



OSCEval News is the evaluation newsletter of the Office of Internal Oversight.

Its aim is to provide insights into the OSCE's work in evaluation, by sharing key evaluation findings and conclusions, as well as new developments regarding the OSCE's overall evaluation culture.

Evaluation is a management tool that contributes to decision-making, strategic planning, and organizational learning.



This edition of *OSCEval News* is dedicated to the

Evaluation of OSCE Community Policing Assistance Projects, 2004-2018.

This evaluation was conducted by the Office of Internal Oversight with the support of an external consultant in 2019.

Introduction

Community policing may refer to policing with a local/community focus. In this case the police is locally involved, trusted, and informed and through this more successful in crime prevention and crime solving. It may also refer to policing between (ethnic) communities, which is also preventive in nature in that the goal is foremost to build trust and to reduce the risk of ethnic violence. The OSCE has provided both variants of community policing assistance. Since 1998 most of the allocated funds have been dedicated to policing between communities.

Evaluation Purpose and Scope

In 2019 the Office of Internal Oversight (OIO) carried out an evaluation of the OSCE's community policing assistance projects. Its larger purpose was to provide OSCE executive structures with inputs that would inform decisions about future assistance in this area.

The evaluation was cross-organizational and covered the time period 2004-2018, with special attention being paid to the period 2013-2018. To ensure that it covered most of the activities and

spending, it focused on executive structures with the highest expenditures in this area. Since key elements of the community policing assistance delivered in Kyrgyzstan had already been assessed by the OSCE in the past, this evaluation covered the 93 projects delivered by the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, the OSCE Mission to Skopje, and the OSCE Mission to Serbia.

Data was collected through desk reviews of OSCE documents, third-party data and documents containing qualitative and quantitative data. OIO also carried out visits to the countries concerned, where it conducted interviews in the capitals and in various regions, at local safety entities, mayors' offices, police stations, and civil society organisations. All in all, OIO interviewed 105 individuals, including officials from the OSCE Secretariat and field missions, civil servants and civil society.

Findings

The projects delivered a wide range of activities, including seminars, workshops, training, and outreach campaigns to inform the public about community policing. They also supported the development of community policing strategies and related implementation plans, the establishment and training of community safety entities, and the construction/renovation of police stations and training centres.

Assistance activities, outputs and expected outcomes were overall found to be **relevant** as they were aligned with needs identified by previous projects and assessments. OIO meanwhile noted that unless a national community policing policy or strategy was at hand that served to institutionalize and underpin community policing, capacity building assistance would be less relevant, since it would be less likely to lead to



changed policing practices. OIO found this to be the state of affairs in one of the three countries, and partly also in another one. OIO meanwhile recognized that the assistance provided by the OSCE to some extent reflected the organization's resource constraints, as well as the type of support that was accepted or requested by local institutions.

OIO found that the assistance was **efficient** in that most projects were delivered on time and within the allocated budgets. To the extent that material underspending took place, it was due to either project tasks being cancelled for various reasons, including delays in government approval, or because the assistance could be delivered at a cost lower than projected.

The projects varied in **short-, mid- and long-term effectiveness**. Due to the lack of data OIO was unable to assess to what extent *short-term effects* in terms of changed *knowledge* and *attitudes* had materialized. With regard to *mid-term results* in terms of changed *policies* and *practices*, OIO found that the assistance had led to various degrees of *policy changes* in community policing, and to changes in *policing practices*, particularly in one case. Given the lack of data, the extent to which the assistance had led to long-term results in terms of *enhanced trust* between ethnic communities, and enhanced trust in the police, could not be assessed. However, given the modest short-term and mid-term results for two cases examined by this evaluation, OIO found no compelling reasons to expect, let alone to attribute, changes in aggregate levels of trust in the police to the OSCE's assistance projects.

Project *activities* and *outputs* were **monitored** in that project officers were commonly involved in delivering activities. For reasons of limited resources, the missions did generally not follow up on *short-term* assistance results through, e.g., knowledge tests. While OIO did not observe *systematic* monitoring and recording of *mid-term results* with regard to the development of policies either, observations in this area were regularly made by project staff. Similarly, there was generally no *systematic* monitoring and recording of whether the assistance had changed *practices*, but project staff were usually informed about the state of affairs through interaction with stakeholders. With regard to *long-term results*, the missions commissioned country-wide surveys to assess, inter alia, trust in the police. OIO welcomes this approach for tracing results.

None of the projects had **gender equality** as the principal objective. However, in recent years gender had been mainstreamed in almost all projects in terms of considering gender balance among participants and/or including gender

thematic issues, either as stand-alone interventions, or incorporated into specific project activities.

During the past five years **co-ordination** with other assistance providers varied, and was sufficient in most cases given that the OSCE field missions had been close to the only community policing assistance providers. Collaboration between the three field missions was need-based. Similarly, collaboration between the field missions and the OSCE Secretariat was need-based and mostly for information sharing purposes rather than planning. Occasionally, the OSCE Secretariat was invited to submit comments on project proposals, to provide a speaker for an event, or for policy level support. Only rarely did the Secretariat receive requests for expertise.

Sustainability of assistance results was assessed at four levels: strategic, operative, in terms of personal capacity, and resources. It concerns whether short-, mid- and long-term results achieved with OSCE support can be sustained in the absence of external assistance. Overall, OIO found that sustainability was unsatisfactory across all four levels in two of the three cases, and constrained across the two latter levels for one case. **In all three countries, community policing was, for various reasons, overall implemented as a separate and/or competing task among other police tasks, rather than regarded as the core philosophy of policing.** In two cases no national community policing strategies with related implementation plans existed that could serve to institutionalize and underpin community policing practices. Moreover, in all three cases OIO observed staff and material shortages within the police sector as well as in the local safety entity sector that affected the implementation of community policing practices.

Recommendations

To ensure long-term results of the assistance, the evaluation provided the following recommendations to the OSCE: :

- I. Update the organization's community policing concept and related assistance guidelines for executive structures.
- II. Develop a cross-organizational community policing assistance action plan/strategy that outlines its core elements, short-, mid- and long-term benchmarks, and a transition strategy.
- III. Prioritize supporting governments in developing national community policing policies and national strategies.
- IV. Initiate large-scale capacity-building assistance for police officers and local safety entities only in the presence of national community policing policies and strategies.
- V. Deliver community policing assistance jointly with other resourceful international assistance providers.

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