Annex 11

Concept Note on the methodology for result indicators establishment under Bulgaria – the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia IPA CBC Programme 2014-2020

September 2014

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GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

BG	Bulgaria
CA	Contracting Authority
CBC	Cross-border Cooperation
CP	Cooperation programme
CSF	Common Strategic Framework
DG	Directorate General
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ETC	European Territorial Cooperation
EU 2020	Strategy "Europe 2020"
IPA	Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance
JS	Joint Secretariat
MA	Managing Authority
MRD	Ministry of Regional Development
MS	Member State of EU
NA	National Authority
NUTS	Nomenclature des unités territoriales statistiques
TP	Thematic Priority

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the present Concept Note is to give a logical framework of the methodology for result indicators establishment and monitoring under Bulgaria – the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia IPA CBC Programme 2014-2020.

The Concept Note is based on *the requirements of ETC and IPA II Regulations* as well as on the important document, that lays down the principles of establishment baselines and targets for programme indicators for the programming period 2014-2020: *"THE PROGRAMMING PERIOD 2014-2020, GUIDANCE DOCUMENT ON MONITORING AND EVALUATION, EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND AND COHESION FUND, CONCEPTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS*"[1], issued by DG Regional and Urban policy of the European Commission in March 2014. The paper sets out some important changes in the understanding and organisation of monitoring and evaluation. The most important one is the emphasis on a clearer articulation of the policy objectives. This is a key to implement results' oriented policy and moving away from an excessive focus on the absorption of funding. The second major concern is the better specification of differences in tasks between monitoring and evaluation. It sets out more clearly the different types of evaluation and calls for more methodological rigour in capturing the effects of EC interventions. Further in the document the EC points out that "*the success and relevance of monitoring and evaluation will depend on the commitment of actors at all levels*".

While developing the Concept Note, some elements from the "EVALSED: The resource for the evaluation of Socio-Economic Development" issued in September 2013 have been also taken into consideration.[2]

Based on the Concept note Methodological guidelines will be developed in order to establish a clear collection algorithm of baseline and target data for the qualitative result indicators under the programme. The Methodological guidelines will also clearly define how indicators are measured, the type of data required to assess progress, the availability of this data, how it will be collected, the frequency and format of monitoring activities and who participates.

According to instructions provided by EC[3] regarding the quantification of the baseline values for the result indicators, it is not obligatory to deliver the full set when the programme document is submitted to the EC. However a CP can only be adopted without a baseline value for some result indicators if there is a commitment and an action plan to provide the data by a certain date – generally within a year at the most of the adoption of the programme.

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[1] http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/2014/working/wd_2014_en.pdf
[2] http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/information/evaluations/guidance_en.cfm
[3] Q&A prepared by Evaluation and European Semester Unit, EC, September 2013

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Results and result indicators

The result indicator identification is one of the cornerstones of the programming for the period 2014-2020 in order to strengthen the *result-orientation of the programming* (according ETC Reg. Art. 8).

Result indicators are a core element of the programmes intervention logic, have specific features and shall meet certain quality criteria. The intended *result* is the specific dimension of well-being and progress for people[3] that motivates policy action, i.e. what is intended to be changed, with the contribution of the interventions designed.

Since result indicators need to capture the desired change, they should be closely linked to the policy interventions supported. They should capture the essence of a result expected in a specific policy field. However, result indicators may measure in practice only some of the relevant dimensions of the results to be achieved. Result indicators should not relate only to programme beneficiaries (as this is the case with output indicators), but to the whole target population in a specific policy field[4].

Logically *result indicators* are variables that provide information on some specific aspects of results that lend themselves to be measured. In addition *result indicators shall meet certain quality criteria, in accordance with CPR, Annex XI:*

- responsive to policy: closely linked to the policy interventions supported. They should capture the essence of a result according to a reasonable argument about which features they can and cannot represent;
- normative: having a clear and accepted normative interpretation (i.e. there must be agreement that a movement in a particular direction is a favourable or an unfavourable result);
- robust: reliable, statistically validated;
- timely collection of data: available when needed, with room built in for debate and for revision when needed and justified.

Only one result indicator and no more than two result indicators are used for every specific objective, for establishing baseline values for every specific result indicator latest available data are used and targets are set for 2023. Baselines and targets are expressed in quantitative or qualitative terms.

The change in the result indicator value is a result of the cooperation programme as well as other external factors related. The evaluation will assess the overall change observed based on the baseline values. Netting out contribution of the programme to the change of result indicators will be done by net impact evaluation in the cases in which difference-in-difference approach could be applied[5].

In the table below the *Result Indicators under Bulgaria – the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia IPA CBC Programme 2014-2020* are presented:

[4] Q&A prepared by Evaluation and European Semester Unit, EC, September 2013

[5] http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/2014/working/wd_2014_en.pdf

Table 1

Programme Result Indicators

Priority axis	Thematic priority	Specific objectives (SO)	Results Indicators (RI)
PA 1	**TP b)**	SO 1.1 Environmental protection and sustainable use of the common natural resources of the CBC area	RI 1.1.1: Increased supported nature protected sites
			RI 1.1.2: Increased level of capacity in using common natural resources
		SO 1.2 Risk prevention and mitigation the consequences of natural and manmade hazards and disasters in the CBC region	RI 1.2.1: Increased joint interventions in the field of risk prevention and management
			RI 1.2.2: Increased joint initiatives related to risk prevention and management
PA 2	**TP d)**	SO 2.1: Enhancing the tourism potential of the region through better preservation and sustainable utilization of natural and cultural heritage	RI 2.1.1: Increase of nights spent by tourists in the cross-border region
		SO 2.2: Raising the competitiveness of the CBC region's tourist offer	RI 2.2.1: Increased created/supported joint tourism products and services
		SO 2.3: Promoting cooperation among regional actors in the area of sustainable tourism	RI 2.3.1: Increased public awareness regarding sustainable use of natural and cultural heritage and resources
PA 3	**TP g)**	SO 3.1: Improving the competitiveness of regional businesses	RI 3.1.1: Increased cross-border business networks created or extended
			RI 3.1.2: Increased level of awareness on the business opportunities offered by the region

2.2. The logic of quantitative result indicators

The Baselines for quantitative result indicators (RI 1.1.1, RI 1.2.1, RI 1.2.2, RI 2.2.1, RI 3.1.1,) concerning joint/common/networking initiatives/interventions (specific only for territorial cooperation programmes have been established on the basis of information (survey) from previous cross border programmes in the region (IPA CBC 2007-2013 and PHARE/CARDS Neighbourhood programmes).

The Baselines for quantitative result indicators RI 2.1.1, concerning general achievements (influenced by various EU and national financial instruments/programmes) have been established on the basis of relevant regional statistical data.

Target values for above indicators have been identified based on an assessment of the available budget under each specific objective and the achieved results will measure overall change and the Programme impact to the cross-border region.

2.3. The logic of qualitative result indicators

For the measurement of qualitative result indicators RI 1.1.2, RI 2.3.1, RI 3.1.2 it is necessary to obtain unavailable information, for example through *surveys*. The text below is providing a step-by-step approach and the time frame for measurement of the qualitative results indicators that is established under the programme.

2.4. Key issues on data selection

Selecting clear result indicators facilitates understanding of the problem and the policy need and will facilitate a later judgement about whether or not objectives have been met. In this context it is useful to set targets for result indicators. Having identified needs and a desired result does not yet mean that the public intervention has been fully designed. Different factors can drive the intended result towards or away from the desired change.

The main questions that will be addressed by the methodological guidelines, as minimum, are as follows:

1. What type of baselines is needed?
2. What key features are provided to ensure that a good baseline is achieved?
3. How baselines will be established?
    a. What type of baseline survey work is needed?
    b. When this survey work will be performed?
    c. What type of data will be collected?
        i. Primary and/or secondary
        ii. Other relevant.
    d. How data will be processed? What specific indicators will be used?
    e. Who provides the relevant primary or secondary data, and who process it?
    f. How baseline survey will be used in the monitoring process?
4. How indicative target value for the qualitative result indicators will be established by appliyng the elaborated methodological guidelines?

The baseline survey defines the 'pre-operation exposure' condition for the set of indicators that will be used to assess achievement of the results expressed in the programme's logical framework. When compared with the condition of the same indicators at some point during implementation (mid-term evaluation) and post-operation implementation (ex-post evaluation), the baseline study forms the basis for a 'before and after' assessment or a 'change over time' assessment. Without baseline data it is difficult to establish whether change at the result level has in fact occurred.

When applying the principles of data collection for measurement of qualitative result indicators under the programme, they will be targeted to the relevant target groups and potential beneficiaries.

Table 2

Target groups and potential beneficiaries

TARGET GROUPS AND POTENTIAL BENEFICIARIES	PRIORITY AXIS 1	PRIORITY AXIS 2	PRIORITY AXIS 1
Local and regional authorities and organisations established and managed by local and regional authorities	✓	✓	✓
National authorities and organisations established and managed by national authorities	✓	✓	✓
Administrations of protected areas	✓		
Regional and sector development agencies	✓	✓	✓
Education and social institutions	✓		
Research and academic institutes	✓		✓
Civil Society / Non-governmental organisations	✓	✓	✓
Population in the region	✓	✓	✓
Regional touristic associations / NGOs in the field of tourism		✓	
Business support structures - chamber of commerce, business association, business cluster		✓	✓
Cultural institutes (museum, library, art gallery, community centres, etc.)		✓	
Tourist operators and tourist information centres (points)		✓	
Education and training institutions		✓	✓

In the case of RI 2.3.1 and RI 3.1.2 the level of awareness and in RI 1.1.2 the level of capacity will be specifically measured through direct administrative data collection and surveys among all relevant organisations.

The scope of the data collection on level of capacity will be in compliance with the envisaged programme activities, and could cover: competences and skills of employees; knowledge, implementation sharing of good practices; availability and implementation of step-by-step procedures; availability and usage of clear and effective communication channels; competences and skills of senior executive staff; etc. The process of administrative data collection will be based on regular inquiries from all relevant organisations/institutions.

In regard to RI 2.3.1 and RI 3.1.2 the surveys on awareness among relevant target groups will be based on representative samples, so that at least a minimum size of a sample equal to 100 in each country is guaranteed.

3. PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION

3.1. Tools and approaches

The scope of coverage of the baselines can be scaled up or down depending on what data is available and the time and budget allocation. Research instruments/toolkit to be used in developing the methodologies include but are not limited to the following:

- Desk research and review of existing statistical data;
- Review of administrative records of relevant authorities;
- Desk research and review of previous research studies by academics, previous donor’s interventions, etc.
- Assessment of existing secondary data.

There is wide range of tools or instruments that can be used in establishing baselines. Typically more than one way of collecting data is used. In some circumstances, especially when looking at qualitative data, it is sometimes useful to use several techniques to help verify the robustness of the findings from each. This cross checking is called triangulation. Key tools for data collection could include:

- Surveys – sample surveys and/or online surveys;
- Acquiring and processing of administrative data
- Individual interviews;
- Group interviews/ focus groups;
- Case studies;
- Participant observation.

This list is not comprehensive, but it provides preliminary insight on the possible solutions in establishing baselines for the qualitative result indicators. As a minimum the methodological guidelines will consists of, but not limited to: representative samples’ design, questionnaires, methods of data colection, methods of data analysis, etc. In adition the methodological guidelines will contain clear collection algorithm of baseline data for the qulitative result indicators. The process of collecting this data is constrained by the costs of both time and finances. The methodological guidelines will clearly define how indicators are measured, the type of data required to assess progress, the availability of this data, how it will be collected, the frequency and format of monitoring activities and who participates.

3.2. Data analysis

The performance of the data analysis will be based on quantitative and qualitative approaches. Quantitative approaches include basic statistical techniques so that measuring of results is feasible and easy to handle by the staff, which will perform it, such as: descriptive statistics, frequency distributions, difference-in-difference methods, calculations of index numbers, and analysis of indicators’ dynamics. Qualitative approaches include sociological methods of processing and summarizing information collected through individual and group interviews.

3.3. Monitoring

The monitoring of the achieved results will be carried out twice during the programme implementation period, namely years 2018 and 2023. Changes in the value of result indicators will be reported in the respective Annual Implementation Reports.

Definitions of the indicators, which will be used in measuring results, require that data collection should cover all target groups and types of potential beneficiaries above. Thus, a clear track of joint interventions, joint initiatives, cross-border business networks, supported sites and joint tourism products will be provided.

For the measurement of the quantitative result indicators information will be obtained from the Project Progress Reports as well as from regional statistical data. In addition to the regular programme reports, additional multiplying effects from the Programme will be measured through surveys on induced joint initiatives, interventions and networks as a continuation of implemented projects, which continuation is beyond Programme funding.

For the measurement of the qualitative result indicator - information will be obtained through survey similar to the one carried out for baseline establishment.

3.4. Indicative time frame and work plan

The indicative time frame and work plan for baseline and indicative target values establishment of qualitative result indicators under the Bulgaria – the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia IPA CBC 2014-2020 Programme is presented in the table below:

Table 3

Indicative time frame and work plan for qualitative result indicators establishment

MILESTONES		2014			2015				2018	2023
		October	November	December	January	February	March	April		
1.	DEVELOPMENT OF THE METHODOLOGICAL GUIDELINES									
2.	ON-THE-JOB TRAINING ON METHODOLOGICAL GUIDELINES IMPLEMENTATION									
3	METHODOLOGICAL GUIDELINES IMPLEMENTATION									
4.	ANALYSIS OF THE DATA RECEIVED									
5.	SETTING BASELINE AND TARGET VALUES									
6.	UPDATING THE PROGRAMME DOCUMENT									
7.	MONITORING ON ACHIEVED RESULTS									