

EVALUATION BRIEFS

FINAL INDEPENDENT PROJECT EVALUATION

INCB Databank for Precursor Control (GLO565)

Region: Worldwide

Duration: 1992 - 2022.

Donors: Australia, Canada, EU, France, Japan, Russian Federation, Switzerland Turkey, United States

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Full report:

<https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/evalua>

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

GLO565 was created in 1992 with the aim to respond to the mandate that the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988 assigned to the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB). The project has provided for the development and maintenance of the central databank on precursors, including administering Governments' reporting to the Board (Form D¹) and the operation of the system of pre-export notifications mandated under the 1988 Convention. GLO565 was created using extra-budgetary resources.

MAIN FINDINGS

GLO565 continues to be relevant given its support for a mandate and activity within the 1988 Convention. The increasing number of

new non-scheduled precursors appearing and the lengthy and time-consuming process of scheduling, represent important challenges to the success of the project. Both staff paid by the GLO565 programme and those paid by Regular Budget resources contribute interchangeably to the overall activities of the Precursors Control Section, making it difficult to differentiate them. A key tool like the databank on precursors, as part of the Board's internal database known as International Drug Control System (IDS), requires urgent revamping. PEN Online continues to serve the purpose of the users although its design requires some service improvements. The logical framework (logframe) of the programme does not reflect all that the programme is doing and while it is apparent that the project has contributed to strengthening international precursor control, the logframe does not have suitable indicators to capture this impact. The partnership between the INCB and UNODC has brought together the INCB's expertise in precursor control and closer access to some regions and countries. Partnerships with regional and global organisations have offered the opportunity to connect with a wider number of public and private entities. GLO565 has also succeeded in involving the chemical sector. It has provided Governments with the capacity building support, tools, resources, information, analysis, training, and technical advice needed to increase their capacity and effectiveness in precursor chemical control. However, in the absence of suitable indicators as mentioned above, it is difficult to assess the extent to which Governments are aware of and have accessed these tools and resources. GLO565 has also served to increase the awareness of many Governments regarding new precursors being diverted and used. It has also contributed to helping them in the investigation of cases and in stopping diversion. However, also in this case, in the absence of specific indicators, it is difficult to quantify the extent to which GLO565 has helped Governments to identify and address weaknesses. The results of GLO565 are sustainable to the extent that countries continue to share and use information on a voluntary basis through the tools provided by the



¹ Form D is the vehicle that governments use to report certain information to the INCB as required by the 1988 Convention.

programme. It also depends on the willingness of Governments to take action and implement the recommendations received from the INCB and its Secretariat. External funding is key to sustaining the programme adequately. Programme communication is an effective tool to promote awareness of the importance and potential benefits of GLO565 and to encourage countries to participate in the activities of the programme. It can also serve to make the results of the programme more visible and broaden the funding base. Human rights is not mainstreamed in the project but is noted in the Annual Report of INCB. The precursor control project is gender neutral. Gender aspects are considered in the selection of staffing and Task Force participation.

LESSONS LEARNED

The voluntary cooperation of governments is essential to the success of this programme. A more strategic approach and long-term planning process helps to address more comprehensively strategic issues such as operational activities, communication, technology, resource mobilization and partnership development, among others. At the same time, a clear theory of change also facilitates implementation and monitoring and evaluation of the programme. In addition, new challenges and threats in precursor control mean that new actors, such as those in the private sector, need to be taken into account.

GOOD PRACTICES

The specialized management, technical expertise, experience, flexibility and support of the INCB Secretariat precursor control staff and Precursor Control Task Force members are critical to effective precursor control. In addition, the innovative approaches applied by GLO565 have enabled it to respond effectively to the new challenges that it faces with respect to the control of precursors.

METHODOLOGY

The evaluation applied a mixed methods approach, consisting of a desk review of relevant documents, online surveys to PEN Online users and Competent National Authorities (CNAs) as well as INCB Board Members, and semi-structured interviews with INCB Secretariat Staff, INCB Board Members, Task Force Members, Regional Partners, PEN Online users, CNAs, and the donor. The PEN Online users and CNAs survey was answered by 69 respondents and the Board survey, by 5 members. In total 28 semi-structured interviews were conducted with 39 interviewees (most were individual interviews; some were conducted with more than 3 participants). They were done remotely through online calls.

The information obtained was triangulated to validate information from different sources. This led to the formulation of findings under each evaluation criterion, addressing evaluation questions. Conclusions were based on findings, and recommendations were developed accordingly.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Design a new project with clear theory of change and M&E framework to enhance project implementation.
2. Develop a communication strategy directed at Governments to promote the precursor control project.
3. Develop a strategy to establish a more dependable source of funding that responds to current and future resource needs for precursor control activities.
4. Review the status of systems or tools such as IDS, PEN online and PICS and develop a long-term plan for their development, support and maintenance to meet current and future needs in order to ensure their proper functioning and funding.
5. Develop a strategic plan to expand partnership opportunities with regional organizations and to strengthen and more clearly define the working relationship with UNODC and, where appropriate, with its regional and country offices. Develop mechanisms to engage other related private sectors.



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INDEPENDENT EVALUATION SECTION

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