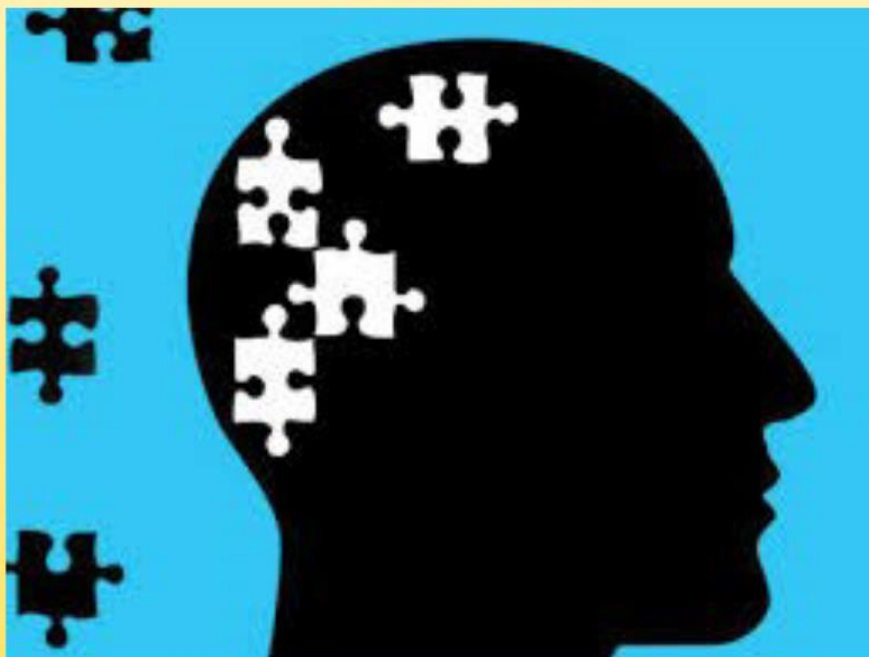




 **Office of Internal Oversight**

Synthesis Report on the Evaluation of Capacity Development and Learning in the OSCE



Report number: IE2018/07

Date issued: 18 December 2019

This synthesis report was prepared by Ms. Elisabeth Duban, gender and evaluation consultant, with inputs from Barbara Torggler, Deputy Director of the OSCE's Office of Internal Oversight (OIO) and Head of Evaluation, and Mr. Birger Heldt, Senior Evaluation Officer in OIO.

Ms. Barbara Torggler, Deputy Director of OIO and Head of Evaluation, oversaw the overall Evaluation of Capacity Development and Learning in the OSCE.

OIO thanks the management and staff of the executive structures involved in the five case studies conducted for this evaluation, the Department of Human Resources in the OSCE Secretariat; the OSCE Programme Office in Dushanbe; the OSCE Office of the Special Representative / Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings in the OSCE Secretariat; and the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, for their inputs and support through-out the evaluation process.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	I
1. Introduction	1
2. Overview of Case Studies	2
3. Capacity Development and Learning in and by the OSCE	3
4. Summary of Case Study Findings	5
4.1 Relevance and added value.....	5
4.2 Results	6
4.2.1 Changes in knowledge and attitude (short-term outcomes).....	7
4.2.2 Changes in practice and policy (medium-term outcomes).....	8
4.2.3 Changes in organizational effectiveness (long-term outcomes)	9
4.3 Monitoring of results.....	10
4.4 Contribution to gender equality.....	11
4.5 Partnerships	12
4.6 Sustainability	13
5. The Way Forward	14

Executive Summary

Capacity development has been and continuous to be a core activity of the OSCE's executive structures, aimed at assisting participating States (pS) to comply with OSCE commitments in the Organization's three Dimensions. However, in the context of the OSCE, little is known about which capacity development methods are *most effective* in building knowledge, and changing attitudes and behaviours, and which methods are *most efficient* in terms of labour intensiveness and costs related to planning and implementation.

In 2018, OIO carried out a cross-organizational thematic evaluation of capacity development and learning activities delivered by the OSCE. Apart from constituting routine oversight of the OSCE's activities, the purpose of this thematic evaluation was to help the Organization to increase the effectiveness of its activities in support of capacity development of staff and counterparts. The evaluation pursued this objective by (i) assessing the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of the OSCE's capacity development activities; and by (ii) identifying lessons learned and good practices in this area that can contribute to learning across executive structures.

The evaluation comprised five case studies of purposely-selected OSCE capacity development and learning assistance projects that targeted OSCE staff (one project) and OSCE pS (four projects). Each project was chosen because it was seen to take an innovative approach to capacity development, which allowed OIO to examine whether and to what extent various approaches have been effective.

One overall conclusion is that the assistance was relevant in that it addressed knowledge and skill gaps among the recipients that had been well-documented in OSCE documents and third party studies, as well as identified by OIO during interviews and surveys that were carried out as part of the evaluation. In all instances, the nature and scope of the assistance to be delivered was agreed upon by recipients before it was launched.

Another conclusion is that highly interactive capacity development and learning methodologies are more *effective* in enhancing *knowledge* and *skills*, and in extension also lead to changed practices, than non-interactive approaches. Data collected during this evaluation also indicates that more experiential and social learning methods, like simulation exercises, are more effective when the aim is to change *beliefs*, *attitudes* and deep-seated stereotypes.

OIO found that monitoring of *activities and outputs* was conducted routinely by the projects, but only two of the projects monitored *outcomes/results*. A weakness across all the projects was the limited capacity for monitoring and for *assessing long-term* outcomes. This challenge is partly due to the extended time period it may take before long-term outcomes materialize, which is considerably longer than many of the OSCE's individual projects. Thus, there is no plan, let alone resources, devoted to following up on such outcomes. Often, staff awareness of the need and ambition to follow-up on longer-term results are also limited.

Two of the five evaluated projects had gender equality as a principal objective. The other projects mainstreamed gender equality beyond ensuring equal participation of women and men, by also paying attention to gender considerations in the training content. Two of the projects demonstrate that there are clear value added opportunities to incorporate gender considerations within the content of broader capacity development efforts that do not have gender equality as a primary objective.

The case studies present a mixed picture in terms of sustainability. OSCE projects commonly rely on partnerships with government entities, civil society organizations and international organizations. Collaborative partnerships of this type are a means to foster local ownership and can contribute to the sustainability of the capacity development outcomes. Several of the evaluated projects also show that former trainees can be engaged in other roles, namely as experts, mentors or trainers.

OIO identified a substantial turnover among participants in some of the projects, which means that capacity development needs to be delivered continuously, and that knowledge gaps within institutions will continue to arise. None of the evaluated projects aimed to create self-sufficiency in capacity development, and thus it is unlikely that any of the activities would continue in the same manner in the absence of OSCE support. Staffing and funding intensive interventions are also less likely to be replicated by counterparts in the pS that have the most limited resources yet also have large-scale and multi-year capacity development needs. The greatest potential for replication of such interventions seems to be in “scaled-down” forms that are less labour and cost intensive.

The overall conclusion from the evaluations is that there are attempts within the OSCE to move away from classical teaching methods and a willingness to experiment with innovative practices. Combining more formal learning methods with interactive ones, as well as including elements such as coaching, mentoring and experiential learning, can have great benefits. The nature and sustainability of these benefits, however, depend on the context, the particular issue at hand, and the specific learning objective. More consistent efforts are needed to articulate why, how and for what purpose these methods are being used, and then to share these insights across the organization. This thematic evaluation concludes with several emerging lessons that can guide future learning and capacity development activities:

- ☑ Interactive and experiential forms of learning are optimal for knowledge gains and skill-building when they are used in combination with formal learning. When the balance is tipped too far in favour of social and experiential learning, effectiveness and efficiency of knowledge transfer seems to decrease.
- ☑ Social and experiential learning methods might be more effective in fostering changes of beliefs and attitudes among learners, and in challenging deep-seated stereotypes.
- ☑ Decisions to use highly interactive methods within larger projects should be carefully weighed against issues of sustainability, efficiency, and the potential to achieve the same results using other methods.
- ☑ Short-term outcomes (changes in knowledge and attitude) often lead to changes in practice (medium-term outcomes), but the kinds of capacity development projects implemented by the OSCE often lack clarity about how to achieve longer-term results, in the form of institutionalised change and impact.
- ☑ Project designs often lack plans for how participants will become leaders in their own institutions and ‘cascade’ their acquired knowledge, skills and attitudes to others.
- ☑ Capacity development projects would be better served if they set fewer and more concrete training objectives and were more strategic in meeting them.
- ☑ Formal training should complement (not replace) social and experiential learning. There is a need for the OSCE to better support counterparts with the establishment of such comprehensive learning mechanisms.

1. Introduction

1. While the OSCE is first and foremost a regional security organization, *capacity development* has always been at the core of its work. In fact, a desk review of training assistance delivered by executive structures to counterparts from 2013 – 2015, which was conducted by the Office of Internal Oversight (OIO) in 2016¹, showed that over 50% of all projects and programmes involved some form of traditional training assistance². In addition, the OSCE conducts interventions to strengthen capacities and enhance learning within the organization. Capacity development involves learning.
2. In the absence of any specific OSCE definition of capacity development, this evaluation understands the concept of capacity development as a ‘... process whereby people, organisations and society as a whole unleash, strengthen, create, adapt and maintain capacity over time’³.
3. Executive structures and field operations use a variety of methods to strengthen capacities and to foster learning. Previous OIO evaluations of OSCE projects have shown that such activities often resulted in the intended changes of individuals’ skills and attitudes, which were in turn translated into more effective work practices. However, little is known about which capacity development methods are overall the *most effective* in building knowledge and skills, and in changing attitudes and behaviours, and which methods are *most efficient* in terms of the human and financial resources needed to plan and implement them.
4. For this reason, in 2018 OIO initiated a cross-organizational thematic *Evaluation of Capacity Development and Learning in the OSCE*. It comprised five case studies, all of which evaluate purposely-selected OSCE assistance projects/programmes in the area of capacity development and learning that targeted OSCE staff (one project) and OSCE counterparts in participating States (pS) (four projects).
5. The *purpose* of the evaluation was to help the OSCE increase the effectiveness of its activities in support of capacity development of staff and counterparts. The evaluation pursued this objective by (i) assessing the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of the OSCE’s capacity development activities; and (ii) by identifying lessons learned and good practices in this area that can contribute to learning across executive structures.
6. This report summarises and synthesises conclusions from the five case studies, which cover several executive structures, OSCE dimensions, areas of engagement, geographical scope, and various methods of capacity development. They were based on desk reviews of OSCE documents and financial records, on-line surveys distributed to project participants (for three case studies), third-party publications, field visits, direct observation of some capacity building activities, and almost 140 semi-structured interviews. Additional evaluation details, including method considerations and limitations, are found in the four individual case study reports.

¹ OSCE/OIO (2017), *Report on the Strategic Assessment of OSCE Training Assistance delivered by Executive Structures to Counterparts, 2013-2015*, Report 6/2016.

² The proportion of interventions aimed at developing capacities of counterparts is to an unknown degree higher, since training assistance (through lectures) only constitutes one of several ways to develop capacities.

³ This is in line with the OECD/DAC definition of capacity and capacity development: ‘*Capacity is the ability of people, organisations and society as a whole to manage their affairs successfully [...] Capacity development is the process whereby people, organisations and society as a whole unleash, strengthen, create, adapt and maintain capacity over time*’. See OECD-DAC (2006), *The Challenge of Capacity Development – Working towards good practice*, DAC Guidelines and Reference Series, Paris: OECD. Specific definitions of ‘learning’ also exist, for instance, ‘*Learning is the process by which a person acquires new knowledge, skills and capabilities, thereby developing the capacity to take action*’. See Argyris, C. (1993), *Actionable Knowledge: Changing the Status Quo*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass/On Organizational Learning. Cambridge, Mass.

2. Overview of Case Studies

Case study I: **Executive Gender Coach Programme.** Organized in 2017 - 2018 by the OSCE's Department of Human Resources, in cooperation with the Secretariat's Gender Section, this was a pilot activity to strengthen OSCE leadership capacity to meet the organization's gender equality commitments. It benefitted the senior management team (nine officials) of the Secretariat. Focusing on effective leadership, the programme consisted of four half-day seminars and four one-hour individual coaching sessions for each participant carried out during alternate months and with a final coaching session after the last seminar. Its content was modelled after a programme that had been used by Swedish institutions, and adapted to the OSCE context. It was funded with EXB resources. Among the five case studies, this is the only one that focused explicitly on capacity development of OSCE staff.

Case study II: **Promotion of Women's Participation in Public and Political Life at the Local and National Level ('the WPP project').** Implemented by the OSCE Programme Office in Dushanbe with Unified Budget (UB) resources over consecutive years starting from 2016, the project intended to increase women's participation in politics in the broad sense of decision-making in the public sphere. It enhanced the gender sensitivity of political parties, built capacities of women politicians and worked towards improving some underlying conditions (countering gender stereotypes). The project employed various methods, ranging from one to multi-day training sessions, mobile outreach trainings, trainings of trainers, regional fora, to mentoring, interactive summer camps and study visits to other countries. The key target groups were women and girls who are active in politics and/or potential leaders in their communities. Several activities also targeted men. Over the years, many individuals were trained. In 2016, for instance, almost 280 people took part in various capacity development activities.

Case study III: **Combating Human Trafficking along Migration Routes – Live Simulation Based Training Course ('the CTHB simulation project').** Starting in 2016, this EXB funded project is implemented by the OSCE Office of the Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (OSR/CTHB) at the OSCE Secretariat in Vienna. It intends to improve practitioner skills in addressing trafficking in human beings by providing them with models for multi-agency, victim-centred, and human rights-based approaches. The training involves one day of theoretical instruction and four days of simulation exercises based on real world scenarios, and included an international group of trainees representing law enforcement, labour inspectors, prosecutors, legal professionals, social services providers (state-based and NGO-based) and the media. Trainees are monitored by simulation directors who conduct daily debriefings with participants throughout the exercise. By December 2018 a total of 386 individuals had received training.

Case study IV: **Ensuring the Effective Processing of War Crimes Cases in Bosnia and Herzegovina through Comprehensive Capacity Building ('the WCCP project').** This project was implemented by the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) over the period 2014 to 2017. It intended to enhance the ability of the BiH justice sector to process war crimes cases from the international conflict of 1992-1995 and targeted justice sector professionals, including judges, prosecutors, legal support staff, defence attorneys, police investigators and victim support staff. It delivered training events, including trainings of trainers and advanced courses, using various methods (lectures, workshops, seminars, role plays and simulation exercises) with various degrees of interactivity. The project enrolled 529 justice sector professionals in a total of 2150 training slots, which means that each enrolled professional took part in an average of four training events.

Case study V⁴: **OSCE Border Management Staff College ('the BMSC project')**. This project is implemented by the OSCE Programme Office in Dushanbe and has been ongoing since 2009. It was created to enhance border control and cross-border co-operation between OSCE pS in Central Asia and Afghanistan. The BMSC serves as a hub for knowledge delivery in the area of border security and management, utilizes interactive classroom teaching, e-learning methods and practical exercises to transfer knowledge and skills. It involves professionals from border, customs and drug control agencies. By December 2017 a total of 3218 individuals had received training.

7. The case studies illustrate the wide variety of methods and approaches used by the OSCE to enhance learning and develop capacities. Some projects employed a combination of methods, while others took a more streamlined approach. On one end of the spectrum, the WPP project in Tajikistan built capacities through a large number of methods including mentoring, role plays, workshops, summer camps, regional fora, and study visits to other countries. On the other end, the CTHB simulation project relied primarily on large-sized scenario-based simulation training that involved some role playing.
8. While the training events provided by the five projects were diverse, a common feature was interactivity. All projects incorporated elements of experiential learning, social learning and formal learning. For instance, the BMSC project in Tajikistan and the WCCP project in BiH relied most heavily on formal learning methods (classroom teaching) combined with various degrees of interactive elements, such as working with case studies, practical exercises, role playing/simulation exercises. Taking a middle-position, the WPP project and the Executive Gender Coach Programme offered a greater degree of social learning via coaching and mentoring individually, in pairs or in small groups. The CTHB simulation was foremost a "learning by doing" exercise with periods for debriefing and reflection, but with a minimal degree of formal/traditional (classroom) teaching.
9. For the interactive methods, one particular feature stands out: interactive elements based on fictional or real cases, as well as discussions in small group settings, appear to have created a "safe" environment in which learners were able to test ideas without judgement or repercussions. In essence, these interactive approaches relied on a non-antagonistic "learn-and-help-each-other-learn" principle.

3. Capacity Development and Learning in and by the OSCE

10. A widely held rule-of-thumb in the area of capacity development in organizations is the so-called 70-20-10 rule: 10% of knowledge and expertise is acquired through various forms of formal training, including courses, workshops and seminars; another 20% is acquired through social learning involving others, for instance by way of on-the-job coaching and mentoring, whereas the final 70% are obtained through experiential learning on-the-job⁵.
11. Despite the prevalence of capacity development activities in the OSCE, OIO notes that the organization does not have a shared approach for or understanding of such activities. The Secretariat's Department of Human Resources has issued an Overview of Learning &

⁴ This case study built on previous (2013, 2016) OIO evaluations of the BMSC, and on more recent project documents and involved a desk review only.

⁵ See for example, Vallejo, B. and Wehn, U. (2016), "Capacity Development Evaluation: The Challenge of the Results Agenda and Measuring Return on Investment in the Global South", *World Development*, vol. 79, pp 1-13.

Development Methods⁶ that highlights the importance of experiential and social learning, i.e. of the activities that belong to the 70% and the 20% categories, for staff.

12. The majority of projects with capacity development elements that are delivered by OSCE field operations for counterparts, however, focus on activities that reside in the remaining 10% of learning, such as variously interactive seminars, workshops, and lectures. The evaluation also noted that there is no guidance for the development and conduct of capacity development activities targeting counterparts that is based on international and empirically validated best practices and research, and that outlines various capacity development methods and their potential comparative effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability. Thus, the most common type of activities that are delivered by field operations, and which constitute a considerable part of the OSCE's annual expenditures, are not systematically informed by such insights.
13. The overwhelming focus of these activities on formal, structured types of learning also shows that approaches used elsewhere in the organization (for instance, to enhance learning and capacities of staff) are not necessarily applied in other contexts, i.e. when working to strengthen the capacities of counterparts. There are, however, exceptions, such as several of the projects selected for this evaluation that include methods aimed at social and experiential learning, including mentoring, coaching and simulations⁷.
14. Capacity development activities are typically based on a shared, and to a large extent implicit, assistance logic that can be depicted as follows:
 - If individuals receive training/education, they will gain knowledge, skills and/or change their views and beliefs (short-term result of capacity development);
 - If the individuals gain knowledge, skills and/or change their views and beliefs, then *practices* and *policies* will change:
 - a. individuals will adopt new practices (mid-term *individual* level results of capacity development);
 - b. agencies/organizations will adopt new policies/procedures/laws/regulations that may either generate new practices, or institutionalise already adopted practices (mid-term *organizational* level results of capacity development).
 - If new practices and policies are adopted, then organizations and institutions will function more effectively and efficiently (long-term result/impact of capacity development).
15. The assistance logic implies that the OSCE is only in partial control of the short-term results, and that results may vary for reasons other than the quality of the training or other learning opportunities. These include the selection of trainees, which may be outside the OSCE's control; staff rotation/turnover (i.e. trained individuals change jobs); budgetary constraints faced by counterparts that hamper the implementation of new practices or policies; lack of leadership support and of political will, etc. OIO evaluations conducted over the years have also shown that expectations that a small number of trained individuals would be able to implement changes at the level of an institution often are unrealistic, and that there needs to

⁶ OSCE. *Overview of Learning & Development Methods. A guide to defining a Learning and Development Objective.*

⁷ This evaluation acknowledges that simulations and role plays, especially those involving real-life scenarios, are experiential in nature, and therefore contain elements that pertain to the 70% category of experiential learning. However, given that they do not take place on the job, but rather in organized settings outside participants' work places, they are still part of structured learning. Nevertheless, it is understood that the very ambition of such methods is to create learning experiences that are as close to on-the-job learning as possible.

be a critical mass of committed individuals to make a difference. Another important factor that may influence the effectiveness of a capacity development intervention is the complexity of the issue at stake, which might require a large-scale and long-term comprehensive capacity development approach⁸.

16. The above analysis has a series of implications. First, expectations regarding the effectiveness of single or one-off capacity development activities, or interventions that are narrow in scope, should be tempered and realistic. Second, long-term results are contingent on long-term/multi-year and continuous capacity development engagement. Third, whereas the OSCE cannot formally be held accountable for whether the delivered knowledge and skills are ultimately translated into more effective and efficient (government) entities, the assistance is nevertheless based on the assumption that such a link exists. Thus, it is still important to evaluate the OSCE's assistance and the extent to which such results are generated, since the project purposes and rationales are based on the assumption of the existence of such a link. This is one of the purposes of this evaluation.

4. Summary of Case Study Findings

4.1 Relevance and added value

17. For the projects covered by this evaluation, OSCE structures often identified capacity development needs in pS, and subsequently proposed the assistance to the recipient entities. In other instances, counterparts approached the OSCE and requested support. However, in all instances, the nature and scope of the assistance was negotiated and agreed upon by the OSCE and the recipients before projects were launched.
18. Overall, OIO found the assistance to be relevant in that it was aligned with the OSCE's mandate and priorities, and that it addressed knowledge and skills gaps that were well-documented through OSCE documents and third party studies, as well as identified by OIO during interviews. Meanwhile, interview information commonly revealed some preferences for minor adjustment of the focus of the trainings, including more in depth training and training of a larger number of individuals. For various reasons, including staff shortages and funding limitations, the OSCE could often not cater to all capacity development needs.
19. The WCCP project, implemented by the Mission to BiH, is a good example of a project that identified knowledge gaps. It was designed to align with the national strategy on war crimes processing and to complement, rather than duplicate, other capacity development efforts. The project addressed well-documented deficiencies in the entire chain of war crimes case processing, from *practices* (related to investigations, indictments, court proceedings and adjudication) to *policies*, and *knowledge* about legal matters, and across all types of justice sector professionals. Interviewees appreciated the WCCP training in terms of its selected target group (prosecutors, judges, investigators), themes (induction training versus advanced training), and the form of training (classroom training with exercises, role plays and scenarios involving staff from across the justice sector. It was also found to be of added value, even though the OSCE was not always the only assistance provider in this area. The assistance needs were of such a scale and duration that no single assistance provider or project could have addressed them alone.

⁸ For instance, to address money laundering successfully it is likely not sufficient to train staff only on issues relating to anti-money laundering, since money laundering is also commonly linked to corruption and good governance issues.

20. The WPP project, conducted by the OSCE Programme Office in Dushanbe, presents several good practices in project design that assured both the relevance and continuity of the work. The project was developed following an in-depth needs assessment, and the objectives of the WPP project dovetailed with those outlined in national policy documents on the advancement of women in Tajikistan. Project design built upon existing relationships the Programme Office had with a particular target group (women political party members), but since then expanded the group of recipients, consistent with identified needs, to include community leaders and active youth. While the project has been implemented through successive UB projects, a five-year vision for how the work would progress was outlined from the outset, with major steps and anticipated outcomes identified for each year. This approach not only assured continuity from year to year, but also meant that the project responded to the participants' needs and engaged them in varied ways, also taking advantage of their increased capacities (e.g., some mentees have become mentors; some trainees began to conduct trainings).
21. The CTHB simulation project responds to a particular gap between knowledge and practice that is prevalent in pS, namely that while many practitioners in the counter trafficking field have participated in seminars, workshops and trainings designed to raise awareness of multi-agency and human rights-based approaches, far fewer have had structured opportunities to put these approaches into practice. Furthermore, the simulation scenario, drafted and revised several times by an expert group, is highly responsive to emerging issues, such as the complexities involved in identifying human trafficking cases in mixed migration flows. A very high proportion of trainees (90%) rated the project as either "relevant" or "highly relevant" to their professional work. The question of whether the simulation has been equally relevant for *each* professional group does warrant further analysis, though⁹. The CTHB simulation was continuously referred to as a unique approach that is not being used elsewhere. The fact that several pS have expressed interest in replicating the simulation further indicates that the project adds value.

4.2 Results

22. Since the evaluation was confined to five projects/programmes, it was in one sense limited in its ability to provide broader conclusions on the results of the OSCE's capacity development efforts. It did, however, allow for in-depth case analyses through desk research, interviews and surveys¹⁰. Furthermore, it based its conclusions on several thousand observations regarding the individual trainees and mentees who were involved in the projects. As a result, the five case studies provide many insights on how, whether and to what extent the individual projects and capacity development methods have enhanced knowledge, skills, and attitudes (short-term results), as well as behaviours and practices (medium-term results).

⁹ Given the findings of OIO's survey, the evaluators could not definitely conclude that the breakdown per professional group is the same as the non-disaggregated finding. In fact, data suggest that not all groups rated the relevance as highly, which is why this is considered an issue where further analysis might be useful.

¹⁰ In four of the case studies OIO had access to individual level data from surveys of training participants: for the WCCP project and the CTHB simulation project, OIO collected data through participant surveys distributed during late 2018 and early 2019. The surveys were answered by 386 individuals (45% response rate) who attended one CTHB simulation training event each, and 529 individuals (44% response rate) who on average attended four training events provided by the WCCP project.

For the Executive Gender Coach Programme, one survey had been distributed within the project itself, while another was disseminated by OIO shortly after the Programme had ended. Only six of the nine individuals fully completed the survey, which means that the sample size is too small to allow for conclusions with any reasonable degree of precision. This limitation was, however, compensated for by conducting in-depth semi-structured interviews with all but one of the participants. For the BMSC project, surveys had been distributed electronically within the project itself at the conclusion of each training event.

23. Another aim of the evaluation was to identify the most effective and efficient approaches that could serve as standards in the OSCE. However, the ability of the evaluation to draw conclusions on the question of whether the degree of knowledge and skill enhancement was related to particular types of capacity development methods had its limitations. This was particularly the case concerning data collected on both the BMSC project and the CTHB simulation training. While the data allowed for information about results to be quantified, the fact that only one training method was used in each of these projects meant that it was not possible to compare levels of effectiveness of different training methods *within* the projects¹¹. The only case study that allowed for conclusions on the *comparative* effectiveness of different methods was the one that concerned the WCCP project. This project utilized a broad range of methods, and the OIO was able to review the results of an electronic survey that was distributed to all former trainees¹². Interview data collected for other projects provided additional insights on the matter.

4.2.1 Changes in knowledge and attitude (short-term outcomes)

24. In general, anecdotal evidence, interview information and survey data indicated that *all* projects enhanced knowledge. Interviewees typically stated that they gained knowledge, skills, confidence, self-awareness and insights as a direct result of learning events. Moreover, in all instances where pre- and post-knowledge tests were used by the projects to assess training results, or when after-training surveys delivered by the projects involved self-assessments of knowledge gains, they confirmed various degrees of knowledge and skill enhancement.
25. For example, for the OSCE Executive Gender Coach Programme the evaluation showed positive results with regards to participants' assessment of their own progress and growth in confidence regarding their individual knowledge, skills and gender equality leadership profile. Likewise, a large majority of interviewees who had taken part in the WPP project described positive changes they had undergone in terms of becoming more self-confident, assertive and goal-oriented.
26. Regarding the *comparative* effectiveness of different methods, data collected on the WCCP project showed firmly that for increasing *knowledge and skills* more traditional approaches (seminars and lectures) combined with highly interactive components were comparatively the most effective. Traditional approaches with little or no interactive elements were found to be less effective. Whereas the simulation exercises used by the WCCP were considered to be more effective than non- or low-interactive methods, they were less effective than more traditional interactive methods when skills/knowledge transfer is concerned. This suggests that to increase *knowledge and skills* it is advantageous to have a strong focus on interactive types of training, in particular on highly interactive lectures and interactive seminars, which are also cost and labour efficient to plan, organize and carry out.
27. The case studies also indicated that *social learning*, such as mentoring, peer to peer work and observation, may have facilitated a deeper understanding and internalisation of good practices that may otherwise have remained at an abstract level. Furthermore, when a core training objective is *attitudinal change*, a greater degree of experiential learning that

¹¹ While the WPP project also utilized multiple methods, surveys of participants were not conducted either during the project or by OIO for this evaluation.

¹² Given the diversity of contexts, scope, objectives and duration of each one of the five projects, as well as the lack of outcome level data for some of them, the possibility to draw firm conclusions on the effectiveness of different methods by making comparisons *across* projects was also limited. It was, for instance, not possible to determine whether the simulation methodology used by the CTHB project was more effective than the WPP's mentoring approaches.

encourages trainees to question their own presumptions may be beneficial. An example of this is the CTHB simulation project. During the simulation, learners experienced how specific approaches are applied in practice, both through their own interactions and role playing, and by observing how peer trainees conducted themselves.

4.2.2 Changes in practice and policy (medium-term outcomes)

28. Anecdotal evidence, interview information and survey data indicated that *all* methods were effective in that participants adopted new practices, approaches or behaviours. For instance, the CTHB simulation project was premised on the idea that the majority of practitioners had some awareness of both multi-agency and victim-centred approaches, but that they had not been able to move from theory to practice and apply them in their daily work. A number of practitioners who took part in the CTHB simulation reported that, after the training, they had taken steps to improve co-ordination with professionals in other agencies and that they adopted new techniques that improved the protection of victims' rights.
29. Similarly, interview data and survey data collected by OIO for the WCCP project in BiH revealed a series of general practices, such as co-ordination and co-operation, as well as technical practices, such as investigations, witness support, indictments and prosecutions, and legal reasoning in court decisions that improved as a consequence of the training. The surveys distributed by the BMSC to training participants six months after the trainings also showed that the training had led to changed practices, such as contraband seizures, passport controls and intra-agency co-operation.
30. An achievement of the WPP project in Tajikistan, for instance, was enhanced knowledge and awareness of political party members so that they were able to advocate for the introduction of gender action plans in their parties. This result can be attributed to the technical knowledge they gained through trainings, combined with study visits that provided first-hand experiences of how political parties can become more gender sensitive. As a result, each political party now has a gender equality action plan, and several of them are now monitoring the implementation of such plans.
31. There were limitations to the ability of the case studies to draw conclusions as to whether the degree of changed practices was related to the type of capacity development methods used. Again, the only case study that allowed for firm conclusions on the *comparative* effectiveness of different methods was the one of the WCCP project that utilized a broad range of methods, and for which OIO distributed an electronic survey to all former trainees. The data collected is consistent with the survey data on changes in knowledge through training activities, in that interactive methods were substantially more effective than non-interactive types of training in generating changed practices. In addition, interactive seminars and the most interactive type of lectures were equally effective, and also more effective than any other training approach, including resource demanding simulations.
32. The five case studies did raise a concern that changes in practice tend to reside within the individual participant, meaning that OIO did not find instances in which changed practices had become formalized or institutionalized through the adoption of new policies, such as legislation, procedures, guidelines, etc., to either promote or standardize/formalize (changed) practices. When practices are not codified, their application is dependent on the initiative of individuals, and therefore potentially unsustainable, since it remains vulnerable to staff turnover and staff initiative (or lack thereof).
33. One feature of the WPP project in Tajikistan, among the five case studies, is its use of a "cascade" approach, whereby participants transferred their newly acquired knowledge and information to others, primarily through mentoring and peer-to-peer engagement. Cascading meant that the results of several activities were magnified in that a larger group of individuals

got involved, suggesting that the project began to take on a life of its own, independent of the OSCE. One caveat about the use of cascading under the WPP project was the lack of a plan for tracking whether and to what extent the results were disseminated, other than by collecting anecdotal information.

34. The cascade model could have been appropriate for two other projects, the Executive Gender Coach Programme and the CTHB simulation project, but this approach was not used to its potential. Although the former was premised on an expected “trickle down” effect that would be initiated by leadership, this was not always put into practice. Some participants expressed the need for additional guidance on how to better guide their teams in their work. Within the CTHB simulation project, some trainees shared the acquired knowledge with colleagues, but these were spontaneous efforts rather than an intentional feature of the project. A handful of activities were developed within the simulation to inspire strategic thinking about how trainees could transfer lessons learned into practice, but as was the case in the example above, trainees were not provided with sufficient tools or support to have an impact. Cascading can be an effective way to enhance broader changes in policy and practice when the approach is built into projects from the outset.

4.2.3 Changes in organizational effectiveness (long-term outcomes)

35. Long-term results are commonly contingent on long-term/multi-year and continuous capacity development engagement, and may take years before materializing. This means that by the time of this evaluation, long-term outcomes should by definition not be expected from the Executive Gender Coach Programme, which was evaluated right after it had ended. The CTHB simulation project and the WPP project in Tajikistan are also quite recent and still ongoing.
36. The intended purpose (i.e., *long-term outcome*) of the BMSC project was enhanced border security and management. Individual level survey data shows that one of the training offerings (staff course) led to an increased number of drug seizures¹³, but no data exist to indicate that such changes applied at the organizational level as well. Apart from the dearth of data, another challenge is that other border management assistance providers delivered related capacity development assistance. This means that even if relevant organizational level data were available, it would be challenging for OIO to parse out the BMSC’s potential contribution from that of the other assistance providers.
37. In the case of the WCCP project in BiH, the intended purpose was to enhance effectiveness with regard to an increased adjudication rate of suspected and indicted war crimes cases. The survey administered by OIO to former trainees showed that these goals were achieved. In addition, highly interactive lectures appeared again to have been the most effective training approach. The finding on the effectiveness of highly interactive lectures is a remarkably consistent finding since it applies across short-term, mid-term, and long-term learning outcomes.
38. The CTHB simulation showed more modest results in terms of long-term outcomes such as regarding institutionalized multi-agency cooperation at national and international levels. A considerable number of professionals, who represented all pS and several Partners for Co-operation, participated in the six simulation exercises that were evaluated. However, because of the limited numbers of trainees from any one country, they have not necessarily been networking or able to generate sustainably changed practices at national and international levels.

¹³ Average response score was 4.0 on a scale from 1 to 5.

39. This issue of long-term outcomes is an area in which further analysis and evaluation are needed in order to identify the most effective means to ensure that increased capacity at the individual level will generate a greater impact at the organizational and systems level as well. This may involve continuous and multi-year assistance that covers a large number of individuals. OIO notes in this regard that despite the fact that all the evaluated projects expected higher-level impact, most project designs were lacking plans for how the participants would “cascade” their acquired knowledge and skills to their peers.
40. Notable exceptions are the Executive Gender Coach Programme and the WPP project. Both had activities aimed at enhancing leadership skills with the explicit intention that the participants would take on the role of furthering the projects’ broader objectives within their respective organizations. They were not equally effective, however. In the case of the former, the participants gained an understanding of their roles as gender champions, but the programme did not seem to have fully succeeded in developing participants’ capacities to lead their teams in gender mainstreaming, at least not by the time when this evaluation was conducted shortly after the end of the Programme. It remains to be seen whether such longer-term results will materialize. In contrast, the WPP project included skill-building in mentorship and fostered mentor-mentee pairs in order to build young women’s leadership skills and connections to political parties. Several mentees have become mentors outside of the project framework. Furthermore, the youth summer camps sparked the interest of a number of young men to act as role models on gender equitable relations in their families and among their peers, even though this was not expected from their participation. It does, however, remain to be seen to what extent these “gender champions” will continue to serve as leaders in the longer term.
41. Due to the complex nature of the issues that the OSCE addresses, improving organizations or systems to bring about change at a higher level (e.g., more women in political office, enhanced border security, or more effective prosecution of war crimes cases) requires addressing gaps that extend beyond the scope of any of the evaluated initiatives, including issues of leadership and political will. Thus, in addition to capacity development a number of other factors affect long-term outcomes. This points to the importance of implementing comprehensive assistance programmes that address related issues and have synergy effects.

4.3 Monitoring of results

42. Monitoring of *activities and outputs* was routinely conducted across the projects. However, only two of the projects monitored *outcomes*. The BMSC project (mostly) and the WCCP project (partly) conducted pre- and post-test knowledge tests, or after-training participant knowledge perception surveys. The BMSC project also carried out an “impact” assessment six months after a training to assess mid- and long-term effects of one of its key training offerings (i.e., the month-long staff course). The mid-term outcomes of the WCCP project were *de facto* monitored through the mission’s multi-year War Crimes Monitoring Project (WCMP) that systematically attended war crimes court proceedings. The same applied to *long-term outcomes* in terms of data on war crimes indictments and court cases, which was also collected by the WCMP.
43. The WPP project in Tajikistan made limited use of pre- and post-training questionnaires that allowed for some assessment of knowledge gains, but they could not identify, or even quantify, changes in attitudes and beliefs among the target groups. Both the WPP and CTHB simulation projects had a significant focus on changing perceptions and yet did not implement methods to measure these results. Monitoring and evaluating of longer-term outcomes was largely conducted by staff through observations and collecting anecdotal reports, rather than by using a systematic approach.

44. In general, pre- and post-tests, and post-training follow-up surveys of mid-term results should be used more consistently within the OSCE to assess short-term outcomes in the acquisition and application of knowledge and skills. Given that attitudinal change is an important goal of several OSCE initiatives, it is important that monitoring plans assess this specific short-term outcome, too. Likewise, the tracking of medium-term outcomes, which could include improvements in multi-agency cooperation or enhanced investigation and prosecution efforts, needs to be systematised across the OSCE's capacity development projects.
45. A weakness highlighted in all the case studies is the limited capacity for monitoring and assessing long-term outcomes, which explains why four of the five evaluations encountered difficulties attributing institutional or organizational change to the projects' capacity building efforts. This challenge is partly due to the considerable time period it may take before long-term outcomes materialize, which is significantly longer than the large majority of OSCE's individual projects.
46. Another factor that undermines the projects' ability to track long-term outcomes, is the tendency to articulate broad and high-level "objectives" without sufficiently outlining the more narrow and specific objectives that must be met first, i.e. the logical links between the capacity development interventions per se (i.e., input, activities and outputs) and the expected results (i.e., short-, mid-term, and long-term outcomes) are commonly not explicit in project documents and monitoring plans. In other words, quite frequently project intervention logics are not fully thought through. As a consequence, project reports on outcomes tend to be based on anecdotal evidence¹⁴, and the question whether OSCE projects are making a difference in the longer run cannot be fully answered with a reasonable degree of certainty.
47. In addition, the OSCE is limited in its ability to track long-term outcomes due to constraints on the resources needed for proper in-depth monitoring and evaluation.

4.4 Contribution to gender equality

48. Two of the five evaluated projects (the Executive Gender Coach Programme and the WPP project) had gender equality as a principal objective. The other projects mainstreamed gender equality to an extent that goes beyond ensuring equal participation of women and men in training events, and paid attention to gender equality considerations in the training content.
49. The gender-specific projects demonstrate that capacity development exercises can be an effective means to convey the importance of promoting gender equality to participants. In this regard, the WPP project in Tajikistan and the Executive Gender Coach Programme stand out as examples of how training activities can be used to challenge entrenched gender stereotypes about women's and men's roles. A previous OIO evaluation found that innovative approaches to promoting gender equality, and overcoming negative gender stereotypes, are lacking in the organization¹⁵. Therefore, projects that demonstrate the possibility of affecting attitudinal change regarding gender roles should be considered for replication and adaptation for other target groups. Of course, the Executive Gender Coach Programme also worked on these issues.

¹⁴ A possible prime reason may be that the OSCE's current project proposal template does not distinguish between short-, mid-, and long-term outcomes. Important assumptions and prerequisites that link the interventions to a cascading set of outcomes are therefore not articulated in the project proposals.

¹⁵ OSCE/OIO (2018), *Thematic Evaluation of the Implementation of the OSCE's 2004 Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality, Supporting participating States to Establish Comprehensive Security and to Achieve Gender Equality*, Report 5/17.

50. The evaluation found that overall the five projects took a more thoughtful approach to gender mainstreaming than is the case for much of the OSCE's project portfolio, while also relying to a considerable extent on ensuring balanced participation of women and men among participants as well as trainers and instructors. The BMSC project addressed the problem of women's low representation among trainees by delivering women-only courses, which eventually led to an increase in female professionals being nominated for all courses. The WCCP project in BiH sought to mainstream gender through training on wartime sexual violence, the promotion of equal participation of men and women in training activities, the promotion of balanced gender representation among trainers, and overall by including "training topics bearing particular impact on female victims and witnesses". The training led to changed practices with regard to the handling of cases involving sexual violence, including the manner in which witnesses were approached and how victims were treated. Meanwhile, whereas armed conflict-related sexual violence against women was a prominent theme during the training, the topic of sexual violence against men received only very limited attention, even though rape and other forms of sexual violence were frequently perpetrated against men and boys during the armed conflict. The WCCP project could have used this opportunity to increase knowledge of, and reduce stigma around, the topic of sexual violence against men as a way to also improve the justice system response.
56. The CTHB simulation project addressed two aspects of gender mainstreaming. First, there was a clear goal to ensure gender diversity (but not necessarily complete gender balance) in each professional trainee team, which itself was a vivid demonstration of one of the core values of the project: the benefit of co-operation among and between different professionals. Second, the simulation storylines gave latitude for the trainees to explore gender-sensitive interactions with trafficking victims and perpetrators, while highlighting the specific vulnerabilities of female victims and countering misconceptions about women being trafficked exclusively for sexual exploitation.
57. The CTHB and WCCP projects also demonstrate that there are clear value added opportunities to incorporate gender equality considerations in capacity development efforts that do not have gender equality as a primary objective, and that it is possible to convey to trainees that particular themes (e.g. trafficking in human beings or war crimes) have gender dimensions. Furthermore, if learning activities are thoughtfully designed, even when gender equality is not a principal objective, participants can also gain knowledge of and practice how to use gender-sensitive approaches in professional settings.

4.5 Partnerships

58. OSCE projects commonly rely on partnerships with government entities, civil society organizations and international organizations. When partners collaborate in the development, implementation and financing of specific projects, there are benefits for the OSCE, not only in terms of cost savings but also ensuring that the interventions are contextualised and relevant. Collaborative partnerships of this type are also a means to foster local ownership and they can contribute to ensuring the sustainability of the capacity development outcomes.
59. Several of the evaluated projects show that former trainees can also be engaged in other roles, namely as experts, mentors or trainers. While this kind of collaboration may be overlooked if only traditional partnerships are considered, this is in fact part of a "cascade approach" that the WPP project fosters to its advantage. The CTHB simulation project has also benefitted from former trainees' enthusiasm to participate in subsequent simulations as experts. While this form of expert participation is not overtly promoted as part of the CTHB project documentation, new "trainers" are supported to join simulations through informal mentoring and briefings.

60. The Executive Gender Coach Programme benefitted from lessons learned from having similar programmes implemented by several institutions in Sweden that were willing to share their experiences. Other organizations also contributed to the Programme by providing resource persons. Likewise, the development and implementation of the CTHB simulation was enhanced by its partnerships with international organizations, national agencies (primarily Italian and Kazakh), CSOs and donors. The partnerships reflected the competence of the institutions, with some providing subject matter expertise (e.g. the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees), others logistical and organizational support (the Centre of Excellence for Stability Police Units, the Municipalities of Vicenza and Venice, the Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan), and others that funded trainees' participation. The partnerships allowed for considerable cost sharing.
61. The WCCP in BiH project was unique in that it relied on many partnerships with international organizations and a variety of partnership modalities. Some of the training events were delivered in co-operation with UN entities (the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, the United Nations Development Program, the United Nations Children Fund), bi-lateral donors (the United States, the United Kingdom), and a civil society organization; while the large majority of the events was delivered almost exclusively by BiH nationals (judges, prosecutors, police, etc.) in partnership with entities of the BiH justice sector. The latter provided trainers and venues, selected the participants, and was involved in the development of the training curricula. Trainees were in turn selected from among these entities.

4.6 Sustainability

62. The case studies present a mixed picture regarding sustainability. They suggest that when it comes to *knowledge* gains and *skills* development, the more costly and intensive initiatives, and those with a higher degree of innovation and interactivity, are less sustainable than initiatives that mix traditional approaches with experiential learning. The foremost reason is that methods like simulations are resource demanding (staff, funds and time) to arrange, which makes them a less suitable model to replicate in countries that have limited resources and extensive capacity development needs that require dedicated efforts over several years.
63. On the other hand, more experiential methodologies, such as simulations and role plays, might be needed when the immediate learning objective is to change individual *attitudes and beliefs*, including stereotypes, as well as *cultural norms and values*, and to ensure that these changes are sustained in the long run. These efforts go beyond increasing knowledge and skills.
64. Overall, the evaluated interventions did not aim to create self-sufficiency in capacity development, and it is therefore unlikely that in the absence of OSCE support, any of them would be continued by other institutions. Many of the institutions benefitting from OSCE training, for lack of funds, lack of trainers, or lack of planning and interest, do not have satisfactory systems for basic training and continuous learning. Thus, they are commonly dependent on continued external assistance.
65. An exception to some extent is the CTHB simulation project that included an activity dedicated to the development and dissemination of a manual on the simulation methodology, with the aim of encouraging OSCE pS to use their own resources and adapt the exercise to meet national training needs. Another exception is the WPP project that foresaw the national parliament taking over some activities to promote women in leadership, but there does not seem to have been much progress in this respect.
66. BiH, where the WCCP project was implemented, does not have training capabilities for justice sector staff beyond providing limited numbers of induction trainings. BiH is therefore

dependent on continuous external financial assistance and expertise from the OSCE and other entities. Thus, the WCCP project has not been able, nor was it the intention, to build such self-sufficiency, and it was therefore succeeded by other assistance activities delivered by the OSCE mission to BiH and the European Union.

67. Another and related sustainability challenge, which applies to some of the projects, is staff turnover/rotation, which creates a continuous need for training to address knowledge gaps. It is therefore important that capacity development initiatives either support self-sufficiency with regard to capacity development by supporting national training institutions, providing training of trainers, and/or supporting the creation of training manuals; and/or create follow-up assistance projects that provide additional training. However, OIO observed that such courses of action are generally not pursued due to lack of long-term planning and/or lack of resources on the side of the OSCE.
68. Last but not least, another sustainability challenge relates to what was discussed earlier in this report: an estimated 90% of learning takes place outside of the formal types of capacity development events provided by organizations such as the OSCE. Thus, even if the OSCE successfully supports the creation of self-sufficiency with regard to capacity development by providing training of trainers and/or supporting the creation of training manuals, unless counterparts have a system in place that encompasses social and experiential learning, i.e. coaching, mentoring, on-the-job learning etc., learning objectives will mostly likely not be achieved, or at least progress will be slower, stall or even recede.
69. It is interesting to note that when WCCP project participants were asked survey questions on whether everyday learning from work tasks was more beneficial for learning than formal capacity development events of the types delivered by the OSCE, around 75% responded in the affirmative. This finding confirms the previously cited rule-of-thumb that 70-90% of learning takes place on the job, and it is likely contingent on the fact that training occurs rarely compared to everyday work¹⁶.
70. Formal training should be a complement to these types of social and experiential learning, not a substitute. This means that it would be wise for the OSCE to also support counterparts with the creation of systems for more informal capacity development, and to alert them to the need for this in the first place. This evaluation has not seen this happen systematically in any of the five projects. It has instead commonly been assumed that trainees will share their newly obtained knowledge and insights with their peers and colleagues, or that formal training alone will do the job.

5. The Way Forward

71. The five evaluated capacity development initiatives are a narrow representation of the many and varied OSCE interventions that aim to foster learning and to develop the capacities of staff and counterparts. One overall conclusion from the evaluations is that there are attempts within the OSCE to move away from classical teaching methods and a willingness to experiment with innovative practices. Combining more formal learning methods with interactive ones, as well as including elements such as coaching, mentoring and experiential learning, can have considerable benefits. The nature and sustainability of these benefits, however, depend on the context, the particular issue at hand, and the specific learning

¹⁶ Thus, even if a single “unit” of everyday work has a considerably lower knowledge generating effect than a single “unit” of formal training, the sheer number of everyday work “units” means that more learning occurs during routine work than through formal training.

objective. More consistent efforts are needed to articulate why, how and for what purpose these methods are being used.

72. This thematic evaluation generated the following emerging lessons that that can be used as guidance for future learning and capacity development activities:

- ☒ Interactive and experiential forms of learning are optimal for knowledge gains and skill-building when they are used in combination with formal learning. When the balance is tipped too far in favour of social and experiential learning, effectiveness of knowledge transfer seems to decrease.
- ☒ Social and experiential learning methods might be more effective in fostering changes of beliefs and attitudes among learners, and in challenging deep-seated stereotypes.
- ☒ Decisions to use highly interactive methods within larger projects should be carefully weighed against issues of sustainability, efficiency, and the potential to achieve the same results using other methods.
- ☒ Short-term outcomes (changes in knowledge and attitude) often lead to changes in practice (medium-term outcomes), but the kinds of capacity development projects implemented by the OSCE often lack clarity about how to achieve longer-term results, in the form of institutionalised change and impact.
- ☒ Project designs often lack plans for how participants will become leaders in their own institutions and 'cascade' their acquired knowledge, skills and attitudes to others.
- ☒ Capacity development projects would be better served if they set fewer and more concrete training objectives and were more strategic in meeting them.
- ☒ Formal training should complement (not replace) social and experiential learning. There is a need for the OSCE to better support counterparts with the establishment of such comprehensive learning mechanisms.