



Fiscal Year 2024 Annual Evaluation Plan

U.S. Department of State

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I. Executive Summary

The Department of State has developed the Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Annual Evaluation Plan (AEP) in fulfillment of requirements set out in the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018 (Evidence Act, Public Law No. 115-435) and guidance from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) circular A-11.

The Evidence Act requires agencies to develop an AEP that outlines significant evaluations they plan to undertake in the coming fiscal year. While the FY 2024 AEP is submitted in 2023, it includes evaluations that will start, continue, or end in FY 2024 (October 1, 2023, to September 30, 2024). Per the Foreign Aid Transparency and Accountability Act (FATAA) of 2016, completed foreign assistance evaluations or evaluation summaries from previous AEPs are published in the Department's [Foreign Assistance Resource Library](#).

Some completed evaluations are not published due to their sensitivity. They are available internally to bureaus to provide evidence for decision-making and to facilitate learning within the Department.

The Department's AEP includes evaluations critical to the Department's strategic goals that align with, and help answer, the priority questions published in the [Department of State Fiscal Years 2022-2026 Learning Agenda](#). Learning Agenda priority questions address critical evidence gaps in institutional knowledge and are intended to improve the Department's operations and performance.

The details provided for each evaluation listed in this AEP include a description of the activities evaluated, the questions the study endeavors to answer, the data that will be used, anticipated evaluation methodologies, and projected challenges and mitigation strategies. A summary of the evaluations addressed in this AEP is as follows:

- There are two evaluations planned for FY 2024 that will examine the effectiveness of the Department's diplomatic interventions aligned with key



Administration priorities, including securing strategic ports from the malign influence of global competitors, and responding to Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

- There are six evaluations planned for FY 2024 evaluating the effectiveness and sustainability of the Department's foreign assistance efforts. They focus on the effectiveness of programs designed to address counterterrorism, education, peace and security, global drug demand reduction, and combating human trafficking.
- There is one evaluation planned for FY 2024 assessing programs seeking to limit the spread of global disinformation.
- There are three planned evaluations assessing programs aimed at creating efficiencies and positive customer service outcomes for the Department's consular services.
- One evaluation that will analyze GAO and OIG reports to understand trends in and improve performance management and program evaluation practices at the Department.

The Department recognizes that not every Learning Agenda question has corresponding significant evaluations to present in this AEP. The Department is leveraging multiple internal processes and projects to enhance and expand its learning culture in alignment with the Administration's foreign policy priorities. This includes using the Learning Agenda implementation process across the Department, with senior-level review, to improve evidence-building functions that evaluate diplomatic and foreign assistance programs.

The Bureau of Budget and Planning (BP) and the Office of Foreign Assistance (F) are partnering with other bureaus and offices to enhance the evidence-building culture at the Department of State, including the Office of Management Strategy Solutions' Center for Analytics and the Secretary's Office of Policy Planning. The Department of State anticipates more evaluations may be planned during FY 2024 that will support Learning Agenda questions that will be reflected in the FY 2025 AEP.



This list should not be considered as final or comprehensive, as evaluations may need to drop or be modified for a variety of reasons. Additional evaluations may be planned as funding and new program priorities emerge closer to or during FY 2024.



II. Process and Definition of Significance

The Department considers the following factors in determining whether an evaluation is significant for the purposes of the AEP:

1. Whether and to what degree the evaluation fills a critical learning need, as evidenced by its potential to support a Learning Agenda question, and
2. The relevance of the subject matter of the program or activity being evaluated to the Department's strategic goals.

Significant Evaluations

The AEP catalogues the evidence-building and evaluation activities prioritized by the Department of State and presents their alignment to the Learning Agenda core questions below.

Question 1: How can the State Department improve the effectiveness of its diplomatic interventions to better advance foreign policy objectives?

Evaluation Activity	Timing
Strategic Ports Initiative (SPI)	September 2023-February 2024
Conflict Observatory Program	April 2024-August 2024

Question 2: How can the Department improve the effectiveness and sustainability of its foreign assistance efforts?

Evaluation Activity	Timing
Bureau of Counterterrorism Practical Exercises and Performance	September 2020-September 2024



Evaluation Activity	Timing
Applied Research on Countering Autocratization Through Support for Nonviolent Action	September 2022-September 2024
Global Drug Demand Reduction Program Evaluation	January 2021-December 2025
Randomized Control Trials on Human Trafficking Interventions	October 2020-September 2025
Multiyear Evaluation of the Tomorrow's Leaders Scholarship Program	March 2024-September 2026
United Voices in Action (VIA)	August 2023-December 2023

Question 3: How can the Department's tools best address the climate crisis?

While the Department is not currently planning a significant evaluation for this question in FY 2024, it is conducting other non-evaluation activities to answer priority questions, such as performance measurement, foundational fact finding, and policy analysis activities.

Question 4: How can the Department better respond to unpredictable international events and emergencies, such as global pandemics?

While the Department is not currently planning a significant evaluation for this question in FY 2024, it is conducting other non-evaluation activities to answer priority questions, such as performance measurement, foundational fact finding, and policy analysis activities.



Question 5: How should the Department confront the rise of global disinformation and its negative effects on the security and prosperity of the United States?

Evaluation Activity	Timing
Measures to Limit the Spread of Disinformation and Shape the Information Environment Cases Outcomes Meta-Assessment	March 2023-December 2023

Question 6: How can the Department balance customer service expectations with national security and cost-effectiveness to provide a better customer service experience to U.S. citizens, and to foreign nationals seeking visas?

Evaluation Activity	Timing
Global Support Strategy (GSS) Evaluation	March 2024-July 2024
CA/1CA Program Evaluation	January 2023-December 2023
Evaluation of Online Passport Renewal (OPR)	January 2023-December 2024

Question 7: How can the Department more effectively analyze and manage risks to promote a safe and secure working environment for its staff and partners?

While the Department is not currently planning a significant evaluation for this question in FY 2024, it is conducting other non-evaluation activities to answer priority questions, such as performance measurement, foundational fact finding, and policy analysis activities.



Question 8: How can the Department utilize performance management and evaluation data and data systems to improve decision-making?

Evaluation Activity	Timing
Meta-analysis of External Reports on the Use of Evidence and Performance Data	January 2024-September 2024



III. FY 2024 Significant Evaluations

Learning Agenda Question #1

How can the State Department improve the effectiveness of its diplomatic interventions to better advance foreign policy objectives?

There are two evaluations planned in alignment with Learning Agenda Question 1: one evaluating a program working to secure strategic foreign ports from malign influence that could adversely impact U.S. interests, and one evaluating a program to build opposition to – and document the effects of – Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

Evaluation Title – Strategic Ports Initiative (SPI)

Name of Bureau or Office:

Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs (EB)

Evaluation Timeline:

September 2023-February 2024

Program Description:

To protect the American people, promote prosperity, and advance our values, we must implement a sustained, whole-of-government approach, in coordination with like-minded partners, to ensure open access and security for strategic international ports and waterways. The Strategic Ports Initiative (SPI) prioritizes international ports and waterways essential to this effort, leverages instruments of commercial diplomacy and foreign assistance, and builds foreign port development, management, and operational capacity to counter malign influence and/or control that could adversely affect U.S. interests. The Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs, Office of Transportation Affairs personnel led seminars for more than 50 participants during calendar year (CY) 2022. These seminars covered Pacific Island Countries, the Western Hemisphere, and



Eastern Africa. The workshops provided the host country with tools to defend its port infrastructure against malign influence, to maintain its sovereignty over its port(s), and to promote sustainable economic development.

Evaluation Question(s):

1. Has the program effectively blocked, balanced, and burdened malign actors in the maritime sector?
2. Following U.S. government engagement, have host country port authorities and/or relevant ministries taken measures that enhance their state's sovereignty over its strategic port(s) and maintain open access? What are these measures?

Methodology and Data:

The evaluation will assess SPI implementation and outcomes. State will review internal documentation including monthly reports, which include key performance indicators, policy-level accomplishments, notes from discussions and meetings with key stakeholders, and EB's annual review of program outcomes. EB will also survey government contacts, program participants, and other relevant partners as appropriate to evaluate the effectiveness of the program in terms of blocking, balancing, and burdening malign actors.

Challenges and Mitigation Strategies:

In 2022, COVID created unknown variables related to program operations, effects, and the ability to monitor progress. The evaluation should include a strategy for conducting the review virtually if necessary. Funding levels of the program continue to be unpredictable, creating additional challenges for scaling up the project and ensuring a durable outcome. Funding limitations precluded a 2022 evaluation of the SPI program. EB plans to use diplomatic engagement funds for the program evaluation in FY24.

Dissemination Strategies and Use:



EB will use evaluation results to target future programs to improve port operations/logistics, strengthen regional connectivity. The evaluation should also result in recommendations for simultaneously helping countries resist investment plans that result in them ceding sovereignty over their ports. EB will disseminate to SPI stakeholders, including regional bureaus at the Department of State, Department of Transportation, Department's offices and bureaus in Economic Growth, Energy, and Environment, and bureaus in International Security Affairs.

Evaluation Title – Evaluation of the Conflict Observatory Program

Name of Bureau or Office:

Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO)

Evaluation Timeline:

April 2024-August 2024

Program Description:

In October 2019, CSO started a two-phase program entitled, "Conflict Observatory." The goal of this program is to build and strengthen local and international opposition, as well as future justice accountability mechanisms, to Russia's invasion of Ukraine by developing a comprehensive and verified body of information documenting the effect of conflict on the people of Ukraine. The program is set to operate from April 1, 2022, to March 31, 2023; CSO will likely extend it an additional year. Upon its completion, CSO projects the evaluation will commence quickly.

Objective 1: Stakeholders utilize Conflict Observatory data, analysis, and reporting to strengthen the cases they take forward through civilian and criminal proceedings in national and international justice systems.



Objective 2: Stakeholders incorporate Conflict Observatory data, analysis, and reporting to create and disseminate more effective, evidence-based reporting and communications about the effects of Russia's actions in Ukraine to strengthen popular resistance and international opposition to Russia's invasion.

Evaluation Question(s):

1. Did the program contribute to civilian and criminal proceedings in national and international justice systems? If so, how?
2. Did the program contribute to the USG engaging in effective international diplomacy against Russia? If so, how?
3. How did the partners use this information to build compelling narratives about the effects of the invasion and to conduct thorough investigations?
4. Did the program create effective counter-messaging?
5. What are the lessons learned and recommendations for duplicating this program (approach) in other contexts?
6. How did the program benefit the Government of Ukraine?
7. To what extent did the program produce other benefits beyond program objectives?
8. How well did the program coordinate with other programs?

Methodology and Data:

This will be a performance evaluation to include a desk review, consultations, and key informant interviews (KIIs); data generated will be new. Note: this may change depending on the situation on the ground.

Challenges and Mitigation Strategies:



Russia's invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022 has limited how data can be collected and our access to beneficiaries. CSO hopes to use both qualitative and quantitative methods to deliver evidence-based answers to the evaluation questions (EQs). However, the bureau may have to adjust the evaluation's methodology to employ mainly qualitative methods. There will be limited in-person data collection.

Dissemination Strategies and Use:

The final evaluation report will be disseminated to the US State Department and other relevant USG agencies, including USAID and DoD. CSO will also share the report with the program implementer and other key stakeholders, including the Government of Ukraine. If possible (and considering the sensitive nature of the program), CSO hopes to further disseminate the key findings and recommendations to a broader audience, including other donors, implementers working in Ukraine, and the American Evaluation Association (AEA).

Learning Agenda Question #2

How can the Department improve the effectiveness and sustainability of its foreign assistance efforts?

There are six evaluations addressing the effectiveness and sustainability of the Department's foreign assistance efforts.

Evaluation Title – Bureau of Counterterrorism Practical Exercises and Performance Evaluations

Name of Bureau or Office:

Bureau of Counterterrorism (CT)

Evaluation Timeline:

September 2020-September 2024



Program Description:

Practical Exercise and Performance Evaluations (PE2) is a tool that blends a traditional evaluation of a Partner Nation (PN) capability with a tailored exercise in a realistic, simulated environment. The result is quick-turn, actionable data to validate CT-funded PN capabilities, identify gaps and areas for improvement, and communicate returns on investment.

Evaluation Question(s):

1. What are the program achievements and successes?
2. How capable is the PN unit? Can the unit graduate from this assistance?
3. What additional resources, if any, are required for this program in the future?

Methodology and Data:

PE2 provides a scalable and customized evaluation approach designed to answer stakeholders' specific questions about a project or PN recipient. The PE2 combines traditional evaluation approaches — interviews, desk reviews, surveys — with a customized capstone exercise or event to demonstrate practical capabilities. CT, in consultation with implementing partners and relevant Embassy personnel, selects specific partner units to participate in PE2 events. Generally, this selection process takes place at the start of each fiscal year and is informed by CT programming and policy priorities. Each PE2 is an evaluation of a select PN project or projects.

Challenges and Mitigation Strategies:

It can be difficult to design effective, tailored exercise events to solicit the desired data to inform future programming. To mitigate, CT collaborates closely with the third-party exercise and evaluation team, CT's program office, and implementers throughout the entire lifecycle of the PE2.

Dissemination Strategies and Use:



Results and updates may be uploaded to the State internal evaluation registry; final reports will be shared with USG stakeholders.

Evaluation Title – Applied Research on Countering Autocratization Through Support for Nonviolent Action

Name of Bureau or Office:

Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL)

Evaluation Timeline:

September 2022-September 2024

Program Description:

Autocratization is a global trend in recent years as many political regimes shift away from democratic institutions and practices. One of the most potent forces for countering autocratization has been citizen-led campaigns of nonviolent action. This evaluation seeks to better understand when and how external support for such campaigns has been effective in countering autocratization. The project's focus will be on evaluating DRL interventions, but with the goal of generating generalizable research findings for future foreign assistance-funded programs.

Evaluation Question(s):

1. How and when have external support for nonviolent action effectively countered autocratization?
2. What theories of change have U.S. and other interventions employed when providing support for nonviolent action to counter autocratization?
3. What gaps or mistaken assumptions have been embedded in those theories of change?



4. What forms of support have most frequently countered autocratization on a national or sub-national level?
5. When support has failed to prevent autocratization at a national level, how can it ensure the survival of civil society and maintain some capacity for future democratization?

Methodology and Data:

The two-year evaluation uses a mixed methods research design, combining the rigor and high external validity of cross-national statistical analysis with the deep understanding of mechanisms and processes that comes through qualitative case studies. The result of the project is a comprehensive evaluation of past interventions to counter autocratization, focusing on the interventions conducted or supported by DRL but including as wide a scope of other interventions as possible, which both illuminates specific successes and failures internal to DRL and informs general principles of effective external support for domestic forces seeking to counter autocratization.

The research process consists of three phases.

1. Theory development.
2. Quantitative data collection and analysis.
3. Tracing mechanisms through in-depth case studies.

The three phases are cumulative, as is appropriate for a mixed-methods research design, and insights from each prior phase inform the specific approaches employed in the subsequent phase.

Challenges and Mitigation Strategies:

The activities described in the phases above outline the initial plan for most effectively executing this evaluation. However, it is possible that the outcome of the activities laid out in Phase 1 (theory development) makes it impractical to move directly into the activities laid out in Phase 2 (quantitative data collection and analysis). This would be



the case if the activities under Phase 1 did not produce a clear enough taxonomy of theories of change to inform the creation of a codebook that guides quantitative data collection. In this situation, the research team switches the sequence of activities to first focus on the qualitative research of Phase 3 before turning to the quantitative research under Phase 2. This would enable a specific taxonomy of theories of change to then move on to the quantitative research. While unlikely, it is possible that no statistically significant relationships between interventions and countering autocratization emerges during Phase 2. In this case, the research team still conducts the case studies but pursues an alternate case selection strategy similar to the “nested analysis” approach.

Dissemination Strategies and Use:

The evaluation will produce publications that will be disseminated in events that are the most effective avenues for activists in countering autocratization. The primary intended use of this research is equipping practitioners and policymakers within DRL with a stronger evidence base on which to design and implement programming related to nonviolent action and autocratization. The research will candidly evaluate what has and has not worked in such programming in the past and provide clear recommendations for future programming. Secondly, the project will seek to inform larger conversations among U.S. government agencies, international donors, grassroots activists, and academics about how to most effectively counter autocratization.

Evaluation Title – Global Drug Demand Reduction Program Evaluation

Name of Bureau or Office:

Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL)

Evaluation Timeline:

January 2021-December 2025

Program Description:



The Drug Demand Reduction (DDR) program will support the implementation of drug use prevention, treatment, and recovery interventions within two Colombian municipalities. Specific interventions INL anticipates will be implemented as part of this program include:

1. Training drug-use prevention, treatment, and recovery professionals in the INL-developed Universal Prevention Curricula, Universal Treatment Curricula, and the Universal Recovery Curricula to increase the number of qualified professionals in the field.
2. Establishing community coalitions to address prevention at the community level.
3. Developing quality assurance systems at the municipal level to ensure that treatment centers are meeting international quality standards.
4. Promoting systems-level approaches to alternatives to incarceration to advance drug treatment options within the criminal justice system to prevent recidivism.
5. Using media prevention training and mentoring programs to address youth substance use.

Evaluation Question(s):

What is the collective effect of INL's drug use prevention, treatment, and recovery programming on drug consumption, attitudes toward drug consumption, and drug-related crime?

Methodology and Data:

A panel design will be used to examine change over time in the communities participating in the study. While the evaluation will review the efficacy of globally implemented interventions, the evaluation will be conducted across two neighboring mid-sized Colombian municipalities to demonstrate population changes as a result of DDR programming.



Prior to and immediately following program implementation, INL will support a baseline survey that represents the population of these municipalities on drug consumption, attitudes toward drug consumption, and drug-related crime. The initial baseline survey was completed in 2022. In addition, throughout the course of programming, INL's implementing partners will collect project data on drug consumption, treatment outcomes, and recidivism rates. These new data sources will inform evaluation analysis.

Challenges and Mitigation Strategies:

The unpredictable course of the COVID-19 pandemic posed a challenge to the initial implementation of programming and related data collection efforts. INL is working with project partners to develop both online and in-person program options.

Dissemination Strategies and Use:

As the first study of its kind at this scale, the evaluation will provide INL with peer-reviewed, statistical evidence to reference in support of evidence-based prevention, treatment, and recovery programs that also seek to reduce drug-related crime and violence. INL will highlight this research in bilateral engagements and multilateral forums to promote balanced, evidence-based approaches to drug policy.

Evaluation Title – Randomized Control Trials on Human Trafficking Interventions

Name of Bureau or Office:

Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (J/TIP)

Evaluation Timeline:

October 2020-September 2025

Program Description:



Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) will increase the evidence base on the effectiveness of anti-trafficking interventions around the world. IPA is working with partner organizations to conduct impact evaluations and randomized control trials testing the effectiveness of anti-trafficking programming.

Evaluation Question(s):

As of now, IPA is funding four randomized control trials that intend to answer four distinct evaluation questions each:

1. To what extent is the Crescer Sem Violencia (Growing Up Without Violence) curricula effective in improving children's and school professionals' knowledge, skills, and behaviors to reduce children's exposure to sexual exploitation, including child sex trafficking, in a Brazilian city?
2. To what extent is two-way information counseling helpful to asylum seekers and refugees to protect themselves against potential exploitation, including human trafficking, in the context of the Mediterranean refugee crisis in Greece?
3. Are beliefs about migration-related risks from southern Nigeria to Europe, interest in attempting to "follow land," and actual departure decisions responsive to information campaigns?
4. If micro-contractors in the construction industry in India are offered low-cost loans, does this reduce the prevalence of forced labor among their workers?

Methodology and Data:

Utilizing randomized control trial methodologies, IPA will fund research teams to test hypotheses about the effectiveness of various anti-trafficking programs and policies. Both qualitative and quantitative data will be used to triangulate findings.

Challenges and Mitigation Strategies:



There are a limited number of academics focused on human trafficking and monitoring and evaluation practices in the trafficking community are limited overall. The TIP Office is working with IPA, a highly regarded research partner, to recruit academics with the promise of funding. Research partner reputation and experience helps advance the monitoring and evaluation culture in the trafficking community more towards rigorous research that relies on experimental methods.

Dissemination Strategies and Use:

IPA will develop policy briefs and work with the research teams to host learning events and policy engagements for the results of each of the four funded randomized control trials.

Evaluation Title – Multi-year Evaluation of the Tomorrow’s Leaders Scholarship Program

Name of Bureau or Office:

Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs (NEA)

Evaluation Timeline:

March 2022-September 2026

Program Description:

The Tomorrow’s Leaders (TL) Program provides graduate and undergraduate level academic matriculation, civic education, and leadership development to economically disadvantaged candidates, including those from marginalized and minority groups from throughout the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. The program aims to build a cadre of professional leaders who are civically engaged, intellectually able, and professionally prepared to become the community, business, and national leaders of the future. The TL program is currently comprised of the TL Undergraduate Program, the TL Graduate Program, the TL Study Abroad Program, the TL Gender Scholars Program



(TLS), the TL Pipeline Program, the TL Recruitment Program, and the Alumni Association.

The suite of TL programs offers scholarships and leadership training opportunities to capable and highly motivated college (undergraduate and graduate) students in the Middle East and North Africa who are from underserved backgrounds and who demonstrate high potential to become leaders. Eligible students for TL and TLS include men and women who represent the region's cultural, religious, and geographic diversity, who could otherwise gain admission to a TL partner institution but would be unable to afford college at an American-accredited, American-style university in the region.

Evaluation Question(s):

1. Were TL's past achievements and lessons learned incorporated into future program design and strategic planning efforts?
2. What were the outcomes of the TL program?
3. Create a baseline to measure success against future TL programming efforts.

Methodology and Data:

This evaluation will utilize a combination of new data and existing quarterly performance reports. This evaluation will use an evaluation strategy and methodology that include a mix of qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis approaches.

Challenges and Mitigation Strategies:

With the global COVID-19 pandemic and unforeseen country concerns, individuals might not be on location or have access to their university systems. All evaluation methods will be accessible and adaptable to the best of possibilities.

Dissemination Strategies and Use:

This evaluation will establish a baseline, a formative midterm assessment, and an outcome evaluation of whether TL achieved its objectives and program effectiveness.



Findings from this multi-phase, multiyear evaluation will be published on the Department of State's website and distributed to key stakeholders via a one-page brief with key takeaways.

Evaluation Title – Evaluation of the United Voices in Action (VIA) Program

Name of Bureau or Office:

Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO)

Evaluation Timeline:

August 2023-December 2023

Program Description:

In July 2021, CSO started a program entitled, "IDP Local Conflict Resolution and Integration – VIA" (IDP #2) whose goal is to advance Ukraine's stabilization by fostering the integration of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) within Ukraine in line with the IDP integration strategy and by reducing IDP vulnerability to exploitation.

Objective 1: IDPs and receiving communities can apply best practices in advocating for their rights and leading social cohesion activities in their communities.

Objective 2: IDPs and receiving communities increase intergroup social cohesion through joint community projects to address issues of mutual concern and mitigate factors that exacerbate tensions.

Objective 3: IDP local and regional integration plans and implementation are informed by IDP and advocacy group inputs to better address the needs of marginalized sub-populations.

Evaluation Question(s):



1. What role did analysis play in informing the program?
 - What were the strengths and weaknesses of the CSO's VIA program design process?
 - To what extent did the program consider the specific needs of IDP women in the program design and implementation?
 - Are there any aspects of the program that will continue beyond the life of the program? If so, in what way(s)?
 - Did the program increase the capacity of the local government of Ukraine in integrating needs and concerns of women IDPs into policy, plans, and processes? If so, in what way(s)?
 - Did the program develop a network of Ukrainian women able to advocate on behalf of integration needs? If so, in what way(s)?
 - How effectively did the community solutions projects address the needs of the community?
2. Are there any aspects of the program that will continue beyond the life of the program? If so, in what way(s)?
3. How well did the program empower and protect women and girls and other marginalized groups? Did it consider the specific needs of women, girls, and marginalized communities in the design and implementation of program activities?
4. How well were the two IDP programs coordinated? How well were lessons applied to IDP #2 program?

Other potential questions:



1. Did the program create positive feedback loops between Ukraine's policymakers and IDPs to ensure policy advancing IDP integration is responsive to IDP needs? If so, in what way(s)?
2. Did the program increase the capacity of the Government of Ukraine in integrating IDP needs and concerns into policy, plans, and processes? If so, in what way(s)?
3. Did the program develop a network of Ukrainian youth able to advocate on behalf of integration needs and a shared vision of a post-conflict Ukraine? If so, in what way(s)?
4. How well coordinated was this program with other IDP programs?
5. How effectively was the conflict resolution program tailored to the needs of this community and context?
6. To what extent are community members willing to engage in dialogue or other relationship building networks (social capital) with IDPs?

Methodology and Data:

This will be a performance evaluation to include a desk review, consultations, and key informant interviews (KIIs); data collected will be new. Note: this may change depending on the situation on the ground.

Challenges and Mitigation Strategies:

Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022, not only greatly affected the implementation of the program but has also limited how data can be collected and CSO's access to beneficiaries. The program evaluation originally sought to use both qualitative and quantitative methods to deliver evidence-based answers to the evaluation questions. However, due to the unpredictable and potentially dangerous nature of the conflict, CSO adjusted the evaluation's methodology to employ mainly qualitative methods. There will be limited in-person data collection.



Dissemination Strategies and Use:

The final evaluation report will be disseminated to the U.S. State Department and other relevant U.S. Government agencies, including the U.S. Agency for International Development and Department of Defense. We will also share the report with the program implementer and other key stakeholders, including the Government of Ukraine. If possible (and considering the sensitive nature of the program), CSO hopes to further disseminate the key findings and recommendations to a broader audience, including other donors, implementers working in Ukraine, and the American Evaluation Association (AEA).

Learning Agenda Question #3

How can the Department's tools best address the climate crisis?

There are no planned or ongoing significant evaluations for FY24.

Learning Agenda Question #4

How can the Department better respond to unpredictable international events and emergencies, such as global pandemics?

There are no planned or ongoing significant evaluations for FY24.

Learning Agenda Question #5

How should the Department confront the rise of global disinformation and its negative effects on the security and prosperity of the United States?

There is one planned evaluation aligned to Question 5 that will help the Department understand the risks and mitigation strategies around the spread of global disinformation.



Evaluation Title – Measures to Limit the Spread of Disinformation and Shape the Information Environment Cases Outcomes Meta-Assessment

Name of Bureau or Office:

Global Engagement Center (GEC)

Evaluation Timeline:

March 2023-December 2023

Program Description:

This Department-wide evaluation builds upon a meta-assessment of Department approaches to limit the spread of disinformation and shape the information environment. These approaches are programs and interventions that aim to build resilience to disinformation and control the narrative around political and diplomatic discourse. Approaches include digital and media literacy training; fact-checking, labeling, and nudges; factual and positive messaging, information campaigns, and pre-bunking; training and capacity building; independent media support; open-internet access tools; and detection and monitoring efforts.

Evaluation Question(s):

1. To what extent have these Department measures been effective at mitigating disinformation's negative effects on the foreign policy interests of the United States? What has made these measures effective?
2. To what extent have these Department measures been effective among vulnerable and marginalized populations?
3. What lessons learned from these measures can be applied to future efforts to limit the spread of disinformation and to shape the broader information



environment in ways that mitigate disinformation's negative effects on the foreign policy interests of the United States?

Methodology and Data:

This evaluation will leverage data on Department approaches to shape the information environment and limit the spread of disinformation that will be collected prior to commencing the evaluation. Additionally, the evaluation team will collect performance data and previous evaluations on relevant projects and programs. The specific data used for the evaluation will be determined in preliminary data availability assessments, but may include evaluation reports on counter disinformation programs, performance management plans for grants and cooperative agreements, Quarterly and Final Performance Reports from implementing partners, and interviews with Department experts.

Challenges and Mitigation Strategies:

Data on the effectiveness of some approaches may be limited. The working group addressing the Learning Agenda question on disinformation (Question 5) will endeavor to bridge gaps through partner engagement and make recommendations for future data collection to stakeholders. This complex evaluation requires engagement with stakeholders across the Department and analysis of multiple, highly differentiated interventions. The evaluation team will mitigate these challenges by ensuring frequent communication about the Learning Agenda and this evaluation across multiple channels throughout the Department.

Dissemination Strategies and Use:

This evaluation will be used to develop a series of products for different levels of Department stakeholders to inform decisions about planning and implementing approaches to limit the spread of disinformation. The evaluation results will also be used to develop a Department-wide capacity assessment to help stakeholders understand Department staff's training and knowledge needs to implement these measures and



best practices. Lastly, the evaluation will inform strategic and operational recommendations for the Department to best confront disinformation.

Learning Agenda Question #6

How can the Department balance customer service expectations with national security and cost-effectiveness to provide a better customer service experience to U.S. citizens and to foreign nationals seeking visas?

There are three planned evaluations assessing programs aimed at creating efficiencies and positive customer service outcomes within the Department's consular affairs function.

Evaluation Title – Global Support Strategy (GSS) Evaluation

Name of Bureau or Office:

Bureau of Consular Affairs (CA)

Evaluation Timeline:

March 2024-July 2024

Program Description:

GSS is a worldwide program created in 2010 to provide visa applicants standardized, transparent, and accountable delivery of common administrative service support functions. Prior to 2010, individual posts overseas made their own contract arrangements to provide this support, which led to inefficient allocation of financial resources. Since March 2020, after a significant drop in consular fees caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the level of support to individual missions and posts was adjusted several times. The Department signed a new set of contracts in 2021.



Evaluation Question(s):

1. Are the GSS 2.0 contracts providing administrative support for consular services overseas as efficiently and effectively as possible?
2. What is the maximum and minimum price per applicant CA should be paying for the level of services GSS provides?
3. What should be the minimum level of acceptable service?
4. Is the GSS team staffed appropriately to support GSS contracts as efficiently and effectively as possible?
5. Do staff have the skills needed to achieve success?

Methodology and Data:

The Department proposes using an evaluation to review the effectiveness of GSS in providing the services for the cost CA is paying. The evaluation will identify priority services and best practices, which will allow the Department to continue providing the administrative support overseas posts need at an affordable cost. Methods used for this evaluation include document review on the founding of GSS 1.0, document review of GSS 2.0 contracts and budgets, in-person interviews of GSS and Executive Directorate staff and GSS contract personnel, and analysis of best practices across the federal government for providing contract support.

Challenges and Mitigation Strategies:

One challenge is the timely completion of the GSS 2.0 transition and rollout. The mitigation strategy for this challenge was to delay the initiation of the evaluation to FY 2024.

Dissemination Strategies and Use:

Recommendations from the evaluation will inform CA and Department leadership on how to organize and fund GSS services more efficiently and effectively.



Evaluation Title – CA/1CA Program Evaluation

Name of Bureau or Office:

Bureau of Consular Affairs (CA)

Evaluation Timeline:

January 2023-December 2023

Program Evaluation Description:

This evaluation will examine the 16 CA Leadership and Management tenets' effectiveness in providing shared principles for consular professionals to cultivate and reflect in every aspect of their work. Results of the evaluation will help the office of CA and CA bureau leadership make any needed adjustments in efforts to foster a culture of learning and process improvement in a post-pandemic, hybrid work environment.

Evaluation Question(s):

The following are the general questions that 1CA seeks to answer using the evaluation:

1. How effectively are the CA Leadership and Management tenets achieving their original desired effect of creating a common language and culture around leadership and management in CA?
2. Are the CA Leadership and Management tenets meeting the needs of the current and future consular workforce?
3. To what extent do the CA Leadership and Management tenets create a positive work environment?
 - a. Influence creativity in problem solving
 - b. Influence morale
 - c. Influence team collaboration



4. What are the effects of the CA Leadership and Management tenets on Consular operations overseas and domestically?
 - a. Influence productivity in routine overseas and domestic services
 - b. Influence efficiency of emergency services
 - c. Influence ability to manage a consular section
5. How effective are 1CA's programs (Consular Leadership Indicator, Consular Leadership Day, 1CA website and newsletter) at promoting a shared understanding of the tenets?
6. What are the barriers to employee understanding and use of the tenets?
7. What are the some of the ways that teams are creatively implementing the tenets that could be replicated in other places?
8. How do the CA Leadership and Management tenets complement the Department's leadership and management principles (3 FAM 1214)?

Methodology and Data:

This evaluation will use a mixed methods qualitative and quantitative analysis including a review of documents, a survey with up to 12,000 respondents, SWOT analysis, and key informant interviews.

Challenges and Mitigation Strategies:

No challenges have been identified as the evaluation is in a nascent stage.

Dissemination Strategies and Use:

Dissemination strategies and utilization will be determined once a methodology is finalized.



Evaluation Title – Evaluation of Online Passport Renewal (OPR)

Name of Bureau or Office:

Bureau of Consular Affairs (CA)

Timeline:

January 2023-December 2024

Program Description:

In compliance with EO 14058, CA is conducting a limited release of a new online passport renewal (OPR) program that does not require physical documents to be mailed to a passport agency to renew a U.S. passport. In partnership with the General Services Administration's Office of Evaluation Sciences (GSA/OES), CA proposes to conduct an evaluation of how behaviorally informed interventions can reduce barriers to completing timely online passport renewals.

Evaluation Question(s):

1. What is the effect of behaviorally informed messaging outreach on the uptake and completion of online passport renewal among eligible passport holders?
2. What barriers do MyTravel.Gov users face when initiating and completing an online passport renewal application? What proportion of users drop off during the renewal process, and at what stages?
3. What is the age, gender, and geographic location of renewal applicants?
4. What does the distribution of expiration dates look like for renewal applicants?



5. How long does the online renewal process typically take, from MyTravel.Gov registration, to application initiation, application completion, and review and final adjudication?

Methodology and Data:

GSA/OES seeks to enable agencies to build evidence to inform decision making in a timely manner, working alongside program managers to conduct “rapid” evaluations. For this to happen successfully, the GSA/OES team will require access to key stakeholders, systems, and data to complete this project.

Challenges and Mitigation Strategies:

No challenges have been identified for this evaluation as the evaluation is still in the planning stages.

Dissemination Strategies and Use:

The objectives of the evaluation project are to inform decision making about future designs of the OPR system and the efforts to use proactive outreach to improve the user experience. Applying evidence-based recommendations for behaviorally informed outreach or other program changes and conducting rigorous evaluation of the effects of those interventions, can support CA’s efforts to better serve customers when implementing online passport renewals.

Learning Agenda Question #7

How can the Department more effectively analyze and manage risks to promote a safe and secure working environment for its staff and partners?

There are no planned or ongoing significant evaluations for FY24.



Learning Agenda Question #8

How can the Department utilize performance management and evaluation data and data systems to improve decision-making?

Evaluation Title – Meta-analysis of External Reports on the Use of Evidence and Performance Data

Name of Bureau or Office:

Bureau of Budget and Planning (BP)

Timeline:

January 2024-September 2024

Program Description:

Over the last five years, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) and the Department's Office of Inspector General (OIG) have carried out several performance related studies on the Department of State and the federal government in general. The meta-analysis of OIG and GAO reports applicable to the Department of State seeks to understand the trends in their findings and recommendations on performance management and program evaluation recommendations at the Department and their application to strengthening the use of evidence in decision-making.

Evaluation Question(s):

Questions on the findings and recommendations in these reports include:

1. What are the consistent findings and recommendations provided by GAO and OIG reports on strengthening and improving performance management and evaluation practices?



2. Has the Department shown measurable progress in implementing those recommendations?
3. Is there correlation between successfully closing out such action items with improvements in how the Department, bureaus or independent offices use performance management and program evaluation practices?
4. Are recommendations and actions being built into agency best practices? Are actions reflected in practices per 18 FAM 300?

Methodology and Data:

The Department proposes using a meta-analysis of GAO and OIG recommendations from 2018-2022. The project will begin with a desk review of applicable GAO and OIG reports, which will include synthesizing the findings, examining closeout of recommendations, studying ongoing governance processes from recommended actions, and identifying potential future evaluations or assessments to address gaps. These will include regular OIG inspections of bureau and independent offices, annual OIG overviews of management challenges, and GAO reports that address performance management and program evaluation topics across the federal government.

Challenges and Mitigation Strategies:

Challenges include whether there is sufficient diversity in the bureaus, i.e., a sufficient sample size, included to make observations that apply across the Department. This will be mitigated by being transparent about how many and what types of bureaus (e.g., functional, regional) have relevant findings and recommendations and noting any limitations in the dataset.

Dissemination Strategies and Use:

Recommendations from the meta-analysis will inform BP and the Department leadership on where progress is being made in the use of evaluation and performance data in decision-making and inform best practices and requirements going forward,



particularly as they impact the [Department of State's program design, performance monitoring, and evaluation policy](#).



