

EVALUATION PLAN FOR THE YEARS 2026–2028

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

1. On-going in 2025 and to be completed in 2026

Evaluation: Environment, Natural Resources and Private Sector Opportunities

The environment and sustainable use of natural resources have long been among Finland's development policy priority areas. Biodiversity was added as a cross-cutting objective in 2022. In line with the Government Programme, this priority area will continue to be promoted in developing countries by leveraging Finnish expertise. The Government Report on International Economic Relations and Development Cooperation also emphasizes the increasing importance of economic aspects. The most recent centralized evaluation, Finnish Support to Forestry and Biological Resources, was **completed in 2011. Finland's international climate finance was evaluated in 2023, and this evaluation builds on that work.** This evaluation examines Finland's achievements in development cooperation in the environment and natural resources sector and identifies effective models for strengthening economic cooperation in the sector in practice.

The evaluation started in early 2025 and will be completed in early 2026.

Evaluation: Finland's Support to Peaceful Democratic Societies

Democracy and rule of law support have long been an important part of Finland's development policy. They are mentioned in both the Government report on Finnish foreign and security policy (2024) and the Report on International Economic Relations and Development Cooperation (2024). The aim of the current evaluation is to collect and assess the results achieved through democracy and rule of law support. Another objective of the evaluation is to provide realistic, evidence-based recommendations on how the policy goals for democracy and rule of law support can best be achieved in the future, taking into account the new reports and global changes in the state of democracy.

The evaluation started in early 2025 and will be completed during the first half of 2026.

Review: *Development Policy, Trade and Investment – Development and Trade Effects*

Finland's goal is to build sustainable partnerships with developing countries based on mutual benefit and respect. The aim is to reduce unhealthy political and economic dependence of developing countries on donors. The priorities of development policy are outlined as part of the 2024 Government Report on International Economic Relations and Development Cooperation. Development cooperation that promotes economic activity plays a key role in fostering more equitable economic relations. The simultaneous decentralized evaluation on Finnfund and Finnpartnership complements this review.

The review starts at the end of 2025 and will be completed mid-2026.

2. New evaluations and reviews starting in 2026

The purpose, objectives, and scope of the evaluations will be further specified when defining the final terms of reference for each evaluation, ensuring the usefulness of the information and the feasibility of the evaluation. Key stakeholders will be consulted during the planning process.

Evaluation: ***Finland's support to Gender Equality and the Rights of Women and Girls***

Gender equality and the rights of women and girls have long been a priority in Finland's development policy. The current Government Programme continues this emphasis, building on Finland's areas of strength. During the previous government term, this priority was not evaluated separately. The last centralized evaluation was carried out in 2017–2018. Gender equality is also one of Finland's cross-cutting development policy objectives and therefore applies to all activities. Finland also upholds the principle of non-discrimination in all its work. The evaluation will also take into account disability and the rights and status of minorities, such as indigenous peoples.

The evaluation will start at the beginning of 2026.

Evaluation: *Effectiveness of the Institutional Cooperation Instrument (ICI)*

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs has used the ICI instrument as one form of support since 2007 to provide capacity building support to public institutions in developing countries. A case study on the ICI instrument was conducted as part of an evaluation assessing the complementarity of different development cooperation instruments, but no separate instrument-level evaluation has been carried out before. Funding for projects has increased over the years, and the same actors often implement them. This evaluation ensures accountability by compiling and verifying the results achieved through the ICI instrument and assessing its effectiveness.

The evaluation will start in spring 2026.

Review: ***Finland's Support to Ukraine***

ODA-funded support and humanitarian assistance to Ukraine have grown since 2014 and significantly increased following Russia's war of aggression. Ukraine has become Finland's largest individual development cooperation partner country. The second part of Finland's national reconstruction plan

for Ukraine comprehensively defines Finland's support to Ukraine, including development cooperation priorities. A new Country Programme for development cooperation was published in 2025. The country programme sets out the objectives of development policy and cooperation, as well as the means and development financing to advance political, commercial-economic, and development policy goals.

A review is planned to support the Ukraine programme, serving not only accountability needs but also providing information for planning and decision-making on Finland's support to Ukraine. Depending on the security situation in Ukraine, either a review or an evaluation will be carried out. Development Evaluation Unit of the MFA will also explore opportunities to participate in joint donor assessments or other forms of collaboration in evaluations. The implementation of this review may be preceded by a synthesis assignment of existing evaluations.

The review will start in autumn 2026 and be completed in early 2027.

Synthesis: Finnish Engagement and Added Value

This assignment synthesizes information, findings, and conclusions from both centralized and decentralized evaluations. The synthesis consolidates the results of previous evaluations and supports the planning and targeting of future evaluations. The assignment will utilize the AI-assisted OpenEval tool and analyze how effectively Finnish engagement and added value have been promoted in development cooperation and policy.

The synthesis will start in autumn 2026 and be completed in early 2027.

Synthesis: Result and knowledge management

This assignment synthesizes information, findings, and conclusions from both centralized and decentralized evaluations. The synthesis consolidates previous evaluation results and supports the planning and targeting of the evaluation starting in 2027. The assignment will utilize the AI-assisted OpenEval tool and analyze how successfully a results-based approach has been implemented in development cooperation and policy during the last two government terms.

The synthesis will start in autumn 2026.

3. Preliminary plan for new evaluations for 2027 and 2028 (not exhaustive)

The topics for the 2027–2028 evaluations will be specified and the implementation agreed upon during 2026–2027. Evaluations and reviews will be added to the annual plan according to information and assessment needs.

Evaluation: Result and knowledge management 2020-2026

This evaluation will build on earlier evaluations (2012, [2015](#) and [2019](#)) on the Results Based Management of development policy and cooperation and evidence-based management. In addition, the evaluation will make use of the preceding synthesis analysis. The evaluation will also examine the impact of this government term's organizational reforms in the foreign service on the effectiveness

of performance management, and how well the new policy guidelines have been implemented amid changes from the perspective of results-based management and data-driven decision-making. The evaluation will also cover the role of artificial intelligence in the future of data-driven management. It will complement the review to be completed in 2026 *Development Policy, Trade and Investment – Development and Trade Effects*, particularly regarding the consideration of comprehensiveness in performance management.

The evaluation will start at the beginning of 2027.

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 launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022. The Foreign and Security Policy Report and the Defence Report prepared in 2024 also defined the basic guidelines for Finland's NATO membership. The 2024 Report on Finland's International Economic Relations and Development Cooperation set out the objectives as well as the measures and monitoring needed to achieve them. **The report includes guidelines on Finland's relations with developing countries.**

The review will examine the role, significance, scope, and weight of development policy and cooperation in different areas of foreign and security policy. It will provide information to strengthen consideration of the changed operating environment (global security situation, challenges caused by climate change, achievement of sustainable development goals, and global health threats) and on how the Ministry for Foreign Affairs could more strategically plan the use of development policy and cooperation tools to achieve foreign and security policy objectives. In addition, the review will assess how foreign and security policy measures could be used more synergistically to strengthen global sustainable development and security.

The review will commence in 2027.

Other contents considered for 2027:

- Synthesis/meta-analysis of civil society organizations receiving programme support
- **Evaluation: EU funding in Finland's development cooperation; added value and effectiveness of delegated funding and Global Gateway**
- Synthesis: effectiveness of seed funding and leveraging

Contents considered for 2028:

- Effectiveness of peace and peacebuilding support
- Synthesis on the efficiency and effectiveness of multi-actor support, especially UN support
- **Evaluation: (if Russia's war of aggression has ended) Finland's support to Ukraine. ODA-funded support to Ukraine has grown significantly due to Russia's war of aggression. Ukraine**

has become Finland's largest individual development cooperation partner country. Evaluation will be carried out if it cannot be implemented due to the security situation in 2026.

- Capacity building and use of national systems