



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.

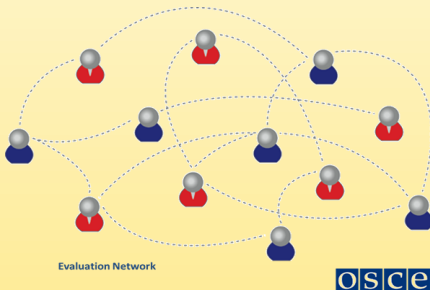
Evaluation is a management tool that contributes to decision-making, strategic planning, and organizational learning.



This edition of *OSCEval News* is dedicated to the

## OSCE's EVALUATION NETWORK ANNUAL MEETING

16—17 October 2019, Tirana, Albania



### Introduction

The OSCE Evaluation Network was established by the Office of Internal Oversight (OIO) in 2013. It is a cross-organizational mechanism that is open to OSCE officials from all executive structures who are monitoring and evaluation focal points, involved in the planning, commissioning and managing of evaluations, or simply interested in exploring M&E topics and in strengthening results-based management in the organization overall. By October 2019, the Network had more than 80 members.

This year's Evaluation Network Meeting was hosted by the OSCE Presence in Albania (PiA), and organized in cooperation with OIO. It brought together over 30 members of the Evaluation Network and a few other participants.

### Purpose

The purpose of the annual meeting was:

- To strengthen common understanding and implementation of the OSCE's Evaluation Framework Administrative Instruction (No. 1/2013), which outlines key evaluation principles and standards, defines the different types of evaluations (independent evaluations, commissioned evaluations and self-evaluations) conducted in the OSCE, and provides guidance regarding the use of evaluation findings.
- To enhance monitoring, evaluation and learning across the OSCE, and
- To share monitoring and evaluation experiences and (good) practices, knowledge, and tools across executive structures.

### Content and Format

The agenda of the two-day meeting focused on the following topics: monitoring and self-evaluation practices of executive structures; the OSCE's decentralized evaluation system (commissioned evaluations); and the OSCE policy environment for evaluation. Further discussions touched upon the challenges of measuring the success of non-project work, PESU's revised project templates, as well as outcome reporting on gender equality.

The meeting included presentations by OIO and representatives of executive structures, interactive discussions in





groups, feedback sessions, as well as an inspirational talk by a former Community Policing Officer, who shared his experience with regards to community policing reform processes in Northern Ireland, including the way progress in this area was monitored and evaluated.

### Good Monitoring and Self-evaluation Practices and Experiences across Executive Structures

The Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina (MtBH), the Programme Office in Bishkek (POiB), and the Mission in Kosovo (OMiK) shared their M&E practices with participants. One element that stood out was the MtBH's approach to M&E and its 3-year planning cycle for Unified Budget Programmes, which the M&E system is tailored to. OMiK reported to have shifted from focusing on activities and outputs to covering results as well.

OIO discussed the difference between implementation based (i.e., input activities and output) monitoring and result based monitoring of projects, emphasising the need to enhance results based monitoring in the OSCE. OIO also provided good examples of results based monitoring, and noted that all the examples stemmed from financially large and multi-year OSCE projects.

### Improving the OSCE Policy Environment for Evaluation

This session covered the OSCE Evaluation Framework Administrative Instruction (EFI) from 2013 that details the purpose and definition of OSCE evaluations, the types of evaluations, and applicable standards. OIO presented the key cornerstones of the EFI, and provided an overview of the provisions typically included in the evaluation policies and strategies of international organizations. Those that relate to the organizations' decentralized evaluation systems (i.e. commissioned / external evaluations managed by field structures and programmatic departments) were particularly highlighted. Participants identified the gaps in the OSCE policy environment, including, inter alia, the following:

- Criteria for when to commission an external evaluation;*
- The types of projects to be externally evaluated (ExB / UB);*
- The best timing of decentralized evaluations (mid-term / ex-post);*
- The distribution of responsibilities for decentralized evaluations;*
- Mechanisms to follow up on the implementation of recommendations from decentralized evaluations;*

- Evaluation report disclosure policy;*
- Resourcing of decentralized evaluations;*
- Clarity of terminology;*
- The code of conduct for external evaluators;*
- Quality assessment and quality assurance for decentralized evaluations;*
- Criteria for selecting evaluation experts;*
- Capacity development for monitoring and evaluation;*
- Methodological guidance and backstopping of decentralized evaluations; and*
- The link between centralized (OIO) evaluations and decentralized evaluations.*

Participants also identified areas where support is needed to enhance the OSCE's decentralized evaluation system. These included the need for guidance on how to plan, manage and use evaluations; high-level policy recommendations from the SG and OIO to senior managers regarding the necessity and value of commissioning evaluations; capacity development for staff; a quality assurance mechanism for external evaluations; and the continuous exchange of M&E practices and evaluation findings across executive structures.

### Managing Commissioned Evaluations

MtBH, the Programme Office in Dushanbe (POiD), as well as PiA shared their practices with regards to commissioned evaluations. Highlights included POiD's and PiA's long-standing experiences and lessons learned, such as POiD's requirement to have UB programmes evaluated at least every three years, or PiA's efforts to improve its evaluation practices over the years and to ensure that evaluation findings are taken into account by subsequent projects. PiA also reported that findings of evaluations had influenced the Presence's reporting to participating States.

OIO presented practices and tools for the management, including quality assurance and quality assessment, of decentralized evaluations. These were subsequently tested by participants and feedback provided to OIO for their improvement.



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