



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
3 April 2012

Original: English

Economic Commission for Europe

Committee on Trade

Fifth session

18-19 June 2012

Item 13 of the provisional agenda

**Programme of Work of the Committee on Trade
and reports of its subsidiary bodies**

Biennial evaluation report for the biennium 2010–2011 Sub-programme 6: Trade

Note by the secretariat

Summary

This note is prepared pursuant to the decision of the Commission (document E/2004/37-E/ECE/1416), requesting Sectoral Committees to conduct biennial performance evaluations of their work programmes.

The note provides the 2010-2011 biennial performance evaluation report for the programme of work of the UNECE Trade Subprogramme. The evaluation follows the 2010-2011 biennial evaluation plan (document ECE/Trade/C/2011/9), which was endorsed by the Committee at its fourth session of 2011 and is provided in a restructured format in the annex to this note for ease of reference.

The biennial performance evaluation report establishes links between the expected accomplishments (EA) and indicators of achievement (IA) of the 2010-2011 Strategic Framework, and divides the Committee's areas of work in six clusters.

The Committee is invited to endorse the evaluation report.

Cluster 1: Strengthening the legal framework for trade facilitation and electronic business

Expected accomplishment

1. Enlarged and enhanced set of UNECE recommendations, norms, standards, guidelines and tools for trade facilitation and electronic business.

Indicators of achievement:

- (i) Number of new and/or updated UNECE recommendations, norms, standards, guidelines and tools for trade facilitation and electronic business agreed upon by Member States

Performance measures:

2006- 2007: 28 recommendations, etc.
Estimate 2008-2009: 24 recommendations, etc.
Target 2010-2011: 28 recommendations, etc.
Achieved: 17 recommendations, etc.

- (ii) Number of countries (regions), international organizations and sectors involved in the development of UN/CEFACT standards

Performance measures:

Estimate 2008-2009: 40 countries (regions), etc.
Target 2010-11: 41 countries (regions), etc.
Achieved: 61 countries (regions), etc.

Statement of accomplishments

2. Programme activities are carried out by the Committee's inter-governmental subsidiary body UN/CEFACT (the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business), which comprises expert Working Groups that meet twice a year at Forums. The Forums discuss achieved outcomes and propose future plans that are presented to UN/CEFACT plenary for approval.

3. The expected accomplishment for the 2010-2011 biennium include: (i) the adoption by Member States of new/updated recommendations, norms, standards, guidelines and tools for trade facilitation, electronic business; and, (ii) the number of countries (regions), international organizations and sectors involved in the development of UN/CEFACT standards.

4. During the 2010-2011 biennium Member States adopted 17 new/updated recommendations norms, standards, guidelines and tools for trade facilitation, electronic business, which is below the set target of 28 recommendations. This is due to the comprehensive restructuring of UN/CEFACT and its expert groups, which commenced in 2011 to improve operational efficiency.

5. The restructuring will enable UN/CEFACT to address emerging challenges associated with delivering on its vision of providing simple, transparent, effective and efficient processes for global trade. Expected benefits from the restructuring process

include improved timeliness of deliverables; prevention of resource-gridlock; greater value-added benefits through specialization; cross-domain initiatives; and, increased outreach to meet strategic stakeholder needs.

6. The restructuring will also enable UN/CEFACT to ensure wider involvement (including the participation of transition economies) in the development and implementation of UN/CEFACT standards and recommendations, in line with the requirements laid down by EXCOM.¹

7. In 2010-2011, the UN/CEFACT Forum held four sessions, in Bangkok (April 2010), Geneva (September 2010 and September 2011) and Washington (April 2011). Participants continued to come from a wide number of countries, although Europe, North America and the Asia-Pacific region were relatively more represented than Latin America or Africa. A wide range of stakeholders continued to be involved, ranging from universities to companies in different sectors such as telecoms or banks and from Government representatives to officials of the United Nations and other international organizations. The 2010-2011 target of 41 stakeholders was exceeded (delegations from 51 countries and 10 international organizations and other institutions took part in the 2010 and 2011 Forums, which were attended by 255 participants). The participants were involved in the development of UN/CEFACT standards during each meeting

Lessons learned

8. The situation in trade facilitation and electronic business standards could further improve if member States and other stakeholders collaborate more closely and actively in UN/CEFACT's work.

Cluster 2: Strengthening the legal framework for standardization and regulatory cooperation

Expected accomplishment

9. Enlarged and enhanced set of UNECE recommendations, norms, standards, guidelines and tools for regulatory cooperation.

Indicators of achievement:

(i) Number of new and/or revised UNECE recommendations, norms, standards, guidelines and tools for regulatory cooperation agreed upon by Member States

Performance measures :

2006-2007: 2 recommendations, etc.

Estimate 2008-2009 : 2 recommendation, etc.

Target 2010-2011 : 2 recommendation, etc.

Achieved: 6 recommendations, etc.

¹ UNECE, Recommendations concerning the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business, ECE/EX/4.

Statement of accomplishments

10. Activities under this cluster are carried out by the Committee's inter-governmental subsidiary body the Working Party on Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Policies (WP.6), which comprises three sub-groups: the *ad hoc* Team of Specialists on Standardization and Regulatory Techniques (START Team), the Advisory Group on Market Surveillance (MARS Group), and the Group of Experts on Risk Management in Regulatory Systems (GRM), as well as four sectoral initiatives: on Telecommunication equipment, on Earth-Moving Machinery on Equipment for Explosive Environments and on Pipeline Safety. The Working Party, START Team and MARS Groups hold one session per year, while the GRM holds bi-monthly webinar meetings. During this biennium, Member States adopted 6 recommendations and tools. These include 3 recommendations on "Risk Management Tools in Regulatory Frameworks", "Crisis Management in Regulatory Frameworks", and "Good Market Surveillance Policies and Practices"; 1 common regulatory framework for the sector of equipment for explosive environments; 1 searchable online database based on data collected through a survey on market surveillance activities worldwide, and one trilingual glossary of market surveillance terms.

Lessons learned

11. The result of activities under this cluster is difficult to capture, as it depends on input from external experts whose availability and capacity to participate in Working Party's meetings and work is curtailed by tight financial concerns in both the private and public sectors.

12. The main lesson learned is that scarce resources can best be used by working in synergy with partner institutions. In 2010-11 WTO recognized ECE as one of the lead institutions developing best practice in the area of "good regulatory practices", and partnered with the Secretariat in training activities for transition economies. Further close collaboration in the area of risk management, market surveillance policies and regulatory practices for high risk products continued with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC), among others.

Cluster 3: Strengthening the legal framework for agricultural quality standards**Expected accomplishment**

13. Enlarged and enhanced set of UNECE recommendations, norms, standards, guidelines and tools for agricultural produce

Indicators of achievement:

(i) Number of new or revised international standards, recommendations and implementation guidelines agreed upon by member States

Performance measures:

2006-2007: 36 standards, recommendations, etc.

2008-2009: 25 standards, recommendations, etc.

Target 2008-2009: 25 standards, recommendations, etc.

Achieved: 67 standards, recommendations, etc.

Statement of accomplishments

14. Activities under this cluster are carried out by the Committee's inter-governmental subsidiary body Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards (WP.7) and its four specialized sections. The Working Party sets internationally harmonized commercial quality standards for agricultural produce, which are widely used by UNECE member States and beyond. During this biennium, 67 new and/or updated ECE recommendations and standards for agricultural produce were adopted by the Working Party at its 2010 and 2011 sessions. This level of output was due to requests by Member States to revise a large number of standards for fresh fruit and vegetables, which were not anticipated when the biennium targets were set.

Lessons learned

15. The Working Party was able to respond to increased demand in part due to the addition of one staff member, who was able to dedicate part of his time to this work. Yet, this indicator remains an approximate measure intergovernmental bodies' work. It does not reflect the impact of new/revised standards, which differ in their complexity and in their importance in trade. For example, updating one standard on meat can be as much work as updating several standards for fresh fruit and vegetables and completely new standards generally entail more work than revisions of existing standards.

16. The overall level of standards development and maintenance will probably remain stable as this is the maximum amount of work that can be supported by the present resources. It would be difficult to do more without either sacrificing the quality of the work or decreasing work on promoting implementation of the standards.

Cluster 4: Supporting the implementation of trade facilitation and electronic business

Expected Accomplishment

17. Increased implementation of UNECE recommendations, norms and standards for trade facilitation and electronic business.

Indicators of achievement

- (i) Number of national implementation of key trade facilitation and electronic business recommendations, norms, standards, guidelines and tools in selected countries

Performance measures:

2006-2007: 29 implementations

Estimate 2008-2009: 30 implementations

Target 2010-2011: 32 implementations

Achieved: 49 implementations

- (ii) Number of downloads of key trade facilitation and electronic business recommendations, norms, standards, guidelines and tools from the ECE Internet site, as a proxy for their use

Performance measures:

2006-2007: Not applicable

Estimate 2008-2009: 35,000 downloads

Target 2010-11: 40,000

Achieved: 51,933 downloads

Statement of accomplishments

18. During this biennium, 49 countries established a Single Window System, thereby exceeding the expected target of 32 implementations. In establishing the Single Window System, countries implemented 4 recommendations: Recommendation 1 (United Nations Layout Key); Recommendation 25 (Use of the UN Electronic Data Interchange for Administration, Commerce and Trade - UN/EDIFACT); Recommendation 4 on National Trade Facilitation Bodies (i.e. establishment of national organizations, or other suitable means, for the implementation of trade facilitation recommendations); Recommendation 33 (Recommendation and Guidelines on establishing a Single Window to enhance the efficient exchange of information between trade and government).

19. The indicator “the number of downloads of key recommendations, norms, standards, guidelines and tools from the ECE Internet site, as a proxy for their use” encompasses the most recent trade facilitation recommendations and standards, including:

- United Nations Code for Trade and Transport Locations (UN/LOCODE)
- UN Electronic Data Interchange for Administration, Commerce and Trade (UN/EDIFACT)
- Core Component Library (CCL)
- Recommendation 33 (Single Window).

20. Owing to a change in the UNECE website software, the number of downloads could only be measured until 30 June 2011. During this period, the number of downloads reached 38,950. The downloads for UN/LOCODE and UN/EDIFACT was 15,509 and 9,702 respectively. Although not fully comparable, it marks a drop compared to previous years (levels in 2009 were of 32'000 and 20'000). Downloads during the same period for the CCL and Recommendation 33 have increased to 4,665 and 9,074 respectively (as compared to only 2'000 for both items in 2009). This means that the number of downloads of UN/LOCODE and UN/EDIFACT has slightly increased compared to the previous biennium (from 94,000 for the 2006-2007 biennium to 101,000 in this biennium (49,000 in 2008 and 52,000 in 2009). On the other hand, downloads for the new CCL and Recommendation 33 have gone from zero up to 9,200 (5,200 in 2008, 4,000 in 2009). Extrapolating the figure 38,950 to cover the whole biennium, the number of downloads amounts to 51,933

Lessons learned

21. The indicator on the number of downloads does not reflect factors behind the increased/decreased use of standards. Moreover, the number of downloads is greatly affected by the rhythm of production of new standards, the extent to which some standards are replacements or improvements of other standards and changes which are needed in the indicators to reflect new products and developments. Beyond these factors, the number of downloads remains very much influenced by the fact that countries not using the Latin alphabet use codes different from UN/LOCODE.

Cluster 5: Supporting the implementation of agricultural quality standards

Expected accomplishment

22. Increased implementation of UNECE recommendations, norms, standards, guidelines and tools for agricultural produce

Indicators of achievement

(i) The cumulative total number of implementations of ECE agricultural quality standards in countries.

Performance measures:

2006-2007: 972 implementations.

Estimate 2008-2009: 982 implementations.

Target 2010-2011: 1,000 implementations.

Achieved: 1,463 implementations

(ii) Number of downloads of key agricultural quality recommendations, norms, standards, guidelines and tools from the ECE Internet site, as a proxy for their use.

Performance measures:

2006-2007: Not applicable

Estimate 2008- 2009: 125,000 downloads

Target 2010-11: 140,000

Achieved: 429,622 downloads

Statement of accomplishments

23. The total number of implementations amounted to 1,350 which exceeds the target of 1,000 implementations set for the biennium 2010-2011. This increase is mainly due to the revised European Union (EU) legislation on agricultural quality standards, which has made 10 of ECE agricultural quality standards obligatory. The revised legislation also stipulates that for all other agricultural standards (of which approximately 40 are covered by ECE agricultural quality standards) ECE standards should be one of two options for adoption by exporters and importers. As such the number of implementations in the EU region reached 1,350. In addition, ECE standards for fruit, vegetables, dried produce, meat and seed potatoes are used worldwide by governments and the private sector as a basis for their own standards. For example, 2 standards have been implemented in China, 12 in Kyrgyzstan, 3 in Tajikistan, 20 in Russian Federation, 31 in Moldova, 40 in Ukraine, 5 in Ghana, all South African standards are harmonized with UNECE ones.

24. As previously mentioned, owing to a change in the UNECE website software, the number of downloads could only be measured until 30 June 2011. The number of downloads of agricultural quality standards during the period until June 2011 was 332,217. Extrapolating this to cover the whole biennium, the number of downloads amounts to 429,622 downloads.

Lessons learned

25. Accomplishments under this indicator point to the success of the secretariat's targeted efforts to promote the ECE's agricultural quality standards worldwide, which commenced in 2008.

Cluster 6: Capacity building**Expected accomplishment**

26. Increased implementation of ECE recommendations, norms, standards, guidelines and tools for trade facilitation and electronic business , regulatory cooperation and agricultural produce.

Indicators of achievement

(i) The number of requests for assistance received from Member States and other international organizations to assist in the promotion and implementation of ECE trade related instruments.

Performance measures:

2006-2007: 20 requests

Estimate 2008-2009: 20 requests

Target 2010-2011: 20 requests

Achieved: 33 requests

(ii) Number of participants trained through capacity-building activities.

Performance measures:

2006-2007: 100 participants

Estimated 2008- 2009: 150 participants

Target 2010-2011: 550 participants

Achieved: 1692 participants

Statement of accomplishments

27. The secretariat received 33 requests for assistance in the promotion and implementation of ECE trade related instruments from Member States and other international organizations. This number exceeds the expected 20 requests, and comprises: 17 requests in the area of trade facilitation and electronic business; 4 requests in the area of regulatory cooperation; and, 12 requests in the area of agricultural quality standards.

28. A total of 1692 participants were trained in 2010-2011, including: (i) 792 participants in the area of agricultural quality standards; (ii) 300 participants in the area regulatory cooperation; and (iii) 600 participants in the area of trade facilitation and electronic business.

Lessons learned

29. Respondents to the end-of-workshop/seminars evaluation surveys conducted by Working Party 7 reported that the training improved their understanding and expertise in the area of agricultural quality standards, and noted that the topics were highly relevant to their pursuits in advancing national quality standards. The relevance of the workshops was

ensured through the adoption of a participatory approach to formulating end of workshop/seminars conclusions and recommendations. National and regional experts who delivered presentations and conducted practical training brought the relevant stakeholders together, and gave impetus to insightful discussions.

30. However, certain issues could be addressed more effectively in the future. The major promotional and capacity-building activities of the past several years which involved many countries across the globe inevitably created a strong demand and high expectations for further technical assistance and training. With the end of international funding cycles, funds for follow-up activities have become scarce, if available at all.

31. Another important lesson learned is that future regional workshops should include, along with the promotional and training component, sessions on the actual development of standards and explanatory material. This would help involve as many national experts around the world as possible. Improvements could also be made in preparing future workshops and seminars. These include, for example, preparing educational material on the basis of outcomes from the various workshops as well as making video recordings of practical/demonstration sessions and making them available to participants on the UNECE website. This could increase the impact of future training activities in beneficiary countries by making it easier for national trainers to share the knowledge made available during the workshops and further develop national capacity.

32. Some room for improvement was also seen in modernizing the modalities of training through the use of modern Internet-based information and communication technology tools. However, the limitations of these tools need to be taken into account. Training workshops on the harmonized interpretation and application of standards requires practical hands-on work with the physical presence of experts and trainees working with samples of real products.

**Annex: Restructured biennial evaluation plan for the biennium 2010–2011 of the
Trade subprogramme**

<i>Expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement of the Strategic Framework 2010-2011</i>	<i>Title of the cluster of activities</i>	<i>Expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement of the Biennial Evaluation 2010-2011</i>
EA(a) Adoption by Member States of ECE recommendations, norms, standards, guidelines and tools for trade facilitation, electronic business, regulatory cooperation and agricultural produce.	1. Strengthening the legal framework for trade facilitation and electronic business	EA 1. Enlarged and enhanced set of UNECE recommendations, norms, standards, guidelines and tools for trade facilitation and electronic business.
IA (a) (i) The number of new and/or updated ECE recommendations, norms, standards and tools for trade facilitation and electronic business.		IA 1. (i) Number of new and/or updated UNECE recommendations, norms, standards, guidelines and tools for trade facilitation and electronic business agreed upon by Member States.
<i>Performance measures:</i> 2006-2007: 28 recommendations, etc. Estimate 2008-2009: 24 recommendations, etc. Target 2010-2011: 28 recommendations, etc.		<i>Performance measures:</i> 2006-2007: 28 recommendations, etc. Estimate 2008-2009: 24 recommendations, etc. Target 2010-2011: 28 recommendations, etc.
IA (a) (ii) Number of new and/or revised UNECE recommendations, norms, standards, guidelines and tools for regulatory cooperation agreed upon by Member States.		IA. 1 (ii) Number of countries (regions), international organizations and sectors involved in the development of UN/CEFACT standards.
<i>Performance measures:</i> 2006-2007: 2 recommendations. Estimate 2008-2009: 2 recommendations. Target 2010-2011: 2 recommendations.	2. Strengthening the legal framework for regulatory cooperation and standardization policies	<i>Performance measures:</i> 2006-2007: Not applicable. Estimate 2008-2009: 40 countries (regions) etc.. Target 2010-11: 41 countries (regions) , etc.
IA (a) (iii) Number of new and/or updated ECE recommendations and standards for agricultural produce agreed upon by Member States.		EA 2. Enlarged and enhanced set of UNECE recommendations, norms, standards, guidelines and tools for regulatory cooperation.
<i>Performance measures:</i> 2006-2007: 36 recommendations. Estimate 2008-2009: 25 recommendations. Target 2010-2011: 25 recommendations.		IA.2 (i) Number of new and/or revised UNECE recommendations, norms, standards, guidelines and tools for regulatory cooperation agreed upon by Member States.
	3. Strengthening the legal framework for agricultural quality standards	<i>Performance measures:</i> 2006-2007: 2 recommendations. Estimate 2008-2009: 2 recommendations. Target 2010-2011: 2 recommendations.
		EA 3. Enlarged and enhanced set of UNECE recommendations, norms, standards, guidelines and tools for agricultural produce.
		IA 3. (i) Number of new and/or updated ECE recommendations and standards for agricultural produce agreed upon by Member States.
		<i>Performance measures:</i>

<i>Expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement of the Strategic Framework 2010-2011</i>	<i>Title of the cluster of activities</i>	<i>Expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement of the Biennial Evaluation 2010-2011</i>
		2006-2007: 36 recommendations. Estimate 2008-2009: 25 recommendations. Target 2010-2011: 25 recommendations.
EA (b) Increased implementation of ECE recommendations, norms, standards, guidelines and tools for trade facilitation, electronic business, regulatory cooperation and agricultural produce.	4. Supporting the implementation of trade facilitation and electronic business	EA 4. Increased implementation of ECE recommendations, norms, standards, guidelines and tools for trade facilitation and electronic business. IA 4. (i) Number of national implementation of key trade facilitation and electronic business recommendations, norms, standards, guidelines and tools in selected countries <i>Performance measures:</i> 2006-2007: 29 implementations Estimate 2008-2009: 30 implementations Target 2010-2011: 32 implementations IA 4. (ii) Number of downloads of key trade facilitation and electronic business recommendations, norms, standards, guidelines and tools from the ECE Internet site, as a proxy for their use <i>Performance measures:</i> 2006-2007: Not applicable. Estimate 2008-2009: 35,000 downloads. Target 2010-11: 40,000 downloads.
IA (b) (i) The number of national implementations of key trade facilitation and electronic business recommendations, norms, standards, guidelines and tools in selected countries. <i>Performance measures:</i> 2006-2007: 29 implementations. Estimate 2008-2009: 30 implementations. Target 2010-2011: 32 implementations.		
IA (b) (ii) The cumulative total number of implementations of ECE agricultural quality standards in countries. <i>Performance measures:</i> 2006-2007: 972 implementations. Estimate 2008-2009: 982 implementations. Target 2010-2011: 1,000 implementations.	5. Supporting the implementation of agricultural quality standards	EA 5. Increased implementation of ECE recommendations, norms, standards, guidelines and tools for agricultural produce. IA 5. (i) The cumulative total number of implementations of
IA (b) (iii) The number of downloads of key recommendations, norms, standards,		

* Regulatory cooperation and standardization policies were not included under this indicator.

<i>Expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement of the Strategic Framework 2010-2011</i>	<i>Title of the cluster of activities</i>	<i>Expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement of the Biennial Evaluation 2010-2011</i>
<p>guidelines and tools from the ECE Internet site, as a proxy for their use.*</p> <p><i>Performance measures:</i></p> <p>2006-2007: 140,000 downloads. Estimate 2008-2009: 160,000 downloads. Target 2010-2011: 180,000 downloads.</p> <p>IA (b) (iv) The number of requests for assistance received from Member States and other international organizations to assist in the promotion and implementation of ECE trade related instruments.</p> <p><i>Performance measures:</i></p> <p>2006-2007: 20 requests. Estimate 2008-2009: 20 requests. Target 2010-2011: 20 requests.</p>	6. Capacity building	<p>ECE agricultural quality standards in countries.</p> <p><i>Performance measures:</i></p> <p>2006-2007: 972 implementations. Estimate 2008-2009: 982 implementations. Target 2010-2011: 1,000 implementations.</p> <p>IA 5. (ii) Number of downloads of key agricultural quality recommendations, norms, standards, guidelines and tools from the ECE Internet site, as a proxy for their use.</p> <p><i>Performance measures:</i></p> <p>2006-2007: Not applicable. Estimate 2008- 2009: 125,000 downloads. Target 2010-11: 140,000 downloads.</p> <p>EA 6. Increased implementation of ECE recommendations, norms, standards, guidelines and tools for trade facilitation and electronic business , regulatory cooperation and agricultural produce.</p> <p>IA. 6 (i) The number of requests for assistance received from Member States and other international organizations to assist in the promotion and implementation of ECE trade related instruments.</p> <p><i>Performance measures:</i></p> <p>2006-2007: 20 requests. Estimate 2008-2009: 20 requests. Target 2010-2011: 20 requests.</p> <p>IA. 6 (ii) Number of participants trained through capacity-building activities.</p> <p><i>Performance measures:</i></p> <p>2006-2007: 100 participants. Estimated 2008- 2009: 550 participants. Target 2010-2011: 550 participants.</p>