



MID-TERM IN-DEPTH EVALUATION OF THE REGIONAL PROGRAMME FOR SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE (XCEU60)

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Summary of the programme purpose

The Regional Programme (RP) for South Eastern Europe (XCEU60) consists of three sub-programmes with activities in all the countries and the territory under the RP. It focuses on the "Balkan Route", one of the major trafficking routes of heroin; border control; targeted assistance within the justice system against human trafficking, organized crime and corruption; and assistance in prevention and treatment in the field of drug use.

The objectives



Purpose of the evaluation

The purpose of this mid-term In-depth Evaluation of the 2nd RP (2012-2015) was to assess progress; describe lessons learned and best practices; suggest areas of improvement for the current RP and the development of a new RP for 2016-2019.

Methodology of evaluation

The evaluators used a mixed methods approach, providing for a triangulation of findings, including a desk review, semi-structured face-to-face and phone interviews with 107 stakeholders, the use of a questionnaire for the collection of quantitative data and direct observations

during a mission to UNODC HQ in Vienna (from 9 to 12 December 2014), including attendance at a programme Steering Committee Meeting (PSC), and a field mission (from 20 January to 4 February 2015) to selected countries under the RP.

RESULTS

Main conclusions

The impact of the RP is visible in:

- EU-accession action-plans, programmes and guidelines;
- improved staff skills and infrastructure for border police and customs resulting in increased drug seizures;
- strengthened co-operation between judicial authorities, including anti-human trafficking; and,
- enhanced awareness, expertise and professional skills in prevention and drug-treatment.

The RP is a framework that gives a strategic structure to potential activities in the region for the purpose of fund-raising, but it is not a coherent and pre-planned programme with fixed content.

The RP is collaborating successfully with UNODC Global Programmes in the region. Ownership by counterparts of RP directions and priorities is a notable strength, including an acknowledgment of national and regional relevance. The importance of transparency of equal investments of activities, funding and staffing under the RP is however stressed by counterparts.



Steering Committee Meeting 9 Dec 2014

INDEPENDENT EVALUATION UNIT

BRIEFS

April 2015

QUICK FACTS

COUNTRIES AND TERRITORY: Republic of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republic of Croatia (partner country), Montenegro, Republic of Serbia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Kosovo under UNSCR 1244 (1999)

EVALUATION TEAM: Mr. Tapio Lappi-Seppälä (Team Leader); Mr. James A. Newkirk; Ms. Charlotte Gunnarsson (IEU)

PROGRAMME DURATION: 23 May 2012–31 December 2015 (2nd RP)

PROGRAMME CODE: XCEU60

PROGRAMME COORDINATOR: Ms. Ekaterina Kolykhalova (from January 2012)

DONORS: Belgium, EU, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Romania, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Slovak Republic, Switzerland, Turkey, One UN - Albania

PROGRAMME BUDGET: Total pledged amount: US\$4,191,893 (March 2015)

IMPLEMENTING AGENCY: UNODC

Main findings

Counterparts express their support of the RP because the RP contributes to the fulfilment of their national priorities and national programmes and further assists them with the EU-accession preparations.

Research conducted in the region in some of the thematic areas of the RP such as corruption and drug routes, has proven to be valuable for the mapping of crime problems and targets for crime-prevention action.

Drug markets and traffickers in South-Eastern Europe are globally connected to heroin producers in Afghanistan. Co-operation under the RP to respond to these threats is established with some of the regional organizations.

While the positioning of the regional office in Vienna is effective and appropriate, there is some room for improvement to clarify the structure of the RP and the specific role and function of field staff.

While the RP has been successful in networking, there is still work to do in protecting the RP's position in the 'market' within its own mandate and focus areas.

There are some UN initiatives in the region directly related to the mandated and thematic areas of UNODC and the RP that are not yet fully considered under the RP.

Turkey is a stakeholder with growing importance in Euro-Asian relations and a key actor in addressing issues related to drug trafficking and organised crime on the 'Balkan route' because of its geographical position.



Key accomplishments

The RP provides for a good example of the creation of new and well-functioning partnerships with a large number of international, regional, national and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the design and/or delivery of the programme throughout the region, especially in the field of border control where police and customs officials are cooperating under the Container Control Programme. Networking with NGOs in the field of social prevention, namely healthy life skills programme and anti-corruption work, such as in the Republic of Albania, has further proven to be successful.

Main recommendations

- Continue aligning RP outcomes and activities with national priorities, strategies and action planning of the counterparts throughout the region in line with the EU-accession processes.
- Increase research and the development of statistics and monitoring systems to provide for new and updated information in all the mandates and thematic areas of the RP.
- Further strengthen co-operation in the field of drug trafficking to cover the entire length of the Balkan route through the establishment of new partnerships for more impact.
- Provide a more balanced approach in the region of expenditure of funds, project activities, placement and clarity of roles of field staff in relation to the RP and counterparts.
- Enhance visibility of the RP and its activities in all related events by promoting and strengthening the role and position of the mandate and thematic areas of the RP.
- Convert the comparative advantage of UNODC by further integrating or relating it to activities of other UN initiatives in the region directly relevant to RP priorities (a 'One UN').
- Expand co-operation with Turkey by developing future strategies and priorities together with the counterparts under the RP and correlate these with Turkey.

LESSONS LEARNED AND BEST PRACTICES

Main Lessons Learned

The framework concept has proved to be flexible, useful in fundraising and being responsive to donor priorities. Constructing and implementing the RP within a framework concept has however caused confusion in reporting, where achievements under the RP versus individual Global Programmes have not been clearly separated and indicated.

Main Best Practices

A particular strength of the RP is in the quality of collaboration between and co-operation with Global Programmes, in particular the Container Control Programme, the Paris Pact Initiative, the UNODC-WHO Programme on Drug Dependence Treatment and Care and the Family Strengthening Programme.

The Programme Steering Committee (PSC) is knowledgeable, involved and motivated and the work of the RP management where the PSC contributes to the effectiveness of the RP.

Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU)
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
Vienna International Centre
P.O. Box 500
1400 Vienna, Austria
E-mail: ieu@unodc.org