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Evaluation of the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance II (IPA II)

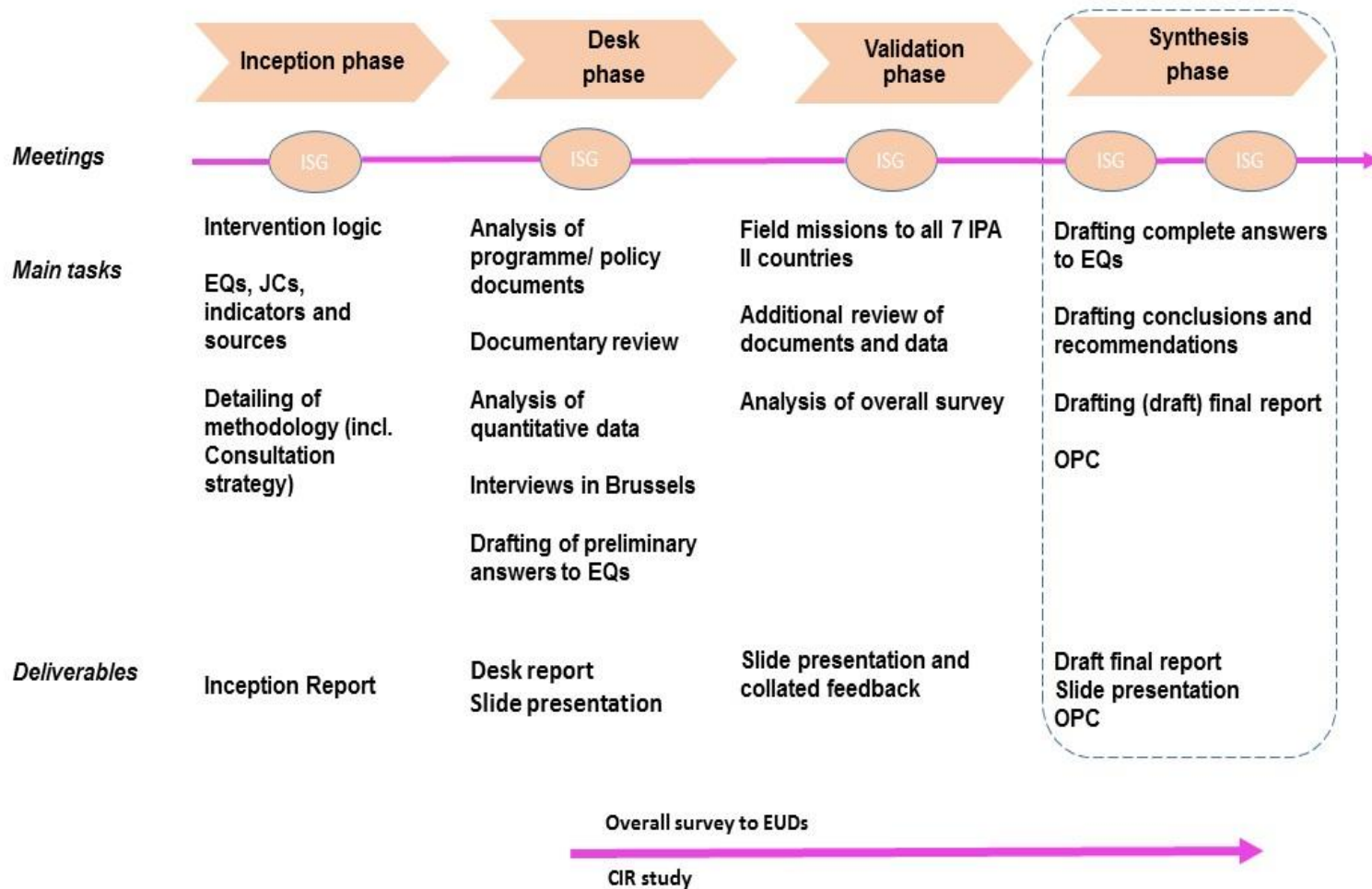
Draft Final Report

Brussels
28/03/2017

Aim of the meeting

- Provide information on the main findings/ conclusions of the IPA II Mid-Term Review (MTR).
- Receive feedback from participants which could serve as additional input for drafting the final evaluation report.

Evaluation process & methodology



EQ 1 on Relevance

- Overall objectives and design of IPA II respond to EU priorities and beneficiary needs.
- Strategic relevance of EU pre-accession support has been considerably improved.
- IPA II puts strong emphasis on structural reforms as the basis for the accession process.
- IPA II programming of IPA II also reflects the reality of the current stage of the overall accession perspective, considering the individual country's progress in fulfilling the accession criteria.
- Sector approach appears to be better understood in some sectors, in others it is still evolving.

EQ 2 on effectiveness, impact, sustainability

- Prospects for increased effectiveness and impact are established - clear concentration of funds in priority areas that are consistent with programme objectives and aligned with the Enlargement Strategy.
- Close alignment between EU Enlargement Strategy and IPA II is ensured. A substantial portion of the IPA II funds is devoted to institution building in the sectors of Democracy and Governance and Rule of Law/Fundamental Rights.
- These are at the core of the 'Fundamentals First' principle that underpins IPA II programme rationale.

EQ 3 on efficiency

- Indicators suggest progress in the EC's administrative efficiency and sound financial management when comparing 2014 with 2015.
- IPA II operational efficiency is currently still low and behind progress made during the period comparable for IPA I, most notably in national programmes.

EQ 3 on efficiency

- Chronic performance problems in some IPA II countries, lead to uncertainty about the future of IMBC (indirect management with the beneficiary country) systems and structures.
- Sector budget support is building up and efficiency gains have still to materialise.
- Monitoring processes for IPA II performance measurement are being put in place - not yet fully functioning, as IPA II has hardly entered real action implementation.
- Weaknesses are still evident in the quality of outcome indicators.

EQ 4 on added value

- The EU's political influence and leverage allows engaging national authorities/ other donors with greater authority and legal certainty than individual EU MS.
- Division of labour as promoted shows mixed achievements for the IPA II beneficiary countries.

EQ 5 on coherence, consistency, complementarity and synergies

- Complementarity and synergies could still benefit from more coordination/ cooperation during planning/ programming of the Instruments.
- EFIs' coordination and donors' coordination are adequate in most of the IPA II countries. Where donor coordination is weak there is still considerable risk of overlaps and gaps.
- Local Authorities in IPA II countries cannot benefit anymore from CSO/LA programme (DCI).

EQ 6 on leverage

- IPA II is used pro-actively for supporting negotiations with the governments of the beneficiary countries for taking the necessary measures leading to reforms.
- IPA II is a major factor in the overall leverage of funds for implementing the development framework of beneficiary countries.

Relevance of IPA II & appropriateness of its programming approach

- IPA II is becoming fit to deliver the instrument's objectives – to prepare countries for EU accession.
- Sector approach has improved the strategic focus of IPA II over its predecessor.
- Overall, sector approach is still in a transitional phase.
- IPA II arrangements allow for the use of multi-annual programmes but in the current period annual action programmes prevail.

Effectiveness & value added

- Indirect positive effects are noted in the approach now being taken by DG NEAR, EUDs and IPA country staff towards programming IPA II. Direct effects are not yet observable at programme level.
- Added value in terms of size of engagement, political weight and advocacy is clear for most IPA II countries.

Efficiency & implementation issues

- Overall, intended efficiency gains have still to materialise.
- Guidance on how to conduct sector level monitoring is now in place but remains incomplete, with significant uncertainty in IPA countries on how to transform this concept into practice.
- Indicators of the Performance Framework are adequate. Weakness in the quality of indicators, particularly at outcome level.
- Evidence from IPA I shows that the IMBC introduction is a mixed blessing - IMBC offers improved ownership but overall efficiency suffers compared to DM.

Coherence, complementarities, synergies & leverage

- Complementarity and synergies of other EFIs with IPA II could still benefit from more coordination/ cooperation during planning and programming of the Instruments.
- Lack of access to the DCI CSO/LA programme in the current period (2014-2020) is a big loss for Local Authorities of the IPA II beneficiary countries.
- Donor coordination is largely satisfactory in most of the IPA II countries. Where this is not the case, poor co-ordination can affect the success of IPA II implementation.

Conclusions 5 (Turkey)

Issues specific for Turkey

- IPA I Components III, IV and V have successfully laid some foundation for the delivery of the sector approach in Turkey.
- These IPA I programmes have allowed the implementation of elements such as sectoral monitoring and Multi-Annual Programming that are important for the successful delivery of IPA II.
- Inefficiencies in the IMBC have generated chronic delays that have accumulated in the system.
- This is already affecting IPA II relevance and influences effectiveness.

Conclusions 6 (Turkey)

Issues specific for Turkey

- The evaluation concluded on critical factors undermining effectiveness and impact for IPA II in Turkey. This includes:
 - sub-optimal efficiency of the IMBC,
 - relatively limited scale of IPA II funds comparative to national budgets,
 - the existence of a stable consensus between the EU and Turkish institutions which would underpin policy dialogue.
 - the current accession perspective for Turkey feeds into widespread uncertainty over the value of IPA II in the country.