

Trade Facilitation Implementation Guide
Project Interim Report
December 2011

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1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose of the report

The purpose of this interim report is to describe the project management and monitoring, activities and outputs, since commencement of the project implementation phase on 1 September 2011. During the previous three months, the UNECE secretariat, in collaboration with the UN/CEFACT project team (PT), had finalized the project work plan and terms of reference and completed the recruitment of project consultants.

1.2. Project overview

1.2.1. Background

The TFIG project is a project funded by the Swedish Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and executed by UNECE, with collaboration from the UN/CEFACT PT.

The project has been designed against the background of increased public awareness of and attention to trade facilitation. This has steered a demand for specific information on trade facilitation reform concepts and on implementation guidelines and recommendations. Although various publications have been issued on the topic of trade facilitation in the past years, there still “remains a need for a practical guide to trade facilitation implementation¹”. The TFIG shall respond to the demand for guidance to the implementation of specific measures/standards and tools for trade facilitation. It will offer answers to practical and applied questions and will compile available knowledge and information in one location.

The project started in the second half of 2011. The UNECE secretariat, with the assistance of the UN/CEFACT PT, prepared the project work plan and terms of reference and undertook the selection of the project consultants. The recruitment of the project coordinating consultant and technical consultants was finalized on 12 September 2011.

1.2.2. Objective of the project

The objective of the project is to produce the Trade Facilitation Implementation Guide. The guide will be an e-guide that contains content items on key trade facilitation implementation processes, instruments and tools, links between the items, links to external reference and information sources, a resource library and a glossary. It will be hosted on the Internet and will allow users different possibilities to access the content of the guide - through navigation by links, search and a navigation bar. The e-guide will consist of more than 200 content pages that are interrelated. This allows users to move from the broader to the narrower information as well moving to related topics and areas. A search function furthermore allows users to search for specific terms and concepts. The e-guide will also be made available on a CD-ROM to allow Internet independent usage.

Training material and an introduction to the guide printed in hard copy will complement the guide. The training material comprises a trainers' and a student's package. Its purpose is to explain how to use the guide. The trainer's package shall enable trainers to explain the guide contents and the use of the guide in capacity building workshops and trade facilitation related trainings. It provides information on training curricula, learning objectives, presentations and exercises related to individual training sessions. The students' package contains background reading material for each of the training session.

¹ From UNECE Project Work Plan

It is not a self-training and can only be used in conjunction with the trainer's package. It will be made available in a paper version as well as in pdf format for download from the Internet and insertion into the CD-ROM.

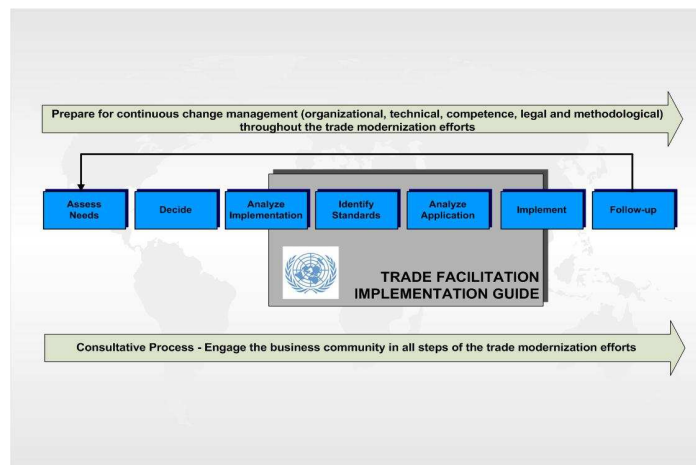
The introduction to the guide introduces the business case for trade facilitation reforms, and present and overview of the guide itself and its scope and content. This introduction will be reproduced in hard copy and serves external communication purposes on the TFIG.

1.2.3.Scope

The Trade Facilitation Implementation Guide will introduce trade facilitation instruments and tools, their conditions of uses and the context in which they can be used. It will introduce existing instruments and best practices in non-technical language and compile relevant references to recommended reading in one location. The guide will part from the traditional book format and adopt a web-based structure of interlinked content pages that can be accessed through the Internet.

The target audience are managers and experts that are involved in the delivery of trade facilitation reform activities and projects, and policy makers that are participating in the decision-making process and design of the projects, policies and activities.

The TFIG does not aim at covering all stages of the political and administrative reform process for trade facilitation (see picture below). It focuses on the implementation phase of a political decision taken after the country has assessed its trade facilitation needs and has prioritized them. The TFIG therefore aims at providing a technical and practical support to the decision makers and implementers on how to implement the necessary reform activities to meet their needs.



1.2.4.Vision

The TFIG guide attempts to better connect theory to practice and to more effectively support people engaged in trade facilitation implementation efforts meet their identified trade facilitation needs.

2. Project Deliverables

The outputs of the project are the following:

2.1. Output 1: Content of the guide

Content of the TFIG that covers key trade facilitation instruments and processes along with their pre-requisites and dependencies. The Guide will be delivered in e-format (see above). It will be structured on the basis of interlinked pages and will be running on Wiki software. An introductory chapter to the Guide, on the business case for trade facilitation and a short guide to the TFIG will be made available in hard copy.

2.2. Output 2: Case Studies

10 case Studies that will cover TF implementation experiences from different regions and will illustrate the benefits of trade facilitation as well as success stories in the implementation of trade facilitation measures/instruments. The case studies are examples of how different trade facilitation reforms are applied in different countries. Various international experts have drafted them in 2008/2009. They illustrate, the context, challenges, and results of their application. These existing case studies will be reviewed and updated where necessary, and integrated as content items in the e-format and in the training package.

2.3. Output 3: Training Material

Training materials as a complement to the e-guide that will be used in regional training workshops to train the target groups concerned on the contents and use of the TFIG. This material, to be tailored to the specific needs and requirements of the countries/regions concerned in a next phase, will include both a trainer's handbook and students' handouts. The training material builds on the content items that are produced for the e-guide. These will be arranged into individual training sessions that include a curriculum, learning objectives, handouts, presentation slides, and exercises.

2.4. Output 4: Design and Layout

The design and layout of the hardcopy version of the TFIG and the training material as well as the design of the web-based and CD-ROM version of the TFIG. A temporary web technology will be made available early in the project to allow the consultants to draft the content items of the e-guide, set up the information structure and share relevant reference materials and project documents.

3. Project Management

3.1. Roles and responsibilities

The UNECE secretariat is responsible for the management of the TFIG project. It is supported by a project advisory team of UN/CEFACT experts.

Role	Name	Contact
Project Management	Tom Butterly (UNECE)	Tom.Butterly@unece.org
Project Management	Mika Vepsalainen (UNECE)	mika.vepsalainen@unece.org
Project Management	Maria-Teresa Pisani (UNECE)	maria-teresa.pisani@unece.org
Project Advisory Team	Mats Wicktor (UN/CEFACT)	mats.wicktor@tullverket.se
Project Advisory Team	Johan Ponten (UN/CEFACT)	Johan.Ponten@kommers.se
Project Advisory Team	Mike Doran	Mike.Doran@bluewin.ch

	(UN/CEFACT)	
Project Advisory Team	Valentina Mintah (UN/CEFACT)	Valentina.Mintah@crownagents.co.uk
Project Advisory Team	Karina Duvinger (UN/CEFACT)	Karina.Duvinger@gs1.se
Project Advisory Team	Jari Salo (UN/CEFACT)	jari.salo@tieke.fi

The UN/CEFACT team acts as advisory team on the content. It provides comments, inputs and advice to the UNECE secretariat.

3.2. Performance monitoring

In order to monitor project progress, the UNECE secretariat, maintains regular contact with the project coordinator, the technical consultants and the UN/CEFACT PT. The implementation schedule contained in the project document and further detailed in a project implementation plan submitted by the project coordinator on 30 October 2011, is used for the tracking of the progress of the outputs and its related tasks.

A face to face meeting with the group of project consultants and the UN/CEFACT PT was held on the 17 and 18 October 2011 in Geneva. Calls with the project coordinating consultant and with the UN/CEFACT PT are held every two weeks to discuss project progress and deliverables.

Furthermore, the UNECE secretariat monitors project progress through a number of project plans and reports that the project coordinating consultant is asked to deliver:

- A project implementation plan. This was delivered on 30 October 2011.
- An interim project progress report 4 months after project commencement, end of December. This was delivered on 15 December 2011.
- A final project report upon project completion, 8 months after project commencement, end of April.

3.3. Financial reporting

According to the revised agreement with Sida of 14 July 2011, the UNECE secretariat is responsible for providing to Sida, by 31 March each year, an annual financial statement certified by the Executive Officer. Such statement has to show the income expenditures, assets and liabilities as of 31 December each year, with respect to the funds provided by Sweden. The next financial statement will be submitted by 31 March 2012.

4. Project Implementation

4.1. Project personnel

The team of project consultants responsible for the project delivery is composed of 8 experts recruited individually for the duration of the project. These experts are

- Six consultants responsible for the drafting of the content of the e-Guide and the training package, and that contribute to the update of the case studies. They also contribute to the design of the overall information structure and architecture by providing specific input for their areas of expertise, and provide status updates to the coordinator for the project reports.

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- Two consultants whose role is to support the development of the training package, including advice on pedagogy and the definition of the learning objectives, and to develop the web-based /CD - Rom format of the e-Guide and of the training package. They furthermore make available tools to support communications and collaboration of the experts during the project cycle.
- One consultant, that will be recruited by the end of January 2012, to work on the case studies. He/she will make an inventory of available case studies, will categorise them according to business domains and regions of implementation, will establish the most suitable format for them, and will review and validate a group of 10 (or more if possible) that will complement the Guide and will be referenced throughout its contents. In doing this, he/she will work in close collaboration with the other consultants for their own domain of competence and with the project coordinating consultant.
- One project coordinating consultant, whose role is to coordinate the work of all consultants and ensure quality and consistency of the inputs, develop an information structure of the e-Guide and an outline of the training package. The coordinator is furthermore responsible for the timely submission of products to the UNECE secretariat, the distribution and monitoring of comments received on the draft versions, and for the project related reporting to the UNECE secretariat.
- Two experts from UN/CEFACT that are in charge of drafting introductory chapters on "TF Theory and Practice Overview" and on the "TF Generic Approach" for the hard copy of the guide.

The following people are involved in the project delivery:

Role	Name	Contact
Project coordinator and technical consultant: WTO negotiations and TF consultation models	Birgit Viohl	birgitviohl@gmx.de
Project consultant: Business processes analysis and simplification	Niki Sahling	nikolaus.sahling@paradigma.net
Project consultant: Customs and Cross border management)	Dietmar Jost	dietmar.jost@jost-consulting.com
Project consultant: Procurement and Trade Finance	John Stanford	jaycstan@msn.com
Project consultant: Transport	Henk van Maaren	hvmaaren@cetima.nl
Project consultant: Electronic business methodologies and standards	Edmund Gray	edmundg@omni.ie
Project consultant: Training materials, web-development and design	Tom Wambeke	T.Wambeke@itcilo.org ,
Project consultants: Training materials, web-development and	Rodrigo Filgueira	r.filgueira@itcilo.org

design		
UN/CEFACT PT expert: TF Theory and Practice Overview	Johan Ponten	Johan.Ponten@kommers.se
UN/CEFACT PT expert: TF Generic Approach	Mats Wicktor	mats.wicktor@tullverket.se

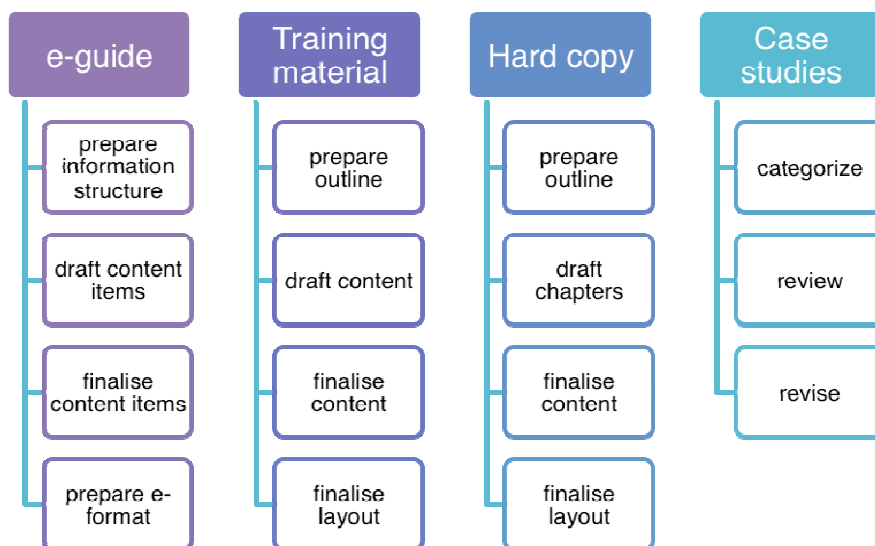
4.2. Day to day management

The project coordinator is asked to keep regular contact with all the consultants over the delivery of the outputs and the respect of the deadlines. Email, phone, and Internet phoning are used for this purpose.

The consultants will send the outputs on the requested day. Any difficulties in respecting the deadlines will be communicated timely to the coordinator, which will promptly inform UNECE.

4.3. Major tasks

The tasks for the delivery of the project's outputs are grouped into four areas. Tasks related to the production of the e-guide, the training material, the hard copy, and the case studies. The entire group of project consultants is responsible for these tasks, but the concretely involvement in the tasks varies. The break down of the tasks is as follows:



Furthermore, the project coordinator accomplishes the following tasks:

- Provide overall planning and coordination of the executing of the project's activities and tasks
- Control quality and ensure coherence of the content of the guide
- Ensure that all outputs are submitted on time and when needed
- Report to UNECE on project progress regularly (telephone calls with the UNECE project management will have to be held on a weekly basis).

4.4. Implementation schedule

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The overall timeframe for the TFIG is from project implementation commencement on 1 September 2011 to delivery of all key outputs and approval of content 30 April 2012.

The timeframe by tasks is shown below, along with reference to current progress.

Tasks	Begin	End	Progress
1. Prepare content and design	1-Sep-11	29-Apr-12	
1.1. Prepare information structure	12-Sep-11	30-Oct-11	1 st Draft Completed
1.2. Prepare first draft of content items	19-Oct-11	10-Jan-12	Ongoing
1.3. Finalise content items	11-Jan-12	20-Mar-12	Not yet started
1.4. Prepare e-format	10-Jan-12	30-Apr-12	Not yet started
2. Prepare training material	25-Sep-11	30-Apr-12	
2.1. Prepare outline	25-Sep-11	16-Oct-11	1 st Draft Completed
2.2. Prepare training material first draft	1-Dec-11	20-Jan-12	Ongoing
2.3. Finalise training material final draft	21-Jan-12	20-Mar-12	Not yet started
2.4. Design and Layout	20-Jan-12	30-Apr-12	Not yet started
3. Prepare Introduction to the Guide	1-Oct-11	30-Apr-12	
3.1. Prepare hard copy outline	1-Oct-11	30-Oct-11	1 st Draft Completed
3.2. Compile individual chapters	1-Nov-11	30-Nov-11	Ongoing
3.3. Finalise hard copy (final draft)	11-Jan-12	20-Mar-12	Not yet started
3.4. Prepare design and layout	11-Jan-12	30-Apr-12	Ongoing
4. Finalise Case Studies	1-Oct-11	20-Mar-12	
4.1. Review Case Studies	6-Oct-11	19-Oct-11	Ongoing
4.2. Finalise case studies	11-Jan-12	20-Mar-12	Not yet started

Milestones of the project implementation are

1. Submission of the outline for the e-guide, the training material and the hard copy. The first draft was delivered on 30 October 2011, and it is in the process of being finalized.
2. Submission of the first draft of the e-guide, the hard copy introductory chapter and the revised case studies. This is planned for 10 January 2012. Project consultants are constantly uploading the draft contents of the e-guide on the project wikispace. This allows both the UNECE secretariat and the project coordinator to monitor the progress made in the drafting of the guide contents. The first draft of the hard copy introductory chapter has also been completed and posted on the project wikispace. Concerning the case studies, the available material has been reviewed and its update will commence at the end of January once the recruitment of the technical consultant charged with this task, will be completed.
3. Submission of first draft of the training package. This is planned for the 20 January 2012. So far the outline of the training package, for both the trainers pack and the students pack, has been submitted.
4. Submission of the final draft of the e-guide, the training package, the hard copy introductory chapter and the revised case studies. This is planned for 20 March

2012. After submission of the first draft of these key project deliverables on 10 January, a commenting period will be opened and will last until mid February. A second face to face meeting of the UNECE secretariat, the group of project consultants and the UN/CEFACT PT is scheduled for the 14 and 15 February for discussing feed-back and comments. Thereafter, the group of consultants will start to finalize the project deliverables.

5. Final delivery of the e-guide, training package (hard copy and online format), hard copy and case studies. This is planned for 30 April 2012.

4.5. Software, Facilities, Materials

The project team of consultants responsible for the delivery and the project management team are spread out over different locations. Only two face-to-face meetings of the project team and the management are scheduled during the implementation period. As a consequence, the collaboration and communication will rely on support tools.

A series of different web-based tools support the project implementation. These tools can be accessed from everywhere at any time and they can be used simultaneously by several of the team. The only requirement is on Internet connection.

Joint drafting: An online workspace has been created for the project using wikispace. It is free of charge and does not require any installation on the computers accessing it. It is accessible on the following url: <http://tradefacilitationimplementation.wikispaces.com/>

The wikispace is the tool for the drafting of the content guide. It mirrors the navigation structure and the content item pages that will form the e-guide. Every team member can access, read and edit the wikispace content at any time.

Documents sharing: In addition to the wikispace, a dropbox folder is set up for the project. Its purpose is to allow sharing of documents of various formats. These documents can be reference reading and background materials.

Project communication: Conference calls are organized by the UNECE secretariat using the webex application. Joining these conference calls is free of charge for the invited experts.

4.6. User's peer review

A peer review of the e-guide is foreseen before finalization of the project. The peer review will be conducted with the voluntary contribution of a limited number of persons representing the future user groups. They will be given a short timeframe to evaluate the e-guide content and structure. A questionnaire will be developed to simplify the evaluation and the assessments of their results. Details of the peer review are still worked out by the project management. However, the UNECE secretariat, together with the UN/CEFACT PT, has already identified a number of potential peer reviewers representing key stakeholders for TF implementation, and is about to contact them.

4.7. Verification & Validation

The quality verification and validation of the outputs takes places on two levels; first on the level of the team of project consultants, and second on the level of the project management.

The technical consultants submit their contents/materials to the project coordinator for review and comments. When validated by the project coordinator, the output will be submitted to the UNECE secretariat for review.

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The UNECE secretariat reviews the material, seek recommendations from the UN/CEFACT advisory team, and provide comments and suggestions to the project coordinator and/or approve and validate the material.

There are three series of output submissions;

- the submission of the first draft of the e-guide contents, training material, revised case studies and hard copy
- the submission of the final draft of the materials, and
- the final delivery of all outputs, including the final design and layout of the TFIG materials.

The final draft and the final delivery are approved and validated by the UNECE secretariat.

5. Conclusions

As of today, the UNECE secretariat considers the project progress to be overall in line with the agreed work plan, and the performance of the group of project consultants to be satisfactory. The consultants provide an excellent mix of competence and expertise in key TF areas and they are demonstrating commitment and dedication to project success. Since project commencement, the UN/CEFACT PT has also played a constructive role and supported UNECE in ensuring quality deliverables.

The project poses a number of challenges, due to its complexity and its innovative approach, the number of experts involved and their geographical distance. However, the use of the wikispace, created right at the start of the project for collaborative working and sharing of draft contents, is revealing to be quite effective in supporting UNECE's effort to achieve the project overall goal and objectives.