



COORDINATOR OF THE 1ST COMPONENT

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME COMPLEMENT EX-ANTE EVALUATION

Ministry requirements for Ex-Ante evaluation of Technical Assistance Operational Programme Complement.

The chapter 2 of T.A.O.P.C is aimed at Ex-Ante evaluation, pointing out that it shall be carried out by external experts.

The requirements of the Ministry for evaluation are focused on the coherence and the potential efficiency of the measures relevant to the three priorities of the Programme Complement.

The main aim is to point out possible omissions or matters able to generate difficulties in the Programme Complement implementation.

A working party associating persons of the Ministries of Economy and of Finance was held on Wednesday, February the 11th to check the potential problems, measure per measure.

A specific mission of Mrs Myriam AFLALO, French expert from DATAR (Feb 23rd-27th) completed the work for Ex-ante evaluation of the Technical Assistance Operational Programme Complement.

The experts' work is aimed at summarizing the different comments made during meetings. Further on, it is aimed at appreciating the global document by analysing its global coherence, its pertinence and its operational characteristics.

General summary of the T.A.O.P.C

The Programme Complement is composed of three priorities, addressing the following major issues:

- To improve the quality of management, monitoring evaluation and control of the Community Support Framework;
- To organise an efficient information system and to promote Structural Funds and Community Support Framework.

To achieve these aims, the T.A.O.P.C. defines three priorities:

- **Priority 1:** Capacity building in management, monitoring, evaluation and control of the Community Support Framework .
- **Priority 2:** Support for the monitoring and financial control IT system.
- **Priority 3:** Dissemination of information and Promotion of Structural Funds.

The final beneficiaries involved are the Ministry of Economy as Managing Authority and the Ministry of Finance as Paying Authority.

Items for Ex-Ante evaluation of T.A.O.P.C

The main items to evaluate the Programme Complement, its priorities and measures are the following: coherence; pertinence; efficiency; sustainability

- **Coherence:** each priority and its related measures, completing each other, must contribute to the global strategy implementation.
- **Pertinence:** through its means and the fields of intervention covered, each measure must contribute to a proper implementation of Community Support Framework and Technical Assistance Operational Programme.
- **Effectiveness:** further than single toolboxes, the priorities and their related measures must be operative, allowing a fast implementation of relevant actions.
- **Sustainability for technical assistance** means to set up convenient tools, skills, methods and systems for measuring and improving quality of interventions as well as for preparing next programming period while using them.

General conclusion

Technical Assistance Operational Programme Complement is composed priorities defining a global complete framework with clearness of final beneficiaries, and need for fast implementation.

It is fundamentally aimed at achieving an efficient and transparent system for Community Support Framework implementation and to prepare basics for next programming period implementation.

In that global framework, priorities and their relevant measures are comparable to specific toolboxes, to be used for the implementation of the overall strategy by:

- Reinforcing administrative capacities,
- Developing systems, methods and skills for monitoring and management,
- By setting up trainings, information and publicity.

Each measure appears complete, with possible financial adjustment while proceeding to accomplishment of the programme.

The main conclusion is that Technical Assistance Operational Programme Complement appears quite balanced and coherent. But also that it might be completed by specific action plans to be fully operational during the first programming period.

The major point to consider that it is not ordinary, being both a programme and a very operational global project to accomplish.

That leads to three major recommendations:

- Elaborating action plans for each priority, defining:
 - Phases and planned milestones for the priorities and for each of their measures;
 - Role and missions of partners involved in the implementation of each phase;
 - Concrete results to obtain at the end of each phase of implementation process.

- In complement to SIMIC IT System implementation, which is a masterpiece of technical assistance, defining specific necessary tools and their associated skills for two of the main actions participating to the overall strategy and facilitating general monitoring and assisting decision-making process meaning:
 - Observation and analysis tools for:
 - Collecting and treating information on profiles, competencies, levels of qualification and missions of personals requested for implementing Community Support Framework and Technical Assistance Operational Programme;
 - Adapting Human resources to the missions;
 - Providing potential evolution of missions;
 - Helping, if necessary, in defining specific statutes or organisations for reinforcing efficacy of the implementation process and for facilitating preparation of next programming period.

 - Evaluation tools, systems and methods for Technical Assistance Operational Programme on-going evaluation and Community Support Framework on-going evaluation for:
 - Providing sustainable strategic systems for observing, measuring and analysing impacts of Community Support Framework.
 - Assisting Monitoring Committee and the partners involved in providing adaptation or evolution of Community Support Framework and Technical Assistance Operational Programme.

- Promoting and enhancing general, thus sectorised, co-ordination with specific information, communication, concertation and management tools, skills and methods aimed at:
 - Promoting, reinforcing and/or creating specific development partnerships and co-operation..
 - Facilitating global measure of progression of Community Support Framework by specific decision making processes;

Priority 1:

Capacity building in management, monitoring, evaluation and control of the Community Support Framework .

Main aim of the priority: reaching an efficient level of capacity to manage programmes and projects under Community Support Framework through training and support to the decision-making process.

Position of the priority in the CSF implementation process

(/T.A. included in other SOPs & IROP)

The global coherence between what composes technical assistance in the different Operational Programmes and what is relevant of the one for Community Support Framework appears clear: each of them is actually focused on the main objectives, strategy, nature of measures and potential projects contained in each OP.

Coherence of priority 1

The priority is independent and completes what is programmed in Priority 2 & 3

The measures appear complementary in their aims and contents. They give the whole priority its coherence in providing: general and specialised trainings as well as support in decision making process by providing materials and equipment, as well as specific assistance in decision-making process by tools to be provided by evaluation..

Pertinence of the priority to achieve the objectives of Technical Assistance Operational Programme

Actions and means described in measures are generally correct. Measure 1.1. appears potentially over financed, but without major impacts on the global balance of the priority. Measure 1.5 might be completed by adding possibilities to provide specific facilities or adapted & equipped places for developing trainings.

Potential effectiveness of the priority

Potentially, the priority contains major linked actions to be efficient. Its operational character will depend on three elements:

Set up of specific tools and skills for determining permanently the nature of needs in training and competencies required for the personals in charge of managing Community Support Framework for providing the best service.

Organisation of clear monitoring process with an extended partnership, which has to be detailed in order to provide adapted support and resources

Accomplishment of an efficient evaluation that may opportunely lead to a quality process and labelling, allowing a good preparation of next programming period with revised European orientations and regulations, as a consequence of conclusions of the third report on cohesion.

Sustainability and possibilities for evolution of the priority

First priority contains the major measure (1.4.) for evolution of both Community Support Framework and Technical Assistance Operational Programme.

It defines the global aims and means for evaluation

As it is mentioned in measure 1.4., defining evaluation, two parts will be treated:

- Evaluation of the Community Support Framework itself;
- Evaluation of the technical assistance programme.

Both will lead to adjustments and enrichment of Community Support Framework and Technical Assistance Operational Programme. But evaluation process to engage will also be of crucial importance for preparing next programming period.

The operational contents and implementation schedule have to be quickly determined, for assisting in decision-making and proceed to necessary adjustments.

Once it will be finalised, the possibility to increase expenditures on evaluation might be analysed.

Conclusion

If nothing particular needs to be modified in the overall contents, the priority must be considered as a real project to set up.

Its efficiency is conditioned by elaboration of a general action plan on a three years long implementation period.

This action plan must almost cover actions to set up in measures 1.1 and 1.4 for reinforcing capacities of persons involved in the global implementation process for structural funds as well as for providing proper evaluation process.

This action plan doesn't have to be integrated in the Technical Assistance Operational Programme Complement but conceived as a tool for the monitoring committee, usable to have an overall view on accomplishment, by defining the main milestones in implementation process.

In complement, specific tools should be implemented for collecting, observing, analysing and setting up trainings adapted to needs for better efficiency of persons involved in Community Support Framework implementation.

**Priority 2:
Support for the monitoring and financial control IT system.**

Main aim of the priority: Developing tools and skills for ensuring efficient monitoring and financial control of Community Support Framework by implementing, using, maintaining and providing evolution of the SIMIK IT system.

Position of the priority in the CSF implementation process
(/T.A. included in other SOPs & IROP)

The priority is a masterpiece for technical assistance as SIMIC system constitutes the basics for measuring efficiency of projects and programmes contributing to Community Support Framework implementation.

Coherence of priority 2

The priority is totally dedicated to SIMIC IT system and appears coherent. It is composed of five complementary measures.

They ensure a possibility of complete set up and development of the system by covering the range of potential needs for its implementation.

In that framework, measure 2.5 on purchase of equipment might opportunely be enlarged to adaptating or creating dedicated amenities -if necessary.

Pertinence of the priority to achieve the objectives of Technical Assistance Operational Programme

Means and range of potential actions described in measures contribute effectively to reaching the main objective of the priority.

Potential effectiveness of the priority

To be fully operational, priority 3 and its related measures require a very operational action plan for configuring and promoting use of the system as fast as possible.

That means to define a specific action plan, comprising:

- Nature and precise contents of operations relevant to the measures;
- Phases and planned milestones for the priorities and for each of their measures;
- Role and missions of partners involved in the implementation of each phase;
- Concrete results to obtain at the end of each phase of implementation process.

These specific programmes don't have to be integrated in Technical Assistance Operational Programme Complement, but they will have to be designed and proposed to Monitoring Committee as soon as possible.

Sustainability and possibilities for evolution of the priority

SIMIC constitutes the basics for monitoring system of Community Support Framework. Its evolution may lead to establishment of an achieved extended system for next programming period, integrating specific evaluation functionalities.

Conclusion

As for priorities 1 and 3, the priority appears coherent in its contents: focused on developing SIMIC system, which is of crucial importance for an efficient monitoring and implementation of Community Support Framework.

Like for Priority 1, one of the major points is to develop the operational character of the priority.

In that sense the main risk to avoid is to consider SIMIK system as a single tool for financial monitoring. If the management of the system belongs to the paying authority, a concrete follow up of Community Support Framework requires a tight co-ordination between managing and paying authorities, to ensure a complete overview of Community Support Framework implementation and guarantee proper adaptation, adjustment and evolution of the programmes.

That requires establishing a shared resource between Ministry of Economy and Ministry of Finance for implementing and using strategically SIMIC IT system as a global resource for Monitoring Committee. and not only a financial one, dedicated to paying authority.

It will also be of crucial importance as SIMIK is one of the keys in evaluation process by establishing cost effectiveness evaluation for providing eventual adjustments.

That specific requirement has not to appear in Technical Assistance Operational Programme Complement but might be included in internal management procedures.

Following the same principle than for Priority 1, a specific action plan might be set up for improving the operational character of Priority 2, determining the main phases, milestones, partners and products to obtain for proper implementation, use and development of the system.

**Priority 3:
Dissemination of information and Promotion of Structural Funds.**

Main aim of the priority: provision for information, communication and promotion of Community Support Framework for reinforcing partnerships and enhancing Structural Funds use and consumption.

Position of the priority in CSF implementation process
(/T.A. included in other SOPs & IROP)

The fact that priority3 embraces all the information, communication, promotion and dissemination actions for Community Support Framework & Technical Assistance Operational Programme appears clear enough to avoid overlapping with what is developed for technical assistance in other Operational Programmes.

Coherence of Priority 3.

No problem to mention about coherence. Like priorities 1& 2, the third one contributes to the overall strategy by providing the necessary information, communication and promotion on Community Support Framework. That requires taking in consideration almost two necessities:

- To built up a phased communication plan for ensuring a permanent flow of information (as an application of measure 3.1)
- To develop specific co-ordination tools and procedures for organisation, management and participation of partners involved in Community Support Framework implementation process.

These elements don't have to figure in the programme complement. But, as part of the overall strategy, they might be established from the start.

Pertinence of the priority to achieve the objectives of Technical Assistance Operational Programme

Apparently, the measures are presented as toolboxes, to support specific actions to be defined and set up during the programming period. The descriptions are, thus, quite standard, but cover the range of what is necessary for achieving the main aim of the priority.

Potential effectiveness of the priority

Through its measures, Priority 3 is mostly presented as a legal requirement of the Commission. Thus, it appears to be less developed than the others and present the risk to become a catch-all one. On the contrary, quite vague contents may lead to more open possibilities for:

- Adapting actions and projects to implementation process
- Ensuring efficient promotion and dissemination of Community Support Framework and structural support

- Establishing a concrete and operational co-ordination between partners involved in the process, in complement to regular information and exchanges.

Sustainability and possibilities for evolution of the priority

Sustainability will be provided by tools, skills and methods to set up for

- Co-ordination of partners involved in Community Support Framework implementation
- Management of resources, reinforcing capacities to work in concert (personals and material means)
- Implementation of strategies and action plans for information, communication and promotion.

These tools, skills and methods will be of major importance for preparing next programming period, as basics for further development.

Conclusion

The priority defines actions, materials and tools for communication, information and promotion of the Community Support Framework and of structural support.

It appears potentially efficient in a way that it covers the requested fields for fulfilling the objectives defined for Community Support Framework and Technical Assistance Operational Programme proper implementation.

Nevertheless, if all the measures contribute to this aim, one dimension asks to be much more defined and developed: the necessary co-ordination of partners involved in the implementation process, while single exchange of information between participants of the Structural Funds implementation process is not sufficient enough for ensuring global coherence and efficient evolution of structural support.

Coordination means:

- Operational association of participants in implementing of structural support: from the Ministries to the Regions and to specific bodies involved, in order to provide the most efficient monitoring process.
- A shared vision of objectives, agendas and means for evaluation, with one difficulty: to be partly tributary of evaluation processes to be engaged in other Operational Programmes, that will feed the one of Technical Assistance Operational Programme for Community Support Framework.