

EVALUATION BRIEFS

INDEPENDENT IN-DEPTH CLUSTER EVALUATION OF UNODC WORK ON ANTICORRUPTION IN MEXICO

Country/Region: Mexico, Latin America.

Duration/scope:

MEXZ95: 15/09/2016-16/09/2018 MEXW26:
05/07/2017- ongoing

MEXW72: 01/11/2018-31/10/2021

MEXW41: 14/06/2018- ongoing

GLOZ99 segment: 10/2019-09/2023

MEXAB5: 01/10/2019-31/01/2023

MEXAD4: 01/08/2021-28/02/2023

Donors: Mexico (Federal Gov. and States),
Joint SDG Fund, UK, USA, Siemens

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Full report:

[https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/evaluation
/reports_year_2023.html](https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/evaluation/reports_year_2023.html)

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Based on the 2012 agreement on Mexico's partnership with the UNODC Office in Mexico, 2015 marked the formal beginning of the UNODC anti-corruption (AC) portfolio in Mexico. The evaluated AC cluster, from 2016 to 2022, included seven projects: **MEXW26** over-arching programme of technical assistance to the federal and later sub-national governments. **MEXAD4** dealt with risks and resource allocation for SDGs; **MEXZ95** provided technical and strategic assistance to corruption prevention in Mexico City; **MEXW72** dealt with awareness raising and capacity building against money laundering. **MEXW41** tackled budget transparency in the state of Nuevo León. This suite of projects set the trajectory of UNODC's AC portfolio, which culminated with **MEXAB5**, a larger, more strategic USAID-funded project for Strengthening Corruption Prevention Capacities in Mexico. A segment of the global programme **GLOZ99** allowed UNODC Mexico to test privately funded initiatives in higher education, linking energy and pharmaceutical companies with universities to set the basis for compliance and good practices in the private sector.

MAIN FINDINGS

Relevance: Relevance of activities to Mexico's requirements is highly substantiated. UNODC has been acknowledged as the guardian of the Convention, which has partly been converted into reliance on the Office as a convener of AC actors. The office has remained relevant by crafting its space in anticorruption landscape to fill the existent gaps and adapt to the implementation context, focusing on prevention and expanding its partnerships at Federal and State levels. Relevance could have been enhanced by structuring the portfolio more strategically and enhancing monitoring, reporting, and learning functions.

Effectiveness: By transferring knowledge and know-how, benchmarking, and good practices to its AC partners, UNODC Mexico has created necessary conditions for harmonisation of the regulatory framework and practices with UNCAC, especially at the State level. UNODC acted as a catalyst for the implementation of the national AC framework, including at State level through modelling and deployment of tailored tools. The (limited) data available suggests the emergence of new attitudes. Through innovative mechanisms based on the Convention, such as peer review and citizen participation, UNODC has contributed to networking emerging AC stakeholders towards corruption and anti-corruption among certain target groups.



Source: Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI)

Sustainability: Given the complex and changing environment, UNODC's business model, and the constraints presented by current funding agreements, ensuring the sustainability of UNODC's work on AC in Mexico is particularly challenging. The resources of the UNODC Office in Mexico have been stretched by the multiplication of partners, leading sometimes

to delayed implementation of some projects. The portfolio itself can only become sustainable through a more strategic approach to planning and resource mobilization. The level of ownership towards the projects' outcomes is uneven, ranging from very strong to limited.

Human Rights, Gender Equality and Leave No One Behind: UNODC Mexico made sporadic efforts to include a human rights approach in the AC projects, and to mainstream AC from a human rights perspective throughout UNODC Mexico's pillars, though with limited effects. The evaluation found some evidence of gender mainstreaming and leave no one behind approach at activity level. However, there is no evidence that project design is underpinned by gender or inclusion analysis, or that projects envisage gender equality and Leave No One Behind.

LESSONS LEARNED AND GOOD PRACTICES

Lessons learned centre on the need for thematic backup for programming from the HQ, which includes up-front investment in research and portfolio design. Such early investment would help the field office to capitalize on UNODC "products of excellence" in AC mandates. The scope of the projects must be carefully considered to match with the project management capacity and administrative infrastructures. Good practice in adapting the UNCAC to the State level in a federal country was identified, which led to transfer of the international peer-to-peer mechanism to the inter-State level, thus boosting the implementation of the Convention to Mexico's in constitutional and legal context. Another good practice was the networking of companies with universities and public institutions to set up the UNCAC-inspired basis for compliance and good practices in the private sector.

METHODOLOGY

This evaluation aimed to generate evaluative knowledge about the portfolio to ensure accountability, entice institutional learning, and inform decision-making in terms of project design, implementation, and resource mobilisation. The evaluation team combined qualitative and quantitative data glimpsed through document review, interviews, direct observation, and a survey to beneficiaries of all scoped projects, with a focus on the changes experienced over time. MEXAB5 served as a case study and was dissected in more detail.



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INDEPENDENT EVALUATION SECTION

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RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Further increase the strategic focus of technical assistance and seize opportunities for scaling-up AC support to Mexican States: Building on innovative collaboration with Mexico for the implementation of UNCAC recommendations at the State level, UNODC Mexico should develop a concept boosting the strategic focus of technical assistance on AC to State-level counterparts.

2. Increase the focus on education to integrity for strengthening the sustainability of UNODC efforts on AC in Mexico: Building on the sound design, strong partnership, and effective implementation of GLOZ99, UNODC Mexico should increase its focus on education to integrity in higher education in partnership with the private sector, in consultation with UNODC Regional and HQ staff.

3. Develop a full-fledged roadmap for future work on anti-corruption in Mexico: UNODC Mexico should elaborate a full-fledged roadmap for its future work on the prevention and fight against corruption and economic crime in Mexico, in consultation with UNODC Regional and HQ staff.

4. Strengthen partnerships and develop evidence-based, structured modular support on anti-corruption, chiefly targeted to State-level entities: UNODC Mexico should design a structured, evidence-based modular offer of support for corruption prevention, chiefly targeted at State-level partner building upon peer-to-peer evaluation among States, support to CPCs, inclusion of AC in universities' curricula.

5. Further invest in knowledge management and research: UNODC Mexico should invest in knowledge generation and management to support a future portfolio on AC in Mexico, in consultation with the AC Project Team in the CO, as well as with CEB in HQ and the Regional Hub.

6. Strengthen RBM at the project level: In the design of a future portfolio on AC in Mexico, UNODC Mexico should elaborate for each project a set of indicators at results level, with resources dedicated to monitoring and reporting results both at the output level and at the outcome level.

7. Strengthen administrative communication and collaboration with HQ: UNODC Mexico should strengthen its communication and collaboration with HQ to better identify the challenges faced administratively as well as their root causes, and to propose solutions drawing from good practices and lessons learned from other FOs, with a view to strengthening procurement and administrative procedures as well as project management capabilities in UNODC Mexico.