

Strengthening implementation of Finland’s development cooperation and policy through measurement and learning

Following the successful completion of phase I, phase II of the Evaluation Management Services framework contract continues to deliver strategic and policy level evaluations

#1
No poverty

#5
Gender equality

#16
Peace, justice and strong institutions



Part of the Evaluation of Agriculture, Rural Development and Forest Sector Programmes in Africa, a village consultation took place in the southern highlands in Tanzania, which related to the Mtwara Agribusiness Support (LIMAS) project.



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Independent and transparent evaluation is a critical component of international development cooperation. Two primary purposes drive the need to conduct evaluations: measurement of achieved results (accountability) on the one hand and learning from successes and failures to strengthen future policies and interventions (forward-looking).

Following a successful phase I of the Evaluation Management Services (EMS) framework contract, NIRAS continues to support the evaluation function of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland’s Development Evaluation Unit in the second phase (EMS II). The framework contract comprises the implementation of strategic level and policy evaluations. But evaluations encompassing multiple countries or programmes, commissioned by other units at the Ministry, are increasingly being channelled through EMS II. In addition, the services include an evaluation Help Desk that different departments and units can turn to when they plan project-level evaluations.

Service coordinator role

The day-to-day management of evaluation services is implemented in close cooperation with and supported by the EMS Service Coordinator recruited by the Consortium NIRAS-Particip. It is a unique position created exclusively for this framework contract. The main objective of this exclusive service is to ensure high-level quality assurance throughout the evaluation process.

The Coordinator is a senior expert in development evaluation who acts as an interlocutor between the MFA’s evaluation manager, the evaluation team leader, and the company project manager. Key tasks also include:

- Transferring the lessons learned from previous evaluations into new assignments;

- Ensuring that the evaluations respond to the needs of their primary users;
- Identifying high-level international candidates for different assignments.

High standard team requirements

Evaluation teams are hired through a systematic and strict selection process based on specific criteria. Given the complexity of policy-level evaluations in development cooperation, a broad range of skills and knowledge is required from senior evaluators. In most assignments, the team leader is required to possess a PhD degree (or competencies which compensate for not having a PhD) and extensive experience from evaluation team leadership as well as relevant technical expertise. Senior evaluators alike are required to have experience in evaluation and a wide range of skills and knowledge related to the topic at hand.

Emerging evaluator capacity development programme

Inclusion of Finnish emerging evaluators is a practice that was implemented in EMS I and has been expanded in EMS II, through the selection of Finnish professionals to be part of the Emerging Evaluator Capacity Development Programme. They are mid-career experts or consultants who have only recently achieved a senior level of expertise. Building on their prior vocational accomplishments, selected experts are interested in pursuing a career as an evaluator. They have the opportunity to work as core evaluation team members throughout the evaluation. The objective is that they will build their capacity as evaluators and gain enough professional experience to qualify for future evaluator positions in the MFA’s strategic evaluations.

Donor

Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland

Client

Development Evaluation Unit

Location

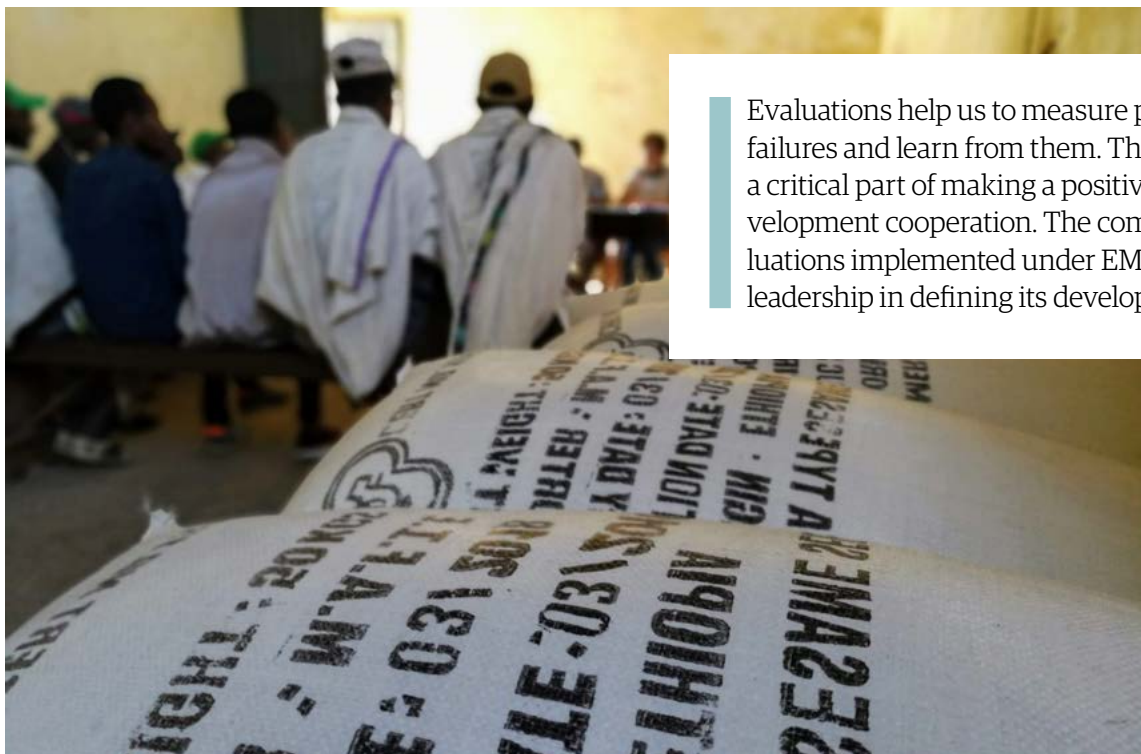
Global, with focus on Finland’s development cooperation partner countries, mostly in Africa, Asia and Europe

Contract value

€2.5 million (total estimated contract value of €5 million shared with the lead contractor Particip GmbH)

Duration

June 2020 - June 2022 with a possibility of extension to 2024



Evaluations help us to measure past successes and failures and learn from them. They are, therefore, a critical part of making a positive impact with development cooperation. The complex strategic evaluations implemented under EMS II support MFA's leadership in defining its development policy.

During the Evaluation of Agriculture, Rural Development and Forest Sector Programmes in Africa, the evaluators spoke with cooperatives that collaborated with the AgroBIG project in the Amhara region in Ethiopia

#6 Clean water and sanitation

#10 Reduced inequalities

#13 Climate action



All evaluation reports produced under EMS I and II are public and can be accessed on the [MFA's website](#).

Updates of the evaluation plan are published [here](#).

The evaluations predicted under EMS II are:

- Evaluation on development cooperation carried out by the Department for Russia, Eastern Europe, and Central Asia, including the Wider Europe Initiative (WEI). Duration: 09/2020 to 05/2021.
- Evaluation on Water Diplomacy in the Context of Finnish Development Cooperation - Lessons for the Future. Duration: 11/2020 to 10/2021.
- Evaluation of Transition Process in Vietnam. Duration: 09/2020 to 06/2021.
- External Review and Evaluation Services of Forest Programmes in Tanzania (developmental evaluation over three years). Duration: 09/2020 to 2023.
- Meta-evaluation of Project and Programme and Centralised Evaluations 2017-2020. Duration: 05/2021 to 02/2022.
- Evaluation on Humanitarian Assistance. Duration: 06/2021 to 03/2022.
- Global Pandemic and Adaptability of Development Policy and Cooperation. Duration: 07/2021 to 04/2022.
- Finland's Development Policy influencing in the EU. Duration: 2021 to 2022.
- The role of Finland's development policy in climate finance and climate policy. Duration: 2022 to 2023.
- International recruitments and JPO Programme. Planned to begin in late 2022.
- Human Rights and Human Rights-based Development Policy and Cooperation. Planned to begin in 2023.
- Right to Education, Right to Learn. Planned to begin in 2023.
- Country Programmes: self-assessment in 2022 and evaluation in 2024.