**TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP No 3 ON PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

**ANALYSIS OF RESULTS OF QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY**

**Draft revised on 25 July 2018**

**Version1 (For TWG members)**

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# 1. Introduction

This report presents the analysis of the results of a questionnaire survey carried out in June 2018 among the participants of the Technical Working Group (TWG) No 3 on performance management – impact assessment methodology (IPA II CBC). It briefly provides background to the launch and work of the TWG No3; the specific objectives, scope and methodology of the survey; and the results of the survey, including general conclusions.

# 2. Background

## 2.1 Purpose of the TWG No 3

The TWG No 3 has been convened following the recommendations of the 2nd CBC Regional Consultative Forum, held in Sarajevo (BA) on 11-12/09/2014, taking into account that the performance framework within the 2007-2013 financial cycle was totally under-developed and that serious concerns remain for the current cycle (2014-2020), as expressed by the independent evaluation of the 2007-2013 CBC programmes.

In response to the findings and recommendations stemming from the evaluation of the 2007-2013 IPA CBC programmes and in the broader context of the strategy for exploiting lessons learnt and synergies, the CBIB+2 team developed an Action Package for a CBC Performance Framework. This package consists of the following components, each comprising a number of actions and responding to specific recommendations of the evaluation:

1. Better focused programmes
2. Better focused calls for proposals
3. More realistic and robust system of indicators
4. Data management, collection, analysis & reporting
5. Surveys (to obtain feedback from successful and unsuccessful applicants, as well as potential beneficiaries)
6. Programme evaluations
7. Developing a performance culture

## 2.2 Priority areas for the TWG No 3

The TWG No 3 was launched in October 2017 following further discussion on the performance framework at the 3rd CBC Regional Consultative Forum, held in Struga (MK) on 17-18/10/2017. Within the scope of the Action Package for a CBC Performance Framework the background paper accompanying its launch identified four priority areas for the work of the TWG:

* **Ex-post surveys:** The TWG will consider the main findings of the already drafted analyses made by the CBIB+2 team and will draw lessons regarding different aspects of the programmes, as well as the survey methodology.
* **Monitoring system:** The TWG will discuss the state of play and will explore practical solutions to any outstanding implementation issues.
* **Revised AIR and final report[[1]](#footnote-1) templates:** The TWG members will discuss the revised templatesand will give their feedback on the revised final report template.
* **CBC programme-level and IPA-wide reporting:** The TWG will discuss this reporting approach and will pilot the compilation of one or two such programme reports.

# 2. Objectives and scope

## 2.1 Objectives of the survey

In the first six months since the launch of the TWG No 3 in October 2017 there were no contributions either at the spontaneous initiative of its members or in response to invitations from the CBIB+2 team. This online survey was undertaken in order to activate the TWG.

The specific objectives of the survey were twofold:

* First, to define the state of play and establish baseline on some of the priority topics of the TWG; and,
* Second, to obtain preliminary contributions from the TWG participants that could provide a springboard for discussion among its members and could stimulate further contributions.

## 2.2 Scope of the questionnaire

The questionnaire of the survey was developed by the CBIB+2 team, using 11 questions with mostly multiple-choice answers, which generally include an open text element. It also contains three identification questions.

The questionnaire covers three out of the four priority topics of the TWG:

* Surveys of beneficiaries and other stakeholders;
* Project and programme reporting – final report and AIR;
* Open reporting at programme level and IPA-wide.

## 2.3 Method

The survey was designed and conducted entirely on line, using the SurveyMonkey platform.

It was launched on 11 June 2018 and remained open until 26 June 2018. During this period the CBIB+2 team sent out several reminders to survey participants by email and also made targeted phone calls.

In total 19 members of the TWG No 3 were invited to take part, i.e. all its registered participants, except for a Brussels-based EU official. Seventeen valid responses were submitted.

In case one of the survey participants is involved in more than one programme there was the option of completing the survey separately for each programme. This option was exercised by one participant who submitted separate questionnaires relating to three programmes.

# 3. Responses

This section analyses the responses received to two questions: Q1 regarding IPA-IPA CBC programmes covered by the responses and Q13 on the role in these programmes of the respondents.

**Q1. In which 2014-2020 CBC programme are you involved?**

The responses cover all nine IPA-IPA CBC programmes of the 2014-2020 period. Of the 17 responses 16 were completed with reference to a particular programme, as shown in the table below, typically one or two per programme (RS-MNE being the exception with three), as shown in the table below. One of the respondents is not involved directly in any specific programme and thus skipped several of the questions.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| RS-MNE | 3 |
| MK-AL | 2 |
| AL-XK | 1 |
| XK-MK | 1 |
| BiH-MNE | 2 |
| MNE-XK | 2 |
| MNE-AL | 2 |
| RS-BiH | 2 |
| RS-MK | 1 |
| None | 1 |
|  | **17** |

**Q13. What is your role in the IPA CBC programme(s)?**

The responses cover the full range of potential roles in the IPA CBC programmes, as shown in the table below.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Contracting Authority - CFCU | 2 |
| Operating Structure | 8 |
| Joint Technical Secretariat | 6 |
| Other (please specify) | 1 |
|  | **17** |

# 4. Surveys of beneficiaries and other stakeholders

This section considers the topic of surveys of beneficiaries and other stakeholders - carried out in the 2007-2013 period or foreseen for the 2014-2020 period - based mainly on the responses to Questions 2, 3 and 4 and some cross-tabulations.

**Q2. Are there any surveys of the following type(s) that have been carried out in connection with this programme or an equivalent 2007-2013 programme?**

The 16 responses received, including multiple choices, are summarised in the chart and table below. They show a majority reporting involvement in programmes with surveys of grant beneficiaries, and a lesser incurrence of other types of surveys in the 2007-2013 period.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Ex-post survey of grant beneficiaries | 9 |
| Survey of entities invited to submit a full application | 1 |
| Survey of unsuccessful grant applicants | 5 |
| Survey of potential beneficiaries, e.g. participants in info sessions, PCM training events or info days | 4 |
| Survey of JMC members | 1 |
| Other (please specify) | 7 |

Regarding the response “other”, the clarifications provided include the following:

* “Surveys have been carried out (continuously) after meetings with potential applicants”.
* “The surveys have also carried out after the meetings that were held with the representatives of each municipality of the programme area (both sides of the border)”.
* “Ex-post evaluation of IPA CBC Programmes 2007-2013”.
* “No surveys. Only evaluation of the programme”.

A cross-tabulation of the responses to this question with those of Q1 shows that there have been ex-post surveys of grant beneficiaries in connection with all[[2]](#footnote-2) the 2007-2013 programmes. In the case of five programmes surveys have also been carried out of unsuccessful applicants and, in three of them, also of potential beneficiaries.



**Q3. Are there any surveys of the following type(s) that are foreseen in connection with this programme in the 2014-2020 period?**

As in the previous question answers were received from 16 respondents, including multiple choices, and they are summarised in the chart and table below. They show a majority anticipating surveys of potential beneficiaries in the 2014-2020 period and fewer responses envisaging other types of surveys. They also show 6 respondents indicating that “No such surveys are foreseen at present” and this is considered further below in the cross-tabulation by programme.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Yes, Survey of potential beneficiaries, e.g. participants in info sessions, PCM training events or info days | 10 |
| Yes, Survey of entities invited to submit a full application | 1 |
| Yes, Survey of unsuccessful grant applicants | 5 |
| Yes, Ex-post survey of grant beneficiaries | 2 |
| Yes, Survey of JMC members | 4 |
| Yes, Other | 2 |
| No such surveys are foreseen at present | 6 |
| If "Yes, Other" please specify / If "No" please give reasons: | 5 |

Regarding the response “Yes, Other” the clarifications provided include the following:

* “Instead of survey for unsuccessful grant applicants project clinics are envisaged”.
* “In regards to third option ticked: The survey after conduction of the project clinics for unsuccessful grant applicants of the 1st call for proposals is planned to be carried out”.
* “Questionnaire for potential applicants under the 1st CfP BiH-MNE 2014-2020 programme was distributed to attendees of partner search forums and info days through google forms questionnaire on 5 April 2017 and subsequently a report was prepared. Another survey is foreseen by the programme document itself and is related to TA result indicator: ‘Average share of beneficiaries satisfied with the programme implementation support’".
* “Survey of potential beneficiaries, participants in info sessions and PCM training events, was conducted in 2017, during these events. TA result indicator stated in the programme document: “Average share of beneficiaries satisfied with the programme implementation support” also requires conducting similar surveys”.
* “Beneficiary satisfaction survey to be considered for the TA Indicator”.

A cross-tabulation of the responses to this question with those of Q1 shows that between 2 and 4 different types of surveys are currently envisaged for all programmes in the 2014-2020, except RS-MK, building on the foundations of the programmes of the previous period. As already noted, the commonest type foreseen is surveys of potential beneficiaries.

The “no such surveys are foreseen” responses noted above were in connection with five programmes, one of which is the RS-MK programme. In the four other programmes they contradict the answers of other respondents who have indicated that certain types of surveys are foreseen. This suggests an insufficient awareness of the intentions of the relevant operating structures.



**Q4. If any such surveys have been carried out or are foreseen, please summarise briefly below the benefits expected from these surveys:**

Participants were asked to indicate the benefits they expect from the surveys of beneficiaries and other stakeholders. Nine of the survey participants responded and five of the open-text responses are relevant and informative and are provided below. However, the high non-response rate could be an indication that some of the TWG participants are unsure about the potential benefits.

* “The surveys are conducted in order to have an overview of the average share of beneficiaries that are satisfied with the programme implementation support, to assess their knowledge, as well as to identify their needs (information, training, workshops). Moreover, the surveys assist us in assessing the interest of potential applicants for future calls for proposals (CfPs)”.
* “The benefit from the already conducted survey of potential beneficiaries under the 1st CfP was an indication of the level of interest of potential applicants for the programme and the benefit from the survey foreseen by the programme document is an indication of satisfaction of beneficiaries”.
* “Surveys foreseen should indicate the level of satisfaction of beneficiaries (as well as potential and unsuccessful applicants) with the programme and support from the programme implementing bodies which is in line with the TA result indicator stated in the programme document: “Average share of beneficiaries satisfied with the programme implementation support”. These surveys should also indicate the level of sustainability of cross-border partnerships previously established as well as increase of capacities of potential applicants to establish new sustainable partnerships and to develop better project proposals”.
* “Report on analysis of the questionnaires for the potential applicants under the BA-ME IPA II CBC 1st call has been enclosed as annex to the AIR 2017. It provides additional info on potential beneficiaries of the Programme as well as their interest for the Thematic Priorities of the Programme”.
* “Where to focus more the support and to better understand their needs, procedures to facilitate in order to have a higher and visible overall achievement of results”.

**The main findings of this section can be summarised, as follows:**

The analysis of the contributions of the TWG participants through this questionnaire suggests that there is a strong basis across programmes regarding surveys of stakeholders, mainly ex-post surveys of beneficiaries and to a lesser extent surveys of other stakeholders.

Some of the responses go beyond the types of surveys specified in questionnaire and suggest interesting approaches, such as regarding the continuous nature and regularity of the surveys, and links with evaluation.

Several TWG participants have also presented a noteworthy outline of benefits obtained or expected from the feedback offered by these surveys. There is a strong emphasis on beneficiaries’ satisfaction with the programme and the support they received, and similarly about the level of satisfaction of potential beneficiaries and unsuccessful applicants. Other benefits include learning about stakeholders’ knowledge, needs, interest in the thematic priorities of the programme, and sustainability of cross-border partnerships; also, how to enhance the achievement and visibility of results.

This sound basis allows the TWG to draw lessons regarding different aspects of the programmes, as well as on survey methodologies and on how to make the most of the feedback obtained; and to build on this knowledge for the remaining period of the 2014-2020 programmes.

Already such surveys – especially covering potential beneficiaries – are foreseen for practically all programmes. However, uncertainties remain, as highlighted by contradictory information provided by respondents in connection with four programmes.

# 5. Project and programme reporting

This section considers the topic of project and programme reporting and comprises two sub-sections. The first focuses on formal reporting requirements and draws on the responses to Questions 5 and 6, while the second addresses a number of CBIB+2 initiatives to improve reporting (Questions 7 to 11).

## 5.1 Revised final report and AIR templates

The revised AIR template was agreed by DG NEAR in autumn 2017 and circulated in January 2018 to the CAs. The grant beneficiaries’ final narrative report template has been revised by CBIB+ but is still under consideration by DG NEAR as part of the latest version of the model application package. Questions 5 and 6 refer to the awareness and preparedness of the TWG participants in connection with these two templates.

**Q5. A revised final report template has been prepared by CBIB+ for new grant beneficiaries. Are you aware of this revised template and ready to introduce it / support its introduction?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Yes, I'm aware of the revised template and ready to introduce it / support its introduction | 5 |
| Yes, I'm aware of the revised template but I think it requires further revision before it's introduced | 0 |
| No, I'm not aware of the revised template | 11 |

The responses are summarised in the above chart and table and show that only one-third of the respondents are aware of the revised final report template and, therefore, there are issues concerning the overall preparedness of the key stakeholders for its introduction. The following free-text comments made by respondents underline this point:

* “The first time that we heard about this template was during the training on monitoring system that CBIB+2 conducted on 7 June 2018 but we have never seen the template”.
* “The CBIB+ informed us on the existence of the new final report template. However, we didn't receive the draft version of the document”.

In contrast to the previous question, practically all the respondents declared that they are aware of the revised AIR template and are ready for its introduction – see the following chart and table.

**Q6. A revised template for the Annual Implementation Report has been introduced by DG NEAR after consultation and has been communicated to Contracting Authorities. Are you aware of this revised template and ready to introduce it / support its introduction?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Yes, I'm aware of the revised template and ready to use it / support its use | 15 |
| Yes, I'm aware of the revised template but need further information/advice before it's used | 0 |
| No, I'm not aware of the revised template | 1 |

## 5.2 CBC programme-level and IPA-wide reporting

The presentations and debates on the implementation of CBC programmes and on the performance framework, during the 4th and 5th CBC Forums, have highlighted the importance and usefulness of a more systematic and consistent reporting at CBC programme level, as well as at IPA-CBC level.

The CBIB+2 team has therefore developed a template for programme-level reporting using readily available data sources, such as project reports and AIRs, as well as JTS specific inputs. A further template has been developed for reporting IPA-wide for all IPA-IPA CBC programmes. It is based on data obtained from programme-level reporting and further calculations, and covers: programme inputs and performance; programme outputs & outcomes; programme objectives and achievements.

**Q7. The CBIB+2 team has developed a template for reporting widely key results of each programme, e.g. on an ongoing basis or annually on the programme website. Are you aware of this template and ready to introduce it / support its introduction?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Yes, I'm aware of this template and ready to introduce it / support its introduction | 5 |
| Yes, I'm aware of this template but I think it requires further discussion or revision before it's introduced | 1 |
| No, I'm not aware of this template | 10 |

The above chart and table summarise the responses to Q7. It is clear that only one-third of the respondents are aware of the programme-level reporting template. Therefore, there are issues concerning the overall preparedness of the relevant stakeholders for the introduction of open programme reporting.

The questionnaire included an open invitation - “If you think that further information/advice is required, please explain briefly what needs to be done” - and this attracted only the response:“I'm not sure this was presented to the JTS. I think this issue requires further discussion”.

**Q8. When do you expect that information on programme inputs, outputs and results achieved will be published on the programme website?**

The low level of awareness about open programme level reporting is reflected in the small number of responses to the question regarding the likely timing of publishing inputs, outputs and results on the programme website – see following table:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Information on inputs/outputs/results of the 2007-2013 and/or 2014-2020 programme is already available on the programme website | 0 |
| Information on inputs/outputs/results of the 2014-2020 programme is expected to be published by 31.12.2018 on the programme website | 1 |
| Information on inputs/outputs/results of the 2014-2020 programme is expected to be published after 2018 on the programme website | 5 |

A cross-tabulation of the responses with those to Q1 shows an intention by six out of the nine programmes to publish such information on their website at some time in the future.

The only programme, which according to the answers received is expected to publish information on inputs/outputs/results by 31.12.2018 on its website is XK-MK. Five other programmes are expected to do so after 2018, namely: RS-MNE, BiH-MNE, RS-BiH, BiH-MNE and MK-AL.

However, a high proportion of survey participants skipped this question altogether, suggesting uncertainty perhaps not only about the timing but also as to whether such information will be published at all.

Notwithstanding the apparent low level of awareness on this topic, there is a keen interest in this topic as the responses to Question 9 indicate – see chart and table below. A majority of respondents would like to receive the template and further information and a sizeable group of them would like to participate in a workshop on this topic.

**Q9. Do you need any information or assistance in order to prepare/support the introduction of programme-level reporting along the lines of the proposed template?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Yes, I would like to receive the template and further information | 10 |
| Yes, I would like to participate in a workshop on this topic | 7 |
| No, I don't need any information or assistance | 0 |

A cross-tabulation below shows that the respondents cover all the programmes with their requests for one or both types of support, and this represents an opportunity to further advance the introduction of open programme-level reporting.



The analysis of the responses has revealed low levels of awareness of the IPA-wide reporting proposals – see chart and table below, similar to those discussed above on programme-specific reporting.

**Q10. The CBIB+2 team has also developed a template for reporting key results of all IPA-IPA CBC programmes, e.g. on an ongoing basis or annually on the CBIB+ website. Are you aware of this template and ready to support its introduction?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Yes, I'm aware of this template and ready to support its introduction | 4 |
| Yes, I'm aware of this template but I think it requires further discussion or revision before it's introduced | 2 |
| No, I'm not aware of this template | 10 |

The similarities with programme-level reporting extend to the responses on potential support for the introduction of IPA-wide reporting, with a majority of respondents expressing their interest in receiving the template and further information and some of them also prepared to participate in a workshop on this topic. The chart and table with the results of Question 11 are presented below.

**Q11. Would you like to receive further information and the template for reporting inputs, outputs and results across all IPA-IPA CBC programmes?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Yes, I would like to receive the template and further information | 11 |
| Yes, I would like to participate in a workshop on this topic | 4 |
| No, I don't need any further information | 0 |

**The main findings of this section can be summarised below.**

First, regarding **formal reporting requirements**:

The analysis of the responses revealed that only a minority of TWG participants are aware of the revised final report template and, therefore, there are issues concerning the overall preparedness of the key stakeholders for its introduction which need to be addressed by the TWG.

By contrast, practically all the respondents declared that they are aware of the revised AIR template and are ready for its introduction.

Second, regarding **other initiatives to improve IPA CBC reporting**:

The responses reveal a limited awareness of the template for programme-level reporting developed by the CBIB+2 team and an imprecision about the likely timing of its adoption and publication of programme-level information (inputs, outputs, results) on the programme websites.

Nevertheless, there is a keen interest in open programme reporting and a majority of respondents would like to receive the templates and further information. Moreover, a sizeable group of respondents would like to participate in a workshop on this matter which can be considerably advanced by the work of the TWG.

The same applies to reporting IPA-wide for which a template has also been developed. According to the responses the current level of awareness is fairly low but there is an encouraging interest among the respondents in receiving the template and related information, including participation in a workshop.

# 6. General findings and conclusions

This section is in two parts. The first sub-section presents the respondents’ suggestions as to matters that should be prioritised in the work of the TWG, while the second brings together the main findings of all parts of the survey and draws general conclusions.

## 6.1 TWG priorities

**Q12. Do you have any suggestions as to which matters should be accorded priority by this TWG?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Regarding surveys of beneficiaries and other stakeholders: | 4 |
| Regarding project and programme reporting: | 4 |
| Regarding other aspects of performance management: | 5 |

As shown in the table, above, 13 suggestions have been submitted concerning the two main topics of the questionnaire (surveys of beneficiaries *et al* and project/programme reporting) and a third general category of other aspects of performance management. These are presented below and include some general priorities and several specific suggestions (e.g. development of a survey tool, aligning project and programme reporting, improving on-the-spot checks).

Suggestions regarding surveys of beneficiaries and other stakeholders:

* “The surveys are an important tool to get data in an easier and cost-effective way and should be given priority, especially those targeted at the beneficiaries, since it would help us make necessary improvements and identify the needs for training, etc.”
* “The survey to measure satisfaction of beneficiaries as envisaged in the programme document need to be developed”.
* “Satisfaction with the grant amount, implementation model”.
* “Development of tool for conducting the survey (e.g. relevant questionnaire)”.

Suggestions regarding project and programme reporting:

* “I consider that programme and project [reporting] is also a must priority!”
* “Indicators; impact and result collection and reporting”.
* “Programme and project reporting should be aligned in terms of timing and information required”.

Suggestions regarding other aspects of performance management:

* “Improvement of the on-the-spot checks procedure over CBC Body, CA, programme beneficiaries and find the way to implement the on-the-spot checks over OS in partner countries”.
* “Focus should be also given to the performance management”.

## 6.2 General conclusions

**Online surveys as a methodological tool**

The use of this online survey was of a pilot nature. The response rate and content of the answers obtained shows that such surveys can be a useful tool for the work of the TWGs of CBIB+, requiring only short time inputs from TWG participants while offering tangible results in the collection of baseline data as well as in obtaining and sharing contributions. However, it remains the case that online surveys cannot replace in-depth interaction between participants, but they can support it.

**Surveys of beneficiaries and other stakeholders**

The analysis of the contributions of the TWG participants through this questionnaire suggests that there are already strong foundations across programmes mainly with surveys of beneficiaries, especially ex-post surveys, and to a lesser extent with surveys of other stakeholders, notably potential beneficiaries and unsuccessful applicants.

In addition, through their questionnaire responses, TWG participants have made a number of suggestions on methodological approaches and have set out a broad range of potential benefits that can be obtained from the surveys of beneficiaries and other stakeholders.

Therefore, there is considerable scope for sharing experiences and lessons, and for a cross-fertilisation of ideas on different aspects of the programmes, as well as survey types and methods within TWG No 3 and beyond, in the remaining period of the 2014-2020 programmes.

**Project and programme reporting**

The analysis of the responses revealed that, in terms of formal reporting requirements, only a minority of TWG participants are aware of the **revised** **final report template** and, therefore, there are issues concerning the overall preparedness of the key stakeholders for its introduction which need to be addressed by the TWG. By contrast, practically all the respondents declared that they are aware of the **revised AIR template** and are ready for its introduction.

Regarding other initiatives to improve IPA CBC reporting, the responses reveal a limited awareness of the **template for programme-level reporting** developed by the CBIB+2 team and a vagueness about the likely timing of its adoption and publication of programme-level information (inputs, outputs, results) on the programme websites. Nevertheless, there is a keen interest in open programme reporting and the same applies to **reporting at IPA CBC level** for which a template has also been developed. A majority of respondents would like to receive the templates and further information and a sizeable group of them would like to participate in a workshop on this matter. These initiatives can thus be considerably advanced by the work of the TWG.

**TWG priorities**

The priorities for future work of TWG No 3 that emerge from the analysis of the responses to this survey and the specific suggestions made by TWG participants can be summarised, as follows:

* To draw lessons and develop and share methods and tools for broadening and systematising the use of surveys of beneficiaries and other stakeholders.
* To support project level and open (programme level and IPA-wide) reporting, including through intensified dissemination of information and mutual learning activities (e.g. workshop or webinar).

In view of the positive outcome of this pilot online survey, a further priority could be to undertake a similar survey on key aspects of the monitoring system and performance indicators, which represent a major part of the remit of TWG No 3 on Performance Management.

1. This basically refers to the final narrative report for grant contracts under IPA II CBC programmes. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. There was no RS-MK programme in 2007-2013 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)