	Social Development Division			response with Maisaa)	telephone call)
Gladys Mutangadura	Female	Senior Economic Affairs Officer	Poverty Analysis & Monitoring Section (PAMS) and LDC, EDND	ECA	Focal point since inception until September 2008	Yes (One combined response)	
Adrian Gauci	Male	Economic Affairs Officer	- do -		Focal point from September 2008		Yes (joint telephone call)
Elizabeth Woldemariam	Female	Economic Affairs Officer	- do -		Responsible for financial aspect and overall project management		

Annex IV

Rating Results

Table 1: Project Methodology/Approach

Element	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Very poor	No response	Total # of respondents
Relevance	1	3	5				9
Effectiveness		5	4				9
Success of omnibus component		5	2	1		1	9
Cumulative score & %	**1 (3.7%)**	**13 (48.1%)**	**11 (40.7%)**	**1 (3.7%)**		**1 (3.7%)**	**27 (100%)**

Table 2: Project's Expected Accomplishment "A"

Element	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Very poor	No response	Total # of respondents
Relevance of activities	2 (22.2%)	6 (66.7%)	1 (11.1%)				9 (100%)
Overall performance		8 (88.9%)	1 (11.1%)				9 (100%)

Table 3: Project's Expected Accomplishment "B"

Element	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Very poor	No response	Total # of respondents
Relevance of activities	2 (22.2%)	5 (55.6%)	1 (11.1%)	1 (11.1%)			9 (100%)
Overall performance		7 (77.8%)	2 (22.2%)				9 (100%)

Table 4: Project Management

Element	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Very poor	No response	Total # of respondents
Design/ planning	2	2	3	2			9
Implementation	1	6	2				9
Monitoring		5	4				9
Evaluation	1	2	2			4	9
Reporting	1	7	1				9
Cumulative score & %	**5 (11.1%)**	**22 (48.9%)**	**12 (26.7%)**	**2 (4.4%)**		**4 (8.9%)**	**45 (100%)**

Table 5: Administrative systems and management

Element	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Very poor	No response	Total # of respondents
Efficiency		4	5				9
Budget adequacy	1	4	4				9
Flexibility in plans/budgets	2	3	2	2			9
Feasibility of the activities timeline		6	2			1	9
Coordination among staff/ sections		7	2				9
Communications (intra and inter-regional)		6	3				9
Performance of lead agency		6				3	9
Cumulative score & %	**3 (4.8%)**	**36 (57.1%)**	**18 (28.6%)**	**2 (3.2%)**		**4 (6.3%)**	**63 (100%)**