



Ministry for Foreign
Affairs of Finland

EVALUATION PLAN FOR 2023–2025

1. Ongoing evaluations and reviews to be completed in 2023

Human rights and a human rights-based approach in development policy and cooperation

Finland's foreign, security and development policy is based on human rights, and the realisation of human rights is a key objective. This is stated in the Government Report on Finnish Foreign and Security Policy and the Report on Development Policy across Parliamentary terms. Guidelines for the implementation of a human rights-based approach in development cooperation (HRBA) were published in 2015, but there is a need to update them. The purpose of the evaluation is to strengthen the implementation of a human rights-based approach. The evaluation assesses the practical application of HRBA in the planning, implementation and monitoring of development cooperation and, in particular, the effectiveness and added value of HRBA in development cooperation in 2019–2022. The evaluation will provide information for updating the HRBA guidelines and for reforming the practices of development cooperation. The Development Policy Committee may also use the evaluation results in its anchor theme 2 (implementation of the HRBA, equality and non-discrimination in Finland's development policy). The evaluation was launched in autumn 2022 and will be completed in autumn 2023.

Right to education, right to learning. Evaluation of the education sector

A report on development cooperation in the education sector was completed in 2018. The following year, recommendations for implementation were drawn up, and a coordination group consisting of stakeholders led by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Education and Culture was appointed in 2020 to consider how Finland could become an internationally more important actor in the field of education and learning. In addition, significant additional investments have been made in education in multilateral cooperation (Global Partnership for Education, World Bank's Coach Fund, Education cannot Wait). The evaluation assesses the implementation and effectiveness of development cooperation in the sector, synergies between development cooperation and education exports, and gives views on the future, how to strengthen Finland's international impact in the field of education and learning. The evaluation takes into account a number of actors in the education sector in Finland, such as the Finnish Centre of expertise in Education and Development established by the Finnish National Agency for Education in September 2021. The evaluation was launched in autumn 2022 and will be completed in autumn 2023.

Influencing through development communications

The evaluation of development communications assesses the effectiveness of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs' development communications and the efficiency and coherence of the related organisational processes and practices. The implementation of the evaluation is divided into two parts: (i) the descriptive section provides information on the Ministry's media visibility, communications activities

and the organisation of development communication; (ii) the evaluation path evaluates the effectiveness of the communications solutions, means and channels used by the MFA and seeks to establish to what extent the MFA has succeeded in increasing understanding of the results and challenges of development policy and development cooperation among the general public. Based on the findings, the evaluation team will make recommendations to improve the effectiveness, impact and coherence of development communications.

The evaluation focuses on the years 2015–2022, and even though the evaluation focuses on the activities of the MFA, it also examines communications funded by other parties. However, the purpose of the latter is not to assess the effectiveness of the communications carried out by them, but to make use of the results for learning. The evaluation began in autumn 2022 and will be completed in the first half of 2023.

Evaluation of Finland's international climate finance

Climate sustainability has been a cross-cutting objective in Finland's development policy since 2012. In 2019, climate change became one of the four development policy priorities (today, climate change and natural resources are one of five). The MFA prepared an action plan for international climate finance in 2022. Climate finance is used to support climate action especially in the poorest countries. Climate finance has grown significantly both globally and in Finland. Climate actions have been included in numerous evaluations as a cross-cutting objective, but climate finance has not been evaluated before. The purpose of the evaluation is to provide information on the results of climate finance. The evaluation will also support the implementation and development of the action plan for climate finance and provide views on how Finland's impact can be strengthened in the future. The evaluation will begin at the end of 2022 and will be completed in autumn 2023.

Finland's efforts to strengthen the domestic resource mobilization and management in partner countries

Within the framework of its development policy and development cooperation implementation Finland strengthens the domestic resources mobilization (DRM) in its partner countries and engages actively in measures that curb aggressive tax planning, tax avoidance and harmful tax incentives. Such actions promote several priority areas Finnish development policy and are guided by Finland's Action Programme 2020–2023 entitled "Taxation for Development". The programme is based on the previous one covering the years 2016–2019. The evaluation will study all initiatives that relate to domestic resource mobilization.

The evaluation will serve the purposes of learning and accountability: it will study both systemic issues and the effectiveness of projects that are part of the Taxation for development -programme. Several units of the MFA are involved in the Action Programme implementation in cooperation with other Finnish and international stakeholders. Therefore, the systemic evaluation will cover MFA cooperation with other Finnish stakeholders and the internal and external coherence in terms of programme planning, management and implementation. The evaluation will start in 2022 and will be completed by autumn 2023 to serve the planning of the next Action Programme.

Review of international recruitments and the JPO Programme

The review is expected to provide an overall picture of international recruitments supported by the MFA and their strategic use as a tool for policy influencing. The analysis maps out any untapped potential and gaps/bottlenecks that could make international recruitment more efficient and effective in the future. The JPO Programme will be evaluated as part of this review. The review was launched in autumn 2022 and will be completed in spring 2023.

Review of the use and utility of centralized evaluations

The review of the centralised evaluations will add depth to the analysis of the use, utility and evaluations as drivers of change and as one tool of knowledge management. The purpose of the review is to strengthen the use of evaluations in decision-making, learning and accountability and to promote the use and utility of centralised evaluations. Therefore, the review also supports the effectiveness of development policy and development cooperation. The implementation of the recommendations will also be assessed. The review was launched in autumn 2022 and will be completed in spring 2023.

2. New evaluations to be launched in 2023

The purpose and objectives of the evaluations will be defined in more detail during the planning of each evaluation.

Evaluation of country programmes (2023–2024)

The implementation of the current country programmes began in 2021. The evaluation of the country programmes will begin in 2023 and will be completed in spring 2024 so that the information produced in the evaluation can be used in the preparation of the next country programmes. According to the norm, the evaluation of the country programmes is the responsibility of Development Evaluation Unit. Together with the regional departments, the Development Evaluation Unit will plan the evaluation so that it includes both the facilitated self-evaluation component and the aspect of clearly independent evaluation. The evaluation will initially cover the country programmes and partner countries of Asia, Africa and the Middle East as well as Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

Review of development policy as part of foreign and security policy (2023)

The review will assess the effectiveness of development policy and its contribution to achieving the objectives of the foreign and security policy. Since the objectives of the foreign and security policy are not defined in detail, the review will examine the role, significance, scope and weight of development policy and development cooperation in the different objectives of the Foreign Service. The review will provide information on how the changed operating environment (including the connection to Nato and the UN Security Council/OSCE campaign, climate change and the Paris Climate Agreement, the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals and global health threats, such as the pandemic) could be taken into account. The review will also provide information and on how the MFA could more strategically plan the use of development policy and development cooperation as tools to achieve foreign and security policy goals, and on how the MFA's different activities could be used more synergically to strengthen global sustainable development and security.

3. New evaluations proposed for 2024 and 2025

The topics will be specified and implementation agreed on during 2023.

Peaceful, democratic societies (2024)

Finland works comprehensively and consistently to promote peaceful and democratic social development based on the rule of law and good governance. This is one of Finland's five development policy priorities. The evaluation complements and deepens the analysis of support for a study on democracy, the rule of law and good governance in 2010–2020 which was commissioned by the MFA.

In addition, the following evaluated areas emerged during the preparation of the following evaluation plan: **the rights of persons with disabilities; natural resources; biodiversity; development cooperation to promote the rights and status of indigenous peoples and development cooperation link to trade.**