EVALUATION BRIEF

Final Independent In-depth Evaluation of the Global Action against Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants (GLO.ACT)

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The Global Action against Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants (GLO.ACT) was a joint initiative by the European Union (EU) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). It is implemented by the UNODC Human Trafficking and Smuggling of Migrants Section (HTMSS) in partnership with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF).

GLO.ACT aims to provide assistance to governmental authorities and civil society organizations to prevent and address trafficking in persons (TIP) and the smuggling of migrants (SOM) across 13 countries: Belarus, Brazil, Colombia, Egypt, the Kyrgyz Republic, Lao PDR, Mali, Morocco, Nepal, Niger, Pakistan, South Africa, and Ukraine.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The final independent evaluation was undertaken, using a participatory, inclusive, mixed methods and gender-sensitive evaluation approach. The purpose of the evaluation was to assess GLO.ACT achievements using the OECD/Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria in order to derive lessons learned as well as best practices for the next phase (GLO.ACT Asia and the Middle East\(^1\) and GLO.ACT Bangladesh\(^2\)) as well as for future project planning in the area of TIP and SOM. The evaluators triangulated findings emerging from various tools and methods (desk review, interviews, surveys and workshops).

Seven of the 13 GLO.ACT countries were visited and 315 people were consulted (48% women).

MAIN FINDINGS

The evaluation found that GLO.ACT has contributed to many positive transformations in tackling TIP and SOM and assisting victims and vulnerable migrants across countries. Most significantly it has influenced laws and policies and built the capacity of key stakeholders and partner organisations.

In terms of relevance, the main needs related to TIP and SOM identified by the countries have generally been tackled by GLO.ACT. The project has further shone light onto sensitive topics which have made it more relevant.

The process of designing GLO.ACT, that is, deciding what was going to be done, why and where, did not end when the project agreement was concluded. In some countries, this resulted in the implementation phase being reduced, increasing the pressure for delivery of activities and meant that the design of national theories of change (ToCs) was

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never completed, which has had effects throughout the project. The implementation pace of GLO.ACT has been satisfactory and the technical quality of the activities has been high. However, to capture effectively how they contributed to change, monitoring tools should have adapted to the national ToCs.

Institutional issues relating to financial management hampered the management of the project in certain instances during the implementation cycle as the team had only limited access to real-time reliable financial information. Even so, the delivery rate was very high.

GLO.ACT has been managed by a dynamic, professional and very committed team. The management model has been based on the placement of National Project Officers (NPOs) in almost all project countries which has proven to be extremely successful. However, not all NPOs have had the same level of support from UNODC and national partners nor expertise, which has had an impact on the success of GLO.ACT.

GLO.ACT has established successful partnerships with multiple actors, in particular with national agencies. In principle, the project was implemented in partnership with IOM and UNICEF but this partnership did not fully materialise in all countries.

The GLO.ACT team were committed to integrating gender and Human Rights into the project and in fact many positive examples were found. However, the project would have benefited from a clearer plan to mainstream gender and Human Rights.

**MAIN LESSONS LEARNED**

The main added value of UNODC vis a vis other agencies stems from the legitimacy and expertise related to its normative work and its role as the guardians of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and its Protocols.

Working with a national ToC would help understanding and capturing the interaction between the work of GLO.ACT and its effects, as well as ensuring a victim-centred focus at all times.

Some countries implement at a different pace for reasons outside the control of a project. This should have been acknowledged and integrated realistically in the project.

Sustainability depends largely on the degree to which two key actors remain involved in addressing TIP and SOM beyond GLO.ACT. They are a) a guardian of the UNTOC, ideally the UNODC Country Office; and b) a national agency leading the process.

**MAIN BEST PRACTICES**

GLO.ACT has reached where it was needed, going beyond the capital cities, sometimes in remote areas.

Some countries have clearly integrated GLO.ACT into the UNODC Country Strategy and/or their national strategies, showing a high level of ownership.

UNODC, through the project, has often used the convening power of UN to bring civil society actors to the table.

The project often developed multi-disciplinary training, using local trainers and ensuring representation of victims’ needs. There was an excellent flow of information between Vienna and the NPOs using informal channels and a warm management style.