



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

The Secretary General

Vienna, 8 February 2013

OSCE Evaluation Framework Administrative Instruction No. 1/2013

I. Introduction

1. Permanent Council Decision 399 (14 December 2000) sets out the Internal Oversight Mandate and provides, inter alia, that:

“The scope of Internal Oversight encompasses the examination and evaluation of the adequacy and effectiveness of the Organization’s systems of internal controls and the quality of performance in carrying out assigned responsibilities. It incorporates the full range of internal audit, including management audit, evaluation and investigation, quality and value-for-money assurance and management advice.”

2. Pursuant to the recommendations of the OSCE Audit Committee to develop a cohesive approach to all types of evaluations throughout the Organization, this Instruction (Framework) sets out the standards to be applied to evaluations and the roles and responsibilities of all actors regarding evaluations.
3. This Framework is not intended to conflict with any decisions of OSCE governing bodies.
4. The focal point for revisions of this Framework is the Office of Internal Oversight.

II. Purpose

5. Evaluations are intended to improve future activities and ensure accountability and transparency. Evaluations should aim to identify recommendations, lessons learned and best practices. OSCE staff members are obliged to demonstrate accountability and to incorporate lessons learned into decision-making, and evaluations provide a useful tool to support this.¹
6. This Instruction is intended to improve co-ordination, planning and implementation of evaluations throughout the OSCE. It applies to all OSCE activities regardless of the source of funding.

¹ As described in the OSCE Project Management Manual

III. Definitions

“Evaluation”

7. An assessment, as systematic and objective as possible, of an on-going or completed programme, project or any other activity (hereinafter “activity”), its design, implementation, and results.
8. The aim of an evaluation is to determine the relevance and fulfilment of objectives, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability, and the added value contributed by the OSCE through an activity. It should assess the extent to which an activity has met its objectives, outputs, outcomes and indicators, where these are defined. An evaluation should provide information that is credible and useful, facilitating the incorporation of lessons learned into the Organization’s decision-making process.
9. The following evaluation activities are carried out in the OSCE.

“Monitoring and Self-evaluation”

10. The critical assessment of a programme’s or project’s design, implementation, achievements and overall performance by the department or unit of the OSCE executive structure that implemented that programme or project. Self-evaluations are governed by the OSCE Project Management Manual and by any guidance issued by PESU.
11. Self-evaluations will remain internal to each executive structure. They will be used as a key managerial decision-making input in strategic planning, programming and budgeting.
12. Executive structures are encouraged to share self-evaluations at project and programme level with PESU and OIO. The sharing of self-evaluations with outside interlocutors such as donors is subject to the approval of the Fund Manager.

“Commissioned Evaluation”

13. Evaluations executed by a contracted expert hired by the OSCE programme or project manager to improve the OSCE’s work and provide assurance on results. They are a tool for learning and improvement and for local management to better discharge their managerial duties, including helping managers demonstrate accountability for results. Commissioned evaluations should follow international standards and guidance provided by OIO and PESU.

“Independent Evaluation”

14. Evaluations executed by the Office of Internal Oversight in accordance with PC.DEC/399. In accordance with its mandate, the Office of Internal Oversight (OIO) is an independent appraisal function established within the OSCE to examine and evaluate its activities as a service to the Organization. Internal Oversight covers all OSCE activities, institutions and missions regardless of the source of funds. By definition, an Independent Evaluation would not be commissioned or executed by line management.

IV. Standards

15. Self-evaluations are governed by the OSCE Project Management Manual. All other evaluations (whether commissioned or independent) should adhere to the following standards, ensuring that:
 - a. The purpose of the evaluation is clearly stated in a terms of reference;
 - b. The evaluation methodology is set out in a terms of reference;
 - c. Evaluations assess activities against specific criteria set out in the terms of reference;
 - d. The evaluation is designed to ensure timely, valid and reliable information, relevant for the entity being assessed;
 - e. The evaluation is objective and findings are evidence-based. Conclusions and any recommendations, lessons learned and best practices are consistent with findings; and
 - f. A quality control process is in place to ensure that evaluation reports are reviewed by someone other than the evaluator for accuracy of findings and to confirm that recommendations are objective, relevant to the entity being assessed and capable of implementation.
16. Details on methodology and tools will be provided in guidelines issued by OIO and PESU.

V. Use of Evaluation Findings

17. Where an evaluation report includes recommendations, the report will state the person or entity responsible for implementing each recommendation and the timeframe within which action should be taken.
18. Knowledge from evaluations should be shared with and between executive structures to improve policy, project and programme planning and delivery and help demonstrate results. Distribution of summaries would be agreed between the Office of Internal Oversight and the respective executive structure(s).
19. OIO will report on evaluations and follow up on agreed actions in accordance with its mandate.
20. In the case of commissioned evaluations, the commissioner of the evaluation should:
 - a. Ensure that agreed actions from the report are implemented; and
 - b. Track that these actions result in the anticipated improvements.
21. Executive structures should reflect the findings, recommendations and results of evaluations in the Programme Budget Performance Report, Programme Outline, Unified Budget or other relevant planning and reporting documents as appropriate.
22. To ensure effective co-ordination of OSCE evaluation activities, all executive structures will advise OIO at the earliest opportunity of evaluations which they have planned.

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