ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Seventy-sixth meeting
Geneva, 31 March 2015

Item 7 of the provisional agenda

Result of the evaluation "Review of the role of information and communication in promoting the visibility of the work of the UNECE"

Management Response

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

Review of the Role of Information and Communication in Promoting the Visibility of the Work of the ECE

Management Response

Evaluation Title:	Review of the Role of Information and Communication in Promoting the Visibility of the Work of the UNECE	
Period of Review:	2008 - 2014	
Date of Evaluation Report:	10 March 2015	
Approved by: Christian Friis Bach	Executive Secretary	Date: 10 March 2015
Cleared by: Zamira Eshmambetova	Director of PMU	Date:
Prepared by: Catherine Haswell	Manager of the evaluation	Date:

Recommendation 1:

Strengthen the Information Unit with additional resources and clarify the responsibilities of the unit vis-à-vis the subprogrammes

Management Response:

UNECE accepts the recommendation, while noting that the organization faces a zero-growth budget. UNECE will review the responsibilities of the Information Unit and communications efforts conducted by the subprogrammes. UNECE recognizes the value of maintaining communications capacity within the subprogrammes, with a strengthened and dynamic relationship with the central Information Unit. UNECE will fundraise for extrabudgetary resources to further strengthen communications efforts.

Follow-up actions and responsibilities:

The role of the Information Unit and of subprogrammes in UNECE communications will be reviewed.

Directors will identify one staff member in each Division with capacity in communications. He or she will act as focal point on communications and his/her annual workplan will include one goal on communications, comprising 25% of the plan. A standard agreed goal with related actions will be agreed among Directors. The staff member will be accountable for achieving the goal and the relevant Director will also be accountable for the achievement of this goal by the staff member. The Chief of the Information Unit will be an additional reporting officer for these focal points in the new e-Performance cycle commencing 1 April 2015. The progress and results of this approach will be reviewed by March 2016.

The Information Unit/OES will prepare a fundraising proposal for extrabudgetary funds to strengthen UNECE's communications by May 2015.

Recommendation 2:

Capitalize on Taskforce gains and formalize Communications Focal Points across the subprogrammes in order to strengthen corporate UNECE communications

Management Response:

UNECE accepts the recommendation to formalize the work of communications focal points in the subprogrammes, in line with the response to Recommendation 1.

Recommendation 3:

Institute broad and regular communications training

Management Response:

UNECE accepts the recommendation, and will develop a plan for targeted communications training to UNECE staff.

Follow-up actions and responsibilities*:*

The Information Unit will develop a training plan for communications for UNECE by 30 April 2015, and include expertise from partners including the UNOG Change Perception Project, the UN Information Service (UNIS) Geneva, and other components of DPI.

The training plan will include activities for:
1. Staff identified by Directors as communications focal points for their respective subprogrammes;
2. Substantive staff identified by Directors as performing functions requiring communications with media;
3. All Directors; and
4. A Townhall event in June 2015 for all UNECE staff on the updated Communications Strategy and the use of key messages.

The Executive Secretary will allocate resources needed to implement the training plan.

Recommendation 4:

Initiate limited stakeholder analysis to identify and prioritise key UNECE audiences

Management Response:

UNECE accepts the recommendation and will implement limited and targeted stakeholder analyses for key outreach events included in the annual programme of high-profile events. UNECE agrees with the report's conclusions that strengthening UNECE's outreach to mainstream media is a key priority.

Follow-up actions and responsibilities:

The Information Unit will work with the respective substantive focal points to identify the key stakeholders for events in the above-mentioned annual programme and determine a tailored outreach approach. Events identified in the annual programme of high-profile events (see Recommendation 8) will include a specific plan for engagement with mainstream and specialized media (see Recommendation 11).

Recommendation 5:

Review communications strategy, disseminate it across the organization and implement it

Management Response:

UNECE agrees with the recommendation and will update the Communications Strategy based on the results of this review.

Follow-up actions and responsibilities:

The Communications Strategy will be updated to reflect the results of this review. The update will be completed after the UNECE branding strategy (Recommendation 6) is completed. All Directors will be responsible for ensuring the dissemination of the updated Communications Strategy to their staff.

Recommendation 6:

Standardize the UNECE brand

Management Response:

UNECE accepts the recommendation to develop a branding strategy to define a corporate-level identity for UNECE.

Follow-up actions and responsibilities:

The Information Unit will review all branding items (including business cards, use of logos, email signatures, presentation templates, nameplates on doors, etc.) and propose alternatives to Directors for endorsement by May 2015.

All Directors will be responsible for ensuring the implementation of the new branding throughout their Divisions.

Recommendation 7:

Review political communications

Management Response:

UNECE partially accepts the recommendation, noting that new measures for UNECE communication with capitals were adopted in October 2014.

Follow-up actions and responsibilities:

UNECE will review the progress and impact of the new measures by December 2016. Directors will be responsible for identifying the appropriate level of persons to be invited from ministries for UNECE technical events, while UNECE remains cognizant of the protocols for communicating with capitals as expected by member States.

The Executive Secretary will continue to maintain a close dialogue with member States through EXCOM on this matter.

Recommendation 8:

Devise realistic annual programme of events and resource appropriately

Management Response:

UNECE accepts the recommendation and an annual programme of high-profile events with dedicated resources will be prepared to promote the visibility of UNECE work.

Follow-up actions and responsibilities:

UNECE will develop an annual Programme of Events including 2-3 high level events per year to maximize the outreach and visibility of the organization's work. The Information Unit is responsible for preparing the 2015 programme of high-profile events by May 2015 and, in the future, by December for the following year (e.g. December 2015 for the year 2016).

Directors are also encouraged to regularly identify and propose global events where UNECE participation will increase the visibility of UNECE work.

Recommendation 9:

Strengthen partnerships with existing "force multipliers" to boost UNECE communications

Management Response:

UNECE accepts the recommendation and will identify partnerships to support UNECE communication gaps.

Follow-up actions and responsibilities:

The Information Unit will liaise with potential "force multipliers" identified in this review and develop specific areas where partnerships with relevant UN departments can strengthen UNECE's visibility. Based on the updated Communications Strategy, the Information Unit is responsible for drafting a proposal for enhancing engagement with the UNOG Change Perception Project, the UN Information Service (UNIS) and DPI by June 2015.

Recommendation 10:

Improve UNECE media briefings

Management Response:

UNECE accepts the recommendation and will work closely with the UNIS to identify specific changes which can be made to increase the effectiveness of UNECE media briefings.

Follow-up actions and responsibilities:

The Information Unit is responsible for obtaining advice from UNIS on how UNECE media briefings can be improved by March 2015.

The Information Unit will prepare guidance for subprogrammes for preparing information for media briefings to maximize media interest in UNECE work by April 2015.

Recommendation 11:

Strengthen media engagement more broadly and target specialist media in particular more actively

Management Response:

UNECE accepts the recommendation, in line with the responses to Recommendations 1, 4, 5, 8, and 10.

Recommendation 12:

Maintain primacy of UNECE website and continue with robust digital engagement.

Follow-up actions and responsibilities:

The Executive Secretary will continue to chair regular meetings of the Website Working Group. The Information Systems Unit (ISU) is responsible for implementing the next stages of the UNECE Website Strategy by June 2015, and ensuring dedicated capacity to enhancing the website. Directors are responsible for ensuring the accuracy and quality of content in their technical areas of the UNECE website.

Recommendation 13:

Improve the quality of written products and streamline publications

Management Response:

UNECE accepts the recommendation, while noting the constraints within a zero-growth budget.

Follow-up actions and responsibilities:

In the absence of additional resources for dedicated professional editing UNECE will explore opportunities to improve the use of both internal and UNOG editorial resources, and if needed out-sourcing of editorial functions.

With regard to publications, the subprogrammes will assure the quality of their publications in accordance with a new administrative instruction "UN Policy Manual for Publications" to be issued in the second half of 2015.

The Information Unit will organize training for staff to improve the quality of written products in UNECE.

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