

Intermediate Progress Report – 11.07.2023

Evaluation of the Economic Commission for Europe: subprogramme 4, Economic cooperation and integration, and subprogramme 6, Trade (E/AC.51/2023/5)

No.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	Actions taken to close recommendation	Implementation date
1	<p>In addition to the existing mechanisms, ECTD should develop a comprehensive framework to document, track and report on member States' requests for technical assistance to help the Division to inform its prioritization of available resources, identify relevant potential outcomes and assist in efficient project planning.</p> <p>Indicator of achievement: a comprehensive framework for tracking member States' requests for technical cooperation discussed, developed and issued by ECE</p>	Important	<p>Findings and recommendations of the OIOS Evaluation and the Secretariat's Management Response were presented to 128th meeting of UNECE EXCOM (15 May 2023). [Seven delegations took the floor, [congratulating UNECE on the Evaluation and expressing their interest in working closely with the secretariat in the implementation of the recommendations]].</p> <p>The OIOS Evaluation was also presented to the spring 2023 sessions of the two Sectoral Committees serviced by ECTD (16th session of CICPPP 30 May – 1 June and 8th session of SCTCS 26 – 27 June) – under a specific agenda item, with feedback from member States and interactive discussion.</p> <p>In addition, discussion of this particular recommendation was also taken-up in the two Sectoral Committees under the agenda items dealing with “Technical Cooperation”, where the secretariat presented its report. The reports included a tabulated listing of requests for technical assistance, as a first step to move towards a comprehensive tracking mechanism.</p>	<p><i>In progress</i></p> <p><i>Target date: 31 December 2024</i></p>
2	ECTD should engage its staff, the Programme Management and Support Services Division and relevant stakeholders to undertake an integrated strategic planning process to develop a division-wide strategic plan with a view to strengthening	Important	While the process for developing an integrated strategic planning process and division-wide strategic plan has not yet officially started, a first step was taken by offering a possibility for the two Sectoral Committees, the four Working Parties and the numerous Teams of Specialists serviced by the	<p><i>In progress</i></p> <p><i>Target date: 31 December 2025</i></p>

¹ Critical recommendations are those that address significant and/or pervasive deficiencies in governance, risk management or internal control processes, such that reasonable assurance cannot be provided regarding the achievement of programme objectives. They should be used infrequently and only applied when failure to implement the recommendation would result in programme failure. Any critical recommendations rejected by the evaluand may be elevated to the UN DSG or SG, if necessary. Critical recommendations that are due or past due are followed up quarterly, in January, April, July and October.

² Important recommendations address reportable deficiencies or weaknesses in governance, risk management or internal control processes, such that reasonable assurance might be at risk regarding the achievement of programme objectives. Important recommendations are followed up semi-annually, in January/February and July/August.

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	<p>interlinkages between its two subprogrammes and identifying at the minimum:</p> <p>(a) The overall divisional vision and organizational objectives, which should be framed around its mandate, strategic framework, the Sustainable Development Goals and the new nexus areas, including Commission-wide topics;</p> <p>(b) The most relevant topics in the context of its mandate, including priority themes vis-à-vis the geographical subregions and member States' priorities and need for support, and related potential risks and mitigation measures;</p> <p>(c) A full results-based framework with clear performance indicators and an articulation of the roles of each organizational unit under ECTD, which includes how each unit will work with the others towards shared objectives within ECTD and outside across other ECE divisions;</p> <p>(d) An outreach strategy on how the Division will communicate with sister agencies, including the resident coordinator system, to ensure that relevant stakeholders are aware of ECTD mandates, roles and comparative advantages in providing the required assistance.</p> <p>Indicator of achievement: a common strategy and strategic plan adopted and implemented</p>		<p>two sub-programmes to exchange views among each other, both, within and across sub-programmes. Both of the two Sectoral Committees serviced by ECTD held respective discussions allowing for such an exchange during their May/June 2023 sessions.</p>	
3	<p>On the basis of the division-wide strategic plan (recommendation 2), ECTD should develop division-specific actions plans to operationalize existing ECE strategies on resource mobilization, partnerships and technical cooperation, upon adoption, to address identified risks and strengthen partnerships, especially at the programme country level, with implementation deadlines, roles and responsibilities, and a monitoring and reporting framework.</p> <p>Indicator of achievement: division-specific action plans issued to operationalize the three ECE</p>	Important	<p>In light of the sequencing between recommendation 3 and 1 (with recommendation 3 to be implemented on the basis, i.e. subsequently to recommendation 1), so far initial, internal exploratory actions have taken place.</p>	<p><i>In progress</i></p> <p><i>Target date: 31 December 2025</i></p>

No.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	Actions taken to close recommendation	Implementation date
	strategies			
4	<p>ECTD should ensure the equal integration of cross-cutting issues (gender, human rights, disability inclusion and environment) into its various workstreams by establishing respective mechanisms and tools within the Division derived from a mainstreaming strategy, which should include the strengthening of partnerships with relevant United Nations agencies, national partners and think tanks with subject-matter expertise.</p> <p>Indicator of achievement: common strategy for ECTD on the integration of crosscutting issues (gender, human rights, disability inclusion and environment)</p>	Important	<p>With a view to charting the way forward, ECTD started by taking stock of examples documenting the successful integration of gender, environment, human rights and disability in ECTD work streams. Examples include (i) for gender: the recently established Team of Specialists on Gender Responsive Standards, the inclusion of gender aspects into its Evaluation Methodology on PPPs and its Innovation Policy Reviews, and into its Trade Facilitation assessments); (ii) for environment the two standards on PPPs for the Circular Economy, the Code of Good Practice for Reducing Food Loss, and the Sustainability Pledge, and established the Team of Specialists for Sustainable Value Chains for the Circular Economy. Entry points already exist for disability (e.g. Evaluation Methodology on PPPs) and (iii) for human rights the Sustainability Pledge for Textiles and Footwear. ECTD also started developing a plan for consultations with experts helping to shape the way forward. In this context a first meeting, with the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Development, was held in June 2023. Work on the integration of disability inclusion in ECTD work streams has not yet started.</p>	<p><i>In progress</i></p> <p><i>Target date: 31 December 2025</i></p>