



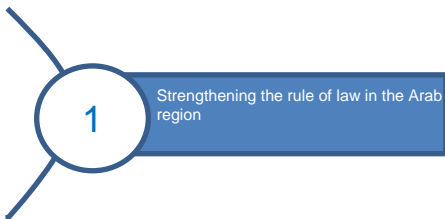
IN-DEPTH EVALUATION OF THE Regional Programme for the Arab States

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Summary of the project purpose

The Regional Programme (RP) on Drug Control, Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Reform in the Arab States (2011-2015) is a joint endeavour between 18 Arab States, the League of Arab States (LAS) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) with the overall objective of responding to evolving threats in the MENA region by strengthening the rule of law.

The objective



Purpose of the evaluation

The final in-depth evaluation's objective was to determine the extent to which planned objective and outcomes were produced; to identify lessons learned and best practices and finally to inform the development of a new Regional Programme for the Arab States (2016-2021).

Methodology of evaluation

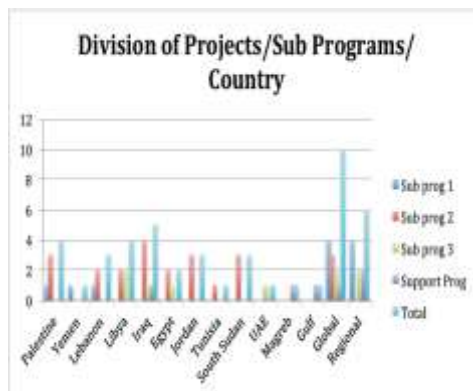
The evaluation entails a preliminary desk research followed by a field mission to UNODC HQ in Vienna and 5 field visits to countries in the region (Tunisia, the UAE, Lebanon, the State of Palestine, Egypt). Open ended and semi-structured questions supported the triangulation of preliminary hypotheses formulated during the desk research. Interviews with 130 internal and external stakeholders were conducted.

RESULTS

The main findings

The RP structure has been used as a strategic umbrella and a political document rather than a programmatic tool. Moreover, the partnership with LAS has been critical to obtain MS political buy in and legitimacy. The creation of the Programme Coordination and Analysis Unit (PCAU) in ROMENA enhanced management efficiency and enabled UNODC to raise funds at the regional level and access soft-earmarked funding, which proved to be more strategic and more flexible to meet MS's needs. Considering the highly volatile context in the region, UNODC showed flexibility and resilience but delays in the implementation of projects were reported.

In addition, the RP's logframe could be improved with SMART indicators and mutually exclusive outcomes for more effective measurement and impact assessment. Finally, the RP's lack of sustainability strategy was compensated by a series of measures such as MS local ownership and mentoring programmes to create institutional memory. However, the next RP could benefit from a clearer exit and sustainability strategy.



Division of Projects, Sub Programmes and Countries

QUICK FACTS

COUNTRIES:

Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, State of Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, UAE, Yemen

EVALUATION TEAM:

Emmanuelle Diehl, Team Leader; Elca Stigter, Justice Sector Evaluator; Anna Leena Lohiniva, Health and Drug Sector Evaluator; Emanuel Lohninger, IEU.

PROGRAMME DURATION:

2011-2015

PROGRAMME COORDINATOR:

Mr. Julien Garsany (since November 2014)

DONORS:

US INL, EU, Canada, Norway, Qatar Foundation Against Human Trafficking, Japan, Korea, UNDP

PROGRAMME BUDGET:

USD\$76,926,866

IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:

UNODC

EVALUATION REPORT:

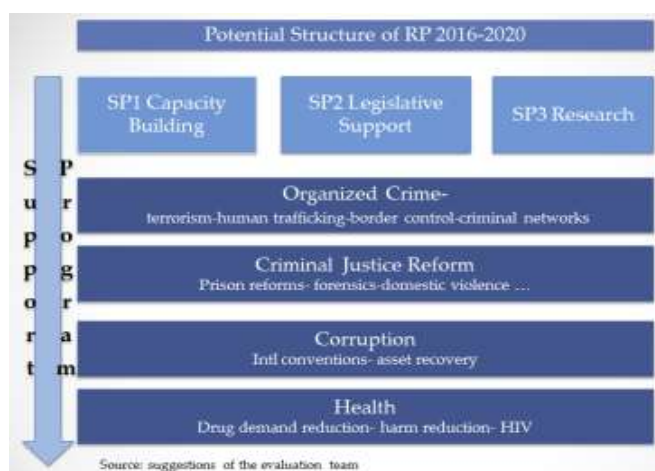


Tinyurl Evaluation Report (please click): <http://goo.gl/HK6bky>

Main conclusions

The RP was designed before critical socio-political and economic changes affected the region in January 2011 but it nonetheless managed to adapt to Member States' new context and priorities. Despite a lot of contextual, financial, managerial and procedural challenges, the RP succeeded in implementing 48 projects in 18 countries in the region.

Moreover, it gathered countries around a set of priorities; started implementing long-term legislative reforms; built a pool of trained professionals across different countries in the region; maintained donors' interests; fostered partnerships amongst strategic international and local organizations as well as with the League of Arab States that played a critical role in raising the RP's legitimacy and obtaining Member States' political buy in; and finally it demonstrated replicable good practices and instilled a sense of 'regionality' amongst UNODC's staff and amongst Member States. All stakeholders concurred on the need to continue with a second RP 2016-2021, based on lessons learned, best practices and recommendations issued from this RP.



Suggested Logical framework for RP 2016-2021 by Evaluation team.

Key UNODC accomplishments

UNODC has leveraged its added advantage in the region to implement 48 projects across three sub programmes: one on international organized crime and terrorism; the second on criminal justice and corruption and the third on health and drug demand and harm reduction. Furthermore, UNODC fostered a strategic partnership with the League of Arab States that raised visibility and legitimacy of this RP.

Main Recommendations

Strategic vs Programmatic - UNODC offices should gauge the pros and cons of the objectives and its best implementing structure: whether the objectives are best reflected in a strategic document that works as an umbrella/guideline vs a programmatic approach with outcomes and indicators. Based on this evaluation's findings, the RP best operated as a strategic umbrella rather than a programmatic tool. This structure should be preferred for the next RP.

LAS partnership - UNODC should pursue its partnership with LAS to maintain MS continuous engagement and support.

Fundraising & strategic communication - An integrated and strategic fund raising effort should be encouraged between HQ, Programme and Regional Offices.

RP Structure & design - Clearer indicators, outcomes and the overall structure of the log-frame should be revisited. Indicators and outcomes should be Strategic, Measurable, Achievable and Time-bound (SMART) and outcomes should be mutually exclusive.

Conflict sensitive strategy and programming - It is key for UNODC's regional and country offices to have a conflict and post conflict engagement strategy as well as closer connections with UNDPKO, the broader international community, financial institutions and a large spectrum of national stakeholders.

Programme Coordination and Analysis Unit (PCAU) for regional support and integration - the PCAU's mandate is clear and should be reconsidered for the next RP.

Sustainability - UNODC Offices (ROMENA and HQ) should proffer in the next RP MS' national ownership and mutual responsibility to achieve RP objective and enduring sustainability.

LESSONS LEARNED AND BEST PRACTICES

Main Lessons Learned

- **Lack of coordinated fund raising efforts** – a lack of coordinated efforts between HQ and Regional Offices can lead to missed opportunities and sole funded projects that can delay activities or lead to closing offices.
- **One-time workshop** - need to promote further mentoring processes into projects design in order to foster enduring learning curves and embed institutional memory within organizations
- **Lack of visibility and knowledge of the RP** – few local counterparts were aware of the RP objectives, which led to missed opportunities

Main Best Practices

- **Partnerships with the LAS** has been strategic to obtain political buy in and continuous engagement of MS
- **Aligning the RP & its projects** with others from international organizations and local counterparts can help with data and cost sharing, joint programming, and greater visibility.
- **Soft-earmarked funding** for flexibility and project fitting country needs.
- **Regional conferences and workshops** for experience sharing.
- **The PCAU** for regional management of the RP helps manage and liaise with HQ.

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