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Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005

Implementation of projects financed from the Development Account: third progress report

Report of the Secretary-General*

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 56/237, in which the Assembly decided to continue to keep the implementation of the Development Account under review and requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on the subject. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in its report (A/57/7/Add.5), recommended that this report be submitted in the context of the presentation of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005.

The report provides information on lessons learned, assesses the preliminary impact of the completed projects and provides thematic reviews of projects' activities in the areas of statistics and sustainable development.

* The present report was submitted late owing to competing workload demands.



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I. Introduction

1. The Development Account projects are an integral part of the technical cooperation activities of the economic and social entities of the United Nations. Activities under the Account aim at capacity-building through subregional, regional and interregional economic and technical cooperation among developing countries, implemented as individual projects aimed at achieving distinct development impact. The projects serve as a natural extension to the normative and policy activities of the implementing agencies in their follow-up to United Nations conferences and summits in economic and social affairs. Projects are executed by economic and social departments and offices and by the regional economic commissions.¹ The Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs acts as Programme Manager of the Account.

2. To date, the General Assembly has approved 43 projects for a total amount of \$39.2 million.² An additional 23 projects are proposed for approval for the fourth tranche of the Development Account under section 35 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005 (A/58/6 (Sect. 35)). It would bring the total amount of funding under the Account to \$52.3 million. The following table summarizes the overall position of projects financed or to be financed under the Account.

Development Account projects as at 30 June 2003

<i>Tranche</i>	<i>Biennium for project initiation</i>	<i>Number of projects</i>	<i>Number of completed projects</i>	<i>Percentage of overall project resources utilized</i>
1	1998-1999	7	4	80
2	2000-2001	16	5 ^a	76.5
3	2002-2003	20	-	36.3
4	2004-2005	23	-	-
Total		66	9	

^a An additional four projects are close to completion.

3. As at 30 June 2003, the seven projects of the first tranche had utilized 80 per cent of allotted resources. Four of those projects had been or were about to be completed and the remaining three were expected to be finished by the end of 2003. The second tranche has spent 76.5 per cent of allocated resources. Of the 16 projects, 5 had completed, 4 were close to completion and 7 will be completed during the course of 2004. The third tranche, launched in 2002, has an implementation rate of 36.3 per cent. Three projects were well advanced, showing expenditures of over 70 per cent, 11 projects were on schedule, while 3 had a rate below 15 per cent and two projects were only just starting. Details on the status of specific projects are contained on the dedicated Development Account web site at: www.un.org/esa/devaccount/.

4. The information contained in the present report is based on progress reports of the executing agencies on the status of activities as at 31 July 2003.

II. Lessons learned

5. A preliminary review of lessons learned from the execution of projects under the first three tranches is presented in the present section of the report. The criteria established by the General Assembly in its resolutions 53/220 A and B guided the review. In those resolutions, the Assembly stressed that the implementation of projects should have a demonstrated impact in building national capacity, and that particular attention should be given to the utilization of technical, human and other resources available in developing countries. The Assembly also emphasized that the projects should have multiplier effects.

6. Projects funded from the Development Account seek to enhance the contribution of local expertise available in developing countries through the establishment of and support to effective networks of knowledge. The Development Account projects emphasize the importance of building knowledge networks using newly available technologies that allow developing countries to access directly guidance and good practice information. Distance learning is another effective tool to acquire and share knowledge. The Development Account projects develop local, national and subregional networks with the purpose of facilitating the informal sharing of knowledge, skills and experiences on key development issues. While traditional means of transferring skills and knowledge such as workshops, fellowships and advisory missions are used, internet-based communication technologies are also often utilized to amplify the impact of subregional and regional networks and link them to relevant global networks. Capacity-building through networking of local expertise creates collaborative opportunities often beyond those originally envisioned by project designers. For example, networks may set up additional regional and interregional links, contribute to capacity-building in related fields or create requests for further networking and/or technical assistance.

7. Properly functioning networks are indirect yet powerful agents for change. A network of decision-makers dealing with environmental issues in West Africa raises awareness and provides momentum to the process of implementing sustainable environmental policies. Knowledge acquired in accession training events organized by the World Trade Organization (WTO) assisted in the formation of core human resources in least developed countries and other acceding countries. The implementation of a drug monitoring and management system fostered the development of a rapidly growing interregional network of over 30 countries, facilitated compliance with the requirements of drug control conventions and paved the way for parties in the network to introduce other e-governance systems. Informal networks of government officials and experts built during subregional workshops in strategic planning and management of natural resources facilitated the cross-fertilization of ideas and thinking on the planning of national level activities.

8. Multiple capacity-building demands compete for limited resources available in the Development Account. In light of the experience of the first two tranches, the Programme Manager set an average project size at about \$600,000, a relatively modest budget but commensurate with expected accomplishments. It was also designed to generate incentives to search for the most economical solutions, and to pool the resources, skills and knowledge of local, subregional and international parties.

9. Successful models may be replicated in other subregions. At the same time, inferior performance provides economical yet valuable lessons for future programme planning. Many project activities may be replicated by scaling up or down, subject to demand. Distance learning courses may be administered to either 1 or 100 students. Environmental management workshops developed for oil producers in West Asia may be replicated for future projects in Central Asia. Web-based networks may accommodate 25 or 2,255 participants. Knowledge and skills compiled by a network of statisticians from Latin America may be shared with a network in south-east Asia or Africa.

10. Projects dedicated primarily to the creation of internet-based networks such as the one on global drug control appear to succeed if the project web site is continually maintained and there is a clear responsibility for the maintenance and survival of the network so that the network remains harmonized and effective and to ensure the continued functioning of a specific software package. Web databases such as those developed to track urban ground water pollution will only be effective, useful and sustainable if they are maintained and updated.

11. In implementing projects, the executing agencies are increasingly encouraged to establish collaborative relationships or partnerships with various interested parties with a view to multiplying effects of main activities through sharing capacities and strengthening skills. The number of jointly executed projects has increased dramatically from zero in the first tranche to 12 in the fourth. Building partnerships is a challenging task. While the United Nations system increasingly views partnerships between the United Nations, Governments and civil society as a useful and effective means to advance development goals, Development Account projects offer particularly interesting opportunities to experiment with setting up collaborative arrangements at the local and subregional levels. Encouraging partnerships and sharing lessons learned should continue to be important modalities of the implementation of projects.

12. Development Account projects draw on information and communications technologies that have potential to be utilized beyond the scope of the project activities. The capacity of information and communications technologies introduced for the creation of a south-east Asian statistical network significantly improved related work processes, productivity, and provides access to non-project related materials in national offices of select countries. Projects promoting information and communications technologies for e-commerce in Africa have served to explore the potential benefits of open source and free software. Web-based interactive tools for the benchmarking of national investment policies have enabled policy makers to assess the strengths and weaknesses of their investment policy/climate compared with other countries and in relation to their national development objectives, while such tools also contribute to enhancing the quality of national human resources. Geographic information systems skills developed for the drawing of urban environmental vulnerability maps may be used in projects monitoring urban poverty, while information and communications technologies enables geographic information systems technicians continually to enhance and update their skills via distance learning.

13. Projects have to identify specific national and regional needs to complement and enhance ongoing capacity-building activities in each region. A sustainable waste management project may need to build relevant local institutions in order to achieve

its expected accomplishments. On the other hand, a hydro-geological project may need to address different capacity-building needs as some target countries may require technical assistance to provide them with basic information and communications technologies capability, while other countries may require assistance in acquiring software packages and related technical training.

14. In several projects, software or computer programming was the main focus of technical assistance. Examples include geographic information systems for urban poverty and urban ground water pollution mapping, the investment compass for benchmarking investment policy and debt sustainability models for debt sustainability analysis. In other cases, the provision of basic computer equipment was critical for successful execution of project activities.

III. Impact of completed projects

15. The first several projects have been completed. The present section of the report contains highlights of four selected projects.

16. A project of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs on research networks for policy analysis strengthened the capacity of African research institutions in policy analysis, particularly in relation to effects of regional and international developments on domestic economic conditions. It substantially enhanced interaction and cooperation between modellers and policy makers and improved the knowledge of modelling specialists in 15 southern African countries. It helped develop and nurture an independent network of expertise in Africa on economic modelling. The network is sustained through an institutional link with the University of Pretoria and an operational link with the African Institute for Economic Modelling, which will run the African Learning Information Networking and Knowledge (LINK) Centre. Strong interest in supporting the newly created network has been shown by a number of bilateral and multilateral donors (the International Development Exchange Programme, the International Development Research Centre, the World Bank and Norway). Building on the success of the project's training activities, the University of Pretoria is considering launching a postgraduate programme on macroeconomic modelling.

17. An UNCTAD project on enhancing capacity of countries to effectively integrate into the multilateral trading system assisted Governments of 18 countries (including six least developed countries), in their process of accession to WTO. Its immediate effect has been better readiness of the negotiating teams in acceding countries for WTO working parties on accessions. Knowledge acquired through training events, seminars and workshops have strengthened national human resources engaged in the international trade negotiations. The project has set up viable coordination frameworks with the participation of key stakeholders in pro-development trade policies such as governments representatives, the private sector and academia. UNCTAD activities under the project have also resulted in the formulation of more comprehensive and sustainable medium and longer-term trade policies. The project has also received additional support from a number of bilateral donors (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Norway and Portugal).

18. A project of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime on an information and communications technologies system for international and national drug control,

successfully implemented a Development Account developed system, called the National Database System, in 30 countries across the world, ranging from the Americas, Europe, Africa, West Asia, Central Asia, South Asia and Australia, and will provide support to an additional 20 countries. The establishment of a unified information management system for drug control on a global scale is improving coordination among Governments at the national, regional and international levels. The strategy also assists Governments in complying with the requirements of the 1961, 1972 and 1988 drug control conventions, and paving the way for the introduction of other e-governance systems. The project has received support from Switzerland, France and Canada. As it has achieved broad acceptance and a substantial level of implementation, regional organizations have expressed their support for the efforts of the Office in establishing a unified single system for drug control like the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission in April 2003.

19. The United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance (UNPAN), established by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, fosters exchange of information and good practices in public administration and finance, and is specifically for the use of experts in developing countries and economies in transition. As at July 2003, more than 43 per cent of the users are from those countries. The Network has become one of the most valuable and popular sources of information on public administration currently available with nearly 1.7 million hits per month. Since its launch, quality and quantity of the contents posted have improved and expanded dramatically. Currently, more than 10,000 documents are posted and can be accessed. UNPAN is working with its regional contacts to widen the use of databases in Africa, Asia, Central Eastern Europe and the Middle East. Based on a recent survey, 72 per cent of its users consider UNPAN excellent or good. The General Assembly, in its resolution 57/277 of 20 December 2002, reiterated its appreciation for the role that UNPAN performed in promoting information sharing and exchange of experiences and in building the capacities of developing countries to utilize information communication technologies for that purpose. The United Nations Committee of Experts on Public Administration stressed the importance of capitalizing on the success of UNPAN by expanding its reach to the subregional level.

IV. Thematic evaluations

20. As requested by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/57/7/Add.5), preliminary thematic evaluations have been undertaken under two large clusters of projects, sustainable development and statistics. These reviews looked into various aspects of project execution, such as design, whether projects achieved their proposed objectives and outputs; the extent that networking and capacity-building have a long-term impact on its beneficiaries, and possible lessons learned.

A. Sustainable development

21. A sample of six projects³ was chosen for the review of impact in the area of sustainable development. The sampled projects were a natural outgrowth of the normative and policy activities of the implementing agencies on sustainable

development, and were designed as a follow-up to the United Nations conferences and summit meetings in this area, particularly the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and Agenda 21. Most focused on assisting countries to prepare for the World Summit on Sustainable Development. They did so by helping Governments and academic institutions in developing countries keep a broader perspective of the world economic realities and better understand how partner institutions in other countries of the subregion deal with the same or similar development challenges. This was achieved through actual contact at the field level, that is, in a more direct way than is possible in established intergovernmental forums. For their part, United Nations entities without a field presence of their own were able to build, connect to and benefit from networks of local counterparts. This serves to enhance the quality and relevance of the analytical and intergovernmental preparatory work done of these entities.

22. The review revealed that those projects that focus on specific issues within sustainable development, such as small island developing States, natural resources, water and energy, and on specific measures of conference follow-up, were most effective in delivering expected results.

23. The projects varied in the clarity of their initial design. Projects with clearly defined objectives were easier to assess. However, even in cases where the initial objectives were fairly broad, the implementing entities were in most cases able to make effective use of the resources, eventually focusing on a limited number of issues, thus increasing final impact, particularly through networks. In future programming, special attention should be given to better defining the geographical focus, specific beneficiaries and expected accomplishments.

24. The project of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs on the implementation of Agenda 21 resulted in the setting-up of a regional network for sustainability indicators in Latin America. Advisory support on indicators, information for decision-making and national development strategies were also provided to Costa Rica, Bolivia, the Sudan and Mauritania. One of the first funded from the Account, the project as originally designed attempted too large a canvas on which to work. The actual activities undertaken, although individually successful, do not allow for a measurement of broader impact. In the light of this experience, subsequent projects in the field of sustainable development have been better focused on a subregion or a specific group of countries and have avoided addressing the gamut of issues arising from a particular global conference. While seeking cross-linkages with other conferences, in keeping with the spirit of the integrated and coordinated follow-up to international conferences, projects normally should not spread limited resources across conferences and regions but offer strategies for attaining specific, tangible results and impacts.

25. The project on capacity-building in strategic planning and management of natural resources in Asia and the Pacific, executed by ESCAP, was well focused on the environment and natural resources dimension of sustainable development. Numerous concrete outputs, such as 10 case studies, encapsulating findings on good practices and lessons learned, the Guidelines on Strategic Planning and Management of the Energy and Water Sectors, and a network of some 74 experts from 24 countries, resulting from the project, all contribute to the project's success. ESCAP serves as the nerve centre for this network of regional and subregional institutions and experts. The guidelines have been translated into Chinese, Russian and

Vietnamese, thus contributing to enhanced national teams' understanding of the strategic planning and management concept. Through group discussions, nearly 300 experts have developed closer ties to their counterparts. Building on support from subregional organizations and ESCAP, countries have expressed interest in participating in the next phase of the project to be expanded to the national level. ESCAP intends to continue its support to the network.

26. A joint project of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the regional commissions chose strategic planning and management as its focus for capacity-building to improve water management and accelerate investments in the water sector. It aims to achieve three specific targets, clearly related to the freshwater goals of Agenda 21: to create a network of national, basin and local institutions involved in the water sector, to establish a network of five international river basin organizations and to develop and launch a United Nations virtual learning centre. To date, the project's accomplishments include: the creation of a network of 15 national focal points, 15 national sub-basin agencies and 5 relevant local initiatives, and the design of 6 out of the 8 core courses of the curriculum of the virtual university. The project design is highly innovative and the lessons learned should be carried over to other disciplines where such networks and virtual universities can be developed.

27. A relatively small project to build capacities for decision-making in sustainable development, though twinning two small island developing States, undertaken by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs was reprogrammed to focus on capacity-building related systems for sustainable development in the Caribbean small island developing States. More than 30 organizations in the Caribbean region involved in the production, management, processing and use of information for sustainable development established, jointly with the Caribbean Conservation Association, a list server for the regional environmental information network. To support the network, the project will focus on the development of training materials, the dissemination of information on best practices, the provision of equipment to support training and further organizing training at the national level.

28. A complex and innovative joint ECE/ESCAP project undertook to promote the rational and efficient use of energy and water resources in the economies of Central Asia. Its purpose was to assist five Central Asian countries to implement the Energy Charter Treaty of 1991 and the Energy Charter Protocol on Energy Efficiency and Related Environmental Aspects of 1994, to which they are signatories. The objective was pursued through a set of activities aimed at strengthening skills of national decision-makers and experts in rational and efficient use of energy and water resources, thus enhancing the ability of Member States to engage in cooperative and negotiated approaches to solving transboundary issues. A strategy for rational and efficient energy and water utilization, developed in the context of the project, resulted in the creation of a bilateral commission on the Chu and Talas rivers between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. Subsequently, statutes and other basic materials to support the work of the commission were prepared. The project is a positive example of regional cooperation on transboundary waters. The initiative has received support from Sweden, the United Kingdom and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

29. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development capacity-building and policy networking project for sustainable resource-based development is another

example of a well-focused activity concentrating on a specific development issue, using the tradable natural resources sector (timber, oil and gas and minerals) to achieve diversified growth and sustainable development, a challenge for many resource-rich developing countries that wish to transit from a resource income to a knowledge-based development process. The project, which has completed most of its activities and produced its outputs in line with the work plan, has established expert networks supported by a series of seminars and web sites. The project has also attracted considerable in-kind support as well as resources from various institutions, including the International Council on Mining and Metals, UNEP, ECA and the United Kingdom. Needs assessment missions have helped to identify specific national and regional needs and to differentiate and design activities to complement and enhance ongoing capacity-building activities in each region. Thus, in the Latin America and Caribbean region, the focus of the project's activities is on local authorities, whereas in Africa the emphasis is on complementing macroeconomic policy initiatives that promote stability. Multiplier effects are already evident as new and previously isolated networks integrate with project activities and significantly expand the project's outreach. This will eventually translate into greater creativity and enhance the quality of capacity-building at the national and local level.

B. Statistics

30. The review covered three projects⁴ executed by the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in collaboration with the respective regional commissions in the Caribbean region, in Eastern Asia and in the ESCWA region, focusing on specific subregional groupings of countries like Caribbean Community (CARICOM) (15 countries), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) (10 countries) and ESCWA (13 countries). In all three cases the projects were built on existing institutional subregional frameworks, which ensured long-term sustainability.

31. The objective of all three projects was threefold: (a) to strengthen statistical capacity at the national level; (b) to strengthen regional cooperation in the field of statistics; and (c) to inform Member States about ongoing global developments of statistical standards and norms and involve them therein. All projects started with a need assessment exercise determining the particular substantive focus of the projects (e.g., CARICOM: environment statistics, social/gender statistics, and information technology).

32. The national counterparts and project beneficiaries were clearly identified as the national statistical offices, which have longstanding relationships with the Statistics Division as they (a) represent their Governments at the Statistical Commission; (b) provide data for the Division's global data collection; (c) participate as experts in the Division's normative and analytical work; and (d) are partners in the Division's regular programme of technical cooperation. Therefore, for all three projects the heads of the national statistical offices of the countries involved effectively guided the projects through a steering committee mechanism. The Division was able to build thereby on the existing networks, like the Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians, the ASEAN Head of Statistical Offices meetings and the ESCWA Statistics Committee. These committees were strengthened, as they actively participated in the initial project formulation and in

subsequent project adjustments and reviews. The mechanism of convening at least one network meeting per year ensured national ownership and the continued relevance of all project activities as well as strengthening the collaboration in the region.

33. The primary vehicles for capacity-building delivery were training workshops in the selected substantive fields (e.g., under the ASEAN project 14 regional workshops were held in four areas: national and satellite accounting; development indicators; statistical organization; and management information technology). Furthermore, national statistical capacity was built through individual study tours and advisory missions. All projects also included procurement of hardware and statistical software as part of the information technologies component. An important success factor for all three projects was the engagement of local support staff (United Nations Volunteers for CARICOM and ASEAN and a local project coordinator in ESCWA), who were placed in the subregional partner institutions and were instrumental in local communication and management as well as in supporting substantive training.

34. The emphasis on tangible delivery of outputs in the CARICOM and ASEAN projects helped to forge effective expert networks at the working level. CARICOM produced the CARICOM Environment in Figures 2002 and Women and Men in the Caribbean Community: Facts and Figures, 1980-2001. ASEAN produced ASEAN in Figures. In both subregions the compilation and dissemination of similar regional products in the future is under consideration.

35. According to the feedback received from participants in workshops and from a final project evaluation seminar (in the case of ASEAN), the projects have been successful in: (a) building national capacity; and (b) creating expert networks. An example of national initiatives as a consequence of the project is the publication of first national environment statistics compendia in Grenada, Dominica, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Suriname. Examples of the creation of regional networks are the CARICOM advisory group on environmental and social statistics and the ASEAN taskforce on statistical classifications. These networks reflect the commitment of the countries in the regions for further cooperation beyond the project horizon.

36. All three projects were implemented with a clearly identified regional partner institution (CARICOM secretariat, ASEAN secretariat, ESCWA). The strengthening of the statistical capacity of the regional partner institution was an integral part of the project objectives. The most visible success in this respect is the creation of a small statistical unit in the ASEAN secretariat, financed by ASEAN secretariat resources. In addition to the partner institutions, other regional stakeholders and funding agencies actively participated in and contributed to the project activities, enhancing their impact and sustainability. The most important examples are the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, UNEP, ESCAP and the Asian Development Bank.

37. The three projects were closely linked to the normative and analytical work of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. In response to paragraph 3 of Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/27, in which the Council called for the strengthening of national capacity to produce statistics and indicators in the context of monitoring progress towards conference and summit goals, all three projects included elements related to global conference indicators, like the

CARICOM project which explicitly targeted the capacity to compile social and environmental conference indicators. By improving basic statistical capacity the projects have enhanced the ability of countries to compile and disseminate indicators.

38. The project drew on the existing capacity of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to contribute to and present training materials at workshops. This ensured that the countries were briefed on the latest international developments in terms of statistical concepts and methodologies. At the same time the exposure of expert Department statisticians normally involved in normative and analytical work to field realities, provided useful feedback for the Department's future conceptual and methodological work.

39. A strong commitment of countries of the subregions to work together facilitated the implementation of the projects. This was most positively felt in the ASEAN region. Major disruptions in the project implementation were caused by the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) epidemic in Asia and the situation in Iraq. Both events lead to the postponement of several regional workshops and fellowships in the ASEAN and ESCWA regions.

V. Management and coordination of the Development Account

40. The Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs continues to provide collective guidance to the implementation of the Development Account, by considering overall themes and specific areas of project activities and making the final selection of the project proposals. The Committee views Account activities as supplementary to and strengthening of the entities' substantive areas of responsibility. A number of projects of a pioneering nature have been launched within the Account, which, upon demonstrating results, are receiving support from bilateral and multilateral donors, which will serve to finance activities additional to those initiated as a result of project implementation, thus multiplying their effects.

41. In its resolution E/2003/3 of 11 July 2003, the Economic and Social Council stressed the importance of monitoring and evaluating operational activities and of learning from lessons in technical cooperation work. The Development Account's Programme Manager is currently revising monitoring and evaluation arrangements to adapt them to the requirements of result-based budgeting. The new arrangements should help the implementing entities focus more closely on achieving expected accomplishments and results and delivering projected impacts. Revised arrangements will also improve the capability of the Programme Manager to assess the actual impact of individual projects and make informed decisions on the best use of funds available to the Account. The design of projects will also be closely linked to multi and bilateral technical cooperation activities by using standardized project documents based on principles of results-based budgeting.

42. Financial data relating to the Development Account is made available on a pilot basis in the Integrated Monitoring and Documentation Information System (IMDIS) as a result of the creation of an interface with the Integrated Management Information System (IMIS). Executing agencies are now able to access IMIS-generated financial data in IMDIS. This creates a linkage of programmatic and financial data for analysis and reporting throughout implementation.

43. The web site of the Development Account (www.un.org/esa/devaccount/) has been redesigned. It has a simpler and more user-friendly interface, which allows easy access to information on different projects by status of implementation, theme, region and implementing entity. The web site is intended to be used as a tool for information sharing and interactive communication among entities, including on lessons learned. The web site will be updated based on the annual progress reports, submitted by implementing entities.

44. The quality and completeness of progress reporting have improved but continue to vary. The improved format of reporting, currently developed by the Programme Manager, will help the implementing entities better focus on projects' impact and effects. Result-based performance reporting would also allow for an early identification of key success factors, stumbling blocks, both institutional and operational, and opportunities for partnerships. Establishing and corroborating a causal relationship between activities and impacts should become a key method of performance reporting. Should such a relationship be difficult to prove empirically, the project's strategy should be revised.

45. The current six-month reporting cycle proved to be useful during the initial period of the Development Account operation. However, given that the number of projects has increased and operational procedures have harmonized, an annual progress reporting cycle is proposed and, as suggested by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, reporting to the General Assembly will be done in the context of the consideration of the proposed programme budgets.

VI. Conclusions

46. Development Account projects contribute to capacity-building in developing countries in specific areas related to follow-up to global conferences in the economic and social fields. These projects are executed by the Secretariat entities that bear policy development and normative responsibilities for issues that are addressed in the context of projects' implementation, thus applying their knowledge and expertise to the direct benefits of developing countries.

47. Learning from experiences, including the slow start of the first tranche, and following on guidance received from the intergovernmental process, both the implementation rate and the reporting on results have improved. The Development Account is a practical and cost-effective way of capacity-building which emphasizes the utilization and enhancement of knowledge base available in developing countries. The approach, where the support of the project is provided through the use of capacities and knowledge that do already exist in the Secretariat, appears to be both cost-effective and relevant.

48. Operational modalities, used by Development Account projects, such as joint execution, networking of expertise, application of information and communications technologies, which focus on subregional cooperation and the emphasis of projects on sustainability, through building partnerships and ensuring local ownership, prove to be beneficial for the use of the Account's limited resources.

49. Evaluation and monitoring of Development Account projects with strong focus on lessons learned, results and accomplishments should be further

improved. Lessons learned should effectively feed into the design of new projects and activities.

50. The General Assembly may wish to take note of the present report.

Notes

¹ Implementing entities: Department of Economic and Social Affairs; Economic Commission for Africa (ECA); Economic Commission for Europe (ECE); Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC); Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP); Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA); United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD); United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention; United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP); and United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat).

² Seven projects under the first tranche of the Account as presented in document A/53/374 and Add.1 and approved by the Assembly in its resolutions 53/220 A of 7 April 1999 and 53/220 B of 8 June 1999; 16 projects under the second tranche as per section 33 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 (A/C.5/54/37), and referred to in part IV of Assembly resolution 54/249 of 23 December 1999; 20 projects under the third tranche contained in the report on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003, section 33 (A/56/6 (Sect. 33)), and referred to in part XIII of Assembly resolution 56/254 A of 24 December 2001.

³ Activities for the implementation of Agenda 21, the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Department of Economic and Social Affairs/Division for Sustainable Development, 98/99 H); capacity-building in strategic planning and management of natural resources in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP, 00/01 A); capacity-building to improve water management and accelerate investments in the water sector (Department of Economic and Social Affairs/Division for Sustainable Development and regional commissions, 01/01 C); capacity-building for decision making in sustainable development (Department of Economic and Social Affairs/Division for Sustainable Development and regional commissions, 00/01 D); rational and efficient use of energy and water resources in Central Asia (ECE/ESCAP, 00/01 F); and capacity-building and policy networking for sustainable resource-based development (UNCTAD/Department of Economic and Social Affairs/United Nations University, 00/01 M).

⁴ Strengthening Capacity in the Compilation of Statistics and Indicators for Conference Follow-up in the CARICOM Region (1999-2003); Strengthening Statistical Capacities in the Region of the Economic and Social Commission for Eastern Asia (2000-2003); and Strengthening Statistical Capacity for the countries of ESCWA region (2002-2004).

Annex

Financial tables by project and tranche

Table 1

Projects funded from section 34, Development Account, of the programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999,^a as at 30 June 2003

	<i>Project title</i>	<i>Implementing entity</i>	<i>Budget</i>	<i>Expenditures</i>	<i>Balance</i>	<i>Implementation rate</i>
			<i>(Thousands of United States dollars)</i>			<i>(Percentage)</i>
A.	Promotion of electronic commerce	UNCTAD	1 980.0	1 710.8	269.2	86.4
B.	Capacity-building in economic and policy analysis in Africa through the networking of expertise	ECA	2 500.0	2 093.7	406.3	83.7
D.	Computer and telecommunication system for international and national drug control	UNODC	1 100.0	818.4	281.6	74.4
E.	Capacity-building and networking for the implementation of the UN-Habitat Agenda in least developed countries	UN-Habitat	945.0	818.0	127.0	86.6
F.	Online network of regional institutions for capacity-building in public administration and finance	DESA	1 525.0	1 121.0	404.0	73.5
G.	Research network for economic policy analysis	DESA	1 325.0	1 325.0	0.0	100.0
H.	Activities for capacity-building in developing countries in pursuance of the objectives of Agenda 21, the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development, the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development and the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action	DESA	3 570.0	2 404.6	1 165.4	67.4
	Total		12 945.0	10 291.5	2 653.5	79.5

Explanatory note: DESA: Department of Economic and Social Affairs; ECA: Economic Commission for Africa; UNODC: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime; UN-Habitat: United Nations Human Settlements Programme; UNCTAD: United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

^a See General Assembly resolutions 53/220 A and B.

Table 2

Projects funded from section 33, Development Account, of the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001,^a as at 30 June 2003

	Project title	Implementing entity	Budget	Expenditures	Balance	Implementation rate
			(Thousands of United States dollars)			(Percentage)
A.	Capacity-building in strategic planning and management of natural resources in Asia and the Pacific	ESCAP	738.0	398.7	339.3	54.0
B.	Training programme on addiction rehabilitation and drug prevention in the workplace for Asia and the Pacific	UNIDCP	549.7	344.1	205.6	62.6
C.	Capacity-building to improve water management and accelerate investments in the water sector	DESA/RC	1 650.0	888.7	761.3	53.9
D.	Capacity-building in decision-making for sustainable development	DESA	300.0	297.0	3.0	99.0
E.	Capacity-building for promoting gender equality in the African countries	DESA	1 241.0	359.1	881.9	28.9
F.	Rational and efficient use of energy and water resources in Central Asia	ECE/ESCAP	1 750.0	1 696.1	53.9	96.9
G.	Strengthening regional capacities for statistical development	DESA	1 500.0	1 381.1	118.9	92.1
H.	Capacity-building and institutional development for equalization of opportunities for persons with disabilities	DESA	940.7	760.5	180.2	80.8
I.	Enhancing the economic and social development policy capabilities in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean	ECLAC	325.4	198.0	127.4	60.8
J.	Development of a collaborative framework for integrated environmental assessments and reporting for West Africa	UNEP	642.2	548.1	94.1	85.3
K.	Sustainable waste management for African countries	UN-Habitat	500.0	498.9	1.1	99.8
L.	Urban pollution of superficial and groundwater aquifers in Africa	UNEP/ECA	250.0	208.8	41.2	83.5
M.	Capacity-building and policy networking for sustainable resource-based development	UNCTAD/UNU	498.0	484.1	13.9	97.2
N.	Enhancing the capacity of developing countries and countries with economies in transition for effective integration in the Multilateral Trading System	UNCTAD	900.0	878.9	21.1	97.7
O.	Capacity-building for debt sustainability analysis	UNCTAD	500.0	387.2	112.8	77.4
P.	Capacity-building for diversification and commodity-based development	UNCTAD	900.0	761.7	138.3	84.6
Total			13 185.0	10 091.0	3 094.0	76.5

Explanatory note: DESA: Department of Economic and Social Affairs; ECA: Economic Commission for Africa; ECE: Economic Commission for Europe; ECLAC: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean; ESCAP: Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific; RC: Regional Commissions; UNCTAD: United Nations Conference on Trade and Development; UNODC: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime; UNEP: United Nations Environment Programme; UN-Habitat: United Nations Human Settlements Programme; UNU: United Nations University.

^a See A/C.5/54/37 and General Assembly resolution 54/249, paras. 190-200.

Table 3

Projects funded from section 33, Development Account, of the programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003^a as at 30 June 2003

	<i>Project title</i>	<i>Implementing entity</i>	<i>Budget</i>	<i>Expenditures</i>	<i>Balance</i>	<i>Implementation rate</i>
			<i>(Thousands of United States dollars)</i>			<i>(Percentage)</i>
A.	Capacity-building for the promotion of capital markets in Africa	ECA	905.0	109.2	795.8	12.1
B.	Capacity-building for research on emerging population issues in developing countries	DESA/ECA/ESCAP	510.0	55.3	454.7	10.8
C.	Capacity-building in trade facilitation and electronic business in the Mediterranean	ECE/ESCWA/ECA	600.0	465.3	134.7	77.6
D.	Capacity-building of national machineries for governance with the gender perspective in Latin America and the Caribbean	ECLAC/DESA	850.0	197.8	652.2	23.3
E.	Urban poverty: an action-oriented strategy for urban governments and institutions in Latin America and the Caribbean	ECLAC/UN-Habitat	800.0	73.4	726.6	9.2
F.	Strengthening of networking of institutions and experts to accelerate the development of social and environmental statistics in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean	ECLAC/DESA	825.0	166.6	658.4	20.2
G.	Capacity-building of Member States of the ESCAP for managing globalization	ESCAP/UNCTAD	950.0	282.9	667.1	29.8
H.	Network of expertise on foreign direct investment in the States Members of ESCWA	ESCWA/UNCTAD	480.0	167.0	313.0	34.8
I.	Capacity-building in developing interregional land and land-cum-sea transport linkages	ECE/ESCAP/ECLAC/ECA/ESCWA	1 250.0	466.2	783.8	37.3
J.	Capacity-building on key issues on the international economic agenda	UNCTAD	960.0	435.4	524.6	45.4
K.	Capacity-building in developing countries to attract and benefit from international investment	UNCTAD	950.0	555.1	394.9	58.4
L.	Building capacity through training in dispute settlements in international trade, investment and intellectual property	UNCTAD	420.0	326.3	93.7	77.7
M.	Institutional capacity-building for competition law policy	UNCTAD	410.0	286.1	123.9	69.8
N.	Improving participation and capacity-building in the implementation of certified environmental management systems in West Asia	UNEP	230.0	88.9	141.1	38.7
O.	Renewable energy for information and the provision of communication services in rural areas of developing countries	UNEP/ITU	260.0	71.5	188.5	27.5

	Project title	Implementing entity	Budget	Expenditures	Balance	Implementation rate
			(Thousands of United States dollars)			(Percentage)
P.	Drug abuse prevention in the workplace and in the family in Southern Cone countries	UNIDCP	450.0	450.0	0.0	100.0
Q.	Strengthening of a network of focal points on gender awareness in Africa and West Asia	DESA/ECA	625.0	0.0	625.0	0.0
R.	Networking and capacity-building for poverty alleviation through community-based environment in the areas affected by environmental degradation	DESA	370.0	1.5	368.5	0.4
S.	Design and implementation of national cleaner technology strategies	DESA	400.0	161.2	238.8	40.3
T.	Strengthening statistical capacity in the region of the ESCWA	DESA/ESCWA	820.0	380.5	439.5	46.4
	Total		13 065.0	4 740.2	8 324.8	36.3

Explanatory note: DESA: Department of Economic and Social Affairs; ECA: Economic Commission for Africa; ECE: Economic Commission for Europe; ECLAC: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean; ESCAP: Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific; ESCWA: Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia; ITU: International Telecommunication Union; UNCTAD: United Nations Conference on Trade and Development; UNODC: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime; UNEP: United Nations Environment Programme; UN-Habitat: United Nations Human Settlements Programme.

^a See A/56/6 (Sect. 33) and General Assembly resolution 56/254 A.