
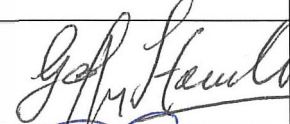
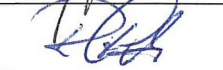


MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

Evaluation Title:	Competitiveness, innovative policies and public-private partnerships: capacity building for civil servants and business associations (UNECE E-226)		
Period of Review:	September 2014-December 2018		
Date of Evaluation Report:	17/05/2019		
Approved by	Catherine Haswell Chief, Programme Management Unit	Date	Signature
		08/07/2019	
Cleared by:	OiC of Economic Cooperation and Trade Division Geoffrey Hamilton	08/07/2019	
Prepared by:	Manager of the evaluation Ralph Heinrich	08/07/2019	

Recommendation 1:

In order to facilitate future evaluations, the project documents should entail (besides the established results-based-management principles) a Theory of Change, explaining how the outputs will generate outcomes and – eventually – an impact. In case this is not possible, at least a logical framework, with performance indicators, baseline values and targets both for output and outcome levels should be mandatory. This set of data will support in measuring correct performance of the project and provide realistic assessment of the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of future similar projects (eventually sustainability could also be assessed).

Management Response:

UNECE accepts the recommendation.

The project document referred to one specific expected accomplishment in the Strategic Framework of Subprogramme 4 for the biennium 2014-2015 (A/67/6/Prog.17), continued in 2016-2017 (A/69/6/Prog.17). The target values set for this specific indicator have been met at the subprogramme level. This being said, UNECE agrees that the project document does not explain fully how each of the activities and outputs contribute to the expected results.

Follow up actions and responsibilities:

A theory of change and logical framework with performance indicators, baseline values and targets will be included in future extra-budgetary projects. The project manager (Ralph Heinrich) will share the recommendation with the donor of the present project and with all professional staff in the Partnerships Development section and the Innovative Policies Development section in June 2019 to explain the need for and benefits of doing this in future projects.

Recommendation 2:

UNECE should carefully plan the adoption of the innovation and competitiveness principles by the member States (governments and private sector). By increasing capacities of policy makers and popularizing “people-first” principles in PPPs, UNECE plays the “facilitator” role between the public

and the private sector in the region and creates the premises for a sustainable economic and social development. The operationalization of the principles should be further guided by UNECE, in consultation with the member States.

Management Response:

UNECE accepts the recommendation.

UNECE has a mandate to adopt innovation and competitiveness principles and has been operationalizing “people-first” PPP principles. UNECE also has been increasing the capacities of policy makers in this area and has played the role of facilitator between the public and private sectors and will continue to do so.

Follow up actions and responsibilities:

UNECE will create a task force on innovation and competitiveness principles at the 2019 annual session of the Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies (December 2019). UNECE will continue to guide the operationalization of people-first PPP principles in consultation with member States. The responsibilities are with the Innovative Policies Development Section (on innovation principles; Anders Joensson) and the Partnerships Development Section (on PPP principles; Geoffrey Hamilton).

Recommendation 3:

Future projects should record exactly how many participants benefitted from financial support, for how long and what were the incurred costs. These data can be used to assess more appropriately the efficiency of the spent funds. On a voluntary basis, also the outcomes of the support could be traced, and a resources/results ratio could be calculated or at least approximated.

Management Response:

UNECE accepts the recommendation.

The number of participants benefitting from financial support and the associated costs have been recorded exactly in the present project. This practice will be continued in future projects. In future projects, questionnaire responses will be collected from the participants of all capacity-building events. Moreover, the contact details of all participants will be collected in order to facilitate tracing outcomes during future evaluations.

Follow up actions and responsibilities:

The recommendation is already being implemented in currently ongoing projects. The responsibility for implementing the recommendation will be with the respective project managers and event organizers in the Innovative Policies Development Section and the Partnership Development Section, under the responsibility of the Chiefs of Sections of the two section (Anders Joensson and Geoffrey Hamilton).

Recommendation 4:

UNECE should streamline gender and human rights considerations in the evaluation framework of future projects. This is more important as UNECE’s work has a high potential impact on the beneficiaries, especially when considering the “people-first” PPPs.

Management Response:

UNECE accepts the recommendation.

Follow up actions and responsibilities:

Gender and human rights considerations will be incorporated in the theory of change, logical frameworks, performance indicators, baseline values and targets of future projects. The project manager (Ralph Heinrich) will share the recommendation with the donor of the present project and with all professional staff in the Partnerships Development section and the Innovative Policies Development section in June 2019 to explain the need for and benefits of doing this in future projects.

Recommendation 5:

Future similar projects should foresee communication tools in order to communicate the project achievements in a broader way. This recommendation relates to the importance of ensuring accountability and attracting extra-budgetary funds to finance similar projects. The tools can rely on modern communication technology (blog, newsletter, webinars, databases, interactive platforms).

Management Response:

UNECE accepts the recommendation.

More could have been done to communicate project activities and results. Communication efforts were constrained by the fact that the project did not include any funding for this purpose. In future projects, budgets for communication will be included subject to agreement with the respective donors. Such funding would make it possible to create and actively maintain blogs or newsletters or to create webinars. Irrespective of funding, press releases on project achievements will be prepared more systematically, national project partners will be encouraged to communicate nationally and to share national media coverage with UNECE, and existing communication efforts (PPP videos on Youtube, tweets) will be maintained.

Follow up actions and responsibilities:

The project manager (Ralph Heinrich) will share the recommendation with the staff of the Innovative Policies Development Section and the Partnerships Development Section and with the donor of the current project in June 2019. The project manager will meet with the UNECE Information Unit in June 2019 to identify ways to make communication about future project achievements more visible.

Recommendation 6:

UNECE should create a mechanism to stimulate the participation of the most relevant delegates in the inter-governmental meetings. The governments are solely responsible to nominate the participants, and they should also provide the political will to positively influence the internal policy making processes. UNECE could request a minimal technical preparation upfront, in order to systematically involve the mostly qualified and effective experts and facilitate networking of the knowledgeable people.

Management Response:

UNECE does not accept the recommendation.

In the opinion of the secretariat, the annual meetings of the Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness and PPPs and its subsidiary bodies have not suffered from a lack of qualified or relevant delegates. Therefore there is no need to take additional steps to increase the participation of relevant delegates.

Recommendation 7:

In order to facilitate networking and sharing of best practices, rely not only on formal events. UNECE acts sometimes as a knowledge “broker” and repository, and could consider creating and maintaining a virtual communication platform for policy makers and specialist in the region. This tool should be

different from the one mentioned in Recommendation 4 (outward oriented) and should be dedicated to “specialists” in the region.

Management Response:

UNECE does not accept the recommendation.

UNECE’s good practices and principles in the areas of innovation, competitiveness and PPPs, as well as our publications on national and comparative reviews, are available online, forming a repository of the knowledge created under subprogramme 4 that is freely accessible to external experts. A separate additional communication platform over and above what is included in recommendations 5 is not necessary.

Recommendation 7a:

UNECE could re-think some of the events organized in the region. While the nature of (semi)official meetings needs to maintain an etiquette (for governmental representatives), at least for practitioners “warm-up” activities could be considered. During a two-days standard event, participants break the ice by the time when the event is over. The participants’ fluctuation prevents from creating informal networks. Hence an online database of “who’s-who” could be created, in order to facilitate networking in the region.

Management Response:

UNECE partially accepts the recommendation.

We agree that “warm-up activities” to break the ice are useful. UNECE does not agree to create an online database of who’s who. The secretariat does have large databases of expert contacts, but if these data were shared widely, this would create a risk of abuse (spamming, or someone sending communications pretending to speak for UNECE).

Follow up actions and responsibilities:

The recommendation does not specify which activities could be used to “break the ice”. In the experience of UNECE, coffee breaks, event dinners and small-group break-out sessions can be used for this purpose.

In future projects, hospitality budgets will be included subject to donor agreement. Tours de table for participants to introduce each other will be included in all capacity building events. Small group breakout sessions with report-back will be included where feasible, i.e. where there are no language barriers or where additional interpretation can be provided as necessary.

To implement the recommendation is ongoing work. The responsibility falls within the remit of the Innovative Policies Development Section (Anders Joensson) and the Partnerships Development Section (Geoffrey Hamilton).