



IN-DEPTH CLUSTER EVALUATION OF THE GLOBAL SMART (GLOJ88) AND FORENSIC SUPPORT (GLOU54) PROGRAMMES

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Summary of the project purpose

UNODC's mandate for building scientific and forensic capacity emanates from 1954 General Assembly Resolution 834 (IX). The present work in the forensic field was consolidated under the Global Scientific and Forensic Services Programme Support Project (FORENSIC) in 2009. Further, specific activities relating to synthetic drugs issues are implemented through a support project called the Global Synthetics Monitoring, Analysis, Reporting and Trends Programme (SMART). SMART was launched in 2008 to assist governments in generating and analysing data on synthetic drugs and new psychoactive substances.

The objectives

- 1 To ensure Member States have access to and use quality forensic science services in support of their efforts to counter drugs and crime (FORENSIC)
- 2 To enable Member States to make effective evidence based decisions to counter the problem of synthetic drugs/new psychoactive substances (SMART)

Purpose of the evaluation

FORENSIC and SMART have been running for six and seven years respectively and have not been evaluated since their initiation. The evaluation was undertaken both to assess the progress made by SMART and FORENSIC so far and (more importantly) to draw lessons and chart future directions for the programmes and UNODC management.

Methodology of evaluation

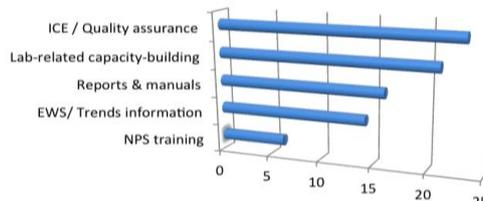
The evaluation covered January 2011 to November 2015, using a mixed-methods approach with adequate triangulation to arrive at credible, reliable and unbiased findings. Primary sources of information were 97 interviews with stakeholders, survey completed by 56 respondents, field missions to Latin America and South East Asia, focus groups and observation. Secondary sources included project documents and archival data available from partner organizations.

RESULTS

The main findings

Both programmes delivered results that are highly relevant to UNODC's mandates to the satisfaction of all stakeholders in targeted countries. They have made a significant contribution to capacity building, and are on a credible trajectory to achieve their larger objectives, although technological advances offer opportunities for further expansion of training without increase in financial support. SMART has promoted greater awareness on emerging trends of new psychoactive substances (NPS), and 57 Member States had already enacted legislation with inputs from SMART by the end of 2015. FORENSIC has significantly impacted on quality assurance in forensic laboratories, and its International Collaborative Exercises (ICE) are widely appreciated. Both programmes have benefitted from close interaction with each other, and possibilities for their merger should be explored.

Top 5 Strengths (as perceived by survey respondents)



QUICK FACTS

COUNTRIES:

SMART: Global, focus in SE Asia, Latin America
FORENSIC: Global

EVALUATION TEAM:

Dr Punit Arora
Dr Robert Anderson
Mr Emanuel Lohninger

PROGRAMME DURATION:

SMART: since 2008
FORENSIC: since 2009

PROGRAMME CODES:

GLOJ88: SMART
GLOU54: Forensic Support

PROGRAMME COORDINATORS:

GLOJ88: Dr Martin Raitelhuber
GLOU54: Dr Iphigenia Naidis

DONORS:

Australia, Canada, Finland, France, Japan, New Zealand, Russian Federation, Republic of Korea, Sweden, Thailand, United Kingdom, UNDP, United Arab Emirates, United States of America

PROGRAMME BUDGET:

GLOJ88: US\$ 8,001,156
GLOU54: US\$ 3,797,000

IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:

UNODC Laboratory and Scientific Section, Research and Trend Analysis Branch, Division for Policy Analysis & Public Affairs.

EVALUATION REPORT:



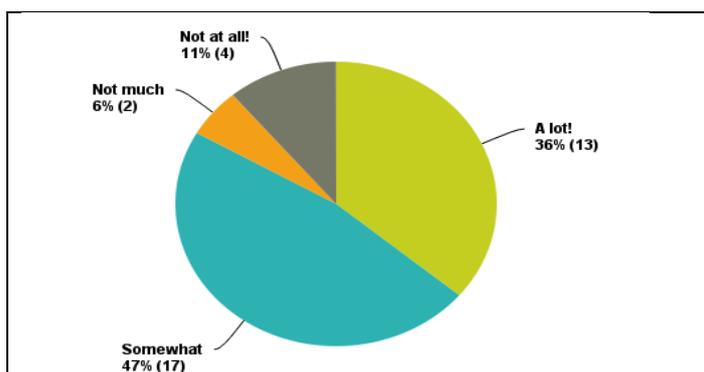
For accessing the report, please scan QR-code (left) or click the following link:

<http://goo.gl/ko3xKS>

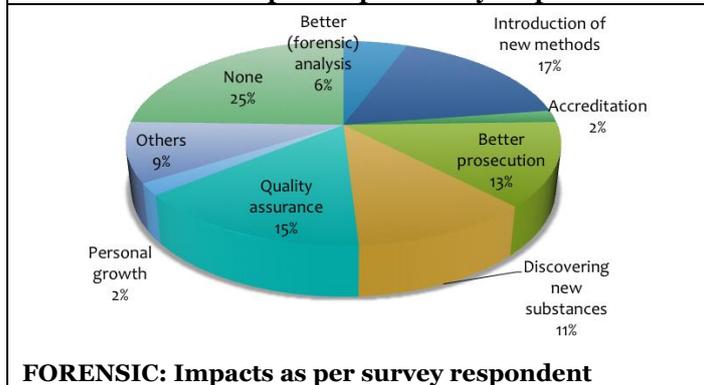
Main conclusions

SMART and FORENSIC are delivering their intended outcomes and outputs in a cost-effective and timely manner, with some regional variations due to resource constraints. SMART has created awareness on synthetic drugs, particularly NPS. It has higher visibility, as it focuses on interactions with governments and external agencies. It should now focus on increasing the speed and frequency of communications with policymakers and other stakeholders.

FORENSIC has been effective in capacity building, especially in improving laboratory quality assurance practices through its International Collaborative Exercises (ICE). It helps SMART succeed but needs a better branding and communication strategy.



SMART: Level of impact as per survey respondents



FORENSIC: Impacts as per survey respondent

The demand for training at all levels in conventional and new fields should make more use of new technology. The quality of data collected by both the programmes for planning, monitoring & evaluation needs to be improved. Partnerships between LSS and other agencies could be more effective and enhanced collaboration with universities and research institutions is needed.

Strategic priorities come from a number of sources but could also include those identified by the governments willing to resource the proposed activities, coordinated by the Laboratory and Scientific Section (LSS). Regional offices and representatives are effective for developing global programmes but communication between HQ, regional offices and stakeholders could be further improved.

Key UNODC accomplishments

UNODC has strategically implemented its mandates to assist Member States control drugs and crime through these two programmes. While the rapid growth of illicit drugs continues to be an international concern, it is also evident that these two

programmes are succeeding in building capacity of Member States to deal with these concerns.

Main Recommendations

LSS should persist with both these successful programmes with a renewed focus to expand to underserved regions (e.g., Africa), providing support tailored to each country's needs.

SMART should expand its partnerships, e.g. with WHO, and geographic reach, and should focus on increasing the speed and frequency of information provided to stakeholders. LSS should also increase the speed and frequency with which it provides local and regional, i.e. actionable, information to policymakers and other stakeholders.

FORENSIC should develop a new recognizable identity to communicate its work, using technology to economize on training, allowing ICE and other forensic support to expand. The possibility of combining the programmes should be explored.

Planning, monitoring & evaluation systems within UNODC, in particular for data collection, should be reviewed to generate more granular information for managerial decision-making.

LSS should strengthen the existing partnership with WHO and continue to identify and form new partnerships, including with universities and research institutes.

LSS should seek greater input from governments to ensure sustainable funding for its activities and to localize its products and services.

LESSONS LEARNED AND BEST PRACTICES

Main Lessons Learned

(1) Drug Abuse Information Network for Asia and the Pacific (DAINAP), an online drug-data collection and sharing system for ASEAN countries and China, is potentially an important innovation introduced by SMART but needs to be hosted by an official entity such as UNODC or ASEAN. (2) Requests for more frequent reports generally require shorter and more relevant information tailored to needs. This is better served by way of website articles, blogs, podcasts and newsletters. While programmes may print a few hard copies, in general they are no longer required. (3) Country-specific summary evaluations are considered valuable by the laboratories that participate in several rounds of ICE as many are not able to do it on their own. This is something that LSS could explore, if resources permit.

Main Best Practices

ICE operated by FORENSIC and Early Warning Advisory (EWA) by SMART are both examples of best practices. Both these components involve extensive stakeholder engagement, and could serve as a model for other programmes.

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