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The conceptual framework for impact evaluation in the case of the ongoing evaluation of the cooperation programme Saxony – Czech Republic 2014-2020

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Impact evaluation

Methodological challenge

- ▶ Impact evaluation covering each of the 7 specific objectives using a theory-based approach, which includes as mandatory task the...
- ▶ Quantification of the 7 programme-specific result indicators (at the macro-level) and estimation of the programme's contribution to the observed change

Impact evaluation

Solution

- ▶ Development of 7 **impact models** with an underlying **assessment framework** for each “building-block” of the model (our major evaluation tool)
- ▶ Impact models were developed during the drafting of the evaluation concept from January 2017 to April 2017 and were intensively discussed with the Managing Authority
- ▶ Impact models re-construct the content of the cooperation programme and help to understand the intervention logic (this “end of pipe” approach is common but not purposeful – foster result-based planning in future programmes)

Impact model

The **components** of the impact models are:

- ▶ Preconditions (e.g. workable partnerships)
- ▶ Planned activities grouped according to “pathways”
- ▶ Short-term and long-term results
- ▶ Accountability threshold (scope of attribution)
- ▶ Given indicators such as output and result indicators

See the following example (a simple one)

Specific objective 6b

IP 6b) ID 2.1 - Strengthening of cross-border water protection to improve water quality

People and businesses benefit from the improvement of the environment

EI2.1 Proportion of surface water bodies with improved water quality
OI3 Joint activities to protect or improve water quality

Long-term results

Short-term results

Action

Precondition

EI 2.1

Improvement of the water quality of surface waters

Improving cross-border aquatic ecosystems

Improving the quality of the groundwater

Coordinated and joint action

Improved continuity of river systems

Restoration of river systems

Minimization of pollutant input

Impact contribution

Context
Projects

Underlying assessment framework

Implementing the EU Water Framework Directive

Create joint management plans, action plans and programmes

OI3

Accompanying knowledge building

OI3

Exchange of informations

Conducting of joint conferences

Initiation of research work

Partnerships are formed

Partnerships are formed

Technical implementation

Information & knowledge

Assessment framework

- ▶ Verify the components in each pathway of the impact model in a qualitative / quantitative way
- ▶ Apply a set of suitable methods: analysis of monitoring data, progress reports, statistical data, conduct of surveys, accompanying research at project level; covering all projects or a sample of the projects
- ▶ elaborate assessment criteria for each component
- ▶ complement missing result indicator on the micro-level (“mirror-like” indicators)
- ▶ assess consistency of all components in the end – see if you are on track in the pathways leading to the long-term result (compelling story?)

Assessment framework (extract)

Topic	Assessment criteria / indicators
Precondition	
Partnerships are formed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Characteristics of partners participating in the joint project• Implementation of the cooperation criteria• Intensity of cooperation• Motives for cooperation• Sustainability of cooperation
Action	
Joint management plans, action plans and programmes are created	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No of joint activities (OI3)• Type of measures and type of project (early phase, strategic development projects, implementation projects)• Investments per measure (part of FI2)• Characteristics of participants• Geographical distribution of activities / projects
Accompanying knowledge building <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exchange of information• Conducting joint conferences• Initiate research work	
Short-term results	
Coordinated and joint action <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improved continuity of river systems• Restoration of river systems• Minimization of pollutant input	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• % of respondents who confirm improved cross-border coordination and action compared to 2014• Number of obstacles removed in rivers• Number of restored rivers• Change in the level of pollutant input

Accompanying research (part of assessment)

- ▶ 12 projects (out of a total of around 90 approved projects) will be visited three times during the implementation period from 2017 to 2021 in order to observe the initial situation and the progress achieved. This should allow a robust before-and-after comparison
- ▶ All 7 specific objectives of the CP are addressed with 1-2 projects of strategic nature
- ▶ The impact models for each specific objective form the reference framework for the evaluation

Accompanying research

- ▶ The following topics are covered:
 - ▶ Development of the partnership (pre-condition for cross-border impact)
 - ▶ Results of the cooperation
 - ▶ Communication
 - ▶ Administrative procedure
- ▶ In each round 24 interviews with the lead-partner and a selected project partner are conducted in SN und CZ (in total 72 interviews)
- ▶ The interview results are processed in the form of 12 case studies, which contribute to the impact evaluation in 2019 and 2021



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Many thanks for your attention!

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