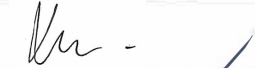




## MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

<b>Evaluation Title:</b>	Evaluation of UNECE Project E330 “Enhancing usage and uptake of standards for sustainable development, gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls”		
<b>Period of Review:</b>	2019 - 2022		
<b>Date of Evaluation Report:</b>	31/12/2022		
		Date	Signature
<b>Approved by</b>	Chief, a.i., PMU Nicolas Dath-Baron	21/04/2023	
<b>Cleared by:</b>	Director of Division Elisabeth Tuerk	21/04/2023	
<b>Prepared by:</b>	Economic Affairs Officer Lance Thompson	21/04/2023	

### **Recommendation 1:**

Plan effectively for implementation of future projects, including through spreading out the work appropriately across the full length of project lifetime, utilising annual work plans, adequately planning for effective use of human resources, both in terms of staff and contractors and the associated internal UN processes, and monitoring budget use at regular intervals.

### **Management Response:**

UNECE accepts the recommendation.

### **Follow up actions and responsibilities:**

The secretariat will make best efforts to ensure that future extra-budgetary projects are sufficiently staffed and that the monitoring of activities and budget use are spread out across the full length of project lifetime. The secretariat will continue its efforts for raising further extra-budgetary funds including project-funded staff.

However, the secretariat further notes that personnel constraints are not always fully under its control. Insofar as possible, all responsibilities of a vacant position are covered by staff within the division.

Responsibility: Ms. Elisabeth Tuerk, Director ECTD

Timeline: 31 December 2023

### **Recommendation 2:**

Any future project should ensure equal integration of cross-cutting issues into its outputs and activities, by establishing respective mechanisms and tools derived from relevant UN mainstreaming strategies (gender, human rights, disability) which should include the strengthening of partnerships with relevant UN agencies, national partners, and think-tanks with subject-matter expertise.

(a) Consider explicitly applying a disability inclusion approach in the design and implementation of the next phase of the Standards for the SDGs project, expanding the portal to map standards relevant for disability inclusion and prevention of accidents, injuries and illness, and embed disability indicators

and targets in project and activity results frameworks. Gender should also be mainstreamed in these areas.

(b) Apply a rights-based approach in the design, implementation and results of the activities for the next phase of the project, including by making explicit reference to relevant international human rights law standards, particularly the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women. Consider developing future projects on gender standards jointly with UN Women to leverage its comparative advantage and technical expertise in gender equality and gender mainstreaming. Increase participation of women including by seeking to engage with national gender equality machineries, women led MSMEs, and women's civil society organisations, and integrating use of gender advocates and experts. Consider embedding the appropriate gender equality, human rights, disability inclusion, and other LNOB indicators and targets for inclusion in project and activity results framework as relevant. Links should be made where possible and appropriate to relevant SDG indicators and targets.

(c) Leave No One Behind: future projects should provide guidance for standards development bodies to employ a human rights-based approach to data disaggregation, i.e., one that calls for disaggregation in accordance with grounds of discrimination prohibited by international human rights law – including gender, age, geographic location, income, and other characteristics relevant in the national context. Standards development bodies could be guided by OHCHR (2012), Human Rights Indicators: A Guide to Measurement and Implementation. Use this for evidence-based policy making relevant for inclusive standards development, including standards for the SDGs and gender-responsive standards.

**Management Response:**

UNECE accepts the recommendation.

**Follow up actions and responsibilities:**

The secretariat recognizes the importance of these cross-cutting issues and their integration into all aspects of its work. It further notes that several of these issues were addressed by the current project, albeit not explicitly cited.

These issues shall be fully integrated into the conception of future projects within Working Party 6 (WP.6) and used as performance indicators.

Responsibility: Mr. Lance Thompson, Secretary of WP.6

Timeline: 31 December 2023

**Recommendation 3:**

Consider European Union and Council of Europe accession as entry points to encourage UNECE member States to build consensus and buy-in to integrate gender responsive standards.

**Management Response:**

UNECE partially accepts the recommendation.

**Follow up actions and responsibilities:**

The secretariat acknowledges the importance of regional economic and political bodies as a vector to promote its work. Efforts are currently made to engage these bodies which may not have been apparent in the deliverables of the current extra-budgetary (XB) project. The regional standards development bodies are one of the key actors in this domain, especially in the European Union context and the European Committee for Standardization (CEN) & the European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization (CENELEC) is not only a signatory to the Declaration on Gender-Responsive Standards and Standards Development but has been an active participant in the formulation of the guidance provided under this initiative.

The secretariat would emphasize that the UNECE has 34 member States covering countries of Europe, but also countries in North America (Canada and United States), Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan,

Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) and Western Asia (Israel). The recommendations and guidance that it produces are applicable globally and experts from all UN Member States are welcome to join in developing these deliverables. Efforts have already been made to engage relevant regional bodies.

The secretariat would further underline that it brings particular efforts to its 17 programme countries within its own region. The translation into Russian of all relevant material is a major part of this effort, in order to ensure that it is accessible to the largest possible audience in this region. The workshop with Russian translation in April 2022 was particularly successful in reaching a large audience in these programme countries.

Moving forward, the secretariat will continue to engage the pertinent regional bodies, the major international bodies and continue to bring particular focus to the 17 programme countries in the UNECE region, subject to the availability of XB funds.

Responsibility: Mr. Lance Thompson, Secretary of WP.6

Timeline: 31 December 2023

#### **Recommendation 4:**

Any follow up project should include a focus on capacity building and awareness raising relevant for Gender Action Plans and gender responsive standards, which may include the following:

(a) Assistance to specific beneficiary country signatories of the Declaration to draft and implement gender action plans for gender-responsive standards and gender inclusive standards development. This would include building consensus and buy-in.

(b) Support relevant institutions to engage more people with the topic of gender-responsive standards and to design and implement effective Gender Action Plans, including through raising internal awareness and building capacity. For example, by running campaigns with high visibility, making the topic a regular item in newsletters and on social media, building an online repository with useful resources and learning tools, including examples of Gender Action Plans of standard setting bodies.

(c) In line with the recommendation of Working Party 6: (i) encourage member States to engage in dialogue with standards bodies in their jurisdiction to become signatories of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) Declaration for Gender-Responsive Standards and Standards Development; (ii) Encourage member States to consider financing for follow-up work particularly capacity-building for gender action plans; and (iii) Continue awareness-raising efforts.

#### **Management Response:**

UNECE accepts the recommendation.

#### **Follow up actions and responsibilities:**

The need for capacity building and further awareness raising efforts is a clear takeaway of this project. The experts in the Team of Specialists on Gender-Responsive Standards (GRS) and the initiative that preceded it have put together a guidance document to assist with this, which accompanies the guidance material developed under this project. The GRS is continuing to develop further guidance, however specific actions will be required in countries to provide capacity building. With this perspective, the secretariat has developed a follow-up project proposal and has approached UN-WOMEN to work together on the topic, with a specific focus on programme countries within the UNECE region. The proposal has been ready since April 2022 and the secretariat has been approaching potential donors. In the meantime, the secretariat is supporting the experts in the GRS to further the development of guidance while waiting for extra-budgetary funds.

Responsibility: Mr. Lance Thompson, Secretary of WP.6

Timeline: 30 June 2024

**Recommendation 5:**

Consider increasing translation of project materials and capacity building activities into multiple UN languages, e.g. Russian, Arabic, Spanish to increase engagement and accessibility throughout the UNECE region and beyond.

**Management Response:**

UNECE accepts the recommendation.

**Follow up actions and responsibilities:**

The secretariat recognizes the importance of making material available in multiple languages in order to raise awareness on the topic and assist experts to access the material. As part of the project, certain materials were translated to the six official languages of the UN and this has been well received.

The secretariat will ensure that such translations are an integral part of future extra-budgetary (XB) projects and plan to deliver accordingly, subject to the availability of XB funds.

Responsibility: Mr. Lance Thompson, Secretary of WP.6

Timeline: 30 June 2024