



19 March 2024

EVALUATION PLAN FOR THE YEARS 2024–2026

This document provides an English summary of the section on planned evaluations and other assignments in the original evaluation plan written in Finnish.

1. In 2024, on-going and to be completed from 2023 plan

Meta-analysis of Country Programmes (2023–2024)

The implementation of current cycle of country programmes based on the new format began in 2021. The meta-analysis of country programmes commenced in 2023 and will be completed in spring 2024. The results of the analysis will be used in the forthcoming planning of bilateral cooperation beyond the current country programmes. The Development Evaluation Unit, in collaboration with regional departments, has designed the process to include both a facilitated self-assessment component and a clearly independent evaluation aspect. The meta-analysis covers country programmes for partner countries in Asia and Africa as well as Palestine and Ukraine.

The meta-analysis will be completed in spring 2024.

The Framework Agreement on Evaluation Management Services (EMS II) ends with this assignment due to the completion of contractual period.

2. New evaluations and reviews to be initiated in 2024

Evaluation: Peaceful Democratic Societies

Finland promotes comprehensive development towards peaceful, democratic, rule-of-law-based governance. This has been one of Finland's development policy priorities. The evaluation complements and deepens the analysis of the MFA commissioned study on support for democracy, rule of law development, and good governance. The evaluation will launch in autumn 2024 and will be completed in spring 2025.

Joint Evaluation: Nordic Trust Fund Evaluation

Multilateral cooperation forms a growing part of Nordic development financing, and Nordic countries channeled a significant portion of multilateral funding through various multilateral funds, especially through the World Bank Group and the UN system. The increasing use of multilateral funds has continued for several decades, and today there is a wide range of funds in terms of size, purpose, geographical focus, and governance structure. Finland participates in this Nordic joint evaluation aiming to address existing information gaps, including the practices and impacts of Nordic funds' support and coordination. The evaluation focuses on the World Bank Group, the UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF), and the African Development Bank. All Nordic countries participate in this evaluation with Denmark in the lead. The evaluation began in December 2023 and will be completed in early 2025.

Review: Finland's support to Digitalisation in Developing countries

Digitalization is a key theme in the government program as an accelerator of growth, enhancer of security and resilience, and enabler of inclusivity. Digitalization also plays a crucial role in Finland's development policy and cooperation. In 2020, the ministry commissioned a development policy study: "Connecting Africa - Perspectives for Energy, Transport, Digitalisation and Research and Innovation." As of now, MFA does not have a comprehensive strategy for promoting digitalization in developing countries. The Finnish Report on International Economic Relations and Development Cooperation (2024) will shed more light on the subject. The review will assess the integration, implementation, and outcomes of digitalization in development cooperation so far. The results of the review will provide insights and guidance for a possible comprehensive strategy for promoting digitalization in Finland's development policy and cooperation. The review will commence in autumn 2024 and be finalised in early 2025.

Evaluation: Finland's support to Environment, Sustainable Use of Natural Resources and Biodiversity

Environment, Sustainable Use of Natural Resources and Biodiversity has been a long-standing priority in Finland's development policy. As per the government program, Finland seeks to promote sustainable forestry utilizing Finnish expertise, to enhance local living conditions and increasing the global carbon sink. Biodiversity was added as a cross-cutting goal in 2022. This policy priority area and theme has not been evaluated for a long time. The most recent centralized evaluation, Finnish Support to Forestry and Biological Resources, was completed in 2011. This evaluation is partly a continuation of the 2023 evaluation of the MFA's international financing on climate. The evaluation will initiate in autumn 2024 and be concluded in 2025.

3. Preliminary plan for new evaluations for 2025 and 2026 (not exhaustive)

2025

Evaluation: Finland's Support to Women's and Girls' Rights

Women's and Girls' Rights have been a longstanding policy priority area of Finland's development policy. The current government program continues this emphasis. Gender equality is also one of Finland's cross-cutting development policy objectives and thus applies to all financing and policy influencing. Finland also considers the principle of non-discrimination in all its support. The evaluation will also consider disability and indigenous rights and status and their linkage to gender equality as part of the analysis. This policy priority area was not evaluated during the previous government term. The evaluation will commence in 2025.

Evaluation: Finland's Support to Ukraine

MFA prepared its first country programme for Ukraine's development cooperation in 2016. The current country program period covers 2021-2024. EVA-11 evaluated Central Asia development cooperation as a whole in 2020-21. Development cooperation and humanitarian aid to Ukraine have significantly increased since Russia aggression started. In 2023, Ukraine was already Finland's largest bilateral cooperation programme. For this reason, it is necessary to evaluate the results achieved by development cooperation funds in light of the recommendations of the previous evaluation, including implementation, effectiveness of aid, and risk management of development cooperation. This evaluation will build on the results of the on-going country programme meta-analysis. EVA-11 will also consider the possibility of participating in joint evaluations or joint evaluation arrangements with development partners. The evaluation will commence latest at the end of 2025.

2026

Review: Development Policy as Part of Foreign and Security Policy

The review will assess the effectiveness and contribution of development policy to the achievement of foreign and security policy objectives. Finland's external and security policy environment has significantly changed since Russia initiated full-scale war against Ukraine in 2022. At the beginning of 2024, a report on foreign and security policy as well as a defense policy will be prepared. By spring 2024, a report on Finland's international economic relations and development cooperation will be prepared setting policy objectives and their monitoring. The report includes guidance for Finland's relations with developing countries.

The review will examine the role, significance, scope, and weight of development policy and cooperation and provide guidance on how to better take into account the changed operating environment (international security, climate change, achievement of sustainable development goals, and global health threats). The review will also give insight on how the MFA could strategically plan the use of development policy and cooperation tools to support foreign and security policy objectives more effectively and how the policy actions could be used in a more synergistic manner to enhance global sustainable development and security.

The review will commence in 2026.

Evaluation: Development Cooperation as a Promoter of Trade and Economic Activity

Finland aims to build sustainable partnerships with developing countries based on mutual benefit and respect. Finland aims to reduce unhealthy political and economic dependence of developing countries. Development policy priorities will be outlined as part of Finland's international economic relations and development cooperation report. Development cooperation promoting economic activities plays a crucial role in advancing more equitable economic relations. Finland's support for strengthening partner countries' economies, creating jobs, and improving livelihoods (policy priority area 2) was evaluated in 2020. The evaluation of Finland's Aid for Trade was conducted in 2016.

The evaluation will commence in 2026.

Evaluation: Meta-evaluation of the decentralized evaluations

The development evaluation unit periodically conducts meta-evaluations focusing on the quality of decentralized evaluations and their utility. The previous meta-evaluation was completed in 2022 and was based on a methodology developed for the ministry. The focus and methodology of the next meta-evaluation will be adapted to correspond to the changed portfolio of decentralized evaluations and the ministry's information needs, especially considering increased funding through multilateral actors.

The evaluation will commence in 2026.

The topics of evaluations and reviews for 2025 and 2026 will be specified, and their implementation will be agreed upon in 2024. Evaluations and reviews will be added annually to the plan according to information and evaluation needs.

The purpose, objectives, and scope of the coming evaluations and reviews will be specified separately in the ToRs of each assignment, focusing on their utility and feasibility.