EVALUATION BRIEFS

FINAL INDEPENDENT PROJECT EVALUATION

SAFETY GOVERNANCE APPROACH IN URBAN ENVIRONMENTS FOR SAFE, INCLUSIVE, AND RESILIENT COMMUNITIES PROJECT

Region: Kenya, Mexico, and Uzbekistan

Duration: 12/2018 - 02/2022

Donor: United Nations Development Account (UNDA)

Evaluation team: Mr. Raul Guerrero (Evaluation Expert) and Ms. Aida Alymbaeva (Substantive Expert)
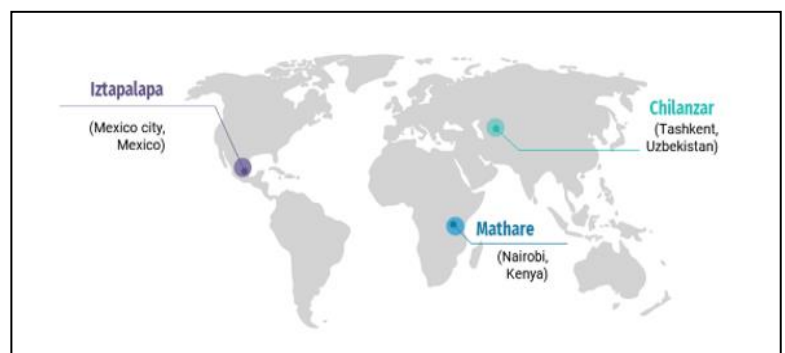
Full report:
https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/evaluation/reports_year_2022.html

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

UNDOC developed the Urban Safety Governance Approach (USGA) to contribute to the achievement of safer and more resilient city environments. UNODC launched this project to pilot the USGA encompassing not only the UNODC's mandate areas. The USGA was expected to produce an in-depth understanding of localized risk factors of crime and it was designed to guide policymakers to understand better how to address the security threats. The USGA was piloted in three municipalities in three different countries: Iztapalapa municipality in Mexico City (Mexico), Mathare county in Nairobi (Kenya), and Chilanzar District in Tashkent (Uzbekistan).

MAIN FINDINGS

Relevance: The project was relevant for municipal and national governments, CSOs and vulnerable groups in the three pilot countries. It was aligned with global instruments and strategies such as the SDGs, New Urban Agenda, Doha Declaration, the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, and the UN Convention against Corruption. The project was responsive to the context of each individual city. **Efficiency:** The project implemented activities in a timely and efficient manner by adding a pilot in a third country (Uzbekistan). Despite some delays related to Covid-19, quality outputs were delivered. Stakeholders acknowledged the added value of the scientific innovative approach proposed by the project. **Coherence:** The project contributed to strengthening the partnership between the UNODC field offices and government stakeholders in pilot countries. It also promoted partnerships with and among local CSOs. **Effectiveness:** Despite limitations, the evaluation found evidence of the contribution of the project to help local authorities to identify evidence-based priority areas of security concern and to serve as the basis to formulate policies, including crime prevention strategies. The project focused on the 1st stage of the USGA (data collection and analysis). Although the 2nd and 3rd stages were also targeted to a certain extent (policy formulation and monitoring), the planned activities were not implemented due to the COVID-19 restrictions and time limitations. **Impact:** The project did not develop integrated action plans to address the USGA recommendations. It should be recognized that policy changes entail longer periods that go beyond the implementation timeframe and capacities of the project, but a clear exit strategy was not developed. Nevertheless, the project contributed to promoting concrete follow-up actions to address issues related to drugs, corruption, and crime in some of the pilot cities. **Sustainability:** Government counterparts had a stake in the project. Yet, their role in the project implementation was rather limited.

Although government stakeholders coordinated the research processes and engaged in data collection, external consultants largely led the research (data collection, data analysis, and report writing). The government counterparts in three pilot countries need continued UNODC assistance to replicate the USGA in new districts. Human Rights, Gender Equality, and Leaving No One Behind: The project design and implementation aligned with the principles of human rights, gender equality, and leaving no one behind.
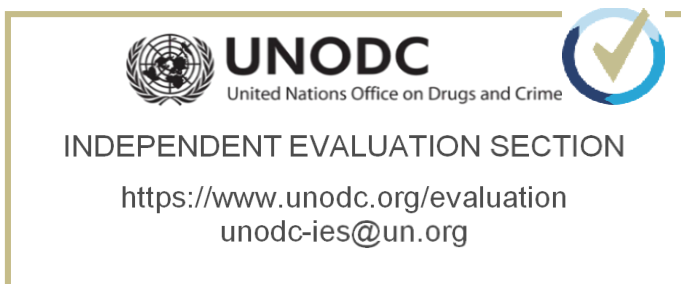
LESSONS LEARNED

Project timeline: Ideally, the time horizon to pilot the USGA in each country needed to be longer (up to 4 years). Two years devoted to each country was insufficient to broadly cover the second project outcome of the development and monitoring of evidence-based policies. The project timeline was also affected by COVID-19 which delayed the launch of many project activities. **Project implementation:** By working directly with local government agencies, the project allowed targeting important actors in the policy response to local crime. On the other hand, organized crime, illicit trafficking, economic fraud, corruption, and extremism call for interaction with national governments. **Research tools:** The project developed products (two guides on the USGA) that can be used in different countries and adapted to different contexts such as natural disasters, pandemics, or other crisis situations with a view to assessing the immediate concerns of communities.

GOOD PRACTICES

The project engaged a diverse range of stakeholders to identify the safety and security needs of local communities in three pilot locations. The report validation and report launch events served as an effective mechanism to build communication and dialogue between governments and CSOs representing the interests of marginalized groups in pilot cities. The project strategy of involving CSOs in the research processes was instrumental in addressing human rights issues and responding to the needs of vulnerable groups. CSOs helped to have access to the vulnerable groups (e.g., LGBTQ+ groups or sexual workers) in order to identify their safety and security needs and reflect them in the USGA.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Policy Recommendations Implementation and Monitoring:** Provide support to the governments in the three pilot countries to implement and monitor the USGA policy recommendations.
2. **E-learning:** Ensure that the e-learning module provides a vehicle for interested parties to carry out the USGA.
3. **Knowledge Management:** Gather evidence from the three pilots to increase understanding on what skills are needed to use the USGA tools in different contexts.
4. **Project Design and Theory of Change:** Include implementation and monitoring of policy recommendations as an integral and central part of the next projects in this area.
5. **Feasibility and Accountability:** Realistically estimate the allotment to cover the technical and administrative support required by UNDA projects.
6. **Exit Strategy:** Envisage an exit strategy at project out set to maximize sustainability.
7. **Capacity Development:** Boost the capacity development activities for government counterparts in pilot countries so that they gain enough skills to scale up the USGA on their own.
8. **Human Rights, Gender Equality and Leaving No One Behind:** Incorporate gender-responsive outputs and gender-disaggregated indicators in the design and reporting of future projects.

METHODOLOGY

A mixed-method approach was used to triangulate information and validate the evaluation findings. It included desk research, 24 remote semi-structured interviews (16 female and 8 male), and an anonymous survey of 24 direct beneficiaries (participants in the activities). The evaluation findings were based on sound evidence and analysis. The evaluation's methodology and data collection tools and instruments considered the limitations due to the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the complexity related to the disparity of context in the three countries targeted by the project.

INDEPENDENT EVALUATION SECTION

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