

Synthesis Review on Evaluation Results for Regional Economic Commissions – contributions to economic development

7 February 2024

Assignment No: IED-24-002



INSPECTION AND EVALUATION DIVISION

Function *“The Office shall evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the implementation of the programmes and legislative mandates of the Organization. It shall conduct programme evaluations with the purpose of establishing analytical and critical evaluations of the implementation of programmes and legislative mandates, examining whether changes therein require review of the methods of delivery, the continued relevance of administrative procedures and whether the activities correspond to the mandates as they may be reflected in the approved budgets and the medium-term plan of the Organization;”* ([General Assembly Resolution 48/218 B](#)).

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Summary

This report synthesizes the findings of four evaluations conducted by the Inspection and Evaluation Division of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the subprogrammes of four Regional Commissions focused on economic development. These four evaluations assessed the relevance, effectiveness, sustainability, and coherence of subprogramme activities in 2018–2021. The four Regional Commissions are: the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC); the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA); the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA); and the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE).

The work of the subprogrammes was generally found to be relevant; activities were well-aligned with the subprogrammes' respective mandates and to the needs of Member States. Stakeholders identified multiple comparative advantages of the subprogrammes, highlighting their convening power as well as the technical and regional expertise of subprogramme staff. The subprogrammes were responsive to requests from Member States but most did not have a formal tracking mechanism in place to manage such requests, thus inhibiting strategic planning and prioritization. Also, interventions did not always sufficiently address country-specific needs and findings were mixed regarding programmatic coverage across the four regions.

Subprogramme interventions were effective in the achievement of immediate outcomes, with more mixed results regarding the achievement of intermediate outcomes. Immediate outcomes to which the subprogrammes contributed included increased awareness, improved policy dialogue, knowledge transfer, and utilization of tools among beneficiaries. The intermediate outcomes achieved were primarily related to contributions to policy design and implementation. However, a proper assessment of effectiveness was limited by weaknesses in monitoring and reporting on outcomes within the subprogrammes.

Findings were mixed on the sustainability of subprogramme interventions, with variance across projects and workstreams. Enablers of sustainability included the replicability of interventions in other contexts and effective government engagement. Limited human resources, lack of financial resources, and government staff turnover were factors that impeded sustainability.

While internal and external coherence was largely observed, coordination with the resident coordinator system was lacking. The subprogrammes focused on economic development generally worked well with other subprogrammes of the Regional Commissions, ensuring interlinkages, alignment, and synergies between divisions. The evaluations also found strong collaboration with a diverse set of United Nations and non-United Nations entities, although coherence vis-à-vis the resident coordinator system was more limited.

The Sustainable Development Goals and COVID-19 considerations were found to be well-integrated into subprogramme work. Mainstreaming results were more mixed for gender and environment and especially weak for human rights and disability inclusion.

Programme managers should consider the following actions to strengthen their work in the economic development subprogrammes of the Regional Commissions:

- Implement a tracking mechanism for the management of requests made by Member States;
- Strengthen monitoring and reporting on outcomes; and
- Increase engagement and cooperation with the resident coordinator system.

I. Introduction

1. Between 2021 and 2022, the United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), Inspection and Evaluation Division (IED), conducted four evaluations of the Regional Economic Commission (REC) subprogrammes that focused on economic development¹. These evaluations assessed the relevance, effectiveness, coherence, and sustainability of these subprogramme activities that were implemented in the period 2018–2021. The Regional Commissions and subprogrammes covered are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Regional Economic Commissions and subprogramme coverage

Regional Commission	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)	Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)	Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)	Economic Commission for Europe (ECE)
Subprogramme(s)	Subprogramme 3: Macroeconomic policies and growth (SP3)	Subprogramme 1: Macroeconomic policy and governance (SP1)	Subprogramme 3: Shared economic prosperity (SP3)	Subprogramme 4: Economic cooperation and integration Subprogramme 6: Trade (SP4+6)

2. This report synthesizes the results of the four evaluations; it identifies common issues and trends, generates learning, and contributes to a better understanding for effective Regional Economic Commission support to economic development. Comments on the draft report were requested and considered from all four Regional Commissions.

II. Background

3. The Regional Commissions of the United Nations were established between 1947 and 1973 by resolutions of the Economic and Social Council to promote regional development. The five Regional Commissions are listed below:

- ECLAC: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
- ECA: Economic Commission for Africa
- ESCWA: Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
- ECE: Economic Commission for Europe
- ESCAP: Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

¹ The subprogrammes selected for the evaluations were based on programme-level risk assessments and scoping exercises, resulting in the selection of the subprogrammes focused on economic development in four out of the five evaluations. For ESCAP, however, the subprogramme focused on environment was selected.

4. The Regional Commissions are each mandated with the promotion of economic and social development through fostering integration and cooperation among Member States in their respective regions. The Regional Commissions are resourced through four funding streams: the regular budget, extrabudgetary resources, the Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation, and the United Nations Development Account. See Table 2 below for information on each of the Regional Commissions included in the scope of this review, including the total budget per year in the period 2018–2021, the percentage of the budget allocated to the subprogrammes focused on economic development², and the number of dedicated posts.

Table 2: Regional Economic Commissions and budgetary information, including budget and post allocations for the subprogrammes focused on economic development³

	Established	Budget (total)	Budget (subprogramme)	Posts (subprogramme)
ECE	1947	\$63M	SP4 + 6 - 14%	35
ECLAC	1948	\$72M	SP3 - 16%	29
ECA	1958	\$113M	SP1 - 14%	30
ESCWA	1973	\$50M	SP3 - 22%	32

III. Scope

5. The scope of this synthesis is limited to the four OIOS-IED evaluations that focused on the economic development subprogrammes of the Commissions.

6. All four evaluations included in the scope of this synthesis assessed relevance, effectiveness, and coherence; all except the ECLAC evaluation also assessed sustainability. The evaluations used a mixed-method approach incorporating a variety of qualitative and quantitative data sources, as shown in Table 3 below.

² Refer to Table 1 in paragraph 1.

³ ESCAP is not included as it is out of scope for this synthesis, see paragraph 5.

Table 3: Data sources used by the OIOS-IED evaluations

	ECLAC SP3	ECA SP1	ESCWA SP3	ECE SP4 + 6
Surveys (of staff and stakeholders⁴)	X		X	X
Interviews (of staff and stakeholders)	X	X	X	X
Case studies	X	X	X	X
Document/data review	X	X	X	X
Analysis of knowledge products	X	X	X	X
Direct observation of meetings	X		X	X
Analysis of requests	X	X	X	
Other⁵		X		X

7. The four evaluations and the data collected for each one constituted the basis for this synthesis. No additional primary data were collected for this synthesis report.

IV. Limitations

8. While the Regional Commission subprogrammes assessed for this synthesis report had similar mandates and the same overarching objective to promote economic development, they varied in their operating contexts and activities undertaken. Consequently, the evaluation findings in the four reports could not always be directly compared across the four OIOS-IED evaluations. The team mitigated this by focusing on common themes and higher-level messages and by noting the relevance of the main points made to the four Regional Commissions. It should also be noted that some of the results in this synthesis report are more pertinent to some Regional Commissions than to others. Lastly, the findings of this synthesis report are based solely on the data collected in the four prior OIOS evaluations. No additional or updated data were obtained for this synthesis review.

⁴ Stakeholders included, but were not limited to: national policymakers, government officials, other UN entity representatives, academia, think tanks, international financial institutions, donors, and the private sector.

⁵ For ECA: A literature review of available documentation and information on providers of similar capacity development services and strategic partners; and human resources analysis of Division staffing and vacancy rates. For ECE: A social media analysis of Twitter data for the period 2018–2021 to identify the themes and keywords associated with ECTD workstreams; and a secondary data analysis of the annual trade data from the UN Comtrade Database to construct an intraregional trade intensity index.

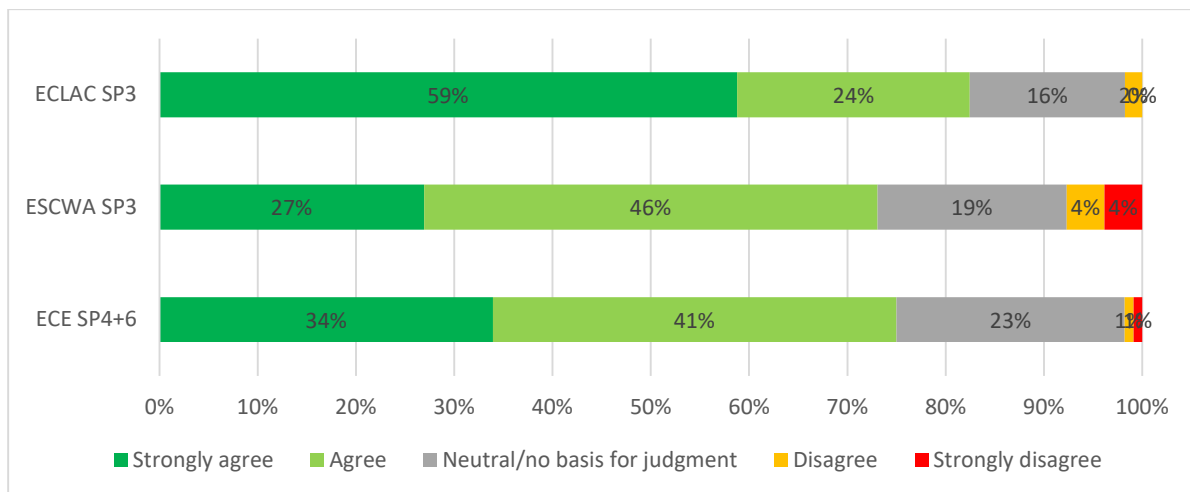
V. Synthesis of Evaluation Results

- A. The Regional Economic Commissions economic development work plans were generally well-aligned with their respective mandates and Member State needs, with the convening power of the Commissions identified as their key comparative advantage

Stakeholders provided strong positive feedback on the alignment of subprogramme work plans with REC mandates and the needs of Member States

9. All four OIOS-IED evaluations found that the work of the subprogrammes evaluated was aligned with the respective REC mandates and the needs of Member States. The majority of stakeholders surveyed in the ECLAC, ESCWA, and ECE evaluations agreed that subprogramme interventions were relevant to their needs, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Stakeholder survey responses on alignment of subprogramme work with mandates or needs⁶



Stakeholders recognized the comparative advantages of the economic development subprogrammes, highlighting in particular their convening power as well as the technical and regional expertise of subprogramme staff

10. In three of the four evaluations, stakeholders identified one or more comparative advantage of the entity subprogrammes. See Table 4 below for the comparative advantages highlighted across these three evaluations.

⁶ The ECLAC and ESCWA surveys asked about alignment with stakeholder needs, while the ECE survey asked about alignment with mandates. Stakeholder survey was not conducted for the ECA evaluation.

Table 4: Subprogramme comparative advantages highlighted in each evaluation⁷

	ECLAC SP3	ECA SP1	ECE SP4 + 6
Convening power	X	X	X
Technical expertise	X		X
Regional expertise	X	X	
Holistic approach to development	X		
Meeting country-specific needs		X	
Neutrality of voice	X		

11. The evaluations identified the following main comparative advantages of the Regional Commissions:

- The convening power in bringing together government officials, experts, and other relevant stakeholders across the region was the one comparative advantage highlighted in all four evaluations.
- The technical expertise of the subprogrammes on topics related to economic development was highlighted in the ECLAC and ECE evaluations.
- Regional expertise, or the capacity to produce relevant economic regional analysis as described in the ECLAC evaluation, was highlighted in the ECLAC and ECA evaluations.

B. In some subprogrammes, the absence of a tracking mechanism for requests made by member States impeded strategic planning and programmatic coverage across their respective regions was uneven

While subprogrammes were responsive to requests received from member States, the absence of formal tracking mechanisms to manage such requests inhibited strategic planning and prioritization of available resources among projects

12. All four evaluations found that the subprogrammes were responsive to the requests made by Member States and demonstrated efforts to prioritize work based on the needs of clients and stakeholders; nevertheless, three of the four evaluations (ECLAC, ECA and ECE) found that there was no formal mechanism in place to track and manage these requests. The absence of such a mechanism constrained the Divisions' abilities to plan and prioritize their work efficiently in a context of limited resources and competing demands. Internally, this also affected knowledge-sharing across the subprogrammes, limited the retention of institutional knowledge, and hindered opportunities for building upon services with additional or complementary interventions. Further, this impeded the ability of other United Nations entities to identify subprogramme activities in countries where they may be engaged in related activities.

⁷ The comparative advantages listed here were identified by stakeholders in response to specific questions on the subprogrammes' comparative advantages. Comparative advantages were not identified in the ESCWA evaluation.

Findings were mixed regarding programmatic coverage across the four regions

13. There was substantial variation in what each of the four evaluations found with regards to the country-level coverage of subprogramme work, both in terms of the coverage of interventions across countries in the Commissions' respective regions, and of the balance between regional- and country-level activities. Table 5 below summarizes these findings for each evaluation.

Table 5: Evaluation findings on country-level coverage of subprogramme work

	ECLAC SP3	ECA SP1	ESCWA SP3	ECE SP4 + 6
Coverage of interventions across countries in the region	Imbalanced	Balanced	Imbalanced	Imbalanced
Balance between regional- and country-level activities	Not enough country-level focus	Balanced	Not enough regional focus	<i>(not assessed)</i>

14. Three of the four evaluations found that the country-specific coverage of subprogramme work across Member States in the region was imbalanced towards a small subset of countries (ECLAC, ESCWA, and ECE). For instance, the ECLAC evaluation found that both knowledge products and capacity-building activities of the Economic Development Division had minimal focus on many of the countries in the region, including those with greater economic development needs. Similarly, projects were found to be concentrated in a group of middle-income countries for ESCWA, and Central Asian countries for ECE. The evaluations noted that each of these three Regional Commissions could benefit from a review of the coverage of subprogramme work across Member States in their respective regions.

15. Concerns were also identified regarding the extent of country-focus of subprogramme outputs. Stakeholders interviewed for the ECLAC evaluation expressed the need for additional country-specific studies and support while evidence from the ESCWA evaluation suggested that subprogramme work was too focused on individual countries, without sufficient outcomes at the regional level that promoted transnational integration and cooperation.

C. Subprogrammes contributed to immediate outcomes, including increased awareness and utilization of tools among stakeholders, and to a lesser extent, intermediate outcomes, including policy design and implementation

All four subprogrammes contributed to immediate outcomes in support of economic development

16. The effectiveness of subprogramme work in contributing to the achievement of immediate outcomes associated with economic development was supported by stakeholder views in all four evaluations, as shown in Figures 2 and 3 below.

Figure 2: Stakeholder survey responses on the achievement of immediate outcomes

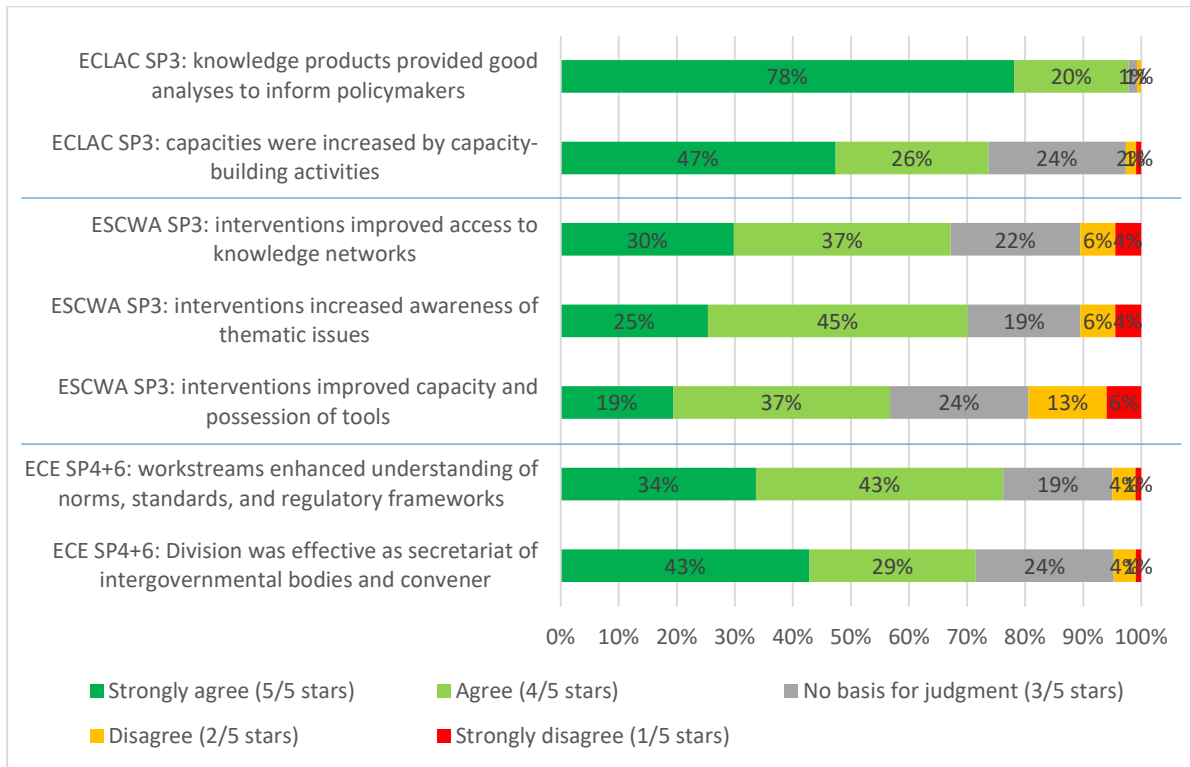
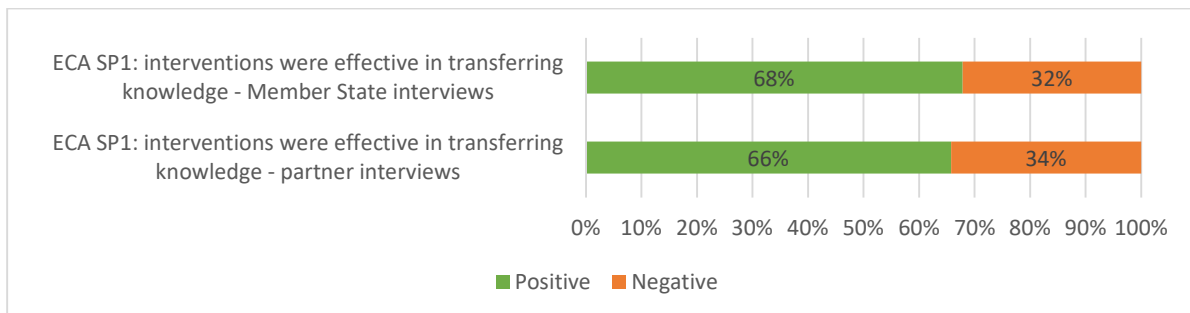
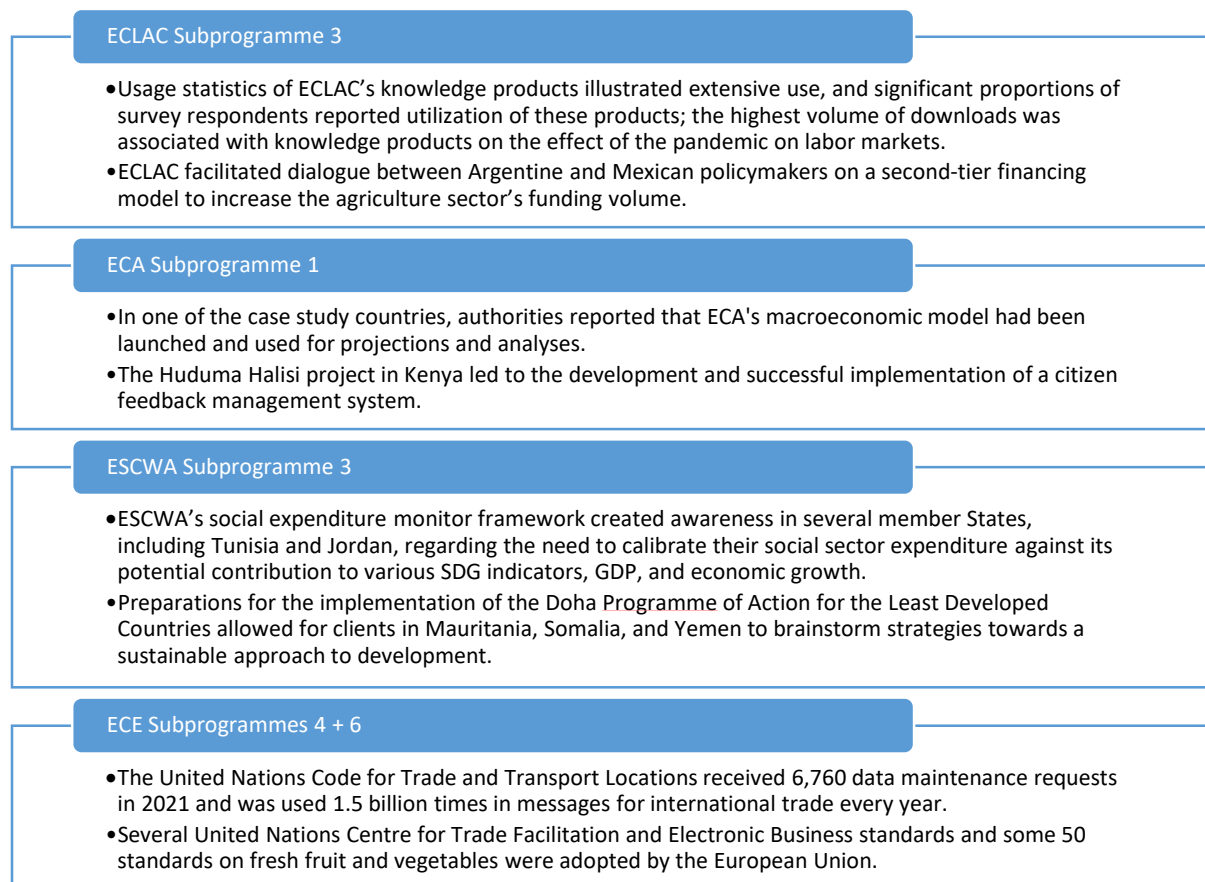


Figure 3: Stakeholder interview responses on the achievement of immediate outcomes



17. Figure 4 below provides specific examples of the outcomes identified above.

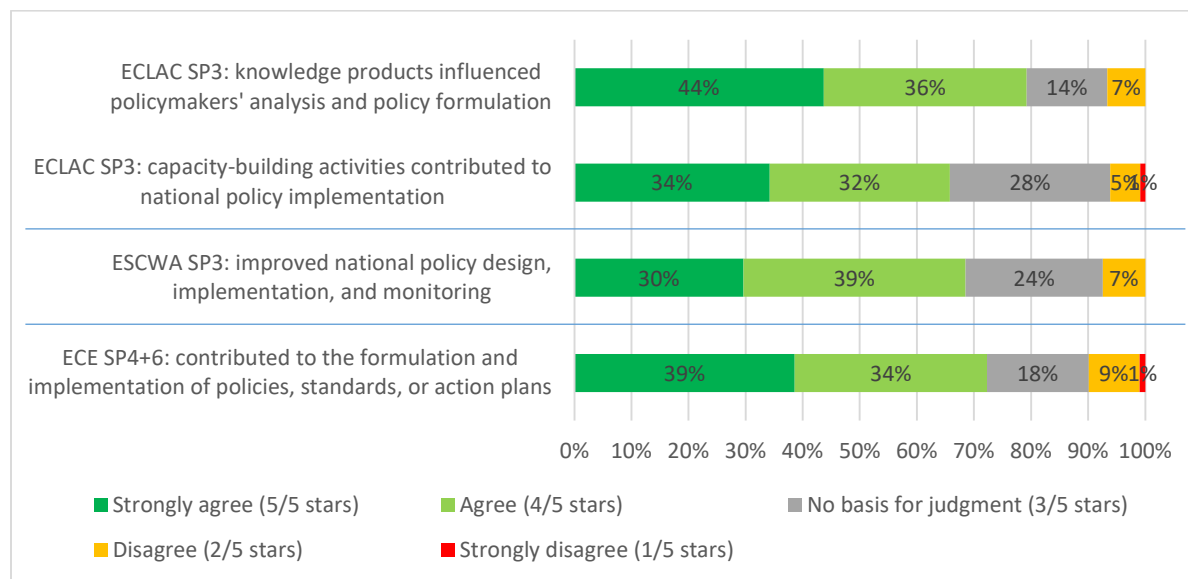
Figure 4: Specific examples of contributions to immediate outcomes



Contributions to policy design and implementation were key intermediate outcomes observed in three of the evaluations

18. Figure 5 below summarizes the views of stakeholders on subprogramme contributions to policy design and implementation in the ECLAC, ESCWA, and ECE evaluations.

Figure 5: Stakeholder views on the achievement of intermediate outcomes

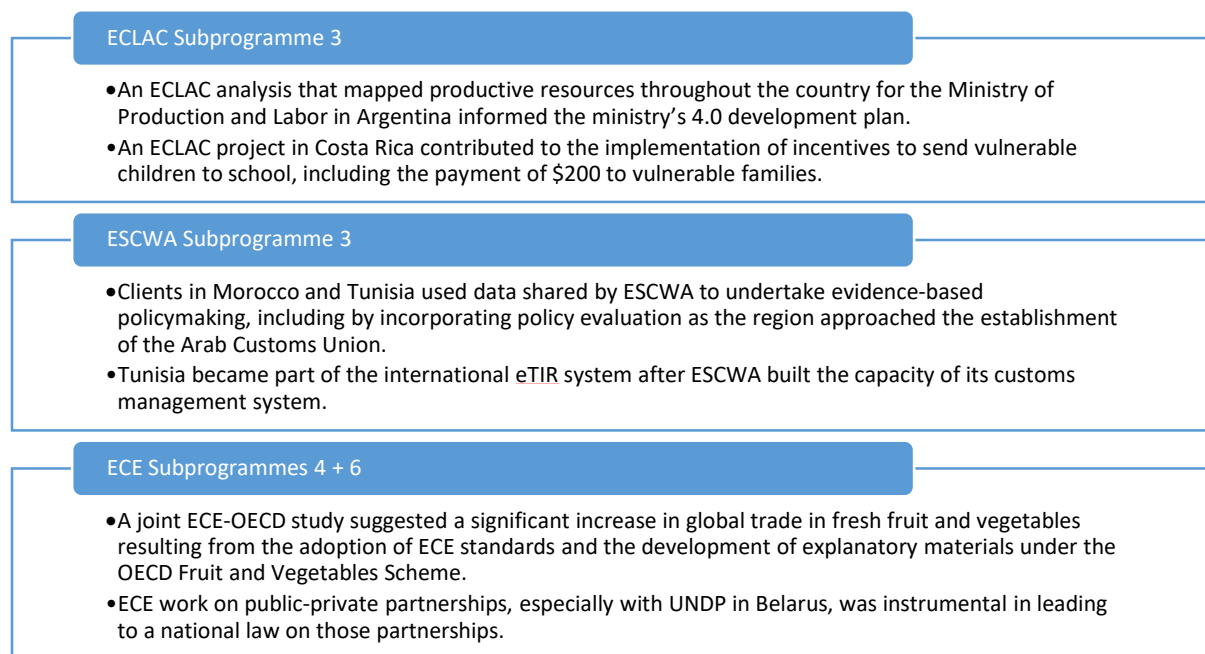


19. In some evaluations, positive stakeholder assessments as shown in the figure above as well as other sources of evidence indicated the achievement of such outcomes. The ECA evaluation encountered challenges in its assessment of effectiveness and evidence of subprogramme contributions towards results was limited; this is discussed further in paragraph 20. For the other three evaluations, Figure 6 (on the next page) presents examples of intermediate outcomes achieved.

Assessing the effectiveness of subprogramme interventions was limited by challenges in monitoring and reporting on outcomes, especially intermediate outcomes

20. Despite the contributions to immediate and intermediate outcomes discussed above, all four evaluations identified challenges in the monitoring and reporting of outcomes attributable to subprogramme activities. One key limitation in this regard was a lack of outcome-level data collected by the subprogrammes. This was exemplified in the ECA evaluation, which highlighted the absence of sufficient outcome data as one of this evaluation’s limitations. In some subprogrammes, challenges were also associated with the amount of time needed to credibly assess outcomes, especially intermediate outcomes. This was highlighted in the ESCWA evaluation, wherein the subprogramme’s theory of change that the entity had developed envisaged at least four years for interventions to translate into concrete results. In other cases, evidence of attribution of outcomes to subprogramme interventions was limited, with prominent gaps in the data identifying the specific activities that were perceived to have contributed to a given result.

Figure 6: Specific examples of contributions to intermediate outcomes



D. Economic development work of the subprogrammes was assessed to be partially sustainable

21. In each of the three evaluations where sustainability was considered (ECA, ESCWA, and ECE), sustainability of the subprogrammes' economic development work was assessed to be partial. The extent to which lasting outcomes were achieved by subprogramme interventions varied by project and by workstream. Table 6 presents the main challenges and enablers for sustainability identified across the three evaluations.

Table 6: Challenges and enablers for sustainability of subprogramme economic development interventions identified across the evaluations

	ECA SP1	ESCWA SP3	ECE SP4 + 6
Challenges			
- Staffing shortages	X	X	X
- Lack of funding		X	X
- Government turnover	X	X	
- Non-resident status			X
- Lack of long-term engagement	X		
Enablers			
- Replicability of interventions	X	X	
- Government engagement	X		
- Longer-term support		X	

The most significant challenge to sustainability was limited resources

22. All three evaluations identified challenges related to staffing and human resources as major constraining factors to sustainability. This included high vacancy rates and a severe shortage of staff, both of which contributed to difficulties in retention of institutional knowledge as well as insufficient resources for ongoing support to beneficiaries amid the need to attend to new requests from Member States.

23. One or more evaluations also identified lack of funding and government staff turnover as additional challenges to sustainability. Staff and stakeholders surveyed in both ESCWA and ECE stressed the constraints posed by limited financial resources. The inherent issue of government staff turnover was explicitly mentioned in the ECA and ESCWA evaluations, posing a difficult challenge for sustainability as the capacity built from subprogramme interventions among Member State officials would not be retained upon their departure.

The main enabler of sustainability was the replicability of interventions in other contexts

24. Two evaluations (ECA and ESCWA) identified enablers for sustainability; both noted the replicability of interventions in other contexts and the associated scaling up of funds as an effective measure to extend the scope and utility of subprogramme work. The identification of successful pilot projects coupled with scalability in programme design led to the replication of outcomes in other countries and domains in multiple instances across both evaluations. Effective government engagement and longer-term support to Member States were other enablers mentioned separately in the ECA and ESCWA evaluations. Working alongside government officials in support of their medium- and long-term goals while securing leadership buy-in was reported by ECA subprogramme stakeholders as a key method correlated with lasting success. The targeting of capacity-building services to the right people as well as providing training to multiple beneficiaries was also seen as being effective in mitigating the challenges associated with high government staff turnover.

E. Despite well-established internal coherence and partnerships with UN and non-UN entities, there was limited coherence with the resident coordinator system

Internal coherence within each of the Regional Commissions was largely observed across the four evaluations

25. Evidence across the four evaluations suggested that findings on internal coherence between the subprogrammes focused on economic development and other subprogrammes of the Regional Commissions were generally positive, as shown in Figures 7 and 8. Additional evidence pointed to a certain degree of collaboration and synergy within the Commissions; for example, in the case of ECLAC’s knowledge products, there was an institutional coordination system that established a clear division of responsibilities and expected outputs, together with a robust communication flow among all ECLAC staff. Similarly, in the ECA evaluation, staff noted improvements in coordination following the restructuring of the Commission, including highlighting quarterly meetings led by the Executive Secretary.

Figure 7: Staff survey responses on the alignment/coordination of the economic development subprogramme with other subprogrammes in the same REC⁸

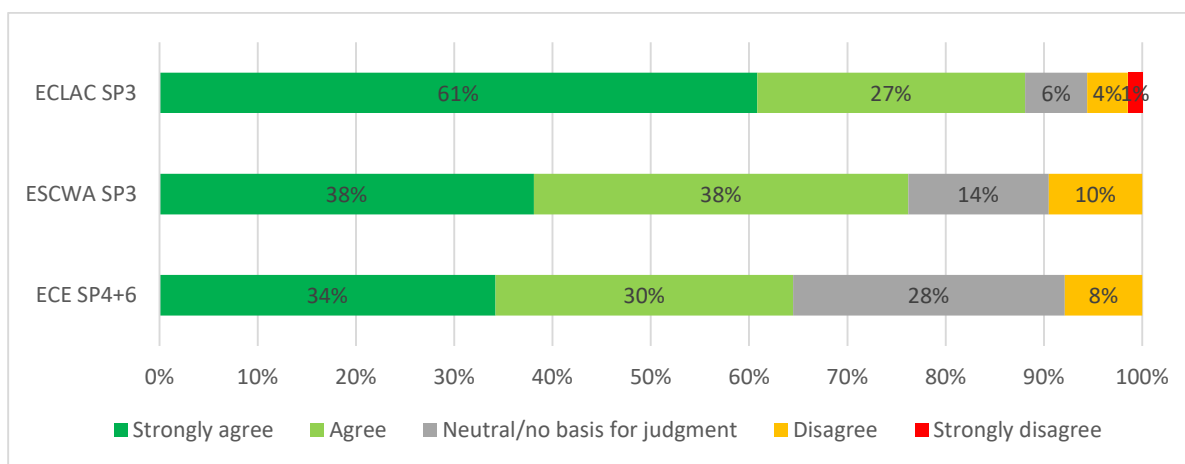
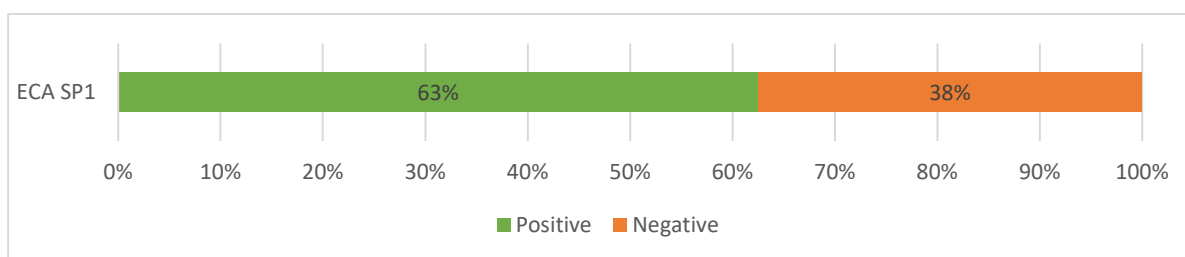


Figure 8: Staff interview responses on the alignment/coordination of the economic development subprogramme with other subprogrammes in the same REC



⁸ While the ECLAC evaluation presented statements to survey respondents with the five options as specified in the legend (results are aggregated to combine responses for knowledge products and capacity-building activities), respondents in the ESCWA evaluation were asked to rate the statement on a 5-point scale. The ECE evaluation asked whether activities were aligned with related activities of other divisions with the options of “yes” (mapped to “strongly agree”), “partially” (mapped to “agree”), “not sure” (mapped to “neutral/no basis for judgment”), and “no” (mapped to “disagree”).

26. Opportunities for improvement on internal coherence within the Commissions were nonetheless identified in most evaluations. In particular, the use of pre-established mechanisms for coordination and joint interdivisional activities at the planning stage, rather than ad hoc coordination at the project level, was found to be lacking in ECE and ECLAC. Where assessed (in the ECA and ECE evaluations), internal coherence within the divisions that were responsible for the subprogrammes under evaluation themselves was weak; this was especially the case for the ECE evaluation which found evidence of staff disagreements on the strategic vision between the two subprogrammes that fell under the purview of the Division due to a recent restructuring.

All economic development subprogrammes of the four RECs established a diverse set of partnerships with UN and non-UN entities

27. A diverse set of partnerships were established with both United Nations and non-United Nations entities, as shown in Table 7 below.

Table 7: Partnerships highlighted across the four evaluations

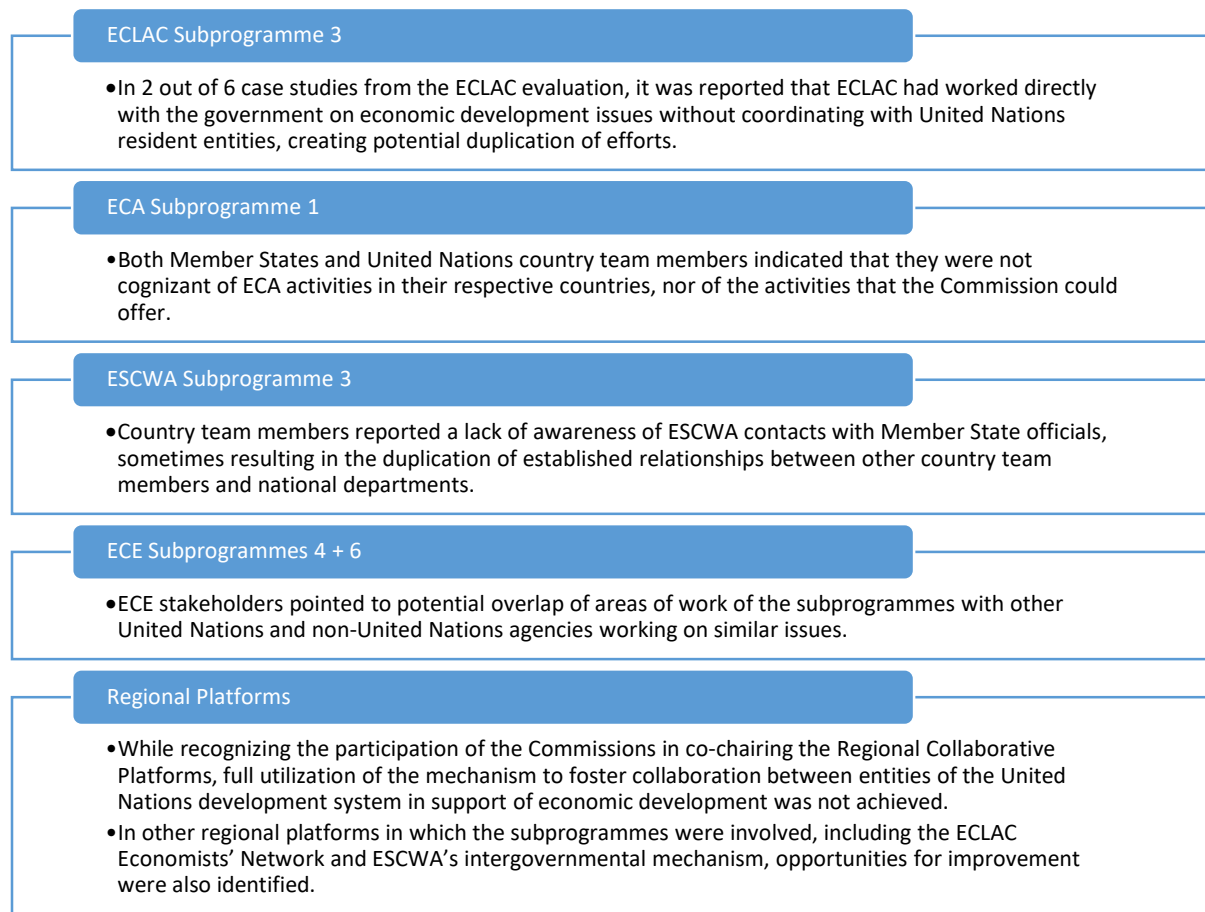
	ECLAC SP3	ECA SP1	ESCWA SP3	ECE SP4 + 6
UNCTAD	X	X	X	X
DESA		X	X	
OECD	X		X	X
Private sector		X		X
Other	- World Bank - IADB	- UNODC	- ECE	- Think tanks - Research networks

28. However, opportunities for improved coordination with certain key strategic partners were identified in some evaluations. For example, there were insufficient coordination mechanisms found between ESCWA and ECA, despite the two Regional Commissions sharing eight Member States in the North Africa subregion. This was also the case between ECLAC and DESA, where informal ad hoc arrangements for collaboration were reported to be the norm.

Coherence with the resident coordination system was limited

29. All four evaluations reported significant gaps in coordination with the resident coordinator system. These findings suggested cooperation with Resident Coordinator Offices and United Nations country teams to ensure system-wide coherence was lacking. A recurring theme found in the evaluations was that participation of the Regional Commissions at the planning stage vis-à-vis the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks was followed by limited involvement in the operationalization of such frameworks. In two evaluations, there was evidence that the subprogrammes supported strategic planning processes through the provision of data, analyses, and other inputs. However, across all four evaluations, country team members reported insufficient participation and limited interaction with the Commissions after the signing of the frameworks. Figure 9 below provides specific examples reflecting the lack of coherence with the resident coordinator system at the operational level.

Figure 9: Specific examples of limitations in coherence with the resident coordinator system



- F. While the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and COVID-19 considerations were well-integrated into subprogramme work plans, the mainstreaming of other cross-cutting issues was fragmented

All four evaluations reported strong integration of the SDGs and COVID-19 considerations

30. Evidence presented in all four evaluations clearly demonstrated how each of the subprogrammes integrated the SDGs into their work. The ECA integrated planning and reporting toolkit was developed in direct response to the needs of Member States to incorporate the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 into their national development plans. Stakeholders from the ECE evaluation highlighted the technical knowledge and expertise of the Division on core thematic areas, including the integration of SDGs into national plans. Survey responses and case studies further supported the finding that the subprogrammes had met their mandates to guide Member States in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

31. Similarly, COVID-19 considerations were found to be well-integrated into subprogramme work, including responsiveness of the subprogrammes in adapting support to Member States to evolving needs and priorities in the context of the pandemic. Across the four evaluations, subprogramme efforts contributed to the COVID-19 response, encompassing: the provision of data to inform policymakers of ongoing developments; assessments of the impact of the pandemic as well as of recovery formulations; and the provision of recommendations on trade-related response and economic recovery. Stakeholders provided positive feedback on these contributions, noting that knowledge products and capacity-building activities addressing the pandemic were timely and useful.

Gender and environment considerations were better integrated than human rights and disability inclusion, although overall integration of these four cross-cutting issues was mixed

32. On the mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues, findings were generally less positive and uneven across the four evaluations. Table 8 below summarizes the evidence across the four evaluations on the integration of each cross-cutting issue.

Table 8: Summary of evidence on the mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues⁹

	ECLAC SP3	ECA SP1	ESCWA SP3	ECE SP4 + 6
Gender	68% of knowledge products covered gender	Often limited to gender-balanced participation	48% of knowledge products covered gender	Positive stakeholder feedback with examples of integration provided
Environment	39% of knowledge products covered environment	<i>(not assessed)</i>	37% of knowledge products covered environment	Examples of integration provided
Human rights	<i>(not assessed)</i>	Rarely considered	26% of knowledge products covered human rights	Rarely mentioned by stakeholders
Disability inclusion	16% of knowledge products covered disability inclusion	Rarely considered	22% of knowledge products covered disability inclusion	Rarely mentioned by stakeholders

33. As noted in Table 8 above, gender and the environment were generally better integrated than human rights and disability inclusion. For example, in the ECE evaluation, work on gender responsive standards and the inclusion of environment-related analyses in knowledge products, among others, demonstrated effective mainstreaming of these issues. Meanwhile, mainstreaming efforts were often limited to gender-balanced participation of trainings and panelists in the ECA subprogramme. Across the subprogrammes, integration of human rights and disability considerations was weak, with rare mentions by stakeholders and minimal coverage in the subprogrammes' knowledge products.

⁹ Percentages of knowledge products covering a cross-cutting issue were obtained from an analysis of knowledge products in the evaluations.

VI. Key Takeaways for Programme Managers

34. The following key takeaways comprise important messages and lessons learned for programme managers to strengthen the work of the subprogrammes of the Regional Economic Commissions focused on economic development. These include:

35. **Implement a tracking mechanism for the management of requests made by Member States.**

The RECs should consider having a formal mechanism in place to track and manage the requests received from Member States. Such a mechanism could categorize requests by country and by thematic area of work. This would enhance visibility over the range of activities carried out by the subprogrammes; assist with strategic planning and prioritization of work in the context of limited resources; and better communicate subprogramme activities to external partners and other entities.

36. **Strengthen monitoring and reporting on outcomes.**

The RECs should consider more robust assessment on the outcomes of their economic development activities. For example, for each technical cooperation/capacity-building project, subprogrammes could identify the expected immediate and intermediate outcomes, gather data relevant to such outcomes, and provide evidence to assess programme results. In the absence of more specific outcome-level indicators, approaches can include beneficiary surveys of knowledge products and training sessions, and the monitoring of policies or actions taken by policymakers in line with subprogramme recommendations. These measures, implemented as part of a larger monitoring and reporting framework, could help to reinforce accountability and learning on the achievement of results.

37. **Increase engagement and cooperation with the resident coordinator system.**

The RECs could better contribute to system-wide coherence through participation in strategic planning processes such as United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks, and also continued engagement and communication with United Nations country teams in a manner that removes duplication and facilitates opportunities for collaboration.