

ANNEX 8 EVALUATION TEAM

After a competitive tendering, the MFA Development Evaluation commissioned Impact Consulting Oy to undertake the Meta-analysis. The Evaluation Team was comprised of two consultants, Dr. Paula J. Williams and Dr. Maaria Seppänen, both of whom are experienced with appraisal and evaluation of development interventions and with Finnish development policies.

The team leader, Dr. Paula J. Williams, has 26 years of development experience, with considerable project design, appraisal and evaluation experience, especially with projects and programmes funded by the Government of Finland, but also with United Nations agencies, the World Bank, other bilateral donors, such as Sweden and the United States, and non-governmental organisations. She has a Ph.D. in social forestry, has worked extensively on forestry, natural resource and rural development projects in Africa and Asia, but also has experience with development planning, policy, and strategy issues.

Dr. Maaria Seppänen has over 20 years of development experience especially in project evaluation, academic research and teaching, and applied research. She has worked in the United Nations system, at the University of Helsinki, Institute of Development Studies, and at the Embassy of Finland in Managua, Nicaragua, as counsellor for development cooperation. She has a Ph.D. in development geography, and she specialises in development cooperation instruments and policy issues, evaluation, governance and democratisation issues and human rights.

This Meta-analysis has been undertaken between May and November 2009. To begin the assignment, an initial meeting with the EVA-11 was held on 29 May 2009. In accordance with the Meta-analysis TOR (Annex 1), the team then prepared its inception report, evaluation tools, interview guide, and undertook an initial analysis of some preliminary characteristics of the evaluations. Between 3 and 8 September 2009, the team did further work together in Helsinki. Another meeting was held with MFA Development Evaluation staff to further discuss the assignment and clarify expectations. In November, further feedback was provided by the Development Evaluation staff to the team.

The team members worked closely on developing the evaluation tools. They both assessed and rated the same two reports, and compared their results, to ensure that they had a common understanding of the ratings. They then divided the remaining assessments, with Dr. Seppänen undertaking the analyses of any reports written in Spanish or Finnish. The team members worked together on the data analysis, and agree upon the findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

As the reports varied enormously in length, ranging from less than 10 pages to more than 100 pages, plus annexes, the time required to assess each report was variable.

But on average, the team members spent at least half a day, often more than an entire day, on reading and assessing one report. Considerable additional time was spent for cross-checking information. The assessments forms for 33 reports and 36 interventions added up to around 200 pages of notes. The team then worked together on the comparative analysis of the information obtained, preparation and revision of the draft report.