

**Management Response Template**

Evaluation Title:	Strengthening the Capacities of Developing Countries and Countries with Economies in Transition to Facilitate Legitimate Border Crossing, Regional Cooperation and Integration (Project ROA: 1213AA)		
Period of Review:	2013-2016		
Date of Evaluation Report:	September 2016		
Approved by:	Director, Programme Management Unit Zamira Eshmambetova	Date 17.01.17	Signature
Cleared by:	Director of Division Eva Molnar		
Prepared by:	Manager of the evaluation André Sceia		

Recommendation 1:

The project team should consider developing a strategic/sustainability business plan that will focus on turning the pilot C2C data exchange platform into a full-scale functioning system;

Management Response:

UNECE agrees with the recommendation, while taking due account of budget limitations and the willingness of countries to implement financing scheme for the maintenance of the platform.

Follow up actions and responsibilities:

The exchange platform could be deployed on a large scale resilient IT environment which would ensure its reliability for real-time data exchange projects between a large number of countries. However, the current resources available at UNECE, including additional extra-budgetary resources related to similar project, cannot cover the maintenance costs of such large scale IT system.

The benefits of data exchange projects in the framework of transit are increasingly obvious. A cost benefit analysis was carried out in the framework of the eTIR project and highlighted the potentially large benefit of electronic procedures versus their paper-based equivalent. While most expert involved in the eTIR project stressed that a fee-per-use could be the fairest system to fund the maintenance of an international data exchange platform, some were of the view that alternatives funding schemes should also be considered. With that in mind, discussions are still continuing on the matter and no solution as yet been found.

A strategic business plan, including the financing of the hosting and maintenance of a large scale and resilient version of the exchange platform developed and deployed in the course of this project, will be considered as the starting point of any follow up global project but

will also be presented to the international bodies dealing with the TIR Convention for their consideration.

Recommendation 2:

Conduct a risk assessment and propose risk mitigation measures at the early stage (design) of the project;

Management Response:

UNECE agrees with the recommendation, while stressing that the need for the granted 6-month extension of the project was mainly due to the delayed proper functioning of the newly introduced ERP (UMOJA). Considering that such system is at the heart of any administrative process (recruitments, payments, call for tender, organization of events,), even a state of the art risk management plan would not have avoided most of delay.

Follow up actions and responsibilities:

Project managers, at the project inception, will be recommended to include in the project document a detailed risk assessment matrix, a description of monitoring methods and tools as well as lists of risk mitigation measures.

Recommendation 3:

Strengthen the gender-sensitive aspects of the project through developing relevant indicators at the early stage of the project design;

Management Response:

UNECE agrees with the recommendation.

Follow up actions and responsibilities:

UNECE is now implementing the UNOG Policy for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women which came into force on 1 September 2016. This policy will improve the inclusion of gender aspects in future projects.

Recommendation 4:

Utilize a coherent and cost saving approach through strengthened collaboration with the specialized agencies;

Management Response:

UNECE agrees with the recommendation.

Follow up actions and responsibilities:

UNECE is already collaborating with the International Road Transport Union (IRU) on similar projects (see ongoing UNECE-IRU MoU of 24 March 2015). UNECE is already in discussion with IRU to continue such collaborations in the future and, possibly, leverage synergies between similar projects.

Furthermore, a donor mapping exercise could also be included in the strategic business plan (see follow up action of Rec.1).

Recommendation 5:

Continue engagement with national stakeholders and potential users of the platform to identify their needs and provide technical support

(legal, advisory, etc.) to streamline processes and precondition required to access the platform

Management Response:

UNECE agrees with the recommendation, while taking due account of the budget limitations.

Follow up actions and responsibilities:

The exchange platform, by design, allow the secure exchange of a wide range of information. Through easy configuration, new agents and new messages can be added. The information relative to the functioning of the platform has been published on the project website. All Regional Commission have agreed that they will continue promoting the use of the platform at any available opportunity.

However, major changes to the platform, if necessary, will require identifying additional funding sources (see follow up action of Rec. 1 and Rec. 4).