

EVALUATION BRIEF

FINAL INDEPENDENT IN-DEPTH EVALUATION

Union support for the universalisation and effective implementation of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism – ICSANT (segment of GLOTP1)

Region: Global

Duration: April 2019-June 2023
(including two no-cost extensions due to Covid-19 constraints)

Donors: European Union

Evaluation team: Deborah Alimi (Lead evaluator), Marta Walker (Substantive expert – Nuclear Security) and Miri Sharon (Substantive expert- Criminal Justice)

Full report:

https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/evaluation/reports_year_2023.html

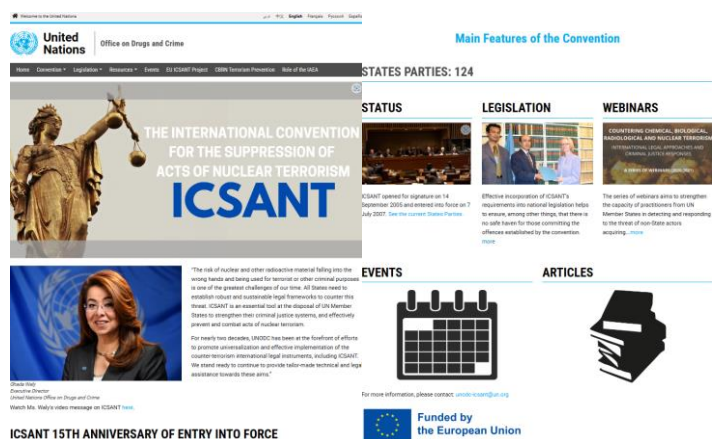
BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

As thematic segment of the UNODC Global Programme on Preventing and Countering Terrorism (2022-2027), the project refers to one of the core functions of UNODC. It supports Member States in the implementation of the obligations established under ICSANT, one of the 19 international legal instruments against terrorism that UNODC is mandated to promote and the sole legally binding international legal instrument relating to the security of radioactive material. Funded by the European Union (EU), the project developed strong outreach activities, reference knowledge products and tools (website, a training manual and eLearning materials), legislative and capacity-building activities towards the universalisation and the effective implementation of ICSANT globally, with a specific focus on Asia, South-east Europe, and Africa. It is complementary to a Canada-funded project on ICSANT and other relevant nuclear security legal instruments.

MAIN FINDINGS

The project successfully contributed to building and sustaining momentum on the importance of the universalisation of ICSANT across

interested stakeholders and partners. While treaties' adherence processes result from many different factors and considerations – whether political, economic, legal or others, the evaluation shows that the project certainly acted as a key knowledge and awareness broker on ICSANT, including at national levels, contributing to advancing ICSANT universalisation and prioritization at the global level. Five additional countries have ratified ICSANT during the implementation period of the project; and the project activities in concerned and requesting countries have positively contributed to accompanying that process. The ICSANT reference website presentations at regional and international events and country visits were particularly useful to deepen interested Member States' understanding of ICSANT's provisions and their practical application. While legislative assistance was promoted and available to potential beneficiary countries upon Member States request, limited demand was observed. Relevant to the current geopolitical context and UNODC priorities and mandate in the field of nuclear terrorism, the project was highly efficient in producing most of



Source: ICSANT Website Page

the expected outputs in a timely manner, adequately adapting to the challenges and delays caused by Covid-19. This notably highlighted the high expertise, professionalism and pro-activeness of its management and team. Thanks to the project cooperation practices, notably with IAEA and UNODA, project awareness and outreach interventions have been advanced in a coherent and synergetic manner but have been articulated using a delivery-oriented logic, rather than formalized or joint frameworks. Despite regular follow-up with counterparts, the project monitoring system focuses on activities and outputs, and seizes in a limited manner medium- to long-term impact. A more thorough assessment could have been conducted to identify relevant aspects of gender equality, human rights, disability inclusion and leaving no one behind in the nuclear security field.

LESSONS LEARNED

The project underlines the importance of developing diversified and comprehensive knowledge tools that ensure accuracy and timeliness of the information, the user-friendliness of the interface, the availability of resources and tools that address specific needs and are translated in all official UN languages (some also in other non-official languages). More broadly at the thematic level, the project demonstrated the added value of having a thematic-focused project on ICSANT to increase project coherence and effectiveness regarding the prioritisation of ICSANT universalisation at regional and global levels. It allows a specific content-centred outreach and a creative and diverse knowledge production, tailored to the specific needs and requirements for ICSANT adherence. At the management level, the inclusion of the project as a thematically focused segment on ICSANT within the global TPB programming contributed to the project's internal coherence and efficiency, however, it could benefit from more visibility 'in-house'.

GOOD PRACTICES

To increase awareness on ICSANT, the project successfully built synergies across specialized organizations and made an optimized use of international specialized platforms, events, and networks, notably with IAEA. It not only enabled to advance the promotion of universal security goals in a coherent manner, considering the different mandates of the organizations, but also contributed to consolidate UNODC's core functions and added value in the field of nuclear terrorism prevention.

METHODOLOGY

Covering the operational period (April 2019-June 2023), the evaluation followed a theory-based, human-rights, gender-sensitive, and mixed-method approach, in line with UN and UNEG norms and standards. Based on OECD/DAC evaluation criteria, it assessed the project's main results and gains, analysed its operational rationale, while focusing on the usefulness of its outreach and knowledge outputs, its direct impact, and sustainability mainly at the regional level. A corpus of primary and secondary sources of information (52 project and external documents) were collected and triangulated, including 2 focus groups with the Project Team, 45 interviews (M= 20, F= 25; out of 67 requests) with key informants (project management, stakeholders and interested parties); a voluntary end-user online survey (yet with a response rate of 10%) and a field mission in Vienna, Austria at the UNODC HQ, during the IAEA General Conference (25-29 September 2023).

*Directed to: Project Management Team,
Terrorism Prevention Branch, UNODC*

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Enhance in-country follow-ups and adjust the scope and framework of intervention to regional and national legislative needs and priorities on ICSANT.
2. Mainstream HRG-LNOB dimensions in accordance with thematic specificities of ICSANT and nuclear security.
3. Streamline and strengthen the project cooperation architecture for the second phase of the project.
4. Streamline, specify and refocus the project Theory of Change for its next phases of development.
5. Develop and implement a comprehensive and change narrative-based monitoring system.
6. Encourage and monitor use of knowledge tools.



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INDEPENDENT EVALUATION SECTION

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