



External Evaluation of the project titled “Countering Illicit Trade of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) materials in Free Trade Zones (FTZs) of Latin America- SMS-2001”

Evaluation process

Project duration: 09/2021 to 09/2023. Project budget: US\$ 597,590, funded by the U.S. Department of State, Export Control and Related Border Security Program. Implementation: Inter-American Committee against Terrorism, OAS.

12 stakeholders consulted

42% female, 58% male
57% response rate



Evaluation period: 08/2023 - 10/2023



Virtual inception calls, document review, virtual interviews

Evaluation users

OAS, CICTE, Participating Member States, donor U.S.



Evaluation purpose



Relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, including cost-benefit, and sustainability of the project in six countries

Evaluation results

Relevance



- Highly relevant to OAS mandates (AG/RES.2880 (XLVI-O/016))
- Fully aligned with U.S. efforts to implement Resolution 1540
- U.N. member States unanimously adopted Resolution 1540 in 2004, including the six project countries
- Reconstructed Theory of Change largely sound



Effectiveness

- For four outputs, targets were largely achieved (outputs 1.1, and 3.2) or fully achieved (outputs 1.2 and 3.1). No data was available for two outputs
- Stakeholder satisfaction with the seven project-funded events ranged from 88% to 99%
- Factors influencing results: OAS reputation, mandate for Resolution 1540, CICTE network of experts, resistance to change

Efficiency



- Progress reports of good quality and quarterly financial reports to the donor
- Sub-optimal quality and appropriateness of logframe indicators
- Good theoretical cost-effectiveness



Sustainability

- Behavior change among customs officers emerges but it is a long-term process
- Public actors' awareness : AEO is a strong concept and well-anchored in Brazil and Panama but less so in Argentina
- Regional cooperation and coordination depend on customs agencies and diplomats; volatility

Key results: theoretical contribution

Customs clearance

Paraguay: 86,7% time saved by AEO-certified traders compared to non-AEO certified ones

Brazil: 93,7% time saved by AEO-certified traders compared to non-AEO certified ones (air freight)
96,9% reduction for road transport

Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) certification

Paraguay: AEO-licensed businesses undertook 7.3% of all business transactions involving import or export

Brazil: 549 operators were AEO-certified in July 2023, i.e., 58% of all importers and exporters

Unintended results: Drugs seizure

contribution to seizing drugs in the market value of US\$ 17,2 billion (OAS, 2022)

Factors influencing results

Positive



- OAS' reputation & CICTE mandate
- Long-term partnership: CICTE & customs agencies
- Use of experts from the region with practical expertise
- Project filling gap between the WTO's and WCO's normative work and its practical implementation



Negative

- "Old school thinking" in customs agencies
- Policy changes and change of political leadership (Argentina, Mexico)
- Extensive lead time to invite officials, up to 3 months

"The OAS and CICTE have first-hand knowledge of the region. They have the ability to engage leadership and act as a game changer in many countries."

Recommendations

1

Donor: Consider the continuation of funding CICTE projects under CICTE's umbrella of the general framework of supporting Weapon of Mass Destruction non-proliferation in the Americas.

2

CICTE Management: Use relevant indicators of the general framework of supporting Weapon of Mass Destruction non-proliferation in the Americas also in the projects under the framework.

3

CICTE Management: support its main counterparts in national AEO programs and Mutual Recognition Agreements to monitor the cost effectiveness of those measures (sharing methodology, disseminating results).

4

CICTE Management: output-level indicators should be results-based rather than activity based.

5

CICTE Management: Project design. It is recommended to include the concept of stakeholder satisfaction using changes in knowledge, awareness, and practices, as currently practiced in CICTE's high quality post-event questionnaires and add it as a logframe indicators at the purpose level.

6

CICTE Management: It is strongly recommended to maintain and expand to the extent possible the invaluable engagement in maintaining contacts with customs agencies and other related actors, particularly in periods when no projects are implemented.

