



## **EVALUATION WORK PROGRAMME 2017-2021** **FOR STRATEGIC EVALUATIONS**

### **I Introduction**

#### **I.1 Principles and framework**

The overall principles governing the evaluation of European Union International Cooperation and Development policies and activities are set out in "Evaluation matters – the Evaluation Policy for EU development co-operation"<sup>1</sup> published in July 2014. Evaluation has a dual role, both in terms of public accountability and in terms of learning on our development policies and practices, notably the Agenda for Change and the European Consensus on Development.

In 2015 the Commission adopted the "Better Regulation" package which includes Commission wide guidelines on Evaluation and Fitness Checks<sup>2</sup> to make the "Evaluation first principle"<sup>3</sup> fully operational. According to this principle, all new policies and programmes should be based on the lessons learnt from the past experiences. Therefore, the Commission uses evaluations to provide accountability for its work and to learn from its experience to improve its policies and practice. The EuropeAid Learning and Knowledge Management Strategy (2014) also encourages to place further emphasis on this dimension.

The Evaluation Work Programme 2017-2021 thus aims to establish a close link between evaluation planning and the policy agenda, in order to ensure timely availability of evidence from evaluations to feed the design of new initiatives and improve implementation of its actions.

The present Work Programme for strategic evaluations has been approved by the Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, in agreement with the High Representative/Vice-President for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the Commissioners for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations and for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management.

#### **I.2 Scope of the Evaluation Work Programme**

The legal basis of the various instruments requires the Commission to "*regularly evaluate the results of geographical and cross-border policies and programmes and of sectoral policies and the effectiveness of programming in order to ascertain whether the*

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<sup>1</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/evaluation-matters\\_en\\_0.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/evaluation-matters_en_0.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/guidelines/ug\\_chap6\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/guidelines/ug_chap6_en.htm)

<sup>3</sup> Communication COM (2013) 686 final - Strengthening the foundations of Smart Regulation – improving evaluation

*objectives have been met and enable it to formulate recommendations with a view to improving future operations".*

Applying the "Better Regulation" guidelines to International Cooperation and Development evaluation activities has led to categorise the evaluations as follows:

1. **Projects and programmes evaluations** provide evidence/lessons supporting Delegations/HQ operational services in the employment of policy funds at field/operational level. They are also used as building blocks for broader thematic or geographic evaluations.
2. **Geographic evaluations** assess the cooperation policies, and the contribution of projects, programmes and instruments to these policies over a significant period of time in a given country or region. These evaluations contribute to accountability and learning by assessing the quality of EU development aid in a **geographic area** and by providing recommendations and lessons for formulation and programming and, to a lesser extent, for implementing of ongoing programming cycles.
3. **Thematic evaluations** assess the cooperation policies and the contribution of projects and programmes to these policies in a given **thematic area or sector** over a significant period of time. They contribute to accountability and learning by assessing the quality of EU development aid in the concerned area(s) and providing recommendations and lessons for formulation and programming. Evaluations of aid modalities are included in thematic evaluations too.
4. **Major evaluations** are those that could lead to changes in the policy and/or regulatory framework and those that do not feed into an overarching evaluation (e.g. Financing Instrument).

The Evaluation Work Programme covers all evaluations which fall under categories 2, 3 and 4.

For category 1 evaluations, an evaluation plan is drawn up separately by each Delegation or operational service in DG DEVCO applying common criteria and using a dedicated tool ("Monitoring and Evaluation Plan") produced simultaneously with the Annual Management Plan. Since 2016 these evaluations are encoded in EVAL Module, an IT tool which helps to manage the evaluation process and serves as repository for all finalised evaluation reports.

In line with the Better Regulation Guidelines, the present Evaluation Work Programme is organised as a five-year rolling work programme. This gives due recognition to the importance of forward-planning while recognizing the need for reviewing and fine-tuning the list of evaluations on a yearly basis in order to take new priorities or other developments into account. As a consequence, **the Work Programme is more complete and accurate for the first two years of the period and more indicative for the following years**. For 2017 and 2018 it corresponds to the delivery capacity of the Evaluation Unit based on its current staff allocation.

The Work Programme is divided into part A "geographic evaluations" and part B "thematic and other evaluations". There are however clear links between the two parts, since country-level evaluations can inform thematic evaluations, and thematic evaluations feedback into country strategies.

## **II Geographic evaluations**

### **II.1 Principles for defining the geographic coverage**

While it would ideally be desirable to evaluate all country or regional programmes for each programming cycle, resources constraints and other managerial considerations lead us to adopt a more targeted approach, still allowing DEVCO to gather relevant comprehensive information. The following criteria have been applied to update the rolling Work Programme, presented under annex A:

- **Financial coverage:** amount of funds allocated under previous and ongoing programming cycles;
- **Regularity:** year of previous evaluation and/or special need in the context of joint-programming;
- **Proportionality:** coverage of regions.

Based on the planning (see Annex A) the evaluations carried out during the period 2017-2021 would represent 50% of financial allocation for geographic programming for that same period. In line with EU's commitment to the New Deal, special attention is paid to evaluations in fragile and conflict-affected countries (representing 18% of financial allocation and 38% of the overall planned evaluations for the period).

Geographic evaluations are conducted at country or region level, and are categorised as:

- *Bilateral (Country/Regional)*, evaluating only EU development aid, managed by the Commission, or
- *Joint evaluations* with other donors whatever the form of their support, and
- *Budget Support (BS)* evaluations, which usually aim at involving all donors providing budget support in a country.

The choice between the 3 categories of geographic evaluations depends on the share of budget support in a country programme and on the interest and willingness of other donors and of the partner country to undertake a joint evaluation.

BS and joint evaluations are much more complex and work-intensive for the Evaluation Unit and can take up to 18 months depending on their scope.

### **II.2 Main adjustments introduced in the work programme**

In order to better match corporate learning needs and other operational constraints, the starting schedule of the evaluations of Nigeria, Niger was postponed. The evaluation of EU cooperation with Eastern Caribbean Countries was cancelled owing to a

disproportionate cost of carrying out such an evaluation considering the important reduction of country allocations in the current programming.

### II.3 On-going work on geographic evaluations

On 31 December 2016, the following eleven geographic evaluations were underway (not yet published):

*Bilateral Country/Regional Evaluations:* Pakistan, Afghanistan, Central African Republic, Eastern-Southern Africa and Indian Ocean, Western Africa, Central Africa;

*Joint Country Evaluation:* Ivory Coast;

*Budget Support Evaluations:* Paraguay, Ghana, Peru, Cambodia.

Out of them, 7 evaluations (those ones underlined) should be finalised and published in 2017.

## **III Thematic and other evaluations including major evaluations**

### III.1 Principles for defining thematic and other major evaluations

The 2017-2021 programme (see Annex B) maintains a balanced approach between learning needs and accountability requirements and is based on wide internal consultations, in particular with thematic and policy directorates. It seeks to complete the on-going geographic evaluations (see section 2.3) in order to have a comprehensive picture of main policy initiatives, cooperation themes and implementing modalities.

### III.2 Main adjustments introduced in the work programme

It has been decided to anticipate to 2017 the evaluation of resilience initially planned to start in 2018 in order to have reliable information available as soon as possible, as resilience is a central topic for the Commission and the EEAS as global actors. This evaluation will cover both DEVCO and NEAR countries.

In agreement with DG NEAR, which will lead it, the evaluation on migration has been anticipated from 2019 (in the former planning) to start before mid-2018 as financial instruments related to migration issues are delivering very rapidly. In addition, there is a need to have information as early as possible. This evaluation will cover both DEVCO and NEAR countries.

In agreement with DG NEAR, the evaluation of EU support to local authorities will also include countries covered by the European Neighbourhood Instrument.

### III.3 On-going thematic evaluation work

As of 31 December 2016, the following 16 thematic / instrument evaluations are on-going: Policy Coherence for Development, Higher Education, EU Approach to Building Resilience to Food Crises in African Drylands, Social Protection (lead DG NEAR), Blending mechanisms, Delegated Cooperation, Joint Programming, Sustainable Energy

Cooperation and the EU External Financing Instruments (DCI, EDF, GD, CIR, EIDHR, IcSP, INSC).

Out of these, 12 evaluations (underlined) should be finalised and published in 2017.

## Annex A: Geographic evaluations

Please note that the year indicates the proposed period for launching the evaluation, not for its publication.

Evaluation description					
Title	Evaluation level	Plan	Joint	Budget Support	Fragile
Latin America	Region	Plan 2017			
El Salvador	Country	Plan 2017	X	X	
Myanmar	Country	Plan 2017	X		X
Nicaragua	Country	Plan 2017	X		
Rwanda	Country	Plan 2017	X	X	X
Somalia	Country	Plan 2017			X
Malawi	Country	Plan 2018			
Mali	Country	Plan 2018		X	X
Tajikistan	Country	Plan 2018			
Angola	Country	Plan 2019			
Kyrgyzstan	Country	Plan 2019			
Mauritania	Country	Plan 2019	X		X
South Sudan	Country	Plan 2019			X
Zimbabwe	Country	Plan 2019			X

Haiti	Country	Plan 2020			X
Papua New Guinea	Country	Plan 2020			X
Ethiopia	Country	Plan 2020			X
Mozambique	Country	Plan 2020			
Niger	Country	Plan 2021	X		X
Nigeria	Country	Plan 2021			X

## Annex B: Thematic and other evaluations

Please note that the year indicates the proposed period for launching the evaluation, not for its publication.

Year of launch	Evaluation focus	Policy areas	Comments
2017	Resilience	Fragility, vulnerability	The 2012 Commission Communication on "The EU approach to resilience: learning from Food Security Crises" (COM(2012) 586) and Action Plan for Resilience in Crisis Prone Countries (2013-2020) is intended to deliver early results and it includes targeted support to a number of vulnerable countries and regions for which shared assessments, strategies and implementation plans are necessary in order to build resilience, which is a central aim of EU external assistance. The approach consists of a long-term commitment, focusing on strengthening capacities at all levels, improving the coordination between humanitarian and development interventions, as well as promoting local ownership and partnership with all stakeholders. The evaluation will assess the intermediate results of the implementation of the Action Plan. Depending on the timetable, it might also serve as basic information for the new Joint Communication which is in the making. This new initiative, which is one component of the follow-up to the EU Global Strategy, aims to establish a coherent policy framework on resilience across the EU's external action, and to identify key issues at the nexus between internal and external policy.
	Conflict Prevention	Conflict fragility and	As considerable experience has been gained in several fragile and conflict-affected countries since the last evaluation (2011) and the adoption of the New Deal, this evaluation will assess to what extent the new way of engaging with these countries has been effective, efficient and sustainable and created an impact for the people and their societies. Broader aspects of the Development /Security nexus, resilience, conflict prevention and conflict sensitivity will also be covered, in its prospective dimension the evaluation may also examine to what extent the SDG 16 on peaceful and inclusive societies would require adjusting current approaches or strategies..
2018	Migration	Migration	Migration is now firmly embedded in the EU's foreign policy, including its development policy. In June 2015, the European Council agreed to implement the European Agenda on Migration and in June 2016, the European Commission set out a new Partnership Framework with third countries under the European Agenda on Migration with the aim of developing tailor made partnerships with key third countries of origin and transit to better manage migration. The European Parliament adopted 'Towards a New Policy on Migration' which provides the strategic direction whilst 'Global Compacts on Migration and on Refugees' provides the implementation tools to address this challenging agenda,

	Vocational training and employability	Private sector, education, employment	aiming at improving capacities for overall migration and refugee management, and in the longer term, at effectively addressing root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement. The objective of the mid-term evaluation will be to assess the relevance, effectiveness and value added of EU interventions in this area.
	Local authorities	Governance	Following on in this important area from the evaluation of employment and social inclusion published in 2011, an evaluation of vocational training will be of great value in improving the effectiveness of our support for better policies in support of the private sector and employment creation, notably for young people.
	State Building Contract	Governance	Following the launch of the new initiative in relation to local authorities in 2013, an evaluation would cover the first five years of implementation and provide guidance for the subsequent programming phase.
			This evaluation intends to look for the first time at the application of this implementation modality in fragile contexts, with a special attention to the 5 evaluation criteria, as well as Coordination, Complementarity and Sustainability
2019	Agriculture-Growth-Employment	Agriculture, employment	This evaluation is needed as in more and more ACP countries the sector of rural development is now a focal sector conformingly with Agenda for Change. The objective of the evaluation will be to assess the support provided by the EU in this area.
2020	Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA)	Trade, private sector	Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) are trade and development agreements negotiated between the EU and African, Caribbean and Pacific regions engaged in a regional economic integration process. The EPAs were put in place to help ACP countries integrate into the world economy and share in the opportunities offered by globalization. The objective of this evaluation is to assess the extent to which the implementation of the EU support for EPAs has created favorable conditions to boost trade in the targeted regions and stimulate growth and job creation.
	EU trust Funds		Evaluation of this new delivery modality based on 5 years of experience that will have been gained by 2020 in implementing various EU Trust Funds in various contexts.

2021	External Investment Plan	Investment, infrastructure, private sector	The European External Investment Plan is an example of a 'smarter' use of Official Development Assistance to leverage funding from other sources, create quality and decent jobs, and generate inclusive sustainable growth for the benefit of the poorest. It will encourage investments that otherwise would not happen – for example in conflict-affected areas or where economic governance is lacking
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