

# EVALUATION



Ministry for Foreign  
Affairs of Finland

Evaluation on Development Cooperation carried out  
by the Department for Russia, Eastern Europe and  
Central Asia, including the Wider Europe Initiative (WEI)

Volume 1 • Main Report



Evaluation on Finland's Development Policy and Cooperation

2021/4A



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**EVALUATION ON DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION CARRIED OUT BY  
THE DEPARTMENT FOR RUSSIA, EASTERN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA,  
INCLUDING THE WIDER EUROPE INITIATIVE (WEI)**

**Final Report**

**Volume 1 - Main Report**

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**2021/4A**

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# Evaluation on Development Cooperation carried out by the Department for Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, including the Wider Europe Initiative (WEI)

This evaluation report consists of two volumes. This is Volume 1 and contains the synthesis.

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# Acronyms and Abbreviations

<b>CoE</b>	Council of Europe
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organisation
<b>DAC</b>	Development Assistance Committee (OECD)
<b>EBRD</b>	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
<b>EECCA</b>	Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia
<b>ENP</b>	European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument
<b>EQ</b>	Evaluation Question
<b>ET</b>	Evaluation Team
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>EUD</b>	EU Delegation
<b>EUR</b>	Euro
<b>EVA-11</b>	Development Evaluation Unit, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organization
<b>FLC</b>	Fund for Local Cooperation
<b>FMI</b>	Finnish Meteorological Institute
<b>FUTF</b>	Finland Ukraine Trust Fund
<b>GTK</b>	Geological Survey of Finland
<b>HRBA</b>	Human Rights-Based Approach
<b>ICI</b>	Institutional Cooperation Instrument
<b>ICT</b>	Information and communications technology
<b>IDP</b>	Internally Displaced Person
<b>IFC</b>	International Finance Corporation (World Bank Group)
<b>IFIs</b>	International Financial Institutions
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organization
<b>INGO</b>	International Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>ITÄ-20</b>	Unit for Eastern Europe and Central Asia
<b>MFA</b>	Ministry for Foreign Affairs Finland
<b>MTE</b>	Mid-Term Evaluation
<b>NEFCO</b>	Nordic Environment Finance Corporation
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>ODA</b>	Official Development Assistance
<b>ODIHR</b>	Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE)
<b>OECD</b>	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
<b>OSCE</b>	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
<b>RBM</b>	Results-based management
<b>SME</b>	Small and Medium Enterprise
<b>SSF</b>	Single Support Framework
<b>SYKE</b>	Finnish Environment Institute
<b>TL</b>	Team Leader
<b>TVET</b>	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNECE</b>	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
<b>UNEP</b>	United Nations Environment Programme
<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Population Fund
<b>UNITAR</b>	United Nations Institute for Training and Research
<b>VET</b>	Vocational Education and Training
<b>WEI</b>	Wider Europe Initiative





# Tiivistelmä

Strategisessa arvioinnissa tarkasteltiin Suomen kehitysyhteistyötä Itä-Euroopassa ja Keski-Aasiassa vuosina 2009-2021. Tarkastelu sisälsi myös Wider Europe Initiative I ja II vaiheet, sekä kehitysyhteistyön maastrategioiden toteutuksen Kirgisiassa, Tadžikistanissa ja Ukrainassa (vaihe III). Arvioinnin keskiössä olivat Kirgisia, Tadžikistan ja Ukraina, joista tehtiin maakohtaiset selvitykset. Suomen kehitysyhteistyön avulla on pyritty vastaamaan alueen maiden keskeisiin haasteisiin, kuten talouden kehittämiseen, ympäristön, hyvän hallinnon ja ihmisoikeuksien kehittämiseen sekä sosiaaliseen kestävyteen ja syrjimättömyyteen.

Arvioinnin tuloksena löydettiin joukko hyviä toimintamalleja. Suomen kehityspoliittiset päämäärät on hyvin integroitu ja otettu käytäntöön. Suomella on myös vahva maine avunantajana, joka on sitoutunut vastaamaan kumppanimaiden keskeisiin haasteisiin. Se, että toteutuksessa on käytetty eri tuki-instrumenttien yhdistelmiä, on varmistanut tulosten saavuttamisen kokonaisvaltaisesti politiikkatasolta yhteisöjen ja yksittäisten hyödynsaajien tasoille asti.

Suomen sitoutuminen pitkäaikaiseen hanketukeen on edesauttanut konkreettisten ja kestävien tulosten saavuttamista. Samoin sitoutuminen syrjäytymisvaarassa olevien ihmisten etujen ajamiseen on johtanut merkittäviin parannuksiin tällä alueella.

Kehitysyhteistyön portfolion strategisen suunnittelun, toteutuksen hallinnoinnin, seurannan ja raportoinnin suhteen on parannettavaa.

Arvioinnin strategisen tason suosituksissa ehdotetaan, että ministeriö laatisi kehitysyhteistyötä koskevan kokonaisvaltaisen vision aluetta varten. Sidosryhmien osallistumisessa ohjelmointiin on myös parantamisen varaa. Tulosohjauksen vahvistamiseksi tulisi osoittaa riittävät henkilöresurssit. Lisäksi kansalaisjärjestöt voisivat osallistua Suomen kehitysyhteistyön toteuttamiseen laajemmin.

Avainsanat: *Itäinen Eurooppa, Keski-Aasia*



# Referat

Utvärderingen granskade Finlands utvecklingssamarbete i Östeuropa och Centralasien under perioden 2009-2021, med särskilt fokus på Wider Europe Initiative I och II samt landstrategier för utvecklingssamarbete (fas III). Fallstudier gjordes av Kirgizistan, Tadzjikistan och Ukraina. Finlands utvecklingssamarbete har syftat till att ta itu med de centrala utmaningar som länderna i regionen står inför inom områdena ekonomisk utveckling, miljö, god samhällsstyrning och mänskliga rättigheter, social hållbarhet och inkludering.

En rad väl-fungerande faktorer identifierades. Finlands utvecklingspolitiska prioriteringar har integrerats och tillämpats väl. Finland uppfattas som en engagerad givare som arbetar med de några av de viktigaste utmaningarna som partnerländerna står inför. Utvecklingssamarbetet har genomförts med hjälp av en blandning av olika instrument, vilket har medfört ett holistiskt angreppssätt som har bidragit till resultat på policy-nivå såväl som på samhällelig nivå och för enskilda individer.

Finlands långsiktiga åtagande har skapat förutsättningar för att uppnå konkreta och varaktiga resultat. Finlands engagemang för utsatta grupper och individer i samhället har gett påtagliga resultat i hela regionen.

Den strategiska planering av utvecklingssamarbetet kan förbättras, vilket även gäller genomförande, uppföljning, och rapportering.

Rapporten föreslår att en övergripande vision för utvecklingssamarbete för hela regionen tas fram. Olika gruppers deltagande i programutvecklings-fasen kan stärkas.

Tillräckliga personalresurser måste anslås, och den resultatbaserade styrningen stärkas. Det civila samhället skulle kunna vara mer delaktigt i Finlands utvecklingssamarbete.

Nyckelord: *Östeuropa, Centralasien*



# Abstract

This strategic evaluation assessed Finland's development cooperation in Eastern Europe and Central Asia over 2009-2021. The Wider Europe Initiative I and II and Country Strategies for Development Cooperation (phase III) were covered. The focus has been on the case countries of the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Ukraine. Finnish development cooperation has aimed to address core challenges faced by the countries of the region, in the spheres of economic development, the environment, good governance and human rights, social sustainability and inclusivity.

A range of factors that have worked well were identified. Finland's development policy priorities have been well integrated and applied. Finland has a strong reputation as a donor committed to addressing core challenges that face partner countries. The mix of instruments used to implement the development cooperation portfolio has secured results in a holistic fashion, from policy level down to the level of communities and individual beneficiaries.

Finland's long-term commitment to supporting interventions has facilitated tangible and sustainable results. Finland's commitment to addressing the needs of persons in disadvantaged positions had led to tangible improvements across the region.

There are issues to address with regard to strategic planning of the development cooperation portfolio, as well as management of implementation, monitoring and reporting.

In terms of strategic recommendations, the report suggests an overarching vision for development cooperation for the whole region be developed. Stakeholder participation in programming could be enhanced.

Sufficient human resources need to be allocated, and Results-Based Management could be strengthened. Civil society could be involved in the programmatic cycle of Finland's development cooperation.

*Keywords: Eastern Europe. Central Asia*



# Yhteenveto

**Johdanto.** Arvioinnin tarkoituksena oli tuottaa ulkoministeriölle laaja-alaista tietoa siitä, miten ulkoministeriön Venäjän, Itä-Euroopan ja Keski-Aasian osaston kautta vuosina 2009-2021 kanna-voima kehitysyhteistyö, mukaan lukien Wider Europe Initiative (WEI), on edesauttanut kehitysvaikutusten saavuttamista kyseisellä alueella viime vuosikymmenen aikana. Arvioinnissa tarkasteltiin kehitysyhteistyön vaikuttavuutta, sen laajuutta ja merkitystä alueen kehitykselle, sekä saavutettujen tulosten ja vaikutusten kestävyyttä. Lisäksi analysoitiin syitä, jotka vaikuttivat toiminnan onnistumiseen ja/tai epäonnistumiseen, mukaan lukien toimintaympäristö, inhimilliset näkökohdat sekä resurssit.

Olellaisena arvioinnin tavoitteena oli tuottaa tietoa siitä, miten ministeriö voisi parhaiten saavuttaa kehityspoliittiset tavoitteensa tulevaisuudessa. Lisäksi arvioinnissa pyrittiin selvittämään, miten edistää hallitusohjelman tavoitteita systemaattisesti sekä miten edelleen kehittää strategioita, ohjelmointia ja ohjelmien toteuttamista strategisella tasolla, mukaan lukien hallinto. Evaluoinnin tarkoituksena oli myös tutkia, missä määrin Suomi on edesauttanut kehitysvaikutusten aikaansaamista alueella viime vuosikymmenen aikana. Lisäksi arvioinnin tarkoituksena oli tuottaa tietoa siitä, kuinka ministeriö voisi maksimoida tuen vaikuttavuutta ja kestävyyttä.

Arvioinnissa käsiteltiin kuutta pääkysymystä:

1. Missä määrin Suomen kehitysyhteistyö on ollut tarkoituksenmukaista?
2. Mikä on ollut Suomen kehitysyhteistyön vaikuttavuus alueella?
3. Mikä on ollut saavutettujen tulosten ja vaikutusten kestävyys?
4. Missä määrin vuosien 2018-2021 maastrategioissa suunnitellut tulokset on saavutettu ja miten ne ovat edesauttaneet Suomen kehityspoliittisten tavoitteiden saavuttamista?
5. Miten kehityspolitiikkaa ja -yhteistyötä on hallinnoitu vuosina 2018-2021?
6. Missä määrin toteutettu kehitysyhteistyö on ollut johdonmukaista?



**Arvioinnin laajuus.** Tarkastelujakso kattoi vuodet 2009-2021. Kyseisenä aikana Suomi on tukenut 11 Itä-Euroopan ja Keski-Aasian maata kehitysyhteistyön avulla. Tuen painopiste on tällä hetkellä Kirgisiassa, Tadžikistanissa ja Ukrainassa.

**Metodologia.** Arviointi toteutettiin marraskuun 2020 ja toukokuun 2021 välisenä aikana. Lähestymistapa oli tulevaisuuteen suuntaava ja teoriaperusteinen. Tiedonkeruun lähteinä käytettiin hankkeisiin liittyviä ja muita asiakirjoja, keskeisten toimijoiden haastatteluja ja kirjallista palautetta, kohderyhmäkeskusteluja ja laadullisia selvityksiä. Yhteensä 89 henkilö osallistui haastattelun tai kirjallisen palautteen myötä. Tiedon analysoimiseen käytettiin alueella toteutettavan kehitysyhteistyön hankesalkun analyysiä, vertailevaa analyysiä sekä kontekstianalyysiä. Kontribuutioanalyysin (contribution analysis) avulla määritettiin Suomen tuen osuutta tapahtuneisiin muutoksiin eri sektoreilla, instituutioissa, yhteisöissä ja politiikkatasolla. Arvioinnin osana tehtiin Kirgisian, Tadžikistanin ja Ukrainan maakohtaiset selvitykset, jotka tukevat pääraportissa tehtyä kokonaisarviota.

**Koronaviruspandemiasta johtuvat rajoitteet.** Koronaviruspandemiasta johtuen arvioinnin ydinryhmä ei toteuttanut kenttämatkoja kolmeen maakohtaisen selvityksen kohteena olleeseen maahan, hankkeisiin tai tehnyt haastatteluja varsinaisten hyödynsaajien kanssa. Sen sijaan kaksi kokenutta maakonsulttia identifioivat sidosryhmien edustajia, haastattelivat heitä ja keräsivät muuta tarvittavaa aineistoa. Kaikki keskustelut ulkoministeriön kehitysevaluoinnin yksikön, maatiimien ja ohjausryhmän edustajien kanssa sekä osa muista haastatteluista toteutettiin verkon välityksellä.

**Löydökset.** Arvioinnin olennaisimmat löydökset olivat:

**Tarkoituksenmukaisuus (Relevance).** Kehitysyhteistyön hankesalkun sisältö on kehittynyt ja mukautunut hyvin ajan kuluessa, mikä on parantanut tuen tarkoituksenmukaisuutta koskien sekä Suomen omia kehityspoliittisia tavoitteita että kumppanimaiden prioriteetteja ja tarpeita. Maastrategioiden käyttöönottoaminen on mahdollistanut johdonmukaisemman lähestymistavan suunnitteluun. Valitut sektorit ja temaattiset alueet heijastavat Suomen vahvuuksia, joita ovat mm. ympäristö, energiatehokkuus, koulutus, sosiaalinen inkluusio, ihmisoikeuksien edistäminen ja vammaisten henkilöiden aseman parantaminen. Suomen tuki on ollut oikea-aikaista. Tästä esimerkkinä on Suomen tuki vammaisten henkilöiden aseman parantamiseksi Keski-Aasiassa. Suomi tukee yhtenä harvoista avunantajista tätä sensitiiviseksi koettua temaattista aluetta. Ulko- ja turvallisuuspolitiikka ovat toimineet kehityksen vetureina. Esimerkkejä ovat turvallisuus- ja kehityspoliittisten prioriteettien välinen vahva linkki WEI I aikana, sekä Suomen vastine Ukrainan kriisitilanteeseen vuodesta 2014 alkaen. Toisaalta kauppapolitiikan ja kehitysyhteistyön välistä yhteyttä ei ole määritelty riittävästi.



**Vaikutavuus (Impact).** Kehitysyhteistyön avulla Suomi on edesauttanut merkittävien muutosten aikaansaamista kaikilla tukemillaan osa-alueilla, joita ovat erityisesti yhteiskunnallis-taloudellinen tilanne, ympäristö, ihmisoikeudet sekä oikeusvaltioperiaate. Sellaisia vaikutuksia, joiden toteutumista Suomi on edesauttanut merkittävästi, on useita. Osassa on pystytty vaikuttamaan koko toimialaan, mistä esimerkkinä on kalatalouden uudelleen elvyttäminen Kirgisiassa, jonka toiminnassa oli ollut puutteita usean vuoden ajan. Muita merkittäviä vaikutuksia havaittiin politiikkalinjausten käytänteiden sekä asenteiden muutoksissa, mikä on johtanut konkreettisiin tuloksiin haavoittuvassa asemassa olevien ihmisten elämän parantamisessa. Myös investoinnit infrastruktuuriin, panostus teknologian siirtoon ja tietotaidon vahvistamiseen johtivat muutoksiin yhteisötasolla, instituutioissa ja yleisesti koko yhteiskunnan tasolla. Havaittavissa oli myös merkkejä tahattomista negatiivisista vaikutuksista, jotka vaativat huomiota. Yleisesti ottaen Suomen lisäarvo perustuu eritysalojen asiantuntemukseen ja siihen, että sitoudutaan tuen pitkäaikaisuuteen, vaikka tuloksia ei olisikaan havaittavissa välittömästi. Suomea pidetään pienenä ja erikoistuneena kumppanina, ja rajallisesta läsnäolosta huolimatta käytännönläheisenä.

**Kestävyys (Sustainability).** Tulosten ja vaikutusten kestävyiden näkökulmasta arvioinnin kokonaiskuva on epäyhtenäinen. Arvioinnin tuloksena havaittiin vain harvoja positiivisia esimerkkejä hankkeiden taloudellisesta kestävydestä. Suurin osa hankkeiden toteutuksesta sekä niiden jatko riippuu merkittävästi ulkopuolisesta tuesta, ja ne ovat kaukana omavaraisuudesta. Kirgisian kalatalous osoitti rohkaisevia merkkejä taloudellisen kestävyiden saavuttamisesta, tosin tietojen luotettavuutta oli vaikea arvioida. On liian aikaista arvioida sosiaalisen kestävyiden tuloksia, koska siihen liittyvät muutokset vievät aikaa, ja useat hankkeet ovat vasta alkaneet. Pitkäaikainen tuki on johtanut lupaaviin tuloksiin ympäristökestävyiden osalta, erityisesti koskien infrastruktuurin ja teknologiaan liittyviä investointeja. Myös eri sektoreilla tehtävät ympäristövaikutusten arvioinnit ovat olleet myönteinen kehitysaskel. Silloin kuin hankkeet ovat pyrkineet kehittämään kumppaniorganisaatioiden institutionaalista kapasiteettia, tulokset kestävyiden osalta ovat olleet lupaavia. Henkilöstön vaihtuvuus on näissäkin tapauksissa haaste. Kaikkein onnistuneimmissa tapauksissa kestävyiden takeena on ollut vahva kansallisten sidosryhmien sitoutuminen.

**Tuloksellisuus (Effectiveness, 2018-2021).** Kirgisiassa ja Tadžikistanissa saavutettiin tuloksia kolmella vaikuttavuuden alueella; ihmisoikeudet ja oikeusvaltioperiaate, taloudellinen kasvu ja ympäristökestävyys. Tadžikistanissa tavoitteita ei täysin saavutettu ympäristökestävyiden osalta rahoituksen lopettamisen vuoksi. Ukrainassa tuloksia saavutettiin vaihtelevasti kaikilla vaikuttavuuden alueilla (koulutus, energia ja ihmisoikeudet). Keski-Aasian maissa hanketoteutus edistyi hyvin kohti tavoitteita, kunnes Covid-19 pandemia alkoi. Näissä hankkeissa oli tiiviit työsuhteet ulkoministeriön, toteuttavien organisaatioiden, tukea vastaanottavien instituutioiden ja yhteisöjen välillä. Ukrainassa uusien hankkeiden aloitus viivästyi jo ennen koronaviruspandemiaa. Tämä johtui erityisesti siitä, että hankkeet kohdistuivat keskeisiin rakenteellisiin muutoksiin, joihin Ukrainan hallitus oli erityisesti pyytänyt tukea Suomelta. Pandemia on vaikuttanut merkittävästi Keski-Aasian hankkeiden toimintaan, erityisesti haavoittuvassa asemassa oleviin ihmisryhmiin, jotka ovat monien hankkeiden pääasiallisia hyödynsajia. Sopeuttavia toimia, kuten verkon kautta tapahtuvaa työskentelyä, on voitu ottaa käyttöön vain rajoitetusti maissa vallitsevista tilanteista johtuen.

**Hallinnointi (Management, 2018-2021).** Maaohjelmien käyttöönotto on mahdollistanut hankesalkun keskitetyn hallinnoinnin. Suomen kehitysyhteistyön rahoitukseen kohdistuneet leikkaukset, henkilökunnan väheneminen ja urakierto ovat kuitenkin heikentäneet ulkoministeriön kykyä hallinnoida kehitysyhteistyöhankkeita. Ohjelmasyklin hallinnoinnissa ulkoministeriö on vahvimmillaan hankkeiden identifiointi- ja suunnitteluvaiheissa, jotka perustuvat laajaan ministeriön ja sen ulkopuolisten sidosryhmien väliseen konsultaatioon. Se, missä määrin seurannassa,



raportoinnissa ja saaduista kokemuksista oppimisessa on onnistuttu, vaihtelee ja on hankekoh- taista. Valittu tukimuotojen yhdistelmä on kaikissa maissa onnistunut. Yhdistelmien kokonai- suuksien avulla ulkoministeriö on voinut saada aikaan merkittäviä tuloksia ja käyttää resurss- jaan tehokkaimmin. Nykyiset kumppanuudet kumppaniorganisaatioiden kanssa (monenkeskiset ja alueelliset) ovat vakiintuneita, samoin kuin instituutioiden välisen yhteistyön kumppanuudet (IKI). Paikallisen yhteistyön määrärahan (PYM) instrumenttia on käytetty onnistuneesti tukemaan tärkeitä pienimuotoisia hankkeita, jotka ovat usein arkaluontoisia aihepiiriltään. Tämä avun ka- nava muodostaa myös korvaamattoman yhteyden ulkoministeriön ja kansalaisjärjestöjen välille. Uusi tukimuoto, jossa yksityiset konsulttiyhtiöt toteuttavat tärkeimpiin reformeihin kohdistuvia hankkeita, vaatii läheistä seurantaa, koska erityisesti aloitusvaiheessa on noussut esille haasteita.

**Johdonmukaisuus (Coherence).** Hankesalkun sisältö on yleisellä tasolla hyvin johdonmukai- nen, mutta suorat kytkökset ja synergia samalla sektorilla toimivien hankkeiden välillä eivät ole niin näkyviä. Ohjelmadokumenteissa tai hankkeiden tasolla johdonmukaisuutta muiden avunantajien toimiin nähden ei määritellä yksityiskohtaisesti, vaikka tosiasiallisesti koordinointi avunantajien kesken on merkittävästi lisääntynyt. Tilanteissa, joissa Suomen panos on suhteellisesti pienempi muihin rahoittajiin verrattuna, ulkoministeriö on pystynyt hyödyntämään suomalaista asiantun- temusta. Tästä yksi esimerkki on sukupuolten välisen tasa-arvon asiantuntijoiden lähettäminen Euroopan Neuvoston maatoimistoon Ukrainassa. Johdonmukaisuutta käsitellään hankkeiden ta- solla enemmän kuin Suomen maastrategioissa, jota käytetään enemmän ulkoministeriön sisäisenä hallinnoinnin välineenä. Monenvälisen tai alueorganisaatioiden toteuttamissa hankkeissa kump- paniorganisaatioiden maatoimistot mahdollistavat läheiset ja säännölliset kontaktit avunantajien edustustojen sekä yhteistyövaltion yhteyshenkilöiden kanssa.

## Johtopäätökset.

Löydöksistä johdettiin kaksitoista johtopäätöstä.

### ***Mikä on toiminut hyvin - mahdollisuudet ja vahvuudet***

1. Suomen kehityspoliittiset päämäärät ja niiden toteuttamista ohjaava ohjeistus on hyvin sisällytetty kehitysyhteistyön suunnitteluun ja toteutukseen.
2. Suomen kehitysyhteistyön ja ulko- ja turvallisuuspoliittisten päämäärien välillä on vahva johdonmukaisuus ja täydentävyys tällä alueella.
3. Suomi on vuosina 2009–2021 pystynyt ylläpitämään vahvaa näyttöä ja mainetta sellaisena avunantajana, joka on sitoutunut vastaamaan kumppanimaiden keskeisiin haasteisiin.
4. Kehitysyhteistyön toteuttamiseen käytettyjen tuki-instrumenttien yhdistelmä on hyvin valittu. Se on turvannut kokonaisvaltaisten tulosten saavuttamisen politiikkatasolta yhteisöihin ja yksittäisiin hyödynsaajiin saakka.
5. Ohjelmasyklin osalta ulkoministeriö on vahvin valmistelu- ja suunnitteluvaiheessa. Henkilöresurssien rajallisuus hankaloittaa koko ohjelmasyklin tehokasta hallinnointia.
6. Suomen sitoutuminen tukemaan kehitysyhteistyöhankkeita pitkällä aikavälillä on helpottanut konkreettisten ja kestävien tulosten aikaansaamista.
7. Rahallinen tuki Euroopan turvallisuus- ja yhteistyöjärjestölle (ETYJ) ja Euroopan neuvostolle mahdollistaa sen, että Suomi myötävaikuttaa näiden organisaatioiden tärkeään työhön.
8. Paikallisen yhteistyön määräraha on tärkeä instrumentti, joka täydentää kehitysyhteistyön toimintoja kumppanimaissa ja ylläpitää Suomen kehitysyhteistyötä muissa alueen maissa.



### ***Toiminnan kehittämistarpeita – haasteet ja rajoitukset***

9. Koko alueen kehitysyhteistyötä koskevan kokoavan politiikan tai yleisen viitekehyksen puute johtaa toiminnan sirpaloitumiseen ja vähentää toiminnan näkyvyyttä.
10. Hankesalkun ja hankkeiden toteutusta, seurantaa ja raportointia koskevaa hallinnointia voidaan parantaa.
11. Kehitysyhteistyön toimintojen strategista suunnittelua voidaan parantaa.
12. Hankesalkun synergioita voidaan hyödyntää paremmin.

### **Suosituks**

Johtopäätöksiin perustuen ulkoministeriölle tehtiin kuusi suositusta liittyen strategiaan linjauksiin ja tulosjohtamiseen.

#### ***Strategiset suositukset:***

1. Vahvistetaan sisäistä strategista suunnittelua ja laaditaan kehitysyhteistyötä koskeva yhteinen visio koskien yksikön tukemia maita.
2. Otetaan käyttöön osallistavampi lähestymistapa aluetta koskevassa kehitysyhteistyön ohjelmoinnissa.

#### ***Hallinnointia koskevat suositukset***

Neljä operationaalista suositusta koskevat kehitysyhteistyön toteutuksen lähestymistapaa, avun kanavia ja miten työtä tulisi ulkoministeriössä hallinnoida.

3. Varmistetaan että yksikössä on projektisyklin hallinnoimiseen riittävät henkilöresurssit ja osaaminen, jotta seuraavalle jaksolle suunnitellun lisärahoituksen ja yhden uuden maan (Uzbekistan) tuomaan hallinnointitarpeeseen voidaan vastata.
4. Vahvistetaan yksikön tulosohjausta henkilöstön kapasiteettia edelleen kehittämällä, ja tarpeellisella henkilöstö- ja muilla resursseilla.
5. Jatketaan nykyisten tuki-instrumenttien käyttöä.
6. Valtavirtaistetaan kansalaisjärjestöjen osallistuminen Suomen kehitysyhteistyön ohjelmallisiin toimintoihin perustuen paikallisen yhteistyön määrärahan instrumentin vahvaan näyttöön alueella.



# Tärkeimmät löydökset, johtopäätökset ja suositukset

Löydökset	Johtopäätökset	Suosituks
<p>(Löydös 1.3) Suomen kehityspoliittiset päämäärät ja toiminta ovat olleet yhdenmukaisia koko tarkasteluajanjakson aikana. Tuen tarkoituksenmukaisuutta alueella on edesauttanut se, että Suomen kehityspoliittiset prioriteetit vastaavat hyvin kumppanimaiden prioriteetteja ja tarpeita, ja ne ovat pysyneet samoina koko tarkastelujakson ajan.</p> <p>(Löydös 1.4) Valitut sektorit ja temaattiset alueet heijastavat Suomen vahvuuksia, joita ovat mm. ympäristö, energiatehokkuus, koulutus, sosiaalinen inklusio, ihmisoikeuksien edistäminen ja vammaisten henkilöiden aseman parantaminen.</p>	<p>1. Suomen kehityspoliittiset päämäärät ja niiden toteuttamista ohjaava ohjeistus on hyvin sisällytetty kehitysyhteistyön suunnitteluun ja toteutukseen.</p> <p><i>(Löydös 6.1 on myös johtanut tähän johtopäätökseen)</i></p>	<p>1. Vahvistetaan sisäistä strategista suunnittelua ja laaditaan kehitysyhteistyötä koskeva yhteinen visio koskien yksikön hallinnoimaa aluetta.</p>
<p>(Löydös 1.6) Ulko- ja turvallisuuspolitiikka ovat toimineet kehityksen vetureina. Esimerkkejä ovat turvallisuus- ja kehityspoliittisten prioriteettien välinen vahva yhteys WEI I aikana, sekä Suomen vastine Ukrainan kriisitilanteeseen vuodesta 2014 alkaen. Toisaalta, kauppapolitiikan ja kehitysyhteistyön välistä yhteyttä ei ole määritelty riittävästi.</p> <p>(Löydös 1.7) Ukrainan tukemiselle on vahva poliittinen oikeutus ulkopoliittisia tavoitteita ajatellen. Vaiheen III aikana kahdelle köyhimmälle maalle (Kirgisia ja Tadžikistan) annettua tukea on vähennetty, mikä kyseenalaistaa Suomen sitoutumisen kaikkien köyhimpien maiden tukemiseen.</p>	<p>2. Suomen kehitysyhteistyön ja ulko- ja turvallisuuspoliittisten päämäärien välillä on vahva johdonmukaisuus ja täydentävyys tällä alueella.</p>	
<p>Löydös 1.1) Suomen kehitysyhteistyö on ollut tarkoituksenmukaista kumppanimaiden prioriteetteja ja tarpeita ajatellen koko 2009-2021 tarkastelujakson ajan. Kehitysyhteistyön avulla Suomi on vastannut alueen maita koskeviin keskeisiin haasteisiin tukemallaan osa-alueilla, joita ovat erityisesti taloudellinen kehitys, ympäristö, hyvä hallinto ja ihmisoikeudet, sosiaalisesti kestävä kehitys sekä syrjimättömyys.</p> <p>(Löydös 1.2) Maastrategioiden käyttöönottoaminen on mahdollistanut johdonmukaisemman lähestymistavan siten, että suunnittelun viitekehys vastaa kumppanimaiden tarpeita. Kolmeen kumppanimaahan keskittyminen vuodesta 2014 alkaen on helpottanut tuen yhdenmukaistamista alueen maiden tarpeiden kanssa paremmin kuin Wider Europe Initiative I aikana.</p> <p>(Löydös 4.1) Saavutetusta edistymisestä huolimatta arvioinnin kokonaiskuva on epäyhtenäinen. Kirgisiassa ja Tadžikistanissa saavutettiin tuloksia kolmella vaikuttavuuden alueella; ihmisoikeudet ja oikeusvaltioperiaate, taloudellinen kasvu ja ympäristökestävyys. Tadžikistanissa tuloksia ei täysin saavutettu ympäristökestävyyden osalta rahoituksen lopettamisen vuoksi. Ukrainassa tuloksia saavutettiin vaihtelevasti kaikilla vaikuttavuuden alueilla (koulutus, energia ja ihmisoikeudet).</p>	<p>3. Suomi on vuosina 2009-2021 pystynyt ylläpitämään vahvaa näyttöä ja mainetta sellaisena avunantajana, joka on sitoutunut vastaamaan kumppanimaiden keskeisiin haasteisiin.</p> <p><i>(Löydökset 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 6.2 ovat myös johtaneet tähän johtopäätökseen)</i></p>	

Löydökset	Johtopäätökset	Suositukset
<p>(Löydös 4.2) Keski-Aasian ja Ukrainan ohjelmakausien välillä oli huomattavia eroja. Keski-Aasian portfolio muodostuu hankkeista, joita on tuettu kaikkien kolmen vaiheen aikana. Monen hankkeen tuki loppui kolmannen vaiheen aikana. Ukrainassa sen sijaan on alkanut useita uusia hankkeita. Keski-Aasiassa toteutettavat hankkeet ovat suurimmaksi osaksi saavuttaneet vuosille 2018-2020 asetetut tavoitteet. Sen sijaan Ukrainassa uusien hankkeiden toteutus on viivästynyt jo aloitusvaiheessa.</p> <p>(Löydös 4.6) Arviointiryhmä ei löytänyt näyttöä siitä, että Suomen kehitysyhteistyön toteutuksen aikana olisi jätetty mitään potentiaalisia mahdollisuuksia käyttämättä. Ukrainassa ohjelmointi oli kysyntäveitoista. Uusia investointeja tehtiin isoihin hankkeisiin, jotka kohdistuivat tärkeisiin reformeihin. Keski-Aasian 2021- 2024 strategiassa suunniteltu kehitysyhteistyön uudelleen aloittaminen Uzbekistanin kanssa on osoitus siitä, että Suomi on säilynyt valppaana ja joustavana vastaamaan aukeaviin yhteistyön mahdollisuuksiin.</p>		
<p>(Löydös 5.4) Itä-Euroopan ja Keski-Aasian yksikön vastuualueeseen kuuluvaa, kokoavaa alueen kehitysyhteistyötä koskevaa strategista viitekehystä ei ole – sellaista, joka myös sisältäisi kytkökset muuhun ulkoministeriön kehitysyhteistyötoimintaan alueella. Nämä kaksi maakohtaista strategiaa eivät viittaa toisiinsa ja näyttävät sen vuoksi olevan erillään toisistaan, vaikka niitä hallinnoi sama alueyksikkö. Maastrategioista ei löytynyt näyttöä alueiden välisestä oppimisesta.</p>	<p>9. Koko alueen kehitysyhteistyötä koskevan kokoavan politiikan tai yleisen viitekehyksen puute johtaa sirpaloitumiseen ja vähentää toiminnan näkyvyyttä.</p> <p><i>(Löydökset 1.2, 1.3, 1.4 ovat myös johtaneet tähän johtopäätökseen)</i></p>	
<p>Löydös 3.2) Ulkoministeriöllä ei ole kovin kehittyneitä menettelytapoja kestävyiden suunnitteluun ja arviointiin. Pikemminkin kestävyiden varmistaminen jätetään jatkorahoituksen varaan. Kestävyttä koskevassa dokumentoinnissa on merkittäviä aukkoja. Tilannetta heikentää myös rajallinen institutionaalinen muisti niin ulkoministeriössä kuin kumppaniorganisaatioissakin.</p>	<p>11. Kehitysyhteistyön toimintojen strategista suunnittelua voidaan parantaa.</p>	<p>2. Otetaan käyttöön osallistavampi lähestymistapa aluetta koskevassa kehitysyhteistyön ohjelmoinnissa.</p>
<p>(Löydös 1.5) Monet hankkeet olivat entisten jatkohankkeita, jolloin toteutuksen aikana saadut kokemukset helpottivat uusien tarpeiden määrittämistä. Kansainvälisten organisaatioiden tai instituutioiden välisen yhteistyön (IKI) kautta toteutettavien hankkeiden avulla aikaansaatiin pitkäaikaisia instituutioiden välisiä suhteita, mikä myös edesauttoi tarpeiden määrittämisessä.</p>	<p>6. Suomen sitoutuminen tukemaan kehitysyhteistyöhankkeita pitkällä aikavälillä on helpottanut konkreettisten ja kestävien tulosten aikaansaamista.</p>	<p>3. Varmistetaan että yksikössä on projektisyklin hallinnoimiseen riittävät henkilöresurssit ja osaaminen, niin että seuraavalle jaksolle suunnitellun lisärahoituksen ja yhden uuden maan (Uzbekistan) tuomaan hallinnointitarpeeseen voidaan vastata.</p>

Löydökset	Johtopäätökset	Suositukset
<p>(Löydös 2.1) Arvioinnissa havaittiin useita myönteisiä vaikutuksia, joista osa oli mitattavissa, mutta useimmat eivät. Positiivisia vaikutuksia havaittiin kaikilla tasoilla politiikkatasolta yhteisöihin ja yksittäisiin hyödynsaajiin saakka, sekä myös koskien sektoreita. Vaikutuksia havaittiin kaikilla osa-alueilla kuten yhteiskunnallis-taloudellinen tilanne, ympäristö, ihmisoikeudet sekä oikeusvaltioperiaate. Konkreettisia tuloksia havaittiin erityisesti silloin, kun investoinnit infrastruktuuriin, ja panostus teknologian siirtoon ja tietotaidon vahvistamiseen johtivat muutoksiin yhteisötasolla, instituutioissa ja yleisesti koko yhteiskunnan tasolla.</p> <p>(Löydös 2.2) Positiivisia vaikutuksia havaittiin politiikkatasolla (esim. lakiesitykset ovat menneet läpi tai on liitytty kansainvälisiin sopimuksiin), mutta tämä tulisi arvioida myöhemmin, koska kyseisissä maissa reformin toteutus kestää pidemmän aikaa. Sellaisia vaikutuksia, joiden toteutumista Suomi on merkittävästi edesauttanut, on useita. Osassa on pystytty vaikuttamaan koko toimialaan, josta esimerkkinä on hiipuneen kalatalouden uudelleen elvyttäminen Kirgisiassa. Muita merkittäviä vaikutuksia havaittiin politiikkalinjausten, käytänteiden ja asenteiden muutoksissa, mikä on johtanut haavoittuvassa asemassa olevien ihmisten elämän kohentumiseen.</p> <p>(Löydös 2.3) Suomen lisäarvo perustuu eritysalojen asiantuntemukseen ja siihen, että Suomi sitoutuu pitkäjänteisesti, vaikka tuloksia ei olisikaan havaittavissa välittömästi. Suomea pidetään pienenä ja erikoistuneena kumppanina, ja rajallisesta läsnäolosta huolimatta käytännönläheisenä.</p> <p>(Löydös 3.1) Tulosten ja vaikutusten kestävyysnäkökulmasta arvioinnin kokonaiskuva on epäyhtenäinen. Useimmissa tapauksissa hankkeet eivät ole kestäviä. Pitkäaikainen tuki on johtanut kestäviin tuloksiin (esim. ilmainen oikeusapu Tadžikistanissa ja Kirgisiassa, ja kalatalous ja vesiviljely Kirgisiassa). Tämä osoittaa hyvin, että monet hankkeet tarvitsevat pitkäaikaista rahoitusta saavuttaakseen institutionaalisen kestävyys ja aikaansaadakseen asenteiden muutoksen.</p> <p>(Löydös 3.3) Omistajuus on keskeinen elementti kestävyys saavuttamiseksi. Se, miten tehokkaasti Suomen hankkeet ovat omistajuutta edistäneet, vaihtelee. Kirgisiassa esimerkiksi hallituksen omistajuus vesihuollon reformissa oli heikko. Kaikkein onnistuneimmissa tapauksissa kestävyys takeena on vahva kansallisten sidosryhmien sitoutuminen (kansallisilta viranomaisilta rahoitusta lainsäädännön täytäntöönpanoon ja infrastruktuurin rakentamiseen, yksityissektoria viemään asioita eteenpäin, ja paikallisyhteisöjä ottamaan oman vastuunsa tulosten saavuttamisesta).</p>		
<p>(Löydös 4.3) Koronaviruspandemia ja siitä johtuvat matkustusrajoitukset ovat vaikeuttaneet hanketoteutusta ja työskentelyä kaikissa alueen maissa. Hankkeiden toimintoja on pitänyt joko peruuttaa tai lykätä sekä pienentää työn laajuutta. Sopeuttavia toimia, kuten verkon kautta tapahtuvaa työskentelyä, on voitu ottaa käyttöön vain rajallisesti. Tämä on vaikeuttanut heikommassa asemassa olevien ihmisten tavoittamista heidän puutteellisten IT-resurssiensa vuoksi.</p> <p>(Löydös 4.4) Kolmannen vaiheen hankkeissa on sekä valtavirtaistettu läpileikkaavia teemoja ja ihmisoikeusperustaisuutta että tehty näissä kohdennettuja toimia. Läpileikkaavien teemojen sisällyttäminen hankesuunnittelun ja toteutuksen vaihtelee. Ihmisoikeusperustaisen lähestymistavan soveltaminen vaihtelee myös hankesalkun sisällä ja hankkeiden eri vaiheissa.</p> <p>(Löydös 5.1) Suomen kehitysyhteistyön rahoitukseen kohdistuneet leikkaukset, henkilökunnan väheneminen ja urakierto ovat kuitenkin heikentäneet ulkoministeriön kykyä hallinnoida kehitysyhteistyöhankkeita, mukaan lukien hankkeiden seuranta ja oppiminen.</p>	<p>10. Hankesalkun ja hankkeiden toteutusta, seuranta ja raportointia koskevaa hallinnointia voidaan parantaa. (Löydös 5.2 on myös johtanut tähän johtopäätökseen)</p>	<p>4. Vahvistetaan yksikön tulosohjausta henkilöstön kapasiteettia kehittämällä, ja tarpeellisella henkilöstö- ja muilla resursseilla.</p>

Löydökset	Johtopäätökset	Suositukset
<p>(Löydös 6.1) Hankesalkun sisältö on yleisellä tasolla hyvin johdonmukainen, mutta suorat kytkökset ja synergiaa samalla sektorilla toimivien hankkeiden välillä esiintyy vähemmän.</p> <p>(Löydös 6.4) Itä-Euroopan ja Keski-Aasian yksikkö ja muut ulkoministeriön osastot suunnittelevat koordinoitusti kehitysyhteistyötä koskevia hankesalkkujaan. Arvioinnissa voitiin kuitenkin osoittaa vain muutama esimerkki todellisesta synergiasta toimintojen tasolla.</p>	<p>12. Hankesalkun synergioita voidaan hyödyntää paremmin.</p> <p><i>(Löydös 5.4 on myös johtanut tähän johtopäätökseen)</i></p>	
<p>(Löydös 4.5) Käytetty tukimuotojen yhdistelmä on kaikissa maissa tehokas. Niiden avulla ulkoministeriö on voinut saada aikaan merkityksellisiä tuloksia ja käyttää sen resursseja tehokkaimmin.</p> <p>(Löydös 5.5) Nykyiset kumppanuudet (monenkeskiset ja alueelliset) ovat vakiintuneita, samoin kuin instituutioiden välisen yhteistyön kumppanuudet (IKI). Uusi tukimuoto, jossa yksityiset konsulttiyhtiöt toteuttavat tärkeimpiin reformeihin kohdistuvia hankkeita vaatii läheistä seurantaa, koska erityisesti aloitusvaiheessa on noussut esille haasteita.</p>	<p>4. Kehitysyhteistyön toteuttamiseen käytettyjen tuki-instrumenttien yhdistelmä on hyvin valittu. Se on turvannut kokonaisvaltaisten tulosten saavuttamisen politiikkatasolta yhteisöihin ja yksittäisiin hyödynsaijiin saakka.</p> <p><i>(Löydös 5.6 on myös johtanut tähän johtopäätökseen)</i></p>	<p>5. Jatketaan nykyisten tuki-instrumenttien käyttöä.</p>
<p>(Löydös 6.2) Ohjelmadokumenteissa tai hankkeiden tasolla ei määrätillä johdonmukaisuutta suhteessa muiden avunantajien toimiin, vaikka tosiasiallisesti koordinointi avunantajien kesken on merkittävästi lisääntynyt. Tämä olen välttämätöntä maissa, joissa Suomi toimii, varsinkin kun otetaan huomioon suuri avunantajien ja tuen määrä.</p> <p>(Löydös 6.3) Tilanteissa, joissa Suomen panos on suhteellisesti pienempi muihin rahoittajiin verrattuna, ulkoministeriö on pystynyt hyödyntämään suomalaista asiantuntemusta. Tästä yksi esimerkki on sukupuolten välisen tasa-arvon asiantuntijoiden lähettäminen Euroopan Neuvoston maatoimistoon Ukrainassa.</p>	<p>7. Rahallinen tuki Euroopan turvallisuus- ja yhteistyöjärjestölle (ETYJ) ja Euroopan neuvostolle mahdollistaa sen, että Suomi myötävaikuttaa näiden organisaatioiden tärkeään työhön.</p> <p><i>(Löydökset 1.6 ja 2.2 ovat myös johtaneet tähän johtopäätökseen)</i></p>	
<p>(Löydös 5.6) Paikallisen yhteistyön määrärahan instrumenttia on käytetty onnistuneesti tukemaan tärkeitä pienimuotoisia hankkeita, jotka ovat usein arkaluontoisia aihepiiriltään. Tämä avun kanava muodostaa myös korvaamattoman yhteyden ulkoministeriön ja kansalaisjärjestöjen välille. Instrumentin käyttöä rajoittaa henkilöresurssien vähäisyys lähetystössä ja ulkoministeriössä.</p>	<p>8. Paikallisen yhteistyön määräraha on tärkeä instrumentti, joka täydentää kehitysyhteistyön toimintoja kumppanimaissa ja ylläpitää Suomen kehitysyhteistyötä muissa alueen maissa.</p> <p><i>(Löydökset 1.4, 5.5, 5.6 ovat myös johtaneet tähän johtopäätökseen)</i></p>	
<p>(Löydös 5.2) Ohjelmasyklin osalta ulkoministeriö on vahvin valmistelu- ja suunnitteluvaiheessa, jotka perustuvat laajaan ministeriön ja sen ulkopuolisten sidosryhmien väliseen konsultaatioon. Menettelytavat hanke-ehdotusten läpikäyntiin ovat kattavat ja vakiintuneet. Se, missä määrin seurannassa, raportoinnissa ja saaduista kokemuksista oppimisessa on onnistuttu, vaihtelee, mikä on selkeä haaste.</p> <p>(Löydös 5.3) Ihmisoikeusperustainen lähestymistapa on myös vahvasti esillä uusien hankkeiden valmistelu- ja suunnitteluvaiheissa. Se, miten lähestymistavan käyttö konkretisoituu toteutusvaiheen aikana, vaihtelee, samoin kuin sen seuranta.</p>	<p>5. Ohjelmasyklin osalta ulkoministeriö on vahvin valmistelu- ja suunnitteluvaiheessa. Henkilöresurssien rajallisuus hankaloittaa koko ohjelmasyklin tehokasta hallinnointia.</p> <p><i>(Löydös 5.1 on myös johtanut tähän johtopäätökseen)</i></p>	<p>6. Valtavirtaistetaan kansalaisjärjestöjen osallistuminen Suomen kehitysyhteistyön ohjelmallisiin toimintoihin perustuen paikallisen yhteistyön määrärahan instrumentin vahvaan näyttöön alueella.</p>



# Sammanfattning

**Inledning.** Utvärderingen av Finlands utvecklingssamarbete, som genomfördes av avdelningen för Ryssland, Östeuropa och Centralasien, inklusive Wider Europe Initiative (WEI), syftade till att stärka utrikesministeriets (UM) kunskap om vilka samlade resultat som Finland har bidragit till i regionen under det senaste decenniet. Utvärderingen granskade utvecklingssamarbetets effekter, omfattning och betydelse för utvecklingen i området. Den bedömde även hur hållbara resultaten är, samt de resultat som har uppnåtts inom ramen för landstrategier och dess hantering. Faktorer som bidrog till resultat och/eller misslyckande identifierades och analyserades. Detta omfattade faktorer i den operativa kontexten, mänskliga faktorer samt resurs-relaterade faktorer.

Ett viktigt syfte med utvärdering var att ge förslag till UM om hur politiska mål kan uppnås på bästa sätt, hur arbetet kan bedrivas på ett systematiskt sätt, samt hur hanteringen och genomförandet av strategier och program kan stärkas på en övergripande nivå. Detta innebar att rekommendationer gavs på både strategisk och operativ nivå.

Utvärderingsfrågorna (EQ) formulerades på basis av utvärderingens **målsättningar**, och återges nedan:

1. I vilken utsträckning har de insatserna som bedrivits inom Finlands utvecklingssamarbete varit relevanta?
2. Vilka effekter har Finlands utvecklingssamarbete bidragit till i regionen?
3. Hur hållbara är de resultat och effekter som har uppnåtts över tid?
4. I vilken utsträckning har de resultat som fastställts i landstrategierna för 2018-2021 uppnåtts och bidragit till att Finlands utvecklingspolitiska målsättningar har förverkligats?
5. Hur har utvecklingspolitiken och utvecklingssamarbetet hanterats under perioden 2018-2021?
6. I vilken utsträckning har de insatser som bedrivits inom utvecklingssamarbetet varit koherenta?

**Omfattning:** Utvärderingen omfattade perioden 2009-2021. Finland har under denna period bedrivit utvecklingssamarbete i 11 östeuropeiska och centralasiatiska länder, i ökande grad med fokus på Kirgizistan, Tadzjikistan och Ukraina.

**Metod:** Utvärderingen genomfördes under perioden november 2020 till maj 2021, och var framförallt framåtblickande och teoribaserad. Metoden utgjordes av dokumentstudier, intervjuer, fokusgruppsdiskussioner, skriftlig återkoppling från centrala aktörer, och kvalitativa undersökningar. Sammanlagt bidrog 89 personer till utvärderingen, genom intervjuer eller skriftlig återkoppling. Olika analysmetoder användes, inklusive portföljanalys, jämförande analys, och kontextanalys. En bidragsanalys ('Contribution analysis') gjordes för att bedöma vilken typen och storleken av Finlands bidrag till förändringar inom sektorer, institutioner, lokala samhällen, och policy-områden. Huvudrapporten presenterar en aggregerad analys, och kompletteras av landsstudier av Kirgizistan, Tadzjikistan och Ukraina.



av dessa resultat. Se bifogad tabell med resultat, slutsatser och rekommendationer för en mer detaljerad översikt.

**Relevans:** Utvecklingssamarbetet har vuxit fram och anpassats väl under perioden. Detta har säkerställt stödets relevans, både när det gäller överensstämmelsen med Finlands egna utvecklingspolitiska prioriteringar och partnerländernas behov. Införandet av landstrategier för utvecklingssamarbete har möjliggjort ett mer sammanhållet angreppssätt. De sektorer och tematiska området som prioriterats har återspeglat Finlands styrkor inom miljöområdet, energieffektivitet, utbildning, social integration, främjande av mänskliga rättigheter och stöd till utsatta individer. Finlands stöd har varit tidsmässigt lägligt, vilket t.ex. framgår av stödet till funktionshindrades rättigheter. Finland är en av få givare som engagerat sig i denna känsliga fråga i Centralasien. Prioriteringar för utrikes- och säkerhetspolitiken har varit drivkrafter, vilket blir tydligt i kopplingen mellan säkerhet och utveckling under WEI I och i Finlands svar på krisen i Ukraina sedan 2014. Handelspolitiska kopplingar till utvecklingssamarbetet har inte förtydligats under perioden.

**Effekter:** Finlands utvecklingssamarbete har bidragit till konkreta, positiva förändringar inom alla områden som omfattats av stödet (socioekonomiska, miljörelaterade områden och inom området mänskliga rättigheter och rättsstatens principer). Ett antal djupgående effekter av transformativ karaktär har genererats, där Finlands stöd har bidragit till betydande förändringar, till exempel inom en hel sektor (återupplivning av en industri - fiskerisektorn i Kirgizistan - som varit slumrande i många år). Andra betydande effekter kan ses i förändringar i policy, praxis och attityder, vilka i sin tur har lett till faktiska förbättringar i utsatta personers livsförhållanden. Effekter påvisas också i fall där investeringar i infrastruktur och tekniköverföring och kunskap har lett till positiva förändringar för lokala samhällen, institutioner och länderna i stort. Det finns dock också tecken på oavsiktlig, negativ påverkan, som bör noteras. Sammantaget återfinns Finlands mervärde huvudsakligen i den kompetens som landet erbjuder inom utvalda områden, och i det långsiktiga engagemanget även i de fall där resultat inte uppnås som förväntat. Finland uppfattas som ett liten och specialiserad givare med ett pragmatiskt förhållningssätt, trots den begränsade närvaron i fält.

**Bärkraft:** Utvärderingens slutsatser om resultatens bärkraft är blandade. När det gäller ekonomisk bärkraft finns ett fåtal positiva exempel. Majoriteten av projekten och deras eftermäle är beroende av fortsatt finansiering och är långt ifrån självförsörjande. Det finns faktorer som tyder på ekonomisk bärkraft främst i förhållande till stödet till fiskerisektorn i Kirgizistan, men det är svårt att bedöma hur tillförlitliga dessa är. Det är även för tidigt att bedöma förutsättningarna för social hållbarhet, eftersom förbättringar på denna nivå tar tid och många relevanta projekt har nyligen påbörjats. Långsiktigt stöd har visat sig bidra till miljömässig bärkraft främst genom investeringar i infrastruktur och andra teknikrelaterade områden, men även genom miljökonsekvensbedömningar i viktiga sektorer. I de fall projekt har stärkt partnerorganisationers institutionella kapacitet finns det goda möjligheter att uppnå bärkraft, men personalomsättning utgör fortfarande ett utmaning i detta sammanhang. I de mest framgångsrika fallen visar utvärdering på vikten av att nationella aktörers åtaganden och engagemang.

Måluppfyllelse (2018-2021): Resultat påvisades både i Kirgizistan och Tadzjikistan inom alla tre påverkansområden (mänskliga rättigheter och rättsstatens principer, ekonomisk tillväxt och miljömässig bärkraft). I Tadzjikistans fall har de planerade resultaten inte uppnåtts då stödet har dragits in. Olika typer av resultat har uppnåtts i Ukraina inom alla tre påverkansområden (utbildning, energi, mänskliga rättigheter). I länderna i Centralasien hade projekten, till dess att pandemins effekter blev kännbara, fortsatt att bygga på de resultat som uppnåtts genom det nära samarbete mellan UM, genomförandeorganisationer, och slutgiltiga mottagare (och det i allmänhet effektiva samarbetet med nationella myndigheter som fått stöd för framtagande av nationella strategier). I



Ukraina drabbades samtliga, nya projekt av förseningar redan innan pandemin. Detta berodde på en rad faktorer men kom sig särskilt av att projekten fokuserade på centrala aspekter av de strukturreformer som pågår i Ukraina, för vilka finländskt stöd hade efterfrågats av Ukrainas regering. Pandemin har kraftigt påverkat projekt i Centralasien. I synnerhet har pandemin drabbat utsatta individer i samhället som utgör en viktig målgrupp för flera projekt – det åtgärder som vidtagits för att dämpa dessa effekter, såsom att arbeta mer digitalt, har endast kunnat tillämpas i begränsad omfattning på grund av landkontexten.

**Förvaltning (2018-2021):** Landstrategiernas införande har möjliggjort en mer fokuserad hantering av landprogram. De senaste årens budgetnedskärningar i Finlands utvecklingssamarbete, personalminskningar och personalomsättningen inom UM har dock påverkat UM:s förmåga att hantera utvecklingssamarbetet på ett effektivt sätt. UM:s styrka inom programcykeln återfinns i identifierings- och programutvecklingsfasen, som bygger på ett djupgående samarbete mellan UM och externa aktörer. Kapacitet för uppföljning, rapportering och analys varierar mellan olika program. Det finns en bra blandning av olika modaliteter i alla länder som gör att UM kan bidra på ett meningsfullt sätt och maximera utnyttjandet av befintliga resurser. Partnerskapet med genomförandeorganisationer (multilaterala och regionala) är väletablerat, vilket även gäller ICI:s institutionella samarbeten. Fonden för lokalt samarbete har använts på ett bra sätt för att stödja småskaliga projekt på viktiga områden, ofta av känslig karaktär. Den utgör en ovärderlig länk mellan UM och bidragsmottagare inom civilsamhället. Den nya förfarandet att anlita konsultföretag för att genomföra viktiga reformrelaterade projekt kräver noggrann uppföljning, då problem har uppstått, särskilt i uppstartsfaserna.

**Koherens:** Det har funnits en tydlig, underförstådd samstämmighet inom portföljen, även om uttryckliga kopplingar och synergier mellan projekten inom samma sektor och teman är mindre synliga. Även om koherensen med andra givares aktiviteter ofta inte uppmärksammas i någon högre grad i dokumentationen på portfölj- eller projektnivå, har det i praktiken skett en betydande ökning av givarkoordineringsarbetet. På områden där Finlands ekonomiska bidrag utgör en relativt liten del av det samlade givarestödet har UM utnyttjat finsk expertis på ett kompetent sätt, vilket kan exemplifieras av utstationeringen av jämställdhetsexperter till Europarådets landskontor i Ukraina. Koherens är något som hanteras på insatsnivå snarare än på landstrateginivå, eftersom fokus i det senare fallet ligger på UM:s interna förvaltning. Stöd genom multilaterala eller regionala organisationer drar nytta av dessa organisationers närvaro på landnivå, och deras nära och regelbundna samarbete med andra givare samt nationella myndigheter.

## Slutsatser

Utifrån resultaten drogs följande 12 slutsatser:

### *Vad som fungerar – möjligheter och styrkor*

1. Finlands utvecklingspolitiska prioriteringar och tillhörande riktlinjer har integrerats väl och tillämpats i utformningen och genomförandet av utvecklingssamarbetet.
2. Finlands utvecklingssamarbete och utrikes- och säkerhetspolitiska prioriteringar i regionen har varit enhetliga och komplementära.
3. Under hela perioden 2009–2021 har Finland uppvisat goda resultat och uppfattas som en engagerad givare med fokus på de centrala utmaningar som partnerländerna står inför.
4. Blandningen av de olika instrument som används för att genomföra utvecklingssamarbetet har varit genomtänkt och tillförsäkrat resultat på olika nivåer, inklusive på policy-nivå, samhällelig nivå och individuell nivå.



5. UM:s styrka inom programcykeln återfinns i identifierings- och programutvecklingsfasen: tillgången på personalresurser utgör vissa begränsningar för en effektiv hantering av hela programcykeln.
6. Finlands långsiktiga åtagande inom utvecklingssamarbetet har möjliggjort påtagliga och hållbara resultat.
7. Genom att ge ekonomiskt stöd till OSSE och Europarådet har Finland kunnat bidra till det viktiga arbete dessa organisationer utför.
8. Fonden för lokalt samarbete är ett viktigt instrument som kompletterar utvecklingssamarbetet i de centrala partnerländerna och samtidigt gör det möjligt att upprätthålla ett visst stöd till de andra länderna i regionen.

### ***Vad som inte fungerar - Utmaningar och begränsningar***

9. Frånvaron av en särskild politik eller övergripande ramverk för utvecklingssamarbete med regionen resulterar i fragmentering och minskad synlighet.
10. Förvaltning av portföljens och projektens genomförande, uppföljning och rapportering kan förbättras.
11. Den strategiska planeringen av utvecklingssamarbetet kan förbättras.
12. Synergier kan utnyttjas bättre genom hela portföljen.

### **Rekommendationer**

Baserat på dessa slutsatser utformades sex rekommendationer med fokus på strategiskt ledarskap i fråga om policy, riktlinjer och resultatstyrning:

#### ***Strategiska rekommendationer:***

1. Överväg att stärka den interna strategiska planeringen och ta fram en övergripande vision för utvecklingssamarbetet för hela den region som enheten arbetar med.
2. Inför ett mer deltagande förhållningssätt till utformningen av utvecklingssamarbetet i regionen.

#### ***Operativa rekommendationer:***

Fyra operativa rekommendationer utformades med fokus på utvecklingssamarbetets genomförande, modaliteter, och hur arbetet ska hanteras inom UM.

3. UM rekommenderas att säkerställa att det finns tillräckligt med personalresurser och kapacitet för projektcykelhanteringen inom enheten, som svarar mot den planerade, ökade finansieringen av nästa fas, och utvidgningen av utvecklingssamarbetet till ytterligare ett land (Uzbekistan).
4. Resultatstyrningen kan förbättras genom att stärka enhetens kapacitet på detta område, och genom att tillföra personal och andra nödvändiga resurser.
5. Fortsätt med den nuvarande blandningen av olika instrument.
6. Vidta åtgärder för att integrera det civila samhället i utformandet av Finlands utvecklingssamarbete genom att bygga på de resultat som uppnåtts genom FLC-instrumentet i regionen.



# De viktigaste resultaten, slutsatserna och rekommendationerna

RESULTAT	SLUTSATSER	REKOMMENDATIONER
<p>(Resultat 1.3) En nära koppling med Finlands utvecklingsprioriteringar har uppnåtts under hela perioden. Det faktum att Finlands utvecklingsprioriteringar har motsvarat ländernas behov och inte förändrats under utvärderingsperioden har bidragit till en hög relevans.</p> <p>(Resultat 1.4) Fokusområdena och tematiska områdena för finskt stöd har återspeglat Finlands styrkor, bland annat inom områdena miljö, energieffektivitet, utbildning, samhällig integration, främjande av mänskliga rättigheter och stöd till utsatta personer.</p>	<p>1. Finlands utvecklingspolitiska prioriteringar och tillhörande riktlinjer har integrerats väl och tillämpats i utformningen och genomförandet av utvecklingssamarbetet.</p>	<p>1. Överväg att stärka den interna strategiska planeringen och ta fram en övergripande vision för utvecklingssamarbetet för hela den region som enheten arbetar med.</p>
<p>(Resultat 1.6) Finlands utvecklingssamarbete i regionen har utgått från utrikespolitiska och säkerhetspolitiska prioriteringar, vilket framgår av kopplingen mellan säkerhet och utveckling inom WEI I och i Finlands svar på krisen i Ukraina sedan 2014. Kopplingen mellan handelspolitik och utvecklingssamarbetet har inte varit lika tydlig under perioden.</p> <p>(Resultat 1.7) Även om utvecklingssamarbetet med Ukraina är välgrundat utifrån utrikespolitiska prioriteringar, väcker det frågor om Finlands åtagande gentemot av de fattigast länderna, då stödet till de två fattigaste länderna (Kirgizistan och Tadzjikistan) har minskat under fas III.</p>	<p>2. Finlands utvecklingssamarbete och utrikes- och säkerhetspolitiska prioriteringar i regionen har varit enhetliga och komplementära.</p>	
<p>Resultat 1.1) Finlands utvecklingssamarbete har svarat mot partnerländernas behov under hela perioden 2009–2021. Insatserna har inriktats på ländernas centrala utmaningar och prioriteringar, inom områdena ekonomisk utveckling, miljö, god samhällsstyrning och mänskliga rättigheter, social hållbarhet och inkludering.</p> <p>(Resultat 1.2) Införandet av landstrategier för utvecklingssamarbete har under de senaste åren gjort det möjligt att på ett mer samlat sätt anpassa programmen till ländernas behov. Fokuseringen på tre partnerländer sedan 2014 har bidragit till en bättre analys av ländernas behov än vad som varit fallet under Wider Europe Initiative I.</p> <p>(Resultat 4.1) Trots framsteg på alla områden har den resultatuppfyllelsen i stort varit blandad. Resultatuppfyllelse påvisades i Kirgizistan och Tadzjikistan inom alla tre påverkansområden (mänskliga rättigheter och rättsstatens principer, ekonomisk tillväxt och miljömässig bärkraft). I Tadzjikistans fall har de planerade resultaten inte uppnåtts då stödet har dragits in. I Ukraina har resultat uppnåtts i varierande utsträckning inom alla tre områden (utbildning, energi, mänskliga rättigheter).</p>	<p>3. Under hela perioden 2009–2021 har Finland uppvisat goda resultat och uppfattas som en engagerad givare med fokus på de centrala utmaningar som partnerländerna står inför.</p>	

RESULTAT	SLUTSATSER	REKOMMENDATIONER
<p>(Resultat 4.2) Det finns en märkbar skillnad mellan de centralasiatiska länderna och Ukraina i fråga om programmets sammansättning – i det första fallet bestod programmen av projekt som förlängts i flera omgångar med finskt stöd, och i flera fall har det finska stödet avslutats under fas III; I Ukraina fanns det flera nya projekt. Medan målsättningarna för de flesta av projekten i Centralasien har varit på god väg att uppnås under perioden 2018-2020, har de nya projekten i Ukraina blivit kraftigt försenade redan från början.</p> <p>(Resultat 4.6) Utvärderingsteamet fann inga bevis för att Finland skulle ha gått miste om möjligheter till framtida stöd. Programmen i Ukraina var efterfrågestyrda och nytt stöd beviljades till stora insatser med fokus på centrala reformaspekter. I Centralasien finns det inte mycket utrymme att ta tillvara nya möjligheter på grund av budgetnedskärningar. Det planerade återupptagandet av samarbetet med Uzbekistan i strategin för Centralasien 2021-2024 är ett tecken på att Finland har noga följt utvecklingen och har en flexibel ansats som gör att nya möjligheter för samarbete kan tas tillvara.</p>		
<p>(Resultat 5.4) Det finns ingen övergripande strategi som på ett samlat sätt vägleder alla de delar av utvecklingssamarbetet som enheten ansvarar för, och som kan stärka kopplingarna till andra UM-avdelningars utvecklingssamarbete i regionen. De två landstrategierna hänvisar inte till varandra och verkar därför helt åtskilda, även om de hanteras av samma regionala enhet. Strategidokumentet påvisar inget lärande mellan olika regioner.</p>	<p>9. Frånvaron av en särskild politik eller övergripande ramverk för utvecklingssamarbete med regionen resulterar i fragmentering och minskad synlighet.</p>	
<p>(Resultat 3.2) UM saknar väl utvecklade rutiner för planering och uppföljning av bärkraft. Istället ser man fortsatt finansiering som en garanti för bärkraft. Det finns väsentliga luckor i dokumentationen, som förvärras av bristen på institutionellt minne hos UM och bland partnerorganisationer.</p>	<p>11. Den strategiska planering av utvecklingssamarbetet kan förbättras.</p>	<p>2. Inför ett mer deltagande förhållningssätt till utformningen av utvecklingssamarbetet i regionen.</p>
<p>(Resultat 1.5) Många projekt var fortsättningar på tidigare projekt, vilket innebär att de utformades på basis av tidigare erfarenheter. Projekt som genomförs av internationella organisationer eller under ICI bygger också på långvariga institutionella relationer, som innebär att det finns en god kunskap om vilka behov som finns.</p> <p>(Resultat 2.1) Utvärderingen påvisade ett brett spektrum av positiva effekter, varav några var kvantifierbara. Positiva effekter har återfunnits på alla nivåer, inklusive politisk nivå, samhälls- och individnivå, jämte effekter på sektornivå, liksom inom alla stödområden (socioekonomiska, miljömässiga områden och inom området mänskliga rättigheter och rättsstatens principer). Påtagliga effekter noterades i synnerhet i de fall där investeringar i infrastruktur och tekniköverföring och kunskap har lett till positiva förändringar för samhällen, institutionerna och landet i stort.</p>	<p>6. Finlands långsiktiga åtagande inom utvecklingssamarbetet har möjliggjort påtagliga och hållbara resultat.</p>	<p>3. UM rekommenderas att säkerställa att det finns tillräckligt med personalresurser och kapacitet för projektcykelhanteringen inom enheten, som svarar mot den planerade, ökade finansieringen av nästa fas, och utvidgningen av utvecklingssamarbetet till ytterligare ett land (Uzbekistan).</p>

RESULTAT	SLUTSATSER	REKOMMENDATIONER
<p>Resultat 2.2) De positiva effekter som noterats på politisk nivå (t.ex. i form av antagen lagstiftning, respekt för internationella konventioner) måste bedömas mot bakgrund av att det faktiska genomförandet av nya policier har visat sig ta tid i de berörda länderna. I ett antal fall noteras dock mer djupgående effekter av transformativ karaktär, där Finlands stöd har bidragit till betydande förändringar. Finlands stöd hade till exempel haft positiva effekter på en hel sektor (återupplivandet av en industri som hade varit slumrande under många år), genom att bidra till förändringar i policy, praxis och attityder som tillsammans inneburit att personer med funktionsnedsättning har fått en förbättrad livssituation.</p> <p>(Resultat 2.3) Finlands mervärde ligger främst i den expertis man kan bidra med inom särskilda områden och i det långsiktigt engagemanget som finns även i det fall resultat inte uppnås. Finland uppfattas som ett liten och specialiserad givare med ett pragmatiskt förhållningssätt, trots den begränsade närvaron i fält.</p> <p>(Resultat 3.1) Utvärderingen ger en blandad bild av resultatens bärkraft. I de flesta fall har insatserna inte blivit självförsörjande. Finlands har gett fortsatt stöd till projekt i flera olika faser, vilket har ökat förutsättningarna för bärkraft, särskilt i Centralasien (t.ex. gratis rättshjälp i Tadzjikistan och Kirgizistan, och fiske och vattenbruk i Kirgizistan). Detta visar på att insatser måste bedrivas på ett långsiktigt sätt för att nödvändiga institutionella och attitydförändringar ska kunna uppnås.</p> <p>(Resultat 3.3) Att tillförsäkra ägarskap är viktigt för att uppnå bärkraft. Finlands insatser främjar ägarskap bland bidragsmottagare i varierande omfattning. I Kirgizistan rapporteras till exempel att regeringens ägarskap av förvaltningsreformer på vattenresursområdet har varit svagt. I de mest framgångsrika fallen uppvisade alla nationella aktörer ett starkt ägarskap (inklusive nationella myndigheter som tillhandahöll finansiering och nödvändig lagstiftning och infrastruktur, den privata sektorn som omsätter resultaten i realiteten, och samhällen som ser till att resultat uppnås på lokal nivå).</p>		
<p>(Resultat 4.3) I alla länder har insatsernas genomförande påverkats av COVID-19 och de restriktioner som införts i regionen. Projektaktiviteter har avbrutits, skjutits upp, eller skurits ner i omfattning. Åtgärder har vidtagits för att kunna bedriva aktiviteter virtuellt, vilket dock har inneburit att det blivit svårare att nå ut till utsatta individer vars tillgång på nödvändiga IT-resurser är begränsad.</p> <p>(Resultat 4.4) Tvärfrågor och rättighetsperspektivet i fas III-programmen har bedrivits både i form av riktade åtgärder och genom integrering. Tvärfrågorna har dock i varierande grad integrerats i projektdesign och genomförande. Tillämpningen av rättighetsperspektivet har också mer eller mindre utpräglat inom programmen och olika projektfaser (se EQ5).</p> <p>(Resultat 5.1) De senaste årens budgetnedskärningar i Finlands utvecklingssamarbete, personalminskningar och personalomsättning inom UM har haft en negativ inverkan på UM:s förmåga att förvalta utvecklingssamarbetet, bland annat när det gäller uppföljning och lärande.</p>	<p>10. Förvaltning av portföljens och projektens genomförande, uppföljning och rapportering kan förbättras.</p>	<p>4. Resultatstyrningen kan förbättras genom att stärka enhetens kapacitet på detta område, och genom att tillföra personal och andra nödvändiga resurser.</p>

RESULTAT	SLUTSATSER	REKOMMENDATIONER
<p>(Resultat 6.1) Det finns en stark, underförstådd samstämmighet inom den projektportfölj som hanteras av avdelningen, men tydliga kopplingar och synergier mellan projekt inom samma sektorer återfinns inte i någon högre utsträckning.</p> <p>(Resultat 6.4) Även om utvecklingssamarbetet samordnas mellan enheten för Östeuropa och Centralasien och andra avdelningar inom UM har utvärderingen endast kunna påvisa ett fåtal exempel på faktiska synergier mellan aktiviteter.</p>	<p>12. Synergier kan utnyttjas bättre genom hela portföljen.</p>	
<p>(Resultat 4.5) Som visas i EQ5 har den blandningen av olika instrument i programmen varit ändamålsenlig, och gjort det möjligt för UM att bidra på ett meningsfullt sätt och maximera användning av befintliga resurser. Synergier inom programmen är för det mesta underförstådda, och kan utvecklas mer.</p> <p>(Resultat 5.5) Finland har väl etablerade partnerskap med genomförandeorganisationer (multilaterala och regionala), vilket också är fallet med ICI:s institutionella relationer. Den nya modellen där konsultföretag anlitas för att genomföra centrala reformprojekt behöver följas upp noggrant, då problem har uppkommit, särskilt i uppstartsfasen.</p>	<p>4. Blandningen av de olika instrument som används för att genomföra utvecklingssamarbetet har varit genomtänkt och tillförsäkrat resultat på olika nivåer, inklusive på policy-nivå, samhällelig nivå och individuell nivå.</p>	<p>5. Fortsätt med den nuvarande blandningen av olika instrument.</p>
<p>(Resultat 6.2) Även om koherensen med andra givares aktiviteter ofta inte uppmärksammas i någon högre grad i dokumentationen på portfölj- eller projektnivå, har det i praktiken skett en betydande ökning av givarkoordineringsarbetet. Detta är inte minst viktigt med tanke på det betydande antalet givare som är närvarande i de länder som Finland samverkar med.</p> <p>(Resultat 6.3) På områden där Finlands ekonomiska bidrag utgör en relativt liten del av det samlade givarstödet har UM utnyttjat finsk expertis på ett kompetent sätt, vilket kan exemplifieras av utstationeringen av jämställdhetsexperter till Europarådets landskontor i Ukraina.</p>	<p>7. Genom att ge ekonomiskt stöd till OSSE och Europarådet har Finland kunnat bidra till det viktiga arbete dessa organisationer utför.</p>	
<p>(Resultat 5.6) Fonden för lokalt samarbete är väl lämpad för att stödja småskaliga projekt på centrala områden, ofta av känslig karaktär. Den utgör en ovärderlig länk mellan UM och bidragsmottagande civilsamhällsorganisationer. Fonden används dock fortfarande endast i begränsad omfattning på grund av personalbrist på ambassader och inom UM.</p>	<p>8. Fonden för lokalt samarbete är ett viktigt instrument som kompletterar utvecklingssamarbetet i de centrala partnerländerna och samtidigt gör det möjligt att upprätthålla ett visst stöd till de andra länderna i regionen.</p>	
<p>(Resultat 5.2) UM:s styrka inom programcykeln återfinns i identifierings- och programutvecklingsfasen, som bygger på ett djupgående samarbete mellan UM och externa aktörer. UM har väl utvecklade och omfattande rutiner för att bedöma projektförslag. Kapacitet för uppföljning, rapportering, och analys av lärdomar varierar mellan programmen och är generellt sätt bristfällig.</p> <p>(Resultat 5.3) På liknande sätt ges rättighetsperspektivet stor uppmärksamhet när nya projekt identifieras och tas fram. Under genomförandet och uppföljningen är rättighetsperspektivet mindre tydligt.</p>	<p>5. UM:s styrka inom programcykeln återfinns i identifierings- och programutvecklingsfasen: tillgången på personalresurser utgör vissa begränsningar för en effektiv hantering av hela programcykeln.</p>	<p>6. Vidta åtgärder för att integrera det civila samhället i utformandet av Finlands utvecklingssamarbete genom att bygga på de resultat som uppnåtts genom FLC-instrumentet i regionen.</p>



# Summary

**Introduction.** The evaluation on Finland's Development Cooperation carried out by the Department for Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, including the Wider Europe Initiative (WEI), aimed at assisting the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to build a comprehensive understanding of and to what extent Finland has contributed to development impact in the region over the past decade. The evaluation assessed the impact, its scope and relative significance to development in the area. It also assessed the levels of sustainability of the achieved results and impact, as well as results achieved by, and management of, the current country strategies. The reasons explaining success and/or failure in performance were analysed, including the operational context, human aspects and resources.

An essential aspect of the evaluation was to provide information on how the Ministry could best achieve its policy objectives in the future, how to pursue the objectives of the government programme systematically as well as how to develop further its strategies and programmes and their implementation at the strategic level, including management. To this effect, both strategic and management related recommendations were made.

The **objectives** of the evaluation also formed the main evaluation questions (EQs). They were as follows:

1. To what extent have Finland's development cooperation activities been relevant?
2. What has been the impact of Finland's development cooperation carried out in the region?
3. What has been the level of sustainability of the results and impact achieved over the period of time?
4. To what extent have the Country Strategies of 2018-2021 achieved their planned results and contributed to the realization of Finland's development policy objectives?
5. How has the development policy and cooperation been managed in the period 2018-2021?
6. To what extent have the development cooperation activities been coherent?

**Scope:** The temporal scope was 2009-2021. Over this period, Finland has supported development cooperation activities in 11 Eastern European and Central Asian countries, with a shift in the emphasis of support towards a focus on the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan and Ukraine.

**Methodology.** The evaluation was conducted in period November 2020 to May 2021. It was mostly forward-looking and theory-based. The methods included documentary reviews, interviews, focus group discussions, written feedback from key informants, and qualitative surveys. Altogether 89 stakeholders were interviewed or have provided written feedback. The modes of analysis included portfolio analysis, comparative analysis and context analysis. Contribution analysis was used to assess the nature and extent of Finland's contribution to changes seen in the sectors, institutions, communities, and policy areas supported. The main report presents an aggregate-level analysis, which is supported by Country Reviews for the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Ukraine.



**Limitations because of the Covid-19 outbreak.** Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the evaluation did not include field missions by the core team to the three case countries, nor visits to individual projects or interviews/focus groups with direct beneficiaries. Instead, two experienced country experts identified and interviewed informants, facilitated the consultation process and gathered relevant information in the three countries. All interviews with MFA in Helsinki were conducted by phone or via online platforms. The same applied to all meetings with EVA-11, the Reference Group, other MFA management staff, Embassies, and country teams.

**Findings:** The evaluation has identified 29 findings from the evidence reviewed for the six EQs. The following narrative summary provides the overall answers to the main EQs and summarises findings against the sub-evaluation questions. For a detailed overview of the findings, refer to the attached table on Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations.

**Relevance:** The development cooperation portfolio has evolved and adapted well over time. This has ensured the relevance of the support, both in terms of its alignment with Finland's own development policy priorities, as well as the needs of partner countries. The introduction of country strategies for development cooperation has allowed for a more cohesive approach. The focal sectors and thematic areas for support have reflected Finland's strengths in the spheres of the environment, energy efficiency, education, social inclusion, promotion of human rights and protection of persons in vulnerable positions. The timeliness of Finland's support has been highlighted e.g., in its support on promoting the rights of persons with disabilities – one of the few donors to engage in this sensitive issue in Central Asia. Foreign and security policy priorities have been drivers, as seen in the linkage between security and development under WEI I, and in Finland's response to the crisis situation in Ukraine from 2014. Trade policy linkages with development cooperation have remained under-defined across the period.

**Impact:** Finland's development cooperation has contributed to tangible positive changes in all areas of support (socio-economic, environmental spheres, as well as in the sphere relating to human rights and the rule of law). There have been a number of cases of profound impacts of a transformative nature, in which Finland's support has contributed to significant change, for instance across an entire sector (revitalisation of an industry – the fishery sector in Kyrgyzstan – that had been dormant for many years). Other significant impacts were seen in changes in policy, practice and attitudes that have had tangible results in improving the lives of persons in disadvantaged positions. Impacts were also identified in cases where investment in infrastructure and transfer of technology and know-how have led to positive impacts for communities, institutions, the country at large. There are, however, also some signs of unintended negative impact which require attention. Overall, Finnish added value mainly lies in its expertise in selected areas and its willingness to commit to long-term support even when headline results are not forthcoming. Finland is perceived as a small and specialised, and, despite its limited field presence, as a "hands-on" donor.

**Sustainability:** The picture of sustainability emerging from the evaluation is mixed. In terms of financial sustainability, only a few positive examples stand out, while the majority of projects and their legacy highly depends on continued funding and is far from being self-sustaining. Likewise, there have been encouraging signs for economic sustainability mainly in relation to the support to the fishery sector in Kyrgyz Republic but their robustness is difficult to judge. It is too early to safely assess even prospects of social sustainability, as societal progress takes time and many relevant projects have only started recently. Long-term support has proven promising for environmental sustainability mainly through infrastructure and technology-related investments but also by establishing Environmental Impact Assessments in relevant sectors. In cases where projects have made efforts to improve the institutional capacities of partner organisations, the prospects



for sustainability are encouraging, but turnover of staff remains a challenge. In the most successful cases, achieving sustainability includes strong commitments from national stakeholders.

***Effectiveness (2018-2021):*** Achievements of results were evidenced in both the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan in all three impact areas (human rights and rule of law, economic growth, and environmental sustainability). However, results in the latter impact area have not been fully achieved in the case of Tajikistan due to the suspension of funding. Varied patterns of results have been achieved in Ukraine across all three impact areas (education, energy, human rights). In the Central Asia countries, until the COVID-19 pandemic took effect, the projects had continued to build on the momentum gained, in which a close pattern of working relations between MFA Finland, implementing partner organisations, and beneficiary institutions and communities can be observed (with generally effective cooperation with the national authorities, for which projects have supported the development of national strategies, for instance). In Ukraine, the newly-introduced projects all faced delays in their start-up process, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. This was due to a range of factors, not least because the projects address core aspects of structural reforms taking place in Ukraine, for which Finnish support had been specifically requested by the Government of Ukraine. The pandemic has severely affected the work of Central Asian projects, including a particular impact on vulnerable communities which are a key target beneficiary group of several projects – mediating measures, such as moving to online regime of working, has been only of limited use given the country contexts.

***Management (2018-2021):*** The introduction of country strategies has allowed for more focused management of country portfolios. However, the cuts seen in recent years in Finland's funding of development cooperation, staffing reductions and staff turnover in the MFA have had an effect on the ability of MFA to manage the development cooperation portfolio. In the management of the programmatic cycle, the MFA is strongest at the identification and formulation stages which now benefit from extensive interaction between relevant MFA and external stakeholders. The extent to which monitoring, reporting, and analysis of lessons learned is achieved varies across the portfolio. The mix of modalities deployed in the portfolios in all countries is good and allows MFA to make a meaningful contribution and maximise the resources it has available. The ongoing partnerships with implementing organisations (multilateral and regional) are well-established, as are the ICI institutional relations. The Fund for Local Cooperation has been used well to support small-scale projects that tackle important issues, often of a sensitive nature. It provides an invaluable link between the MFA teams and beneficiary civil society organisations. The new modality of engaging private consulting companies to implement key reform related projects requires close monitoring, as issues have arisen in the start-up phases in particular.

***Coherence.*** There has been strong implicit internal coherence within the portfolio, although explicit linkages and synergies between the projects addressing the same sector and themes are less visible. Coherence with the activities of other donors is not defined in detail in programmatic documentation at portfolio or intervention level for the most part, although de facto there has been a significant increase in donor coordination related work. Where Finland's financial contribution is a relatively small part of a broader donor funding arrangement, MFA has shown that it is adept at leveraging Finnish expertise, as seen in the secondment of MFA gender advisers to the Council of Europe country office in Ukraine. Coherence is addressed at the intervention level rather than through Finland's Country Strategy level, as the latter is used rather for internal management purposes by the MFA. In interventions implemented by multilateral or regional organisations, the in-country presence of the implementing partner enables close and frequent contact with other donor representations as well as with the national governmental focal points.



## Conclusions

From the findings following 12 conclusions were drawn:

### ***What works – Opportunities and Strengths***

1. The development policy priorities of Finland and accompanying guidelines have been well integrated and applied in the formulation and implementation of the development cooperation activities.
2. There has been strong coherence and complementarity between Finland's development cooperation activities and foreign and security policy priorities in the region.
3. Across the 2009-2021 period Finland has maintained a strong track record and reputation as a donor committed to addressing core challenges that face the partner countries.
4. The mix of instruments used to implement the development cooperation portfolio has been well selected and has secured results in a holistic fashion, from policy level down to the level of communities and individual beneficiaries.
5. In the programmatic cycle MFA Finland is strongest at the identification and formulation stages; the availability of human resources poses some constraints to the effective management of the whole programmatic cycle.
6. Finland's long-term commitment to supporting development cooperation interventions has facilitated the achievement of tangible and sustainable results.
7. Financial support to the OSCE and Council of Europe allows Finland to make a contribution to the important work of these mandated organisations.
8. The Fund for Local Cooperation is an important instrument that serves to complement development cooperation activities in the core partner countries and sustain Finland's development cooperation in the other countries of the region.

### ***What does not work – Challenges and Limitations***

9. The absence of a dedicated policy or overarching framework for development cooperation with the region results in fragmentation and reduced visibility.
10. Management of the implementation, monitoring and reporting of the portfolio and projects can be improved
11. Strategic planning of the development cooperation activities can be improved
12. Synergies across the portfolio can be better exploited.





## Recommendations

Based on these conclusions six recommendations were drawn, with a focus on the provision of strategic leadership in the form of a policy, guidelines, and managing for results:

### ***Strategic recommendations:***

1. Consider strengthening internal strategic planning and establishing an overarching vision for development cooperation for the whole region covered by the Unit.
2. Adopt a more participatory approach to the formation of its development cooperation programming in the region.

### ***Management recommendations***

Four operational recommendations serve to guide on implementation approaches, modalities and how the work shall be managed within the MFA.

3. The MFA is recommended to ensure that there are sufficient human resources and capacity for the project cycle management within the Unit to respond to the increasing funding planned for the next phase, and the coverage of an additional country (Uzbekistan).
4. The Unit's approach to Results-Based Management could be strengthened by developing the Unit's RBM capacities, matched by the requisite human resources and other necessary resourcing.
5. Continue with the current blend of instruments.
6. Introduce measures to mainstream civil society partners in the programmatic activities of the development cooperation portfolios of Finland by building on the strong track record established by the FLC instrument in the region.

# Table of Key Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

FINDINGS	CONCLUSIONS	RECOMMENDATIONS
<p>(Finding 1.3) Strong alignment with Finland's development priorities has been achieved across the whole period. A factor promoting relevance in the region was that Finland's development priorities corresponded well to countries' needs and remained consistent over the evaluation period.</p> <p>(Finding 1.4) The focal sectors and thematic areas for Finnish support have reflected Finland's strengths, including in the spheres of the environment, energy efficiency, education, social inclusion, promotion of human rights and protection of persons in vulnerable positions.</p>	<p>1. The development policy priorities of Finland and accompanying guidelines have been well integrated and applied in the formulation and implementation of the development cooperation activities. <i>(Finding 6.1 has also contributed to this conclusion.)</i></p>	<p>1. Consider strengthening internal strategic planning and establishing an overarching vision for development cooperation for the whole region covered by the Unit</p>
<p>(Finding 1.6) Foreign and security policy priorities have been drivers with regard to Finland's development cooperation engagement in the region, as seen in the linkage between security and development under WEI I, and in Finland's response to the crisis situation in Ukraine from 2014. Trade policy linkages with development cooperation have remained under-defined across the period.</p> <p>(Finding 1.7) While there is strong policy justification for support to cooperation with Ukraine, drawn from foreign policy priorities, the fact that support to the two poorest countries (Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan) has been reduced during Phase III raises a question with regard to how this fits with Finland's commitment towards the poorest countries.</p>	<p>2. There has been strong coherence and complementarity between Finland's development cooperation activities and foreign and security policy priorities in the region.</p>	
<p>(Finding 1.1) Finland's development cooperation has been relevant to the needs of partner countries across the whole 2009-2021 period. Cooperation activities have addressed key challenges and priorities of the countries, in the spheres of economic development, the environment, good governance and human rights, social sustainability and inclusivity.</p> <p>(Finding 1.2) In recent years, the introduction of country strategies for development cooperation has allowed for a more cohesive approach in aligning the programmatic framework with the needs of the countries. The focus on three partner countries from 2014 onwards has facilitated a closer mapping against country needs than had been seen under Wider Europe Initiative I.</p>	<p>3. Across the 2009-2021 period Finland has maintained a strong track record and reputation as a donor committed to addressing core challenges that face the partner countries. <i>(Findings 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 6.2 have also contributed to this conclusion.)</i></p>	
<p>(Finding 4.1) Despite progress observed in all areas, overall achievement of the expected results has been mixed. Achievements of results were evidenced in both the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan in all three impact areas (human rights and rule of law, economic growth, and environmental sustainability). However, results in the latter impact area have not been fully achieved in the case of Tajikistan due to the suspension of funding. In Ukraine, results have been achieved with varying success across all three impact areas (education, energy, human rights)</p>		

FINDINGS	CONCLUSIONS	RECOMMENDATIONS
<p>(Finding 4.2) There was a noticeable difference between the portfolios in the Central Asian countries, and that delivered in Ukraine, in terms of the programmatic cycle – the former was composed of continuation projects that have been supported over three phases, several of which have come to the end of their funding from Finland in Phase III; while in Ukraine, there were several new projects. While projects in Central Asia have been on track to achieve their targets over the 2018-20 period for the most part, the newly introduced projects in Ukraine encountered significant delays in their start-up phase.</p> <p>(Finding 4.6) The evaluation team found no evidence that opportunities or potential for future engagement were missed by Finland's development cooperation. In Ukraine, the programming responded to demand-driven dynamics and new investments were made in major interventions addressing core reform agendas. In Central Asia, the reduction of funding does not allow much room for taking on new opportunities. The foreseen renewal of cooperation with Uzbekistan in the 2021-2024 Strategy for Central Asia shows that Finland has remained alert and flexible enough to respond to opening opportunities for collaboration.</p>		
<p>(Finding 5.4) There is no overarching strategic framework that would bring together all strands of development cooperation work conducted by the Unit, and which would also show the linkages to the work of other MFA departments in the target region in development cooperation. The two Country Strategies do not cross-reference each other and therefore appear to exist in isolation from one another, even though they are managed by the same regional unit. Inter-regional learning is not evidenced in the strategy documentation.</p>	<p>9. The absence of a dedicated policy or overarching framework for development cooperation with the region results in fragmentation and reduced visibility. <i>(Findings 1.2, 1.3, 1.4 has also contributed to this conclusion.)</i></p>	
<p>(Finding 3.2) The MFA does not have well-developed procedures regarding the planning for and review of sustainability. Rather it is left to the inertia of follow-on funding to ensure sustainability. There are substantive gaps in the documentary trace, compounded by institutional memory limitations within MFA and among implementing partner organisations.</p>	<p>11. Strategic planning of the development cooperation activities can be improved.</p>	<p>2. Adopt a more participatory approach to the formation of its development cooperation programming in the region</p>

FINDINGS	CONCLUSIONS	RECOMMENDATIONS
<p>Finding 1.5) Many projects were continuations of existing ones, meaning that experience accumulated helped to identify evolving needs. Projects implemented through international institutions or under ICI also built on long-standing institutional relations, with the resulting familiarity with needs.</p> <p>(Finding 2.1) The evaluation identified a wide range of positive impacts, some quantifiable but most not. Broad positive effects have been found at all levels, from policy level down to community and individual level, with sector impacts lying in between, as well as in all areas of support (socio-economic, environmental spheres, as well as in the sphere relating to human rights and the rule of law). In particular, tangible impacts were identified in cases where investment in infrastructure and transfer of technology and know-how have led to positive effects for communities, institutions, the country at large.</p> <p>(Finding 2.2) Positive effects observed at policy level (e.g., legislation passed, international conventions adhered to) must be qualified by the fact that in the countries considered here, implementation typically lags far behind policy reform. However, there have been a number of cases of profound impacts of a transformative nature, in which Finland's support has contributed to significant change. For instance, Finland's support had positive effects across an entire sector (revitalisation of an industry that had been dormant for many years), influencing changes in policy, practice and attitudes that have had tangible results in improving the lives of persons with disabilities.</p> <p>(Finding 2.3) Finnish value added mainly lies in its expertise in selected areas and its willingness to commit to long-term support even when headline results are not forthcoming. Finland is perceived as a small and specialised donor, and, despite its limited field presence, as a "hands-on" donor.</p> <p>(Finding 3.1) The picture of sustainability emerging from the evaluation is mixed. In most cases, interventions have not become self-sustaining. However, Finland's commitment to maintain funding across several iterations of the same projects has led to sustainability in the case of several projects in Central Asia (e.g., free legal aid in Tajikistan and the Kyrgyz Republic, and fisheries and aquaculture in the Kyrgyz Republic). This reflected well the fact that many projects require continued long-term support in order for necessary institutional and attitudinal change to be achieved</p> <p>(Finding 3.3) Building ownership is a vital ingredient in achieving sustainability. There is variation in the extent to which Finnish-supported interventions are effectively promoting ownership among beneficiaries. In Kyrgyzstan, for example, government ownership of water management reforms is reported to be weak. In the most successful cases, this included strong commitments from all national stakeholders being achieved (from national authorities providing funding and the necessary legislation and infrastructure, private sector engagement in taking results forward, local communities taking responsibility for results at their level).</p>	<p>6. Finland's long-term commitment to supporting development cooperation interventions has facilitated the achievement of tangible and sustainable results.</p>	<p>3. The MFA is recommended to ensure that there are sufficient human resources and capacity for the project cycle management within the Unit to respond to the increasing funding planned for the next phase, and the coverage of an additional country (Uzbekistan).</p>
<p>(Finding 4.3) In all countries, implementation has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and the working and travel restrictions in place in the region. Projects have had to cancel or postpone activities, reduce the scope of work conducted. Mediating actions such as moving to online mode of delivery have been adopted, although outreach to persons in disadvantaged positions has been affected because of lack of access to the necessary IT resources.</p> <p>(Finding 4.4) With regard to coverage of cross-cutting objectives and HRBA, the portfolio in Phase III has continued to address these priorities both in the form of targeted actions and through mainstreaming. However, there are important variations in the integration of cross-cutting objectives in project design and implementation. The application of HRBA has also varied within the portfolio and across phase of the projects (see EQ5).</p> <p>(Finding 5.1) The cuts seen in recent years in Finland's funding of development cooperation, staffing reductions and staff turnover in the MFA have had a negative effect on the ability of MFA to manage the development cooperation portfolio, include in terms of monitoring and learning.</p>	<p>10. Management of the implementation, monitoring and reporting of the portfolio and projects can be improved. <i>(Finding 5.2 has also contributed to this conclusion.)</i></p>	<p>4. The Unit's approach to Results-Based Management could be strengthened by developing the Unit's RBM capacities, matched by the requisite human resources and other necessary resourcing.</p>

FINDINGS	CONCLUSIONS	RECOMMENDATIONS
<p>(Finding 6.1) There has been strong implicit internal coherence within the portfolio of development cooperation of the Department, although explicit linkages and synergies between the work of projects addressing the same sector and themes are less visible.</p> <p>(Finding 6.4) Whereas coordination between the Unit for Eastern Europe and Central Asia and other MFA departments with regards to the development portfolio takes place, the evaluation could identify only few examples of actual synergies that have been developed between activities.</p>	<p>12. Synergies across the portfolio can be better exploited.</p> <p><i>(Finding 5.4 has also contributed to this conclusion.)</i></p>	
<p>(Finding 4.5) As shown in EQ5, the mix of instruments deployed in the portfolios in all countries has been effective and has allowed MFA to make a meaningful contribution and maximise the resources. Synergies within the portfolio remain implicit for the most part – there is scope to render synergies more explicit.</p> <p>(Finding 5.5) Finland’s ongoing partnerships with implementing organisations (multilateral and regional) are well-established, as are the ICI institutional relations. The new modality of engaging private consulting companies to implement key reform related projects requires close monitoring, as issues have arisen in the start-up phase in particular.</p>	<p>4. The mix of instruments used to implement the development cooperation portfolio has been well selected and has secured results in a holistic fashion, from policy level down to the level of communities and individual beneficiaries.</p> <p><i>(Finding 5.6 has also contributed to this conclusion.)</i></p>	<p>5. Continue with the current blend of instruments</p>
<p>(Finding 6.2) Coherence with the activities of other donors is not defined in detail in programmatic documentation at portfolio or intervention level for the most part, although de facto there has been a significant increase in donor coordination related work, essential in the countries in which Finland operates given the high density of donor support.</p> <p>(Finding 6.3) Where Finland’s financial contribution is a relatively small part of a broader donor funding arrangement, MFA has shown that it is adept at leveraging Finnish expertise, as seen in the secondment of MFA gender advisers to the CoE country office in Ukraine.</p>	<p>7. Financial support to the OSCE and CoE allows Finland to make a contribution to the important work of these mandated organisations.</p> <p><i>(Finding 1.6, 2.2 has also contributed to this conclusion.)</i></p>	
<p>(Finding 5.6) The Fund for Local Cooperation has been used well to support small-scale projects that tackle important issues, often of a sensitive nature. It provides an invaluable link between the MFA teams and beneficiary civil society organisations. However, its use remains strongly limited by the availability of human resources at Embassy and MFA level.</p>	<p>8. The Fund for Local Cooperation is an important instrument that serves to complement development cooperation activities in the core partner countries and sustain Finland’s development cooperation in the other countries of the region.</p> <p><i>(Finding 1.4, 5.5, 5.6 has also contributed to this conclusion.)</i></p>	
<p>(Finding 5.2) In the management of the programmatic cycle, the MFA is strongest at the identification and formulation stages which now benefit from extensive interaction between relevant MFA and external stakeholders. There is a well-established and comprehensive set of procedures used by MFA in screening project proposals. However, the extent to which monitoring, reporting, and analysis of lessons learned is achieved varies across the portfolio and is a gap at the level of the portfolio as a whole.</p> <p>(Finding 5.3) Similarly, while HRBA is afforded strong emphasis at the identification and formulation phases of new projects, subsequent implementation and monitoring varies.</p>	<p>5. In the programmatic cycle MFA Finland is strongest at the identification and formulation stages; the availability of human resources poses some constraints to the effective management of the whole programmatic cycle.</p> <p><i>(Finding 5.1 has also contributed to this conclusion.)</i></p>	<p>6. Introduce measures to mainstream civil society partners in the programmatic activities of the development cooperation portfolios of Finland by building on the strong track record established by the FLC instrument in the region.</p>



# 1. Introduction

The following Final Report presents the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the ‘Evaluation on Development Cooperation carried out by the Department for Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, including the Wider Europe Initiative (WEI)’. The evaluation has been commissioned by the Development Evaluation Unit, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (EVA-11), as part of the multi-year rolling evaluation plan for centralised evaluations 2020-2022.

The evaluation has been conducted by an independent Evaluation Team (ET) of Particip GmbH – Niras Finland oy consortium, in the period October 2020 to May 2021. The ET would like to acknowledge the contributions of all respondents, from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, implementing partner organisations and international donor organisations, and representatives of governmental, institutional, professional and civil society sectors in the partner countries.

## 1.1. Rationale for this evaluation

Finland has engaged in development cooperation support to this region over a considerable period, during which the citizens and governments of the partner countries have faced an array of challenges in the political, socio-economic, environmental and security spheres. The portfolio of interventions funded by Finland has sought to address these challenges through targeted responses in key thematic, sectoral, and policy areas. The rationale of the current evaluation is to take stock of the net achievements of the support, assess the extent and nature of the outcomes and, where possible, long-term impacts to which the support has contributed, and examine the sustainability of these results. The factors that have either facilitated or hindered progress will be afforded particular attention.

The evaluation presents an aggregate-level analysis of the evolution of the Finnish development cooperation portfolio and approach, which have been based on a complex, multi-faceted blend of interventions. Implemented by long-standing partner organisations, these have tackled key issues in the spheres of economic development, the environment, good governance, and rights of vulnerable persons. They have been complemented by smaller-scale activities targeting specific issues of institutional capacity-development, as well as community-level initiatives.

The ongoing current phase of support is included in the evaluation’s coverage in order to provide an up-to-date assessment of progress against objectives and targets. The management of the current programme has been reviewed, particularly with regard to the implementation of programmes in the three partner countries of the Kyrgyz Republic (Kyrgyzstan), Tajikistan and Ukraine, in order to examine both the cumulative achievements of projects in Central Asia over several phases, and the evidence relating to the innovative projects introduced in Ukraine.

The lessons learned will assist the Ministry in its planning and implementation of future development cooperation in this region and beyond.



## 1.2. Purpose and scope of the evaluation

**Purpose:** *As stated in the Terms of Reference (ToR), “the purpose of the evaluation is to support the achievement of Finland’s development policy objectives in the region, and to provide information for the further development of the strategies and programmes and their implementation at the strategic level. The evaluation is expected to help the Ministry build a comprehensive understanding of to what extent Finland has contributed to development impact in the region over the past decade. Similarly, the evaluation is to provide information on how the Ministry could best achieve its policy objectives in the future, how to pursue the objectives of the government programme systematically as well as how to develop further its management and approaches. Furthermore, the evaluation is expected to draw lessons on how the Ministry could maximize impact and sustainability of its interventions more generally.”*

*Specifically, as stated in the ToR (see Annex 1), the objectives of the evaluation have been:*

1. To assess the impact(s), if any, of Finland’s development cooperation carried out in the region by the Department for Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia;
2. To assess the scope of the impact(s) and their relative significance to development in the area;
3. To assess the levels of sustainability of the achieved results and impact;
4. To assess the results achieved by, and management of, the current country strategies;
5. To analyse the reasons explaining success and/or failure in performance and in reaching a lasting impact, including the operational context, human aspects and resources; and
6. To provide recommendations that will serve the Ministry in developing its strategic planning, management and response in the region as well as drawing the broader lessons on how to increase impact and sustainability, in advancement of Finland’s development policy objectives.

**Temporal scope:** The evaluation has covered three phases of support – 2009-2013, 2014-2017, and 2018-2021. The 2009-2013 and 2014-2017 periods coincide with the Wider Europe Initiative (WEI) phases I and II, which were the subject of mid-term evaluations conducted in 2012 and 2016. The current evaluation has drawn on the findings of these evaluation reports (as an ex-post component), combined with the evaluation of the ongoing current 2018-2021 period (which coincides with the implementation of Country Strategies for the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, and Ukraine), to produce an amalgamated, aggregate-level analysis of the cumulative effects of Finland’s support over the 12 years.

**Geographical scope:** Over the period 2009-2021 Finland has supported development cooperation activities in 11 Eastern European and Central Asian countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. The portfolio of interventions includes both single and multi-country/regional interventions. The geographical focus and extent of activity has evolved over the period, with: a broader range of countries engaged during WEI I; a shift in the emphasis of support during WEI II towards a focus on the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan (as the region’s least economically developed countries) and support to Ukraine following the 2014 political crises and the outbreak of conflict in Eastern Ukraine; and the emphasis on the same three countries through country strategies in the current 2018-2021 period. Coverage of the region as a whole (11 countries) has continued across the 2009-2021 period through activities funded under the Fund for Local Cooperation (FLC), and through support to the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).



Users of this evaluation: The main intended users of the evaluation are the MFA headquarters HQ, The Department for Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia and Finnish embassies and permanent missions. Other important users are the Finnish governmental agencies taking part in development cooperation (e.g., the Institutional Cooperation Instrument or ICI), Finland's parliament, Finland's development policy Committee, and Finnish civil society organisations (CSOs). In addition, the evaluation is expected to be of interest to stakeholders in the partner countries and other donors in the context of their own development cooperation activities in the region. While the expected main use of the evaluation by the MFA Finland and its close partners is anticipated to be in providing strategic leadership and managing for results, the evaluation may also support other on-going processes. These include further development of Finland's Country Strategies and Country Programmes for Development Cooperation in the region, and preparations for future work, including evaluations, that interlink with the themes and interests of this evaluation.

### 1.3. Evaluation questions

The following Evaluation Questions (EQs) and sub-questions were addressed in the evaluation. The questions were used as the basis of the Evaluation Matrix, which guided the data collection and analysis. The matrix is provided in Annex 8.<sup>1</sup>

#### RELEVANCE<sup>2</sup> (during 2009-2021)

##### 1. To what extent have Finland's development cooperation activities been relevant, with regard to:

- The needs of the partner countries (disaggregated by the perspectives of the citizenry, governmental and non-governmental organisations, commercial sector, etc.).
- Alignment with the overall priorities of Finland's development policy and development cooperation.
- Alignment and complementarity with the foreign and security policy, including economic relations.

#### IMPACT<sup>3</sup> (during 2009-2021)

##### 2. What has(have) been the impact(s), if any, of Finland's development cooperation carried out in the region by the Department for Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia?

- What have been the most significant and transformative impact(s) contributed to by Finland and why? This includes analysis of impact by social, environmental and economic as well as human rights perspectives. What have been the levels where the impact(s) have taken place?

<sup>1</sup> The evaluation uses the OECD/DAC definitions of the evaluation criteria deployed in the evaluation (OECD/DAC 2002). The 2002 version covers the programmatic periods relevant for the evaluation. An updated set of criteria was introduced by OECD/DAC in 2019 (OECD/DAC 2019) (i.e., after all of the interventions covered in the current evaluation had been programmed).

<sup>2</sup> 'The extent to which the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners' and donors' policies.'

<sup>3</sup> 'Positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.'





- What have been the scope and extent of the impact(s)?
- What has been Finland's role and added value in contributing to the impact(s)?
- What negative and/or unintended impacts have taken place, if any? Why?

### **SUSTAINABILITY<sup>4</sup> (during 2009-2021)**

#### **3. What has(have) been the level(s) of sustainability of the results and impact achieved over the period of time?**

- For which of the results and impact areas is there evidence that the benefits achieved are lasting? Why?
- What has been the extent of sustainability of results and impact in terms of a) financial, b) economic, c) social, d) environmental, and e) institutional capacities of the systems needed to sustain net benefits over time? Includes analyses of resilience, risks and potential trade-offs.
- What strategies has the Ministry employed in order to maximize sustainability? Which of them have been the most successful and why? Have projects and programmes adequately planned for sustainability?

### **EFFECTIVENESS<sup>5</sup> (during 2018-2021)**

#### **4. To what extent have the Country Strategies of 2018-2021 achieved their planned results and contributed to the realization of Finland's development policy objectives?**

- What results have been produced until now, who and how many have benefitted from them? What groups were not reached, if any?
- To what extent is implementation on track to achieve the set objectives by the end of 2021? Note any major deviations or risks to achieving objectives and the reasons behind them. Includes analysis by funding instrument.
- Are there any lost opportunities or potential for future engagement in the region?

### **MANAGEMENT (during 2018-2021)**

#### **5. How has the development policy and cooperation been managed?**

- How effective has the policy formulation, strategic planning, selection of interventions, partners and instruments been?
- To what extent are programmatic, regional or sector coordination points of view, results-based management (RBM) as well as synergies guiding the decisions made?
- To what extent have the Ministry's guidelines on Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) been applied in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation?
- What were the strengths and weaknesses of planning and implementation? What could the Ministry do to improve its management for impact, sustainability, effectiveness and relevance? How? Consider structures, approaches and processes.

<sup>4</sup> The continuation of benefits from a development intervention after major development assistance has been completed. The probability of continued long-term benefits. The resilience to risk of the net benefit flows over time.'

<sup>5</sup> The extent to which the development intervention's objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.'



## COHERENCE<sup>6</sup> (2009-2021)

### 6. To what extent have the development cooperation activities of the Department for Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia been coherent with regard to:

- Coherence within the portfolio managed by the Department.
- Coherence with other Finnish-funded development cooperation activities implemented in the target region.
- Coherence with development cooperation in the target region supported by the broader donor community, including the European Union and its Member States.

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<sup>6</sup> Coherence was not included in the 2002 set of OECD/DAC evaluation criteria, but is included in the updated 2019 set (OECD/DAC 2019), where it is defined as follows: “*COHERENCE: HOW WELL DOES THE INTERVENTION FIT? The compatibility of the intervention with other interventions in a country, sector or institution. Note: The extent to which other interventions (particularly policies) support or undermine the intervention, and vice versa. Includes internal coherence and external coherence: Internal coherence addresses the synergies and interlinkages between the intervention and other interventions carried out by the same institution/government, as well as the consistency of the intervention with the relevant international norms and standards to which that institution/government adheres. External coherence considers the consistency of the intervention with other actors’ interventions in the same context. This includes complementarity, harmonisation and co-ordination with others, and the extent to which the intervention is adding value while avoiding duplication of effort.*”



## 2. Approach, Methodology and Limitations

The following section summarises the nature of the evaluation design and methodological approach used in the evaluation. A more detailed presentation is provided in Annex 4. The section also presents a set of challenges and limitations to the evaluation process, as well as measures adopted to mediate these issues.

### 2.1. Approach and Methodology

The evaluation has used a Theory-Based Evaluation (TBE) approach, in which the engagement with the evidence base has been informed by the reconstructed Theories of Change (see section 4.6). The evaluation is both summative and forward-looking in line with the evaluation questions.

The Evaluation Design and Analytical Framework shown in Annex 4 map against the attributes of the Evaluand (the subject of the evaluation):

The aim of the evaluation has been to achieve aggregation of findings relating to the Evaluand, which can be considered to represent all aspects of development cooperation activity conducted by the Department for Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia over the period 2009-2021.

In order to arrive at aggregation of findings, the evaluation process has engaged with the evidence provided data at the policy and strategy level, country and regional level, thematic and sectoral level, and intervention (project) level. This has included a sampling approach based on country-level evidence – to examine the net achievements of Finnish support to the three countries that have been included in all three phases of the period 2009-21 (Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Ukraine).

The coverage of the three distinct sub-periods (2009-13, 2014-17, 2018-21) has allowed for longitudinal analysis of certain aspects relating to the Evaluand (e.g., regarding the evolution of the approach to programming and management of the portfolio; analysis relating to interventions that have been supported continually over two or three phases; the evolution of support to specific thematic priorities and sectors).

The analytical framework of the evaluation has also incorporated a range of comparative dimensions, covering instrument/modality (e.g., bi-lateral and multi-bilateral, ICI, etc.); sectors and thematic priorities (e.g., rule of law, environment, etc.); type of activity (e.g., capacity-building, institutional strengthening, awareness-raising, technical assistance); comparative perspectives among national and international stakeholders; and comparisons with the support of other donors

**The evaluation is both summative and forward-looking**



Portfolio analysis has informed the engagement with the evidence relating to the various forms of support, including the trends seen in Finland's development cooperation portfolio per sector, theme, country, modality, etc.

Contribution Analysis has been used to trace possible causal linkages, and to assess attribution of the results and impacts of the development cooperation activities, including intended and unintended outcomes.

The analytical framework has embedded coverage of the cross-cutting objectives in Finnish development policy (gender equality, non-discrimination, climate resilience and low emissions development).

## 2.2. Data collection

The evaluation has been based primarily on the use of qualitative data collection and analysis, through documentary review, interviews and focus group discussions with stakeholders, two surveys, and written feedback received from stakeholders. In addition, quantitative analysis has been used, primarily with regard to the conduct of portfolio analysis.

Data sources for the documentary review included policy and strategy level documentation of MFA Finland and the European Union, programmatic documentation and evaluation and monitoring reports relating to interventions supported by Finland, documentation of implementing partner organisations, publicly-available information (e.g., websites of implementing partner organisations and national-level stakeholders / beneficiaries; websites of other donors, and reports published by other donors and international organisations).

The travel restrictions in place in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic meant that no international travel could be undertaken by the evaluation team, whether for meetings at MFA Finland in Helsinki, or the intended field missions to the beneficiary countries. All consultations conducted by the team of international experts were therefore conducted from distance, using video-conferencing software. Two country evaluators were engaged in the Kyrgyz Republic (covering that country and Tajikistan) and Ukraine, to facilitate interviews and focus group discussions.

## 2.3. Limitations

The following limitations can be noted with regard to the evidence base, the accessibility to data and respondents:

- Documentary evidence relating to impact and sustainability is generally very limited.
- The documentary trace of decision-making within MFA contains substantive gaps.
- There are gaps in the documentary trace with regard to analysis of aggregate results achieved phase by phase, identification of lessons learned, justifications for continuation or termination of projects, etc.



- The financial data made available to the evaluation has limitations with regard to internal consistency and reliability (see Annex 5).
- In MFA Finland there has been a considerable turnover of staff over the period under evaluation (12 years). This has led to a certain institutional memory gap relating to aspects of the development cooperation portfolio and its implementation, in some cases. This is compounded by the gaps in the documentary trace noted above.
- Feedback from consultations and surveys conducted for the evaluation have only served to compensate for the gaps in the documentary trace – which should be the core source of secondary evidence available to an evaluation – to a limited extent, and with considerable variation across the portfolio.
- Impact is not defined clearly enough at the programming stage across the portfolio, and not afforded sufficient attention in monitoring and reporting. This leads to a gap in the knowledge base regarding Finland’s development cooperation, which the current evaluation could not fully compensate for.



## 3. Contexts

The current section presents an overview of the contexts relevant to the evaluation, covering i) the policy frameworks of Finland’s development policy during this period, ii) the interface between development policy and Finland’s foreign and security policy and trade policy, iii) institutional and organisational contexts, iv) the national and regional contexts in the region covered by the evaluation, and v) global contexts.

### 3.1. Finland’s development policy evolution, 2009–2021

The period under evaluation has seen the evolution of Finland’s development cooperation policy in the policies of 2007, 2012, 2016, and 2020. These policy frameworks have underpinned the cooperation activities implemented by the Department for Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia. The key aims of the policy frameworks, per policy period, are summarised in Table 1 Finland’s development policy aims during the period under evaluation, along with the set of Cross-Cutting Objectives that were emphasised:

**Table 1 Finland’s development policy aims during the period under evaluation<sup>7</sup>**

POLICY PERIOD	AIMS	AREAS/PRIORITIES OF COOPERATION	CROSS-CUTTING OBJECTIVES
2007-2011	Poverty eradication and promotion of sustainable development in accordance with the UN Millennium Development Goals (2000)	Economically, socially and ecologically sustainable development  Crisis prevention and support for peace processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promotion of gender and social equality</li> <li>Human rights and equal participation opportunities of easily marginalized groups (including children, people with disabilities, indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities)</li> <li>HIV/AIDS as a development challenge</li> <li>Environment, climate change and disaster risks</li> <li>Good governance</li> </ul>
2012-2015	Strengthening of the position of the poor and the reduction of inequality, and reduction of poverty in absolute terms	Democratic and accountable society that promotes human rights  An inclusive green economy that supports employment  Sustainable management of natural resources and environmental protection  Human development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduction of inequality</li> <li>Gender equality</li> <li>Climate sustainability</li> </ul>

<sup>7</sup> The 2020 policy framework is not included here, as all interventions of the portfolio covered in the evaluation were programmed prior to 2020.



POLICY PERIOD	AIMS	AREAS/PRIORITIES OF COOPERATION	CROSS-CUTTING OBJECTIVES
2016-19	Eradication of extreme poverty and reduction of poverty and inequality guided by 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.	Enhancing the rights and status of women and girls  Improving the economies of developing countries to ensure more jobs, livelihood opportunities and well-being  Democratic and better-functioning societies  Increased food security and better access to water and energy and the sustainability of natural resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender equality</li> <li>• Non-discrimination (focus on persons with disabilities)</li> <li>• Climate resilience</li> <li>• Low emission development</li> </ul>

Source: MFA 2007, 2012a, 2016.

During the 2009-2021 period MFA Finland has continued to develop and refine its guidelines relating to key aspects of the development cooperation activities it supports – namely in relation to the HRBA, gender mainstreaming, and involvement of civil society organisations in development cooperation. The programmatic approach to development cooperation has also developed, with the introduction of RBM. The evaluation has examined the nature and extent of the application of these guidelines and approaches across the portfolio of development cooperation managed by the ITÄ-20 unit.

Relative to other partner countries, the countries of this region have not received as much emphasis or visibility. In the 2012 development policy, only the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan are mentioned, while the 2016 policy additionally mentions Ukraine. There is no specific sub-focus on the region within Finnish development policy, evaluation reports on Finnish development policy do not cover this region as a rule.

### 3.2. Finland’s foreign and security policy, and trade policy

Development policy forms an integral part of Finland’s foreign policy, and there is a clearly identified set of linkages between security and development that serve to guide development cooperation programming and implementation.

The tenets of Finnish foreign policy are grounded in a commitment to a human rights-based approach, promoting sustainable economic development, and safeguarding the environment.

There is no specific Finnish foreign policy towards the region. Finland aligns with the EU European Neighbourhood and Central Asia regional policies. The evolution of the aims and policy priority areas of the EU policy towards the European Neighbourhood and Central Asia are shown in the table below. The continued emphasis has been on supporting the region’s stability, prosperity, and environmental sustainability. The analysis of Finland’s aims in development cooperation demonstrates the alignment with overall EU policies.

**Finnish foreign policy is grounded in human rights, sustainable economic development and the environment**



**Table 2 EU policies relating to the target region**

EU POLICY	AIMS	AREAS OF COOPERATION
<b>EU POLICY TOWARDS THE EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD</b>		
European Neighbourhood Policy 2004	Promotion of stability and prosperity within and beyond the new borders of the Union,  developing a zone of prosperity and a friendly neighbourhood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trading relations and market opening</li> <li>• prevention and combat of common security threats</li> <li>• Promotion human rights, further cultural cooperation</li> <li>• Integration into transport, energy and telecommunications networks and the European research area</li> <li>• Investment promotion and protection</li> </ul>
European Neighbourhood Policy 2011	Strengthening the partnership between the EU and the countries and societies of the Neighbourhood (stability, prosperity, security)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good governance, democracy, rule of law and human rights</li> <li>• Sustainable economic growth</li> <li>• Cross-border management</li> </ul>
European Neighbourhood Policy 2015  EU Global strategy	Stabilisation of the Neighbourhood through building resilience of partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good governance, democracy, rule of law and human rights</li> <li>• Economic development for stabilisation</li> <li>• Security</li> <li>• Migration and mobility</li> </ul>
<b>EU POLICY TOWARDS CENTRAL ASIA</b>		
The EU and Central Asia: Strategy for a New Partnership, 2007	Peaceful, democratic and economically prosperous Central Asia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human rights, rule of law, good governance and democratization</li> <li>• Investing in the future: youth and education</li> <li>• Promotion of economic development, trade and investment</li> <li>• Strengthening energy and transport links</li> <li>• Environmental sustainability and water</li> <li>• Combating common threats and challenges</li> <li>• inter-cultural dialogue</li> </ul>
The EU and Central Asia: New Opportunities for a Stronger Partnership, 2019	Stronger, modern and non-exclusive partnership with the countries of Central Asia so that the region develops as a sustainable, more resilient, prosperous, and closely interconnected economic and political space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnering for Resilience: democracy, human rights and the rule of law, tackling trans-regional environmental challenges</li> <li>• Partnering for Prosperity: development of a competitive private sector and promoting a sound and open investment environment</li> <li>• Working Better Together: political dialogue and opening up space for civil society participation.</li> </ul>

Sources: EEAS 2021, EC 2011, Council of the European Union 2007, EC 2019





Finland's development policy foresees a linkage between trade and development, which establishes an alignment between development policy and trade policy. There is an underlying aim to promote increased trade between Finland and its partner countries by supporting economic development with partner countries through development cooperation activities. According to MFA Finland, in this target region Finnish companies are most interested in trading with Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine. Finland's export to Ukraine has fluctuated significantly during the period of evaluation, with the highest volume of EUR 545 million achieved in 2011, and the lowest being EUR 176 million in 2016. As noted in the MFA Country Strategies, the amount of Finland's trade with The Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan remains at a very low level.

More broadly, the EU Global Strategy, with which Finland's development policy aligns, calls for cooperation activities, while aligned with partner country priorities, to serve EU citizen interests as well. These include not only cross-cutting issues such as gender and human rights, but security in line with the Common Foreign and Security Policy (EU 2016).

### **3.3. Institutional and organisational contexts**

The development cooperation with Central Asian countries is managed by the Unit for Eastern Europe and Central Asia (ITÄ-20) of the Department for Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

The Department for Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia handles matters related to the following countries: Russia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. The Department is responsible for political, trade political, commercial and economic, and international development cooperation issues related to bilateral relations, the EU's external relations and multilateral institutions in respect of these countries; regional organisations and other cooperation forums; administration of financing for Baltic Sea, Barents and Arctic cooperation and related international financial arrangements issues related to the Northern Dimension. The department consists of two Units: Unit for Russia (ITÄ-10) and Unit for Eastern Europe and Central Asia (ITÄ-20). Currently the Unit for Russia consists of three teams: Political Affairs, Bilateral and Commercial and Economic Relations, and Regional Cooperation.

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8 <https://oec.world/en/profile/bilateral-country/fin/partner/ukr>



The ITÄ-20 unit deals with the following countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. According to the MFA webpage (<https://um.fi/unit-for-eastern-europe-and-central-asia>) this Unit is responsible for the overall monitoring of developments in these countries, bilateral relations between Finland and these countries, external relations of the European Union in respect of these countries, questions related to these countries that are dealt with in international organisations, preparation, presentation and handling of development cooperation projects in the ministry's internal coordination system and management and supervision of their implementation as well as Economic and Joint Commissions between Finland and Kazakhstan, Finland and Ukraine, and Finland and Uzbekistan. In addition to the Director, the Unit has currently two staff members and is in the process of recruiting a third.

Finland has an Embassy in Kazakhstan, also dealing with the Kyrgyz Republic. For the other Central Asian countries (Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan) the Roving Ambassador is Finland's official representative. The Roving Ambassador is located in Finland but travels to the region regularly.

The overall amount of disbursements in 2009-2020 channelled to the region through ITÄ-20 managed projects amounted to EUR 110.5 million<sup>9</sup>. Over the period under evaluation, as shown in Figure 1 Finland's development cooperation disbursements for Eastern Europe and Central Asia in EUR million, there has been a steady reduction<sup>10</sup> in the allocation of funding for development cooperation activities managed by the Department for Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia. This period has also seen a substantive reduction in staffing resources within the MFA (OECD 2017). These factors have affected the operations supported, as found by the OECD in its 2017 peer review of Finland's development policy.<sup>11</sup>

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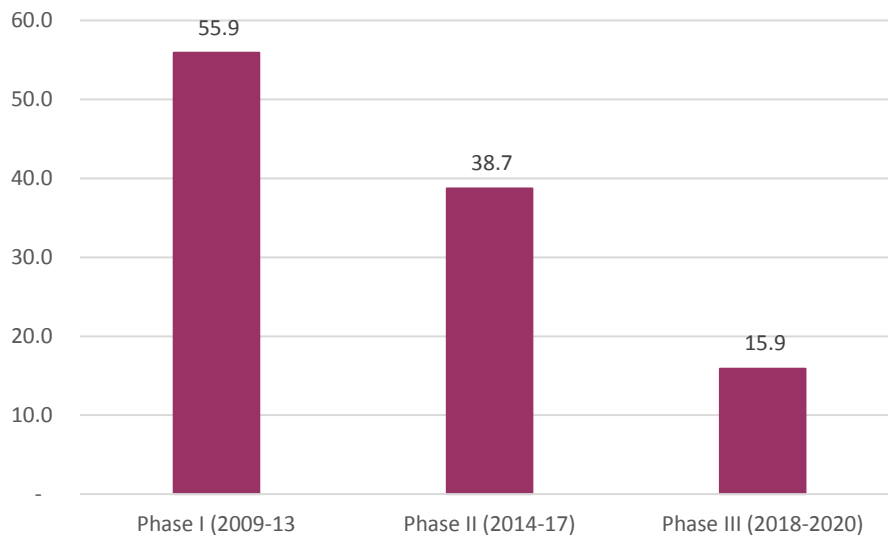
<sup>9</sup> MFA Ratsu Financial reporting data extracted in January 2021, excluding funds allocated to administrative tasks, amounting to EUR 1.8 million disbursed.

<sup>10</sup> While this trend is exaggerated by the fact that Phase I covered 5 years whereas the subsequent phases were shorter (and in case of Phase III are still ongoing), this is in line with the phasing out of the Wider Europe Initiative and the concentration on only three countries for Phase III.

<sup>11</sup> As the SDG Knowledge Hub noted in early 2018 in its review of the report's findings: "Finland's aid budget has decreased by 38% annually in the past five years, with additional reduction planned for 2018-2020. This has pushed the country further behind the international target to provide 0.7% of its gross national income (GNI) as official development assistance (ODA), with net ODA dropping to US\$1.06 billion or 0.44% of GNI in 2016. Although its 2016 development cooperation policy intends to 'raise the level of our development co-operation funds to 0.7% of gross national income in accordance with UN goals', the government has no plan or timeline to reverse the decline and maintain its commitments with limited resources, the report notes." <http://sdg.iisd.org/news/oecd-review-calls-on-finland-to-address-development-aid-decline/>



**Figure 1 Finland's development cooperation disbursements for Eastern Europe and Central Asia in EUR million**



*Source: MFA Ratsu data 2009-2020; Data compilation: Evaluation team.*

A key development in the period under evaluation has been the introduction of country strategies of development cooperation and attendant country programmes with results frameworks, with the goal of managing the development cooperation portfolio. In the case of this region, the Wider Europe Initiative was phased out after its second iteration, with country strategies introduced for the three focal countries for cooperation – the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, and Ukraine – in line with the approach used by all regional departments from this phase to date. The evaluation period has coincided with the development of the next round of country strategies and their development programmes for the period following 2021.

### **3.4. Country and regional contexts**

In the region covered by this evaluation (11 countries of Eastern Europe, South Caucasus and Central Asia) developments in the sphere of politics and governance over the 2009-21 period show considerable variation – ranging from relative stability and continuity in the case of some countries (e.g., no change of regime or leadership, as in the case of Azerbaijan and Tajikistan), through gradual changes introduced in line with change at the level of political leadership of the country (e.g., Uzbekistan), through turbulence in the political arena (Kyrgyz Republic, Moldova, Armenia), to regime change and associated political flux (Ukraine). The case of Belarus presents a striking example of tensions between the incumbent political leadership and calls, following the presidential elections of summer 2020, from the political opposition for regime change. While a number of countries in the region have held elections considered by international observers to be reasonably free and free, the underlying political culture of the region remains fractured, with highly personalised, clan, oligarchic politics dominating. Media control is often highly centralised, and, in some instances, dissent has been ruthlessly suppressed.



The environments in which civil society functions in the region remains challenging for the most part – conducive/permissive environments are relatively rarely found (Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine), while restrictive environments tend to be the norm – up to and including the application of severe restrictions on civil society actors. The situation with regard to the respect for human rights, and rights in general, remains a challenging one in the region as a whole. Gender equality is highly country-specific, but in general, the situation is challenging, as evidenced by low political (Georgia) and labour force (Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan) participation of women, highly unbalanced sex ratios at birth (Armenia, Georgia) and, despite some policy progress, persistent violence against women and girls (Georgia). The situation of women differs markedly between urban and rural areas.

Developments have been seen with regard both to regional cooperation, and the involvement of external actors in the region –e.g., the introduction of the Eurasian Customs Union (EACU), including the involvement of Armenia, Belarus and the Kyrgyz Republic; the expansion of cooperation with countries of the Eastern Partnership (EaP, consisting of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, and the Central Asian region (Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan), and the EU; the engagement with countries in the region on the part of the Russian Federation, China, Turkey, Iran, etc. The role of Russia includes the part it has played in developments in Ukraine (e.g., illegal annexation of Crimea; direct and indirect involvement in the conflict in Eastern Ukraine), and the broader region (e.g., exertion of influence through political, socio-economic, security related means, and through an increase in Russia’s role as a donor of cooperation activities).

In the sphere of the economy, regional disparities are considerable – ranging from the low-income country of Tajikistan, to upper-middle income countries (Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan). In the socio-economic sphere, considerable challenges are ever present, with employment prospects often limited for both skilled and unskilled workers (leading to large migration flows to Russia for citizens of Tajikistan and the Kyrgyz Republic, for instance), while higher education graduates find few opportunities, resulting in ongoing problems of brain drain in many countries. All countries in the region are characterised by striking disparities in income and access to basic services between rural and urban areas and between major cities and the rest of the country. Remote regions and geographically challenging regions are sometimes inhabited by ethnic and linguistic minorities.

Environmental sphere challenges persist and have grown over this period – despite increasing attention from the international community, responses of national governments continue to be limited for a range of reasons, while the ability of civil society to influence change faces constraints.

Finally, in the sphere of security and conflict, the region as a whole has continued to see turbulence, up to and including armed conflict (Ukraine, Nagorno-Karabakh), increasing activity in the area of radicalisation of youth and recruitment to terrorist organisations in Central Asia, and ongoing challenges relating to organised crime, drug trafficking, human trafficking, etc.

Finland’s development cooperation engaged with the broader region of eleven countries relates only to WEI I (2009-2013). While the challenges noted above have largely continued across the whole period, the rationale for discontinuing support to all but three countries was driven by the change in emphasis in Finland’s development policy towards supporting the least developed countries (applied to the cases of the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan).



### 3.5. Global contexts

The period under evaluation has coincided with, at the start of the period, the aftermath of the global financial crisis of 2008; and at the end of the period, the global fall-out of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. These phenomena have exerted a considerable influence on not only the partner countries, but also developed countries including Finland. These exogenous factors need to be borne in mind in the assessment of the achievements of support. In addition, it can be noted that the cluster of challenges in the sphere of the environmental, including climate change and its consequences, have represented an-ever present and growing crisis situation, affecting all countries, with Central Asia in particular seeing tangible effects.

**The global financial crisis of 2008 and the Covid-19 pandemic posed a global challenge**

The context of international development cooperation implemented by multilateral and regional organisations and institutions in this target region has also evolved over this period, within relevant policy frameworks, including the promotion of Millennium Development Goals (until 2015) and Sustainable Development Goals (post-2015). These are reflected in relevant MFA and implementing partner documentation relating to the development cooperation portfolio, as well as in the national policies and strategies of the partner governments.



## 4. The Evaluand

The ‘Evaluand’ denotes the subject matter of the evaluation. In the case of the current evaluation, the evaluand covers three distinct programmatic phases (2009-13; 2014-17; 2018-21), and includes all development cooperation activities supported by the MFA’s Department for Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, over these periods – i.e. all programmable (multi-year) ODA-funded interventions, as well as short-term small-scale projects supported by FLC, and ODA-funded project activities implemented by OSCE. The current evaluation has not assessed development cooperation activities implemented in this region that have been managed by other MFA departments or other Finnish-funded ODA activity (including activities in the civil society sphere, higher-education cooperation), although the coherence of these activities with the portfolio managed by the Unit for Eastern Europe and Central Asia has been addressed under the assessment of Coherence (5.6).

In addition to the contents of the portfolio of development cooperation activities, the evaluation has also examined the issues of programming, management and monitoring of the portfolio by ITÄ-20 and MFA diplomatic missions. The evaluation has not been tasked with assessment of Efficiency (i.e., budget management and other resource-related issues).

### 4.1. Programming

Overarching programmatic frameworks were established for Phases I and II to cover the development cooperation activities included in the portfolio. The programmatic core documentation presented the rationale, aims and priorities of Finnish development cooperation and the composition of the portfolio per phase. In WEI I, the initiative covered work in 11 countries and was organised according to five thematic clusters: security, trade and development, information society development, energy and the environment, and social sustainability (MFA 2011). WEI II was focused on work conducted in the three priority partner countries of the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Ukraine, while still outlining work conducted in the larger set of 11 countries through ongoing support to the OSCE and the FLC instrument. For Phase III, the transition to adopting country strategies for the three priority countries has resulted in a more focused and detailed programmatic presentation of activities, as well as a results framework per country. While de facto the FLC and OSCE supported activities continued in Phase III across the 11 countries as a whole, their visibility was reduced in programmatic terms, as they were not an integral part of the country strategies.

### **Operationalisation of the programmatic activities of the evaluand**

There has been a gradual deployment of a Results-Based Management approach over the period 2009-21. The MTE of WEI I recommended the formation of an overarching results framework and logframe for the portfolio-level, which was added in 2014, for WEI II. The current country strategies do incorporate results frameworks, which are used for overall monitoring of results, as presented in annual reports on the country programmes. During the evaluation period, the Unit for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, in reflection of human resource constraints had been exempt



from having to follow a full-fledged RBM approach in its development cooperation management. The evaluation has assessed the implications of this status, with regard to the results achieved by the portfolio.

The Unit for Eastern Europe and Central Asia oversees the Country Strategy for Development Cooperation in Ukraine (2018-22) and the regional Central Asian Strategy for Development Cooperation covering the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan (2018-21). While following a similar model the two strategies contain differences in terms of the impact areas embedded in their respective results frameworks as well as with regard to the portfolio of interventions that are covered in these frameworks.

In the case of the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan, the portfolio comprises interventions that are continuation projects from previous phases. The interventions relate to the following impact areas, as shown in the country results framework: Impact area 1 – More equal societies and strengthened realization of human rights and rule of law;<sup>12</sup> Impact area 2 – Sustainable and inclusive economic growth;<sup>13</sup> Impact area 3 – Environmentally sustainable society.<sup>14</sup> The portfolio across the two countries is very similar (with parallel projects running in both countries, with the exception of the Fishery project in the Kyrgyz Republic).

In the case of Ukraine, the majority of the portfolio consists of new interventions: The Strategy introduced a new area for support (education) and a new modality for support, the implementation of projects via private consulting companies. The strategy defines the three impact areas as follows: Impact area 1: Ukrainian basic and vocational education are reformed to meet European standards and the education system is appreciated by citizens<sup>15</sup>; Impact area 2: Investor confidence in the Ukrainian energy sector<sup>16</sup>; Impact area 3: Ukrainian legislation, institutions and practice are better in line with European standards in the areas of human rights, the rule of law and democracy.<sup>17</sup>

## 4.2. Management of the portfolio

During Phases I and II, centralised oversight of the portfolio was maintained by the Department for Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, while the diplomatic representations of Finland (roving ambassadors and their teams, and embassies) were and are directly engaged in the management of FLC activities. With regard to long-term interventions, all project proposals pass through the quality review conducted by the Quality Board in MFA, which can include appraisal missions,

<sup>12</sup> Widening Access to Justice in the Kyrgyz Republic, Phase II (UNDP); Strengthening Rule of Law and Human Rights to Empower People in Tajikistan, Phase II (UNDP)

<sup>13</sup> Aid for Trade Project in Central Asia, Phase IV (UNDP), The Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan; Towards Sustainable Aquaculture and Fisheries Development in the Kyrgyz Republic, Phase III (FAO); From Crisis towards Decent and Safe Jobs, Phase II (ILO), The Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan.

<sup>14</sup> Programme for Finland's Water Sector Support to The Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan, Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE); Strengthening the Mastering of Natural Resources in the Kyrgyz Republic Geological Survey of Finland (GTK); Strengthening the Mastering of Natural Resources in the Republic of Tajikistan Geological Survey of Finland (GTK); Capacity Building in the Field of Meteorology in the Kyrgyz Republic, Phase II Finnish Meteorological Institute (FMI); Capacity Building in the Field of Meteorology in Tajikistan, Phase II Finnish Meteorological Institute (FMI).

<sup>15</sup> The Learning Together project, incorporating the EU-funded component on Ukraine language instruction for minority groups; and Finland's contribution to a multi-donor funded "The EU4Skills: Better Skills for Modern Ukraine" project.

<sup>16</sup> Finland-Ukraine Trust Fund (NEFCO) project.

<sup>17</sup> Finland's contribution to the Council of Europe Action Plan for Ukraine 2018-2022.



inputs from sector- and thematic advisers, etc. During the implementation of interventions, the level of MFA staff involvement varies. In a small number of actions (e.g., the Security Cluster under WEI I managed by MFA staff in Helsinki, and the education sector interventions introduced in Ukraine in Phase III which are supported by an education counsellor stationed in the Embassy of Finland in Kyiv), MFA staff have played an active role in the management; in others, MFA staff have been engaged in regular oversight of interventions fully or mainly funded by Finland and managed by Finnish institutions under the ICI instrument. For projects managed by international implementing partner organisations, the role of MFA is more limited during implementation phases (e.g., conducting monitoring missions, responding to annual reports). In those multi-bi interventions for which Finland's funding contribution is relatively small (e.g., 2% of the overall donor contributions), the engagement is quite limited, with MFA receiving reports and attending steering committee meetings.

### 4.3. Monitoring

The implementation of interventions in the WEI portfolio was accompanied by annual reporting submitted by the implementing organisation, but there were no aggregate-level annual reports for the WEI I and II programmes as a whole produced by MFA (that might have contained, e.g., analysis of progress towards targets). The development cooperation activities conducted in the three countries covered under the country strategy approach implemented under Phase III do provide annual reports (the ET has received access to one year's reports, for 2019). However, the reporting style is brief in nature, providing short narrative accounts and summative 'traffic-light' (green-amber-red) assessments of performance. The analytical value of these reports for the current evaluation is rather limited, therefore.

Assessment of the aggregate results and lessons learned of the Evaluand-level activities is provided only in the two mid-term evaluations conducted by external evaluation teams in 2012 and 2016 for WEI I and II respectively (MFA 2012b; Olesen et al. 2016). There are no end-of-phase reports/analyses/evaluations produced whether by MFA or other bodies of the final, aggregate results achieved under Phases I and II, or an explicit trace of the decision-making process for the formation of Phases II and III.

### 4.4. Thematic coverage

The three phases have seen both continuity and change – continuity in certain aspects of the portfolio (some interventions have continued for two or three phases, particularly in Central Asia); alongside change in the scale of the portfolio (reduction from 11 to 3 countries from Phase I to II), and the transition from a centrally-managed portfolio to country-based portfolio management through the introduction of country strategies in Phase III.

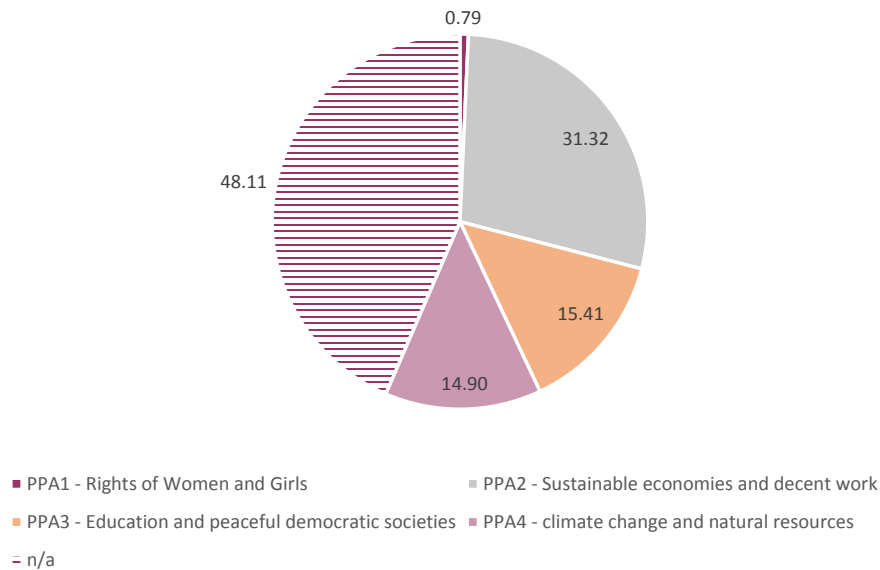
Of the 129 projects extracted from the MFA financial management system, only 61 were assigned primarily with the MFA policy priority areas as per Finland's development policy. The relatively large share of projects without any assigned policy priority area may partly be explained by the fact that assigning PPAs to new interventions in the system was a gradual process, and the use became more systematic only after 2015-16, along with the publication of the 2016 development policy. While Policy Priority Area 2 on 'Sustainable economies and decent work' was primarily assigned to only 11 projects, it covers 50% of the budget (calculated based on disbursements for these 61





projects). On the other hand, Policy Priority Area 1 on ‘Rights of Women and Girls’ is primarily linked to as many as 20 projects and covers only 1% of the total funds included in this calculation, as these are mostly small-scale FLC projects. Figure 2 Development cooperation disbursements 2009-2020 by primary MFA policy priority areas in EUR million presents the total disbursements per policy priority area, excluding funds allocated to administrative tasks.

**Figure 2 Development cooperation disbursements 2009-2020 by primary MFA policy priority areas in EUR million**

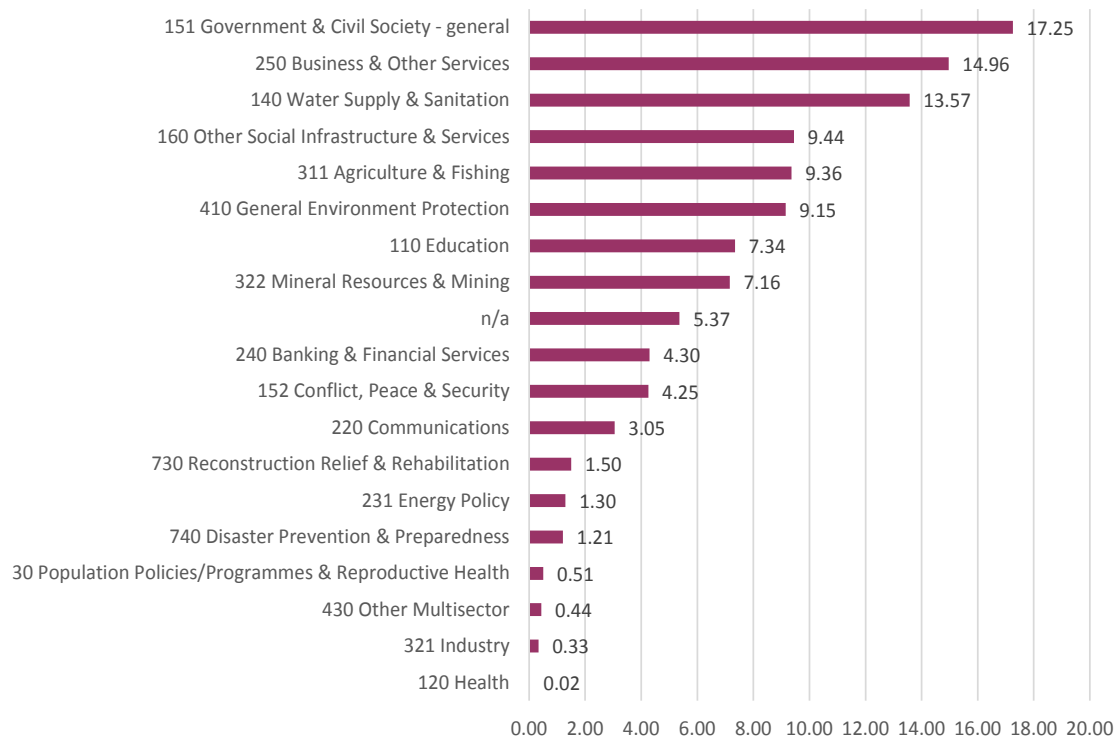


Source: MFA Ratsu data 2009-2020; Data compilation: Evaluation team.

Regarding funding per OECD DAC sector classification, when measured in disbursed funds, the largest sectoral focus of the portfolio has been in the Government & Civil Society (16%), Business and Other services (14%), Water Supply and Sanitation (12%), Environmental management related (17% – codes 410 and 322) and Education (7%) (see Figure 3 Development cooperation disbursements 2009-2020 by OECD DAC sectors in EUR million).



**Figure 3 Development cooperation disbursements 2009-2020 by OECD DAC sectors in EUR million**



Source: MFA Ratsu data 2009-2020; Data compilation: Evaluation team.

## 4.5. Modalities

Throughout the evaluation period, funds have been channelled through multilateral organisations and through institutional (ICI) cooperation between government institutions. FLC projects, managed by the Embassies have complemented the support and focused on civil society actors under themes identified from the MFA development cooperation policies. Overall, the ranges of activities supported by this Department, and covered by the current evaluation, is summarised below:

- Programmable multi-year ODA interventions, which include an emphasis on capacity-building, and a target beneficiary audience that ranges from governmental through to community level, and including representatives of state and governmental institutions, private sector institutions, educational institutions, rural households, women, persons in disadvantaged positions);



- Support to regional and multilateral organisations, including mandated institutions, through contributions to donor funds;
- Policy dialogue on priority themes;
- Contribution to monitoring missions on peace and security;
- Promotion of trade between partner countries and Finland;

FLC activities that support CSOs through small-scale project funding, across a broad range of priority areas.

There has been a strong degree of continuity over the period with regard to the pattern of institutional partnerships through which MFA Finland has implemented its portfolio, characterised by heavy reliance on multilateral and regional partners and Finnish institutional partners. The current phase has also seen the deployment of a new modality (for the Department of Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Europe), of contracting private consulting companies to implement interventions.

As presented in Figure 4 Development cooperation disbursements 2009-2020 per implementation channels and per phase in EUR million, the largest funding portion of EUR 54.0 million (48%) has been channelled through UN agencies. This to a large extent also covers the most utilised implementation modality – multi-bilateral.<sup>18</sup> These partner UN agencies include UNDP as the largest recipient, followed by ILO, UNEP, FAO, UNECE, UNFPA and UNITAR. The multi-bilateral modality includes support through International Financial institutions (IFIs), with EBRD as the largest recipient, followed by the World Bank, European Investment Bank and the Nordic Environment Finance Corporation (NEFCO). Based on MFA's financial data, EUR 22 million (21%) were channelled through IFIs%. Other important implementing partners have been the Council of Europe (CoE), the Nordic Council of Ministers, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and German Development Cooperation, as well as the private sector to some extent.

EUR 15.3 million, mainly representing the Institutional Cooperation Instrument (ICI) modality, were disbursed through Finnish state institutions.<sup>19</sup> These partner institutes include Finnish Environmental Institute, Geological Survey, Finnish Meteorological Institute, Radiation and Nuclear Safety Authority and National Institute for Health and Welfare. Of the disbursed funds, 8% were channelled through local or International NGOs. This includes the recipients of the Funds for Local Cooperation (FLC), which – as per the analysis – has been applied in as many as 72 projects (out of the total 129). This modality only covers 4% of the total disbursed funds, with average funds of EUR 60,673.<sup>20</sup>

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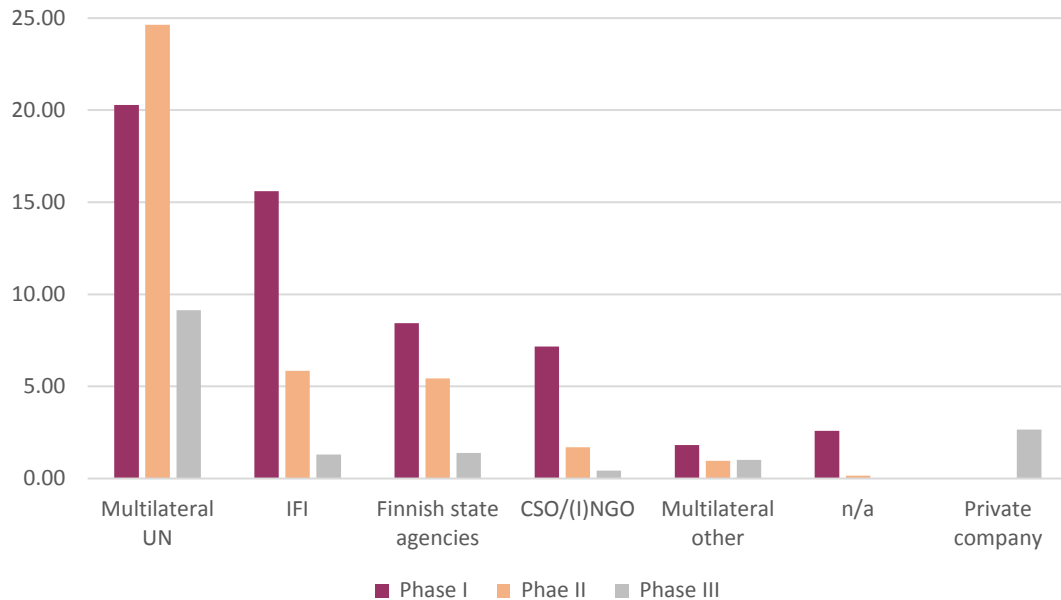
<sup>18</sup> “Multi-bi” modality refers to a bilateral cooperation that has been implemented by a multilateral agency, in case of the Finnish Development Cooperation evaluated in this evaluation this implies to UN agencies.

<sup>19</sup> Finnish state institution receives the funds based on cooperation with a corresponding partner country institute.

<sup>20</sup> Based on calculated average disbursement amounts in EUR.



**Figure 4 Development cooperation disbursements 2009-2020 per implementation channels and per phase in EUR million**



Source: MFA Ratsut data 2009-2020; Data compilation: Evaluation team.

#### 4.6. Theories of Change reconstructions

The Evaluation team constructed Theory of Change (ToC) diagrams for Phase I (WEI I), Phase II (WEI II), and Phase III (split into two ToCs, one for the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan and one for Ukraine). Results Chain models are presented to illustrate the progression from inputs to outputs to outcomes to impacts. The following observations were made in the construction of the ToCs:

- WEI I and WEI II did not have impact statements and impact indicators. Country Strategies for Ukraine, the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan have identified three impact areas and sources for impact indicators, but have not defined indicators and related baselines.
- WEI I and WEI II did not have programme or 'initiative'- level outcomes or thematic outcomes, the outcomes were mainly related or drawn from individual interventions.
- Assumptions, which are an important part of impact analysis, are not available for WEI I and WEI II. The Phase III Country Strategies for Ukraine, the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan include detailed intervention-related assumptions from outputs to outcomes and from outcomes to impacts.

In the reconstructed ToCs, the initiatives were mapped under MFA's current development cooperation policy priorities, issued in 2016 (Rights of women and girls, Sustainable economies and decent work, Education and peaceful democratic societies, Climate and natural resources), to enable thematic analysis beyond individual interventions. The mapping of the themes against the development policy priority areas is presented in Table 3 Themes of WEI I, WEI II and Country Strategies for Ukraine, the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan.



**Table 3 Themes of WEI I, WEI II and Country Strategies for Ukraine, the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan**

DEVELOPMENT POLICY PRIORITY	SECTOR/ THEMATIC FOCUS	PHASE I (WEI I, 2009 – 2013)	PHASE II (WEI II, 2014 – 2017)	PHASE III COUNTRY STRATEGY KYRGYZ REPUBLIC AND TAJIKISTAN (2018–2021)	PHASE III COUNTRY STRATEGY UKRAINE (2018-2022)
1. Strengthening the status and rights of women and girls		✓	✓	✓	✓
2. Sustainable economies and decent work	Trade	✓			
	Sustainable economic growth			✓	
3. Education and peaceful democratic societies (including political institutions, taxation, public administration, enabling environment for civil society)	Social sustainability Rule of Law and Human rights, democracy	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Education				✓
	Security	✓			
	ICT	✓			
	Civil Society	✓	✓	✓	✓
4. Climate Change and natural resources	Energy	✓	(✓)		✓
	Environment	✓	✓	✓	

Source: ET analysis

The presentation of the ET’s reconstructed theories of change for WEI I and WEI II and for the Country Strategies for the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Ukraine is provided in Annex 7.



## 5. Findings

The following sections present the findings relating to the **six Evaluation Questions** addressed in the evaluation. Each section provides an **aggregate-level** analysis of the performance of the Department's portfolio over the 12-year period (with the exception of the discussions of Effectiveness and Management, sections 5.4 and 5.4, which cover the 2018-21 period). In total, the six sections draw on examples relating to all key thematic priorities and sectors, and all modalities. However, the aggregate nature of the discussion means that all aspects of the portfolio cannot be elaborated in each section. The information presented here is complemented by the Country Reviews for the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Ukraine, presented in Vol 2.

The coverage of the projects and cumulative effects seen across a 12-year period has allowed for longitudinal analysis to be conducted where appropriate – revealing patterns that were not so clearly visible within the phases themselves. The mid-term evaluations of the Wider Europe Initiative in 2012 and 2016, for instance, highlighted certain issues at the time, which it has now been possible to revisit and reassess in the light of the developments seen in subsequent years.

### 5.1. Relevance of Finland's development cooperation

**EQ1: To what extent has Finland's development cooperation been relevant, with regard to:**

- EQ1a. The needs of the partner countries
- EQ1b. Alignment with the overall priorities of Finland's development policy and development cooperation
- EQ1c. Alignment and complementarity with the foreign and security policy, including economic relations.



### Box 1 Answer to EQ1 – Main findings

(Finding 1.1) Finland's development cooperation has been relevant to the needs of partner countries across the whole 2009-2021 period. Cooperation activities have addressed key challenges and priorities of the countries, in the spheres of economic development, the environment, good governance and human rights, social sustainability and inclusivity.

(Finding 1.2) In recent years, the introduction of country strategies for development cooperation has allowed for a more cohesive approach in aligning the programmatic framework with the needs of the countries. The focus on three partner countries from 2014 onwards has facilitated a closer mapping against country needs than had been seen under Wider Europe Initiative I.

(Finding 1.3) Strong alignment with Finland's development priorities has been achieved across the whole period. A factor promoting relevance in the region was that Finland's development priorities corresponded well to countries' needs and remained consistent over the evaluation period.

(Finding 1.4) The focal sectors and thematic areas for Finnish support have reflected Finland's strengths, including in the spheres of the environment, energy efficiency, education, social inclusion, promotion of human rights and protection of persons in vulnerable positions.

(Finding 1.5) Many projects were continuations of existing ones, meaning that experience accumulated helped to identify evolving needs. Projects implemented through international institutions or under ICI also built on long-standing institutional relations, with the resulting familiarity with needs.

(Finding 1.6) Foreign and security policy priorities have been drivers with regard to Finland's development cooperation engagement in the region, as seen in the linkage between security and development under WEI I, and in Finland's response to the crisis situation in Ukraine from 2014. Trade policy linkages with development cooperation have remained under-defined across the period.

(Finding 1.7) While there is strong policy justification for support to cooperation with Ukraine, drawn from foreign policy priorities, the fact that support to the two poorest countries (Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan) has been reduced during Phase III raises a question with regard to how this fits with Finland's commitment towards the poorest countries.

#### 5.1.1. Alignment with partner country needs

**The evaluation has confirmed that Finland's development cooperation has been relevant to the needs of partner countries across the whole 2009-2021 period.** This alignment became more explicitly stated through its grounding in country strategies and results frameworks of the programmes embedded in these strategies.



The relevance of the support provided in Wider Europe Initiative I and Wider Europe Initiative II was confirmed by the Mid-Term Evaluations conducted in 2012 and 2016. The 2012 evaluation of WEI I (MFA 2012b, p.11) concluded: “Interventions are seen by stakeholders as being very relevant to the needs of a wide range of beneficiary groups in the WEI countries, including government institutions, NGOs, populations.” The 2016 evaluation of WEI II (Olesen et al. 2016, p.18) concluded that: “The WEI-II programme is highly relevant in relation to the Government priorities of the target countries and to the needs of the beneficiaries.” In the case of both evaluations, the conclusions were arrived at on the basis of feedback received from national stakeholders, triangulated against the analysis of the contents of the portfolio of interventions delivered in both phases.

The current evaluation has conducted an analogous exercise relating to the current, ongoing phase (2018-2021), in which development cooperation activities have been delivered through Country Programmes for Development Cooperation embedded in Country Strategies, relating to the partner countries of the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan (covered in a combined strategy) and Ukraine.

**In all three countries Finnish support has aligned with the partner countries’ national strategies, thereby underpinning the relevance of the development cooperation activities.**

**Finnish support has aligned with the partner countries’ national strategies**

For the Kyrgyz Republic, Finland’s strategy was formulated in line with the ‘Kyrgyz Republic 2013-2017 National Sustainable Development Strategy’, and subsequently implementation was conducted in line with the ‘National Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2018-2040’ following its introduction in 2018. In the case of Tajikistan, Finland’s development cooperation has aligned with the priorities laid out in Tajikistan’s ‘National Development Strategy 2016–2030,’ and its attendant ‘Mid-Term Development Programme 2016–2020’. Given the similarities in the challenges faced and priorities identified in national programmes for both Central Asian countries, Finland’s support has been provided according to a combined strategy and programme for development cooperation, in which three impact areas have mapped against the national priorities and have integrated the activities delivered in the portfolio of interventions (which has been largely similar in both countries).

Finland’s development cooperation in Ukraine is aligned with the Ukrainian government’s ‘Medium Term Action Plan’ covering the period 2018-2020, specifically against the following priorities identified by the government: i) Economic growth; ii) Good governance; iii) Human capital development. These are reflected in the three impact areas embedded in the country programme for development cooperation.

**Finland made more extensive use of its established partnerships in the region from Phase II onwards.**

Whereas the involvement of country partners in programme design was limited during WEI I, with alignment with national needs achieved mostly at the project level relying on the presence, knowledge, and expertise of implementing partners. As the WEI I initiative was put together in a compressed timescale, and as it involved deployment of development cooperation support in countries where Finland had previously had little involvement and limited in-country presence in diplomatic missions, there was little involvement of national stakeholders in programmatic consultations (as noted in feedback to the current evaluation and as recorded in the WEI I MTE), or on broader donor coordination (MFA 2012b, pp. 32-3). Rather, relevance was essentially determined at the intervention level, with considerable reliance on the goals of the respective implementing partner organisation. This was a defensible approach in view of the fact that many implementing organisations, many of them UN organisations with long presence





and good institutional contacts in the countries covered could be counted on for a good analysis of country needs and government priorities. From Phase II onwards, the established pattern of relations between MFA Finland, the implementing partner organisations, and the target beneficiary institutions and groups, were drawn upon to reconfirm relevance for the planned phase (in particular in the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan, where the portfolio contents remained quite stable).

**For all three countries the current evaluation can confirm, on the basis of the evidence reviewed (feedback from stakeholders, documentary review) that Finland's support is considered to be relevant and addresses key challenges and priorities of the countries through the work of the portfolio of interventions.** This relates to all three impact areas identified in both Country Strategies for Development Cooperation. Furthermore, the timeliness of Finland's support has been highlighted, including the readiness to provide rapid responses to the needs of the beneficiaries, as well as Finland's commitment to following a Human Rights-Based Approach as seen in its work on promoting the rights of persons with disabilities – one of the few donors to engage in this sensitive issue in Central Asia.

### **5.1.2. Alignment with the overall priorities of Finland's development policy and development cooperation**

**WEI I and WEI II reflected and aligned with the priority themes set out in Finnish development policy documents (2007 and 2012).** The WEI I was implemented during Finland's development policy of 2007 titled 'Towards a Sustainable and Just World Community'. WEI II was implemented during the development policy Programme of 2012.

**WEI I was designed as a reflection of Finland's development policy (2007)' aims, priority themes, sectors, including an emphasis on a regional approach.** Under WEI I the priorities of Finland's development policy 2007, which emphasised economically, socially and ecologically sustainable development, and placed crisis prevention and support for peace processes as important elements in promoting socially sustainable development, were reflected in the structure of the initiative, which contained five thematic priority areas (security, trade and development, information society development, energy and environment, and social sustainability). The framework aligned with the cross-cutting objectives in place at that time: i) Improvement of the position of women and girls in promotion of equality; ii) Promotion of the rights of the children, persons with disabilities, indigenous people and ethnic minorities and iii) combating HIV/AIDS.

**WEI II was adjusted to reflect the changes introduced under the 2012 Finnish development policy in terms of its aims, priorities, and thematic coverage.** WEI II aligned with the 2012 development policy, with regard to the thematic priorities (security; trade and development; information society development; energy and the environment; and social sustainability), which in turn aligned with the Finnish development policy priorities of supporting the development of a democratic and accountable society that promotes human rights; an inclusive green economy that promotes employment; sustainable management of natural resources and environmental protection; and human development. The WEI II programme outlined cross-cutting objectives of the development policy, namely gender equality, the reduction of inequality and climate sustainability, but did not make a specific reference to the rights and opportunities of groups that are particularly vulnerable and easily marginalised, which implies particular attention.



**The introduction of country strategies under Phase III has allowed for a more cohesive approach in aligning the programmatic framework with the needs of the countries, as well as Finland's development policy priorities.** The Country Strategy for Development Cooperation for The Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan is explicitly aligned with the 2012 Finnish development policy through the reference to the Finland's development policy's identification of the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan as key target partner countries in the region, which was reaffirmed in Finland's 2016 development policy. The Country Strategy for Development Cooperation with the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan is also explicitly aligned with three out of four priorities of Finnish development cooperation: 1) Strengthening the status and rights of women and girls have been enhanced; 2) Strengthening the economic base of developing countries and creating jobs, with an emphasis on innovations and the role of women in the economy and female entrepreneurship; and 4) Climate change and natural resources, with an emphasis on strengthening adaptation alongside mitigation of climate change, food security and water, meteorology and disaster risk prevention, forests and safeguarding biodiversity.

The Country Strategy for Development Cooperation with Ukraine for 2018-2022 states that Finland's development cooperation in Ukraine supports three of Finland's development policy priority areas: 1) The rights and status of women and girls have been enhanced; 3) Societies have become more democratic and better functioning; and 4) Food security and access to water and energy have improved, and natural resources are used sustainably.

**There have been some inconsistencies regarding the cooperation's alignment with Finland's policy commitment towards the poorest countries.** While there is strong policy justification for support to cooperation with Ukraine, drawn from foreign policy priorities, the fact that support to the two poorest countries (Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan) has been reduced, de facto, during this phase (with some projects suspended, others projects being phased out), raises a question with regard to how this fits with Finland's declared priorities in development policy. As highlighted in the portfolio analysis, the amount of funding allocated to Ukraine for Phase III development cooperation work is roughly the same as that allocated to the two Central Asian countries combined.

### **5.1.3. Alignment and complementarity with the foreign and security policy, including economic relations**

**While the linkage between security and development was a key focus under WEI I, WEI II saw the disappearance of the linkage between security and development as an explicitly stated priority.** Under WEI I explicit alignment with foreign and security policy was established through the focus on the linkage between security and development, and crisis and conflict prevention, in Finland's foreign policy priorities at that time. This was reflected in the inclusion of security as a thematic priority within WEI I and was also influenced by Finland's response to Russia's aggressive policies towards its neighbouring countries, including the aftermath of the conflict between Russia and Georgia that occurred in 2008. The 2012 development policy narrowed the set of priorities, with security and conflict removed, thus indicating a de-linking between development and security. This was reflected in the originally planned WEI°II initiative. However, the events in Ukraine, and Finland's response (along with the EU and other members of the international community) de facto restored the focus on security, crisis management and conflict resolution to the core of Finland's engagement in Ukraine (see below).



The Country Strategies of 2018-2021 explicitly align Finland's approach with EU policy priorities and strategies in Central Asia and Ukraine (and the Eastern Partnership region). This includes Finland's alignment with regard to the response to the Russian Federation's involvement in these countries, including the illegal annexation of Crimea.

**Direct linkages between trade and development were not set out explicitly during 2009-2021.** In the sphere of trade policy, linkages were implicit under WEI I and WEI II. In the current Country Strategies, a more direct linkage is noted, with reference to existing patterns of trade relations with the respective countries. In the case of the Central Asian countries trade with Finland remains very limited, notwithstanding the focus on trade sector development through the Aid for Trade project. In the case of Ukraine, Finnish companies are more actively engaged in commercial relations. In development cooperation activities, the focus has been more on opening opportunities for Finnish companies in the Ukrainian market, rather than vice versa.

## 5.2. Impact of Finland's development cooperation

**EQ2. What has been the impact(s), if any, of Finland's development cooperation carried out in the region by the Department for Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia?**

- EQ2a. What have been the most significant and transformative impact(s) contributed to by Finland and why? This includes analysis of impact by social, environmental and economic as well as human rights perspectives.
- EQ2b. What have been the levels where the impact(s) have taken place? What have been the scope and extent of the impact(s)?
- EQ2c. What has been Finland's role and added value in contributing to the impact(s)?
- EQ2d. What negative and/or unintended impacts have taken place, if any? Why?

**Remark on challenges faced by the team when answering EQ2:** In Theory-based Evaluation and Results Based Management, Impact, at the right-hand end of the results chain, is invariably the most difficult to assess. In the Finnish development cooperation in the region (and particularly in Phases I and II), impact was not defined clearly enough at the programming stage both at intervention and strategy level, and not afforded sufficient attention in monitoring and reporting. To the extent possible, the current evaluation has sought to compensate for this through stakeholder consultations (interviews and surveys), review of project reporting where available and contents have allowed, supplemented by the ET's analysis of the websites of beneficiary organisations and implementing partner organisations, as well as through additional context analysis to search for traces of impact. In the case of reporting and feedback a tendency is observed towards reporting successes, not failures, which has represented a challenge common to many evaluations. Negative outcomes and impact are not seen in the reporting, for instance – where these are noted in the current report, this is on the basis of the ET's separate analysis, triangulating data through use of external documents such as government reports. Another structural problem is that Finland is a small donor in relative terms, so that, while it may achieve concrete impact at small scale (communities, individuals), at higher scale what must be considered is contribution to impact in areas and at levels where many donors are operating.



## Box 2 Answer to EQ2 – Main findings

(Finding 2.1) The evaluation identified a wide range of positive impacts, some quantifiable but most not. Broad positive effects have been found at all levels, from policy level down to community and individual level, with sector impacts lying in between, as well as in all areas of support (socio-economic, environmental spheres, as well as in the sphere relating to human rights and the rule of law). In particular, tangible impacts were identified in cases where investment in infrastructure and transfer of technology and know-how have led to positive effects for communities, institutions, the country at large.

(Finding 2.2) Positive effects observed at policy level (e.g., legislation passed, international conventions adhered to) must be qualified by the fact that in the countries considered here, implementation typically lags far behind policy reform. However, there have been a number of cases of profound impacts of a transformative nature, in which Finland's support has contributed to significant change. For instance, Finland's support had positive effects across an entire sector (revitalisation of an industry that had been dormant for many years), influencing changes in policy, practice and attitudes that have had tangible results in improving the lives of persons with disabilities.

(Finding 2.3) Finnish added value mainly lies in its expertise in selected areas and its willingness to commit to long-term support even when headline results are not forthcoming. Finland is perceived as a small and specialised donor, and, despite its limited field presence, as a “hands-on” donor.

### 5.2.1. Most significant and transformative impact(s) contributed to by Finland

This section assesses the nature, scope and extent of impacts to which Finland's development cooperation activities contributed. It draws primarily on the evidence of the three countries, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Ukraine, which were the focus of cooperation in Phases I-III, and to a more limited extent, on the evidence available from other countries that were supported by Finland under WEI I (2009-2013). The following set of illustrations relating to intervention-level impact serve to demonstrate the range of patterns seen over the 12-year evaluation period. The section below is structured along broad themes which are cutting across the impact areas of the country strategies.

**Finland's development cooperation activities have contributed to tangible positive changes in all areas of support** (socio-economic and environmental spheres, as well as the sphere relating to human rights and the rule of law). These included improved access to justice for people in vulnerable positions such as people with disabilities, rural populations, women, IDPs by developing a free legal advisory service system (the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan); improved institutional capacities and services in the sphere of meteorology and geology (the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan); improved production and export capacities in agriculture (the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan) and new aquaculture and fisheries sector (the Kyrgyz Republic); positive changes in occupational health (the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan), and nuclear power-station related safety in Ukraine. In Ukraine, Finland's funding has contributed to the stabilisation efforts coordinated by the Government of Ukraine with the support of the donor community, leading to progress in the alignment of Ukrainian legislation with the EU (contributing to strengthened rule of law), as



well as the macro-economic stabilisation of the country. Finland's development cooperation activities in Ukraine have made contribution towards modernisation of Ukrainian basic education and energy efficiency reform.

**However – the scale of support must be borne in mind when considering the impact achieved.** The amount of funding allocated by Finland is modest when compared with the overall total amounts of donor funding disbursed in the region, and the scale of challenges seen in the priority spheres and sectors addressed in Finland's portfolio is considerable.

**Finland contributed to socio-economic and environmental development, human rights and the rule of law**

## Social inclusion

**Finland's development cooperation has occasionally contributed to promoting social inclusion and sustainability across the broader region of 11 countries.**

Strong examples of impact presented in the feedback to the ET include short-term projects led by CSOs on inter-ethnic conflict, which for instance reduced tensions among ethnic groups in 20 Kyrgyz schools thus benefitting 15,077 pupils, and social inclusion of persons with disabilities in Turkmenistan. The 'Mimino' regional FLC project (South Caucasus) contributed to confidence-building among Georgian and Armenian youth, as a means of stimulating joint activities of benefit for both communities. Social inclusion of Internally Displaced Persons in Ukraine was strengthened through the adoption of legislative amendments and new legislation focused on protecting property rights, voting rights. This work at the policy level has been complemented by grass-roots work by FLC project aimed at supporting IDP women.

**In general, FLC projects have been an important contributing factor to Finnish impact in this area of support.** Mostly the projects address community-level needs, although some projects do gain traction on a wider scale (region within country, or nationwide) – see below. Across the 2009-2021 period a range of FLC projects have addressed pressing, often sensitive challenges in the social sphere, aimed at tackling stereotypes, prejudice, and maltreatment of persons in vulnerable situations. These projects often have included an element of capacity-strengthening and empowerment of citizens (including youth) to exert a positive influence on developments in their organisation, local community, broader sphere such as the environment. In Ukraine, for example, social inclusion of IDPs was strengthened through the adoption of legislative amendments and new legislation focused on protecting property rights and voting rights. This work at the policy level has been complemented by grass-roots work by FLC project activities aimed at supporting female IDPs.

**Finland has also contributed to social inclusion through addressing the needs of minority groups and persons in disadvantaged positions,** as is for example evidenced by the support to a range of initiatives in the sphere of supporting minority languages in Ukraine. For instance, according to feedback, work on minority languages conducted under the Crimean Policy dialogue was drawn upon in the Ukrainian education reform process. Through the Learning Together project hundreds of school leavers from ethnic minority groups improved their education progression prospects through strengthened confidence in taking a Ukrainian-language state exam. Signs of cultural change in the teaching profession, an essential element of the reform process, are beginning to show in Ukraine, as beneficiaries testify. Another expected impact that the project is working towards relates to the improvement of public opinion towards the school reform process. The early results here are mixed but show some positive signs, according to the project reporting and feedback from beneficiaries to the evaluation – momentum is building in raising confidence in a reformed and more inclusive education system among parents, students, and the public at large.



**There have been de facto synergies (although these often remain implicit, rather than explicitly stated in project documentation) between long-term Finnish-supported projects targeting social sustainability and projects targeting other areas of support.**

For example, the Aid for Trade projects and FAO fishery projects discussed below (see section on Economic development) contributed to social cohesion and sustainability through community level employment creation and strengthening entrepreneurship.

There have also been many implicit synergies between Finnish support for the rule of law and social inclusion and sustainability. In Tajikistan, changes in societal attitudes towards gender stereotypes have been promoted by providing access to free legal aid for women and girls in cases relating to domestic violence, lack of a marriage certificate, divorce, alimony, or child support. An FLC project in Armenia implemented by the Civilitas Foundation engaged people with disabilities, with a particular focus on young people, which gained widespread attention and interest among the wider public across the country through social media campaigns. In the Kyrgyz Republic, the

Widening Access to Justice project has contributed to the increased awareness of disability and women's rights issues both among the beneficiary groups and among the wider public. The country has ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD) and, with the support of the project, legislation was enacted which serves as the legal basis for the recognition and legitimisation of the rights of persons with disabilities. However, interviewees pointed out that the realisation of the principles of the Convention requires further work and support also from the international community. As is generally the case with cooperation related to rights, passage of legislation is only the first step, and continued support is necessary to ensure effective implementation.

**Implicit synergies exist between support for the rule of law, social inclusion and sustainability**

## Energy and environment

Across the three phases, energy and environment have been constant focal areas of Finnish support. **Impacts have been identified in the form of increased cross-border cooperation (particularly in river basin management), disaster risk reduction, energy efficiency, and climate resilience. Infrastructure and technology-related investments made by Finnish-support interventions can be seen to have left a lasting legacy, even where funding ended some years ago. However, the ET has experienced challenges in tracing impact due to the nature of evidence.** In others there is a paucity of data, notwithstanding the multi-phase nature of Finland's contribution (e.g., the results of the FinWaterWEI interventions are not clear). This situation arises in part because of the challenges involved in establishing clear patterns of results in the energy and environment sphere – but also because of the nature of the reporting of the implementing organisations. The ICI instrument interventions, for instance, have tended not to have sufficiently detailed reporting based on a robust RBM approach (and relied on self-evaluations, rather than independent external evaluations, for the most part).

However, there are cases for which the trace of impact is more clearly defined and there is sufficient detail to achieve an understanding of the achievements (e.g., EBRD's results in the sphere of waste water management and provision of access to drinking water).

**Increased cooperation in joint management of river basins was seen between Tajikistan and Afghanistan, and Tajikistan and the Kyrgyz Republic, the Kyrgyz Republic and Kazakhstan as well as Ukraine and Moldova.** Positive changes were made in the improvement of mechanisms for sectoral, regional and local development planning through the



integration of measures aimed at adaptation to climate change in the management of the transboundary basin of Chu and Talas Rivers.<sup>21</sup> The Treaty on Co-operation on the Conservation and Sustainable Development of the Dniester River Basin, signed in 2012, following the contribution of the ENVSEC project supported by Finland under Phase I, was ratified by Ukraine in 2017. The project also contributed to the reduced vulnerability to extreme floods and climate change.<sup>22</sup> The regional security aspects of cross-border water resource management are substantial, and the contributions of Finnish support here go far beyond simple environmental issues.

**Energy and environment have been constant focal areas of Finnish support**

**Disaster preparedness was enhanced and risk levels reduced in the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan through Finnish-financed capacity building at Kyrgyzhydromet and Tajikhydromet.**

Thanks to Finnish support, these agencies are able to deliver improved weather-related early warning services, including monitoring of snow and glaciers, although the extent of the Finnish contribution is difficult to distinguish given that the institutes receive support from a range of donors. The support to meteorological and geological institutes under the ICI instrument also have led to tangible benefits (such as the transition to use of digital cartography). However, the current project and institutional monitoring systems do not track the number of users or collect user feedback, so the actual impact at beneficiary level is not possible to assess.

In Ukraine, tangible impacts were identified in the sphere of nuclear power plant safety and radiation protection. The contribution of Finnish support to the Chernobyl Shelter Fund through the construction of the New Safe Confinement is described below. Finnish mobile radiation detection laboratory supplied by the Nuclear Safety and Security Capacity Building in Ukraine project (Phase I), i.e. some ten years ago, is still being actively used by the Ukrainian State Scientific and Technical Centre for Nuclear and Radiational Safety. The equipment is used to detect lost or stolen radioactive material from hospitals and nuclear power plants in order to protect the Ukrainian public from radioactive contamination. It is also used to check food, public buildings safety, etc. in communities in affected areas.

**Energy efficiency, a perennial issue in Ukraine and one with significant environmental linkages in view of heavy dependence on coal, was addressed**

in the form of a demonstration project, the energy efficient school building in Kherson, built with the support of NEFCO's Nordic Energy Efficiency and Humanitarian Support Initiative (NIU). The building, with a capacity over four hundred pupils and training staff, has showcased the benefits of energy efficiency measures that can improve the condition of infrastructure and benefit the community. However, the broader impact to date has been limited – only one school has benefitted, a multiplication effect has not been achieved by the current phase of the FUTF. The Finland Ukraine Trust Fund launched in Phase III, while under-performing in terms of the numbers of projects it has funded, nevertheless has helped (in the case of one project that has been funded, a feasibility study) contributed to unlocking a multi-million Euro energy efficiency investment from the European Investment Bank (according to feedback received from the Ukrainian State Agency for Energy Efficiency and MFA respondents).

<sup>21</sup> [https://unece.org/DAM/env/water/Chu-Talas/EN\\_ClimateProofingChuTalas\\_web\\_10Dec2018.pdf](https://unece.org/DAM/env/water/Chu-Talas/EN_ClimateProofingChuTalas_web_10Dec2018.pdf)

<sup>22</sup> [http://unepineurope.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=45:transboundary-cooperation-in-the-dniester-river-basin&catid=34&Itemid=101](http://unepineurope.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=45:transboundary-cooperation-in-the-dniester-river-basin&catid=34&Itemid=101)



**Environmental attitudes have shifted as a result of Finnish support.** In Ukraine, FLC grantees attest that participants of their project activities adopted changes in attitudes and practices towards key environmental challenges, as seen in the ‘Zero Waste Academy’ project.

Health risks in the region are often environmental in origin. **In Ukraine, public health risks of radioactive exposure have been reduced as the “New Safe Confinement” structure, constructed under the Chernobyl Shelter Fund, blocks the release of radioactive material** and provides a 100-year long storage solution for the highly radioactive fuel left in the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Station after the 1986 catastrophe. Public safety and confidence have also improved in Ukraine through the use of mobile radiation detection laboratory equipment supplied by Finland (an example of impact provided by the application of Finnish technology – see also under environmental impacts). Water-related projects in Central Asia improved water infrastructure and wastewater management, and the resulting access to safe drinking water and improved sanitation have generated positive health impacts, particularly for women who otherwise would be carrying water from wells and other sources – however the scale of impact is small, according to the MFA’s data (from 2009-2021 only some ‘hundreds of households’ have benefitted) (MFA 2020c). According to feedback received by the ET, the introduction of occupational standards with the help of the ILO project in the Kyrgyz Republic has contributed to a 20% reduction of accidents in the workplace in the construction sector. An unexpected benefit in Kyrgyzstan of the FAO aquaculture and fisheries development project is that fish has now become a staple food in many benefitting communities, resulting in a more balanced diet.

## Economic development

**Macroeconomic stabilisation was most evident in Ukraine, where Finland contributed to the EBRD Ukraine Stabilisation and Sustainable Growth Multi-Donor Account.** According to the 2019 evaluation of the initiative, Ukraine improved its internal and external deficit situation thanks to structural reforms supported by the Fund. Ukraine also improved its ranking in key global indices such as the World Bank Doing Business Index, in which it rose by 48 positions between 2013-2019. Transparency International’s Corruption index for Ukraine improved slightly from 25 to 32 points out of 100 (2013-2018). The evaluation report also notes that challenges remain in the anti-corruption sphere.

New jobs were created in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan

**Finnish cooperation support contributed to jobs creation in the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan.** In the Kyrgyz Republic, some 1,492 jobs were created through the export-related activities (the Aid for Trade project), while some 1,225 new jobs were created via the establishment of the Guarantee Fund. New jobs were also created in the fishery and aquaculture sectors in Kyrgyzstan through Finnish-supported work by FAO. Aquaculture and fisheries have not only become significant employers at selected community level, but the sector as a whole, long neglected, has become significant at national scale. One out of four fish associations’ members reported having officially employed workers on their farms. In Tajikistan, the Aid for Trade project has created some 2,264 jobs, and the adoption of the new State Programme on Reducing the Level of Informal Employment for 2019-2023 and its Implementation plan for 2019-2023 was facilitated by the Finnish-financed ILO project. As mentioned above, some FLC projects contributed to jobs creation. However, while these impacts are positive for the people concerned, this contribution can be considered as small scale when compared with the national scale of employment needs of Tajik and Kyrgyz citizens.





**The Decent Work agenda was promoted by Finnish support to ILO interventions implemented in the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan** which led to tangible improvements in the sphere of employment rights and conditions. The project has supported the development of the State OSH Programme for the Republic of Tajikistan 2020-2023 and the diagnostics and policy advice on informality in Tajikistan has led to the development and adoption of the new State Programme on Reducing the Level of Informal Employment for 2019-2023 and its Implementation Plan for 2019-2023. In both countries, Assessment-Based National Dialogues (ABND) on Social Protection Floors have been initiated and completed, and the State Programme on Social Protection Development in Tajikistan 2020-2024 was developed using recommendations of ABND reports. In the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan, Finnish-funded activities have promoted employment opportunities for the rural population, strengthened the confidence of women and persons with disabilities and, in the case of Kyrgyzstan, promoted job-creation and entrepreneurship in aquaculture and fisheries, previously a neglected sector. FLC-funded projects in particular contributed to promoting employment opportunities of women in disadvantaged positions. The examples include, for instance, securing employment opportunities for women with HIV-AIDS in Tajikistan through training and supporting female IDPs in Ukraine to establish their own small businesses via an entrepreneurship mentoring scheme.

Trade and agriculture sector development have been supported through all three phases. The UNDP-implemented Aid for Trade programme commenced (during Phase I) as a regional project covering a range of WEI region countries. **The results of the first phase, including any impacts gained, are not visible for the region as a whole** (e.g., none can be discerned for Ukraine). **However, the two Central Asian countries, which have continued to be a focus of the Aft initiative in Phases II and III, do present substantive evidence relating to the impacts achieved.**

The Kyrgyz Republic has seen its trade boosted through the increase in fish exports seen since 2014 after the joining of the Eurasian Export Union. **This can be considered a transformative impact, as the country has switched from being a net importer to being a net exporter of fish.** In the Kyrgyz Republic, the Aid for Trade project has provided advisory support to the Ministry of Economy for the formulation of trade financing instruments for increasing exports. The work on access to finance for export-oriented production leveraged an estimated USD 58 million. For instance, exports increased tenfold from 300 tons of fish in 2017 to 3,000 tons in 2020 thanks to the FAO fishery project.

**In Tajikistan, positive impacts of Finnish-supported development projects can be seen in the legislative and regulatory environment for trade.** The development of business intermediary organisations as well as the adoption by the government several national-level policy documents (e.g., Export development programme 2021-2025) have made positive contribution towards improving the investment climate in the country, according to Aft project reporting. The case of export development in Tajikistan is complicated, as the Tajik business climate ranking is much lower than its neighbour, the Kyrgyz Republic, and Tajikistan, unlike the Kyrgyz Republic, is not a member of the Eurasian Customs Union. UNDP Tajikistan has sought to mediate these factors by adapting the project design; e.g., facilitating an international networking of traders and engaging with state authorities in establishing a trade agency. Nevertheless, the exogenous factors are significant – for instance, there has been an increase in cross-border illegal trading from Tajikistan to the Kyrgyz Republic, given that higher revenues can be gained in the latter thanks to its membership of the Customs Union.



In Ukraine, the Geo-information portal, established under the Capacity Building for Development of European-type Geo-Information Management Infrastructure in the Geological Sector project (Phase I) continues to operate post Finnish-funding and is now supported by the World Bank. It hosts a range of initiatives funded by other donors in the spheres of improving transparency of the agricultural market, improving land use efficiency, etc.<sup>23</sup> The results of these projects are not attributable to Finnish support, rather, they are an outcome of a long result chain, in which the impact of Finnish contribution can be traced back to the establishment of the portal.

## Human rights, democracy, good governance, and rule of law

**Reference has already been made above to Finland’s contribution to enhanced access to justice in the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan through support for free legal aid. As a result of the support, access to and provision of free legal aid is now well-established through the maintenance of a network of clinics, which include provision for people in vulnerable positions.**

**Free legal aid is made available for people in vulnerable positions**

The projects have also contributed to the strengthening of a legislative basis for the promotion of human rights; e.g., ratification of the UN Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, amendments in legislation aimed at strengthening the provision of free legal aid in the Kyrgyz Republic. A new version of the Free Legal Aid law was drafted in order to introduce important amendments to strengthen the quality of legal aid services, as well as increase coverage and recipients of the state-funded legal aid system. Progress is also evidenced towards removing barriers for equal participation by training Sign Language interpreters in juridical concepts in the Kyrgyz Republic.

In Tajikistan and in Kyrgyz Republic, Finnish-funded activities helped to establish, under the Ministry of Justice, Legal Aid Centres which coordinates the government-operated and funded system of free legal aid. In Tajikistan, there are 26 legal centres in the network and in Kyrgyzstan the 15 centres were established through Finnish support and now the network is expanding through support from other donors. Overall figures of people who were able to benefit from the free legal aid services are not available to the ET, but in Tajikistan, as an illustration, “17,971 citizens received free legal aid in the period from January to November 2016. This is a significant increase from the 11,206 people in 2015, and 8,505 in 2014.”<sup>24</sup> In the Kyrgyz Republic, it is reported that the centres and mobile services have benefitted more than 49,000 individuals since 2016 (33,492 citizens during the first phase of 2016-2018 and another 15,606 during 2019-2020).<sup>25</sup>

**Human rights awareness of the population was enhanced.** People became aware of the availability of free legal aid – in both civil and criminal cases – with consequential increased confidence in equality before the law. While the projects have achieved strong results, nevertheless, as MFA respondents noted to the evaluation, the national contexts relating to good governance and the rule of law remain fragile in both countries – which serves to underline the importance of such contributions, but also to highlight the fragility of results achieved.

<sup>23</sup> <https://geoportalua.com/en>

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/undprola2j/posts/legal-aid-centers-provide-access-to-justice-for-tajikistans-citizens-nigina-had-/1259668447450219/>

<sup>25</sup> These figures are based on data retrieved via the results framework (compiled from annual reports and email correspondence).



**The FLC instrument has proved to be a valuable tool for the MFA in addressing, in a targeted fashion, priority issues in this area of support, often on sensitive subjects.**

In addition to these activities, the portfolio has included complementary activities conducted by OSCE ODIHR (on parliamentary reform in the Kyrgyz Republic, and parliamentary and judiciary procedures in Armenia and Georgia) and FLC projects on aspects of good governance in both Central Asian countries. In general, across the 11 countries, the FLC instrument was used to support local projects on media freedom, conduct of fair elections, lobbying for legislation to prevent torture). For instance, as a result of a project funded by FLC in Tajikistan, a network of lawyers was established that provides support to victims of torture. Cases of torture are registered in a database and reported to the UN Committee against Torture. The project also lobbied for the amendments of legislation against torture. The draft law is progressing and is at the stage of inter-ministerial hearing.

**In Ukraine, Finland's support to the organisations that hold mandates for conducting activities in the sphere of democratic institutions and processes, and the rule of law and justice sector reform (CoE and OSCE), allow for a contribution to be made to core change processes in the partner countries.**

As discussed in sections 5.4 and 5.5, Finland – as a Member State of the Council of Europe, and participating State of the OSCE, joins with other donor countries to contribute financial and other resources to support the work of these organisations. While Finland's actual financial contribution is relatively limited, its commitment is important as an act of solidarity, and is accompanied by other forms of contribution made by Finland – such as the secondment of MFA staff, support provided through policy dialogue activities, use of Finnish expertise. Achievements include CoE's work supported by Finland in strengthening Ukrainian legislation, institutions and practice in the sphere of minority rights, protection of IDPs, anti-corruption measures; and the OSCE's work in strengthening democratic institutions and practices in a range of countries across the region under evaluation (Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan). For instance, revision of policies and practices has strengthened a rehabilitative approach in Ukrainian prisons. The CoE's work is reported to have contributed to a reduction of inhuman treatment of detainees by law enforcement officers by mandating access to legal aid within two hours of detention. The rights of IDPs to vote have been legally ensured through the adoption of the Electoral Code by the Ukrainian Parliament.

## **Security and development**

**Security and development, emphasised in Phase I (WEI I) was discontinued as a major area of support of the portfolio from Phase II onwards. The trace of impact relating to the Research Cluster funded in Phase I is limited and relates principally to the benefits accrued by Finnish university and research sector institutions (rather than benefits seen among researchers in the partner countries). However, support to OSCE allowed for continued engagement with the security theme; e.g., through maintenance of funding to the OSCE Academy in Bishkek, the ODIHR programme on Human Rights, Gender and Security, etc. The impact of such support is difficult to trace – the rationale for supporting training in security studies and international relations for students from Central Asia is a strong one (democratising the ownership of this sphere, which is usually kept under the tight control of national authorities), but there is little evidence that graduates had the subsequent opportunity to influence developments in foreign and security policy in the region is limited. This is one of a number of cases in the portfolio where support to processes is important – but the overall impact is contingent largely on external factors, beyond the direct influence of the supported intervention.**



**The Crimea Policy Dialogue project, supported in part by Finland, contributed to the international scrutiny of Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and human rights violations through submission of evidence to international legal processes.**

In Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, as briefly mentioned above, Finnish support for cross-border river basin management indirectly addressed one of the major security issues in the region.

### **5.2.2. Scope and extent of the impact(s)**

**The review has shown that a number of interventions have generated impacts across several levels.** There is evidence of Finnish contribution to impacts at the levels of policy-making and legislation, sectors, institutions, communities, and individuals, the latter including those in disadvantaged positions. The aggregate, net effect of interventions in the same sector/thematic area is that impacts gained in several projects serve to reinforce one another, often through implicit synergies of effects that map across levels (e.g., from policy level to community or individual level).

**At policy level, interventions have contributed directly and purposefully** (i.e., as part of their programmed activity) to change in the policy sphere, including constitutional change for which OSCE ODIHR projects have contributed in Armenia and Georgia, signing of international conventions (e.g., the UN Convention on Persons with Disabilities), development of legislative and regulatory frameworks (e.g., in trade and the environment), and introduction and capacity-development of key institutions in the policy sphere (e.g., Ombudsperson institutions). Such work has been seen across the portfolio supported by Finland, with the involvement of interventions under all modalities present in the portfolio, and including large-scale, multi-million Euro projects through to small-scale short-term FLC projects. The support to key partner institutions (e.g., UNDP, FAO, ILO) with the resources, expertise, presence, and relationships needed to influence change at policy level has been a key factor. Finland's support to the mandated organisations of the CoE and OSCE has allowed it to contribute to targeted developments in the policy sphere relating to human rights. At the same time, it is widely recognised that implementation of policies, particularly in sensitive areas having to do with human rights, often lag far behind policy progress. This is particularly true for a region in which the respect for human rights or the environment of civil society remain challenging, as described in section 3.4.

**At sector level, Finland has focused support on sectors in which it may leverage strong expertise, which has served as a facilitating factor in achieving impact.** In the cases of interventions that have aimed at achieving substantive changes in terms of sector-wide structural improvements (e.g., in the case of the revival of the fishery sector in Kyrgyz Republic), a key ingredient has been the sustained nature of Finland's support, with a range of projects continuing across several phases; and the complex approach taken to ensuring that a holistic, multi-level coverage is ensured (e.g., working with national authorities to introduce legislation and regulations, to support work being implemented at the sectoral and institutional levels, as well as engaging effectively with target beneficiaries).

The FAO project on fishery sector support in the Kyrgyz Republic represents the main example of impact achieved in a sector. By 2021, the project's impacts had become clear: development of fishery industry has led to multiple impacts, including job creation, health benefits, and trade development. In the first phase, as the WEI I MTE reported, there was even discussion that the project may not continue – it had been suspended following a case of alleged corruption, and the project's potential to achieve results was far from clear. The challenges were faced in cooperation



with the implementing partner, budgeting of the project was revised, and an external evaluation was conducted. With these measures, viability of the project was ensured and support to the fishery sector was continued.

**At institutional level, Finland has used the ICI instrument to support long-term projects in the spheres of capacity development** through expertise sharing in meteorology, geology, the environment, statistics, enabling the partner institutions to modernise and improve their functions and services.. However, issues arising as a result of substantive staff turnover rates (see section 5.3.2), restructuring of state agencies and institutions, has led to limitations of the overall effects of support.

**At community and individual levels, a range of interventions have contributed to the improvement of the conditions of communities and livelihoods of individuals.** There have been considerable impacts in addressing the needs of persons with disabilities, IDPs, persons facing discrimination, persons in need of legal assistance, as illustrated above in section 5.2.1. FLC projects have played a key part in securing and maintaining links between Finland as donor and key target communities in the 11 countries covered.

### 5.2.3. Finland's role and added value in contributing to the impact(s)

**Finland's financial resources and field presence are limited, forcing it to choose its strategic priorities carefully. It has accomplished this in several ways. Interviews and survey results show that stakeholders view Finland as a long-term partner that can be expected to continue to provide support in selected areas even when short-term problems emerge. It has also concentrated on areas where it has particular interest or expertise, such as disability rights, gender, rule of law, and energy and environment. Despite limited field presence, MFA is appreciated for a very 'hands on' approach to projects, ready to respond to developing needs and support implementing partners and beneficiaries.** The scope for such support has diminished, however, given the reductions in funding and human resource allocation.

The interviewees from Central Asia pointed out that MFA is one of the few partners which explicitly promote the rights of persons with disabilities in a systematic manner. The implementing organisations pointed out the commitment and interest of the MFA not only on the progress of the projects but also in the content of the work being implemented. MFA and particularly sector advisers have also provided substantive advice for the project proposals, thus ensuring that crosscutting issues are appropriately addressed.

Stakeholders frequently note the importance of Finland's readiness to commit to long-term cooperation, and to "weather the storm" of short-term challenges in order to ensure achievement of results over time. The reliability and consistency of Finland's support has allowed the partner organisations to gain the necessary momentum, essential in many projects, especially those tackling sensitive or innovative topics.

The ability of the MFA to respond to changing needs in an effective and timely manner, including in response to crisis situations, has also been remarked upon by a range of stakeholders. The adoption of a 'hands-on' approach by MFA staff has been a key feature at time, where this is feasible notwithstanding the logistical challenges of operating from a distance – an illustration here is the case, for example, of the intervention made by the roving ambassador to South Caucasus to ensure



that the project on reforestation in Georgia was not derailed by changes in the partner government's policy approach, which required substantive changes in the project design.

**Finland is able to respond to changing needs in a timely manner**

Flexibility and adaptability of the MFA's approach are seen as key characteristics by those stakeholders who are familiar with the implementation of projects in which Finland has a significant share of funding. This includes a readiness to revisit the results framework, introduce recalibrations of the project workplans within phases, and to conduct reviews of project design before commencing follow-on phase activities.

Integration of Finnish expertise in the work of development cooperation activities was considered valuable (by stakeholders and evaluation reports) in the following areas: education, conflict resolution, forestry, environment, gender equality, meteorology, geology, energy efficiency.

#### 5.2.4. Negative and/or unintended impacts

**The documentary trace and the interview responses did not yield evidence regarding unintended impacts, as they are not systematically monitored in the reporting at intervention level. However, it is important that such monitoring does take place and that the MFA and implementing organisations are able to use such information to respond where needed. Among the few unintended impacts identified were the following.**

For instance, the case of the FAO fishery project in the Kyrgyz Republic is regarded as a successful project with a range of positive impacts – yet unintended, negative impacts were identified through internet-based research conducted by the ET (they are not visible in MFA or project reporting). For instance, the revival of the fish stock has been accompanied by the parallel growth of fish poaching, which has become a large-scale problem that the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic is struggling to contend with,<sup>26</sup> as well as the disappearance of indigenous fish species due to the proliferation of farmed fish in Issyk-kul lake.<sup>27</sup> The ET could not identify any evidence that these challenges have been addressed by the project. Yet, on the positive side, the emergence of fish as a major source of protein in some areas' diet was not foreseen in the project design (although this would have been a logical result to expect).

Supply-induced demand can be regarded as an unintended impact in service (and infrastructure) provision projects. The success of the Access to Justice project in extending services to vulnerable population members is well-recorded – but it also resulted in a situation where demand is out-pacing capacity by 150%.

Another case of unexpected supply-induced demand concerns actions involving calls for proposals. The NEFCO Finland-Ukraine Trust Fund has generated a flow of applications from potential beneficiaries who, while meeting the general requirements for funding and considered as fundable by the SAEE, were rejected by the project on the grounds that they did not fit the level of

<sup>26</sup> <http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ky-kg/157159?cl=ru-ru>

<sup>27</sup> [https://ru.sputnik.kg/society/20181007/1041442068/the\\_Kyrgyz\\_Republic-issyk-kul-chebak-ehkologiya.html?fbclid=IwAR13ytQnolIVZm5QCzazcVis9YuaMwnHPEssdFzzDcYa2J12aVJ5jXc-2U](https://ru.sputnik.kg/society/20181007/1041442068/the_Kyrgyz_Republic-issyk-kul-chebak-ehkologiya.html?fbclid=IwAR13ytQnolIVZm5QCzazcVis9YuaMwnHPEssdFzzDcYa2J12aVJ5jXc-2U)



innovation or uniqueness defined by NEFCO's internal considerations. This points to shortcomings in project design and implementation and asymmetric power relations within the project, where decision making does not rest with the Ukrainian Agency for Energy Efficiency. These issues, if not addressed, can lead to frustration among partner institutions and beneficiaries. It is not clear from reporting whether the rejected applicants have been directed effectively to more appropriate funding sources, or subsequently found support for their proposals.

### 5.3. Sustainability of the results and impact achieved

#### EQ3. What has (have) been the level(s) of sustainability of the results and impact achieved over the period of time?

- EQ3a. For which of the results and impact areas is there evidence that the benefits achieved are lasting? Why?
- EQ3b. What has been the extent of sustainability of results and impact in terms of a) financial, b) economic, c) social, d) environmental, and e) institutional capacities of the systems needed to sustain net benefits over time?
- EQ3c. What strategies have the Ministry employed in order to maximize sustainability? Which of them have been the most successful and why? Have projects and programmes adequately planned for sustainability?

#### Box 3 Answer to EQ3 – Main findings

(Finding 3.1) The picture of sustainability emerging from the evaluation is mixed. In most cases, interventions have not become self-sustaining. However, Finland's commitment to maintain funding across several iterations of the same projects has led to sustainability in the case of several projects in Central Asia (e.g., free legal aid in Tajikistan and the Kyrgyz Republic, and fisheries and aquaculture in the Kyrgyz Republic). This reflected well the fact that many projects require continued long-term support in order for necessary institutional and attitudinal change to be achieved (see EQ2).

(Finding 3.2) The MFA does not have well-developed procedures regarding the planning for and review of sustainability. Rather it is left to the inertia of follow-on funding to ensure sustainability. There are substantive gaps in the documentary trace, compounded by institutional memory limitations within MFA and among implementing partner organisations.

(Finding 3.3) Building ownership is a vital ingredient in achieving sustainability. There is variation in the extent to which Finnish-supported interventions are effectively promoting ownership among beneficiaries. In Kyrgyzstan, for example, government ownership of water management reforms is reported to be weak. In the most successful cases, this included strong commitments from all national stakeholders being achieved (from national authorities providing funding and the necessary legislation and infrastructure, private sector engagement in taking results forward, local communities taking responsibility for results at their level).



### 5.3.1. Evidence that the benefits achieved are lasting

**With regard to the results achieved in the eight countries that were supported with multi-year interventions under WEI I, but which were not subsequently included in WEI II and Phase III, the trace of sustainability of results is difficult to establish for the most part.** There is a gap in the documentary trace held by MFA. Monitoring of sustainability of projects post-funding has not been practised, and the results of these interventions were not referred to in subsequent MFA reports, strategies, or programmatic documentation. Analysis by the ET showed that some interventions continued post-funding thanks to support of other donors (e.g., the geo-portal in Ukraine, the European Humanities University in Lithuania). However, the gaps in MFA reporting, and that of implementing partner organisations, does not allow for accurate quantification of how many interventions have continued after the end of Finnish support in circa 2013-15. In general, there is a paucity of evidence relating to the lasting effects of projects supported under WEI I in the South Caucasus, which an ex-post evaluation cannot compensate for.

It is also necessary to emphasise here that Finland is a small donor in terms of the funding allocated to development cooperation in the region – in the three focus partner countries Finland is not in the top 10 of donors by funding level, for example. Tracing sustainability has limitations, therefore – particularly with regard to system- or sector-wide, national-level change. For the most part, the focus needs to be at the level of the institutions, communities, individuals which have been the direct beneficiaries of interventions in which Finland has played a role as a donor.

**For the three case countries most closely covered in the evaluation, differing patterns are seen between the interventions implemented in Central Asia, and the Ukraine portfolio** – in the case of the latter, there has been significant change in the make-up of the portfolio contents across the three phases, while the two Central Asian countries have seen continuation of support for the same package of interventions for the most part. In that region, the beneficiaries and implementing organisations have had time to develop a pattern of trust, shared responsibilities, knowledge needed to shape implementation, address setbacks encountered, and to build a foundation for sustainability. The interventions have, importantly, been able to build strong links to their respective state/governmental stakeholders, which has brought considerable benefits in terms of securing the projects' results and potential legacy.

In the case of Ukraine, the contexts in which interventions have been delivered (particularly the crisis situation in the aftermath of the 2014 events) have put a strain on development cooperation activities, and on the building of sound foundations needed for sustained effects. The Phase III projects on education and energy sector reforms represent an ambitious move by MFA Finland, therefore – as these initiatives place Finland at the core of structural reforms which are high-profile, and for which there are considerable expectations and pressure emanating from the general public, policymakers, and other donors. At the current time it is possible only to discuss the prospects for sustainability – which will depend on long-term commitment by all key stakeholders, including the Government of Ukraine, the international donor community and financial institutions, progress made in structural reforms, the state of the Ukrainian economy, as well as the engagement by and support of institutions and professional groups charged with implementing the reforms.

**A mixed pattern is observed regarding the extent of sustainability of results and impact.** For a number of interventions, work has been in the sphere of policy reform, legislative change, establishing standards and regulatory procedures, promoting accession to international agreements, and encouraging alignment with European standards. This can involve advocacy





efforts (e.g., CSOs pressing for the adoption of changes to laws regarding vulnerable groups), technical assistance (as provided by CoE and ODIHR) in guiding legislative change in line with international norms and commitments and assistance in leading to the signing of international agreements, conventions. While these are achievements in their own rights, and can be considered sustainable to the extent that they are unlikely to be unwound, their long-term impact on the ground must be considered on a case by case basis. Sustainability is heavily dependent on continued donor funding and involvement to entrench progress made and turn commitments into concrete results. Regarding the areas of support covered under the three phases, the following patterns have been identified:

**In the area of Human Rights, democracy, good governance and Rule of Law, sustainability can be seen most clearly in those cases where support has contributed to changes in or the introduction of new legislation, ratification of international treaties, development of new regulations and procedures, establishment of new institutions.** This has included, for example, the adoption of laws relating to protection of ethnic minority populations, persons with disabilities, the rights of IDPs, and legislation relating to domestic violence. However, as discussed above, the fact of sustainability at policy level (e.g., a new law, once passed, can be assumed to remain in force), does not necessarily translate into implementation results on the grass-roots level. Structures and procedures need to be put in place, meaning that ownership and responsibility for funding have been assumed by relevant national stakeholders, for instance) – The level of detail needed to ascertain to what extent changes in behaviour and attitudes have followed (e.g., have police forces adapted to new requirements relating to the treatment of victims of abuse, have social services come to treat persons with disabilities in line with new regulations) is generally not visible in the documentary trace or in feedback.

**In the energy and environment sphere, sustainability is more easily traceable in cases where a transfer of technology took place, or where investment was made into infrastructure-focused projects, where a lasting legacy can be seen in tangible, material terms.** With regard to capacity-building in environmental institutions, the level of sustainability is harder to establish, but the evidence generally points to fragile patterns; e.g., in the case of ICI projects in Central Asia, which report constant challenges of turnover of staff and under-resourcing of the institutions.

**As also shown below, sustainability in the area of economic development is most traceable either at the macro-level** (e.g., introduction of legislation, procedures, institutions that improve the business climate in the partner country), **or at the micro-level of direct beneficiaries of projects that have led to job creation.**, i.e. within communities, small-medium sized enterprises. It is not feasible, based on the evidence available, to extrapolate the broader effects of sustainability that might be achieved through multiplication of results (e.g., expansion of job creation in a region, or nationwide, traceable to the contribution of a particular intervention or Finland's support to a specific sector).

### **5.3.2. Sustainability of in terms of financial, economic, social, environmental and institutional capacities**

**The picture of sustainability emerging from the evaluation is mixed.** In terms of financial sustainability, only a few positive examples stand out, while the majority of projects and their legacy highly depends on continued funding and is far from being self-sustaining. Likewise, there have been encouraging signs for economic sustainability mainly in relation to the support to the



fishery sector in Kyrgyz Republic but their robustness is difficult to judge (nonetheless in view of the implications of the Covid-19 pandemic). It is too early to safely assess even prospects of social sustainability, as societal progress takes time and many relevant projects have only started recently. Long-term support has proven promising for environmental sustainability mainly through infrastructure and technology-related investments but also by establishing Environmental Impact Assessments in relevant sectors. Finally, in cases where projects have made efforts to improve the institutional capacities of partner organisations, the prospects for sustainability are encouraging, but turnover of staff remains a problem.

The extent of sustainability across the portfolio is largely case-dependent and often projects will have good prospects in one dimension, but face challenges in another. The following sections deal with these different dimension in more detail to showcase the aspects mentioned above.

**For many Finnish-supported projects, financial sustainability has been a challenging goal and evidence clearly shows the time required for sustainable changes and the risks associated with ending funding prematurely before sensible prospects of sustainability are achieved.** Financial sustainability highly depends on the availability of financing of the Government and other counterpart institutions for maintaining and further improving the service capacities after project termination. However, governments have limited fiscal space and civil society remains entirely dependent on donor support. This has been a problem, for example in Ukraine, where the ENVSEC initiative, which supported several trans-border projects, was discontinued shortly after Finnish funding ended. In Kyrgyz Republic, due to financial constraints of the Government, the state institute Kyrgyzhydromet is now operating only for three days a week. As a consequence of these challenges, many projects (and their expected results) still depend – and are likely to depend for the foreseeable future – on ongoing external support. For example, support to structural reforms via the work of EBRD and the CoE, require the sustained effort of the donor community, given the challenges faced by Ukraine in the context of political and security crises and the nature of socio-economic and environmental contexts. In some cases, financial sustainability of some projects whose funding was discontinued by Finland was ensured through the financial support by other donors, e.g., the hosting of Geoportal is now funded by the WB and the PADOS project initiative continued with some support from the EU. However, there are also a few encouraging examples. The government agency set up to oversee the provision of free legal aid in Tajikistan (SALAC) was launched with 100% donor funding (Finland and Switzerland) in 2016, and is now gradually moving towards self-funding from the national government.

**There have been encouraging examples of economic sustainability. However, the scale of such achievements needs to be kept in perspective – they are relatively small, in comparison with the overall challenges facing the partner countries.** As noted in section 5.2, there have been a range of success stories with regard to jobs creation and benefits for communities from the economic developments seen on the basis of project results. The example of the fishery and aquaculture project in Kyrgyzstan shows what can be achieved with long-term support. In the Kyrgyz case, fisheries and aquaculture collapsed after the end of the USSR, with under 100 persons employed when the project started. By 2023, it is anticipated (under the national programme's plans) that up to 37,000 additional jobs will have been created in this industry. Care will need to be taken moving forward that local communities' ownership is not overridden by the financial concerns of large companies, including foreign investors. In general, based on stakeholder interviews, there was a good amount of confidence that the aquaculture and fishery, the enterprises set up and the jobs created will sustain, even though the COVID-19 pandemic may have negative impacts.



**Finnish projects have, in various sectors, aimed to address social cohesion and societal priorities with some success, but achieving social sustainability of results is a tough challenge.** The fragile situation in Ukraine and the overall difficult context for human rights and the civil society in the region are strong constraining factors. Social changes require time, and in several cases the main projects in this area of support are relatively new and ongoing, e.g., the Learning Together and the FUTF project in Ukraine. There are a few positive examples to note, such as the Access to Justice and Equal before Law projects in Kyrgyz Republic that have made significant progress in raising awareness among the PwDs and women on their rights. Most impressive, the Crimea Policy Dialogue project also stands as an example of how, against the odds, the effects of its contribution have been sustained in the communities in Ukraine where it worked following the illegal annexation of Crimea – but also within Crimea itself, where despite the fact that the region is now under Russian occupation, the achievements made by the project in fostering inter-ethnic trust can still be felt (according to beneficiary responses to the evaluation).

**The environment has been a constant focal area for support across the 2009-2021 period, and, accordingly, there are signs of environmental sustainability across a range of countries.** In Tajikistan, the EBRD funded interventions e.g., drinking and sewage water as well as waste management projects, included Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) studies and conclusions. In addition, mitigation measures will be mandatory for future construction of water and waste management infrastructure. The results achieved by ENVSEC projects, for instance, can still be seen in those cases where the activities led to a tangible result in the sphere of cross-border cooperation. Institutional cooperation has also been important in ensuring that the partner institutions continue to function and respond better to challenges in the environmental sphere.

**Supporting the capacity-development of beneficiary institutions (whether existing organisations, or the putting in place of new institutions) has been a key aspect of securing sustainability for a range of interventions.** This has included support to national agencies in the development of strategies and national plans –e.g., the FAO Fishery project has assisted the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic to design a ‘Programme for the Development of Fishery and Aquaculture in the Kyrgyz Republic for 2019-2023’, the UNDP Aid for Trade project in Tajikistan supported national authorities to produce the country’s ‘Export Development Programme 2021-2025’, and the ILO project in the Kyrgyz Republic has made a strong contribution to the development of national Occupational Safety and Health standards and procedures. Evidence from interviews and the document review suggests that the institutional capacities of the ICI institutions both in terms of equipment and, to some extent, human capacity have been sustained over the evaluation period and that newly acquired knowledge has been integrated into the system of work of the concerned institutions. The large pool of experts trained as well as continuous close cooperation with experts on a regional level (mostly between Tajikistan and Kyrgyz Republic) has contributed positively to that effect. As a consequence, Tajikhydromet and Kyrgyzhydromet have been able to deliver their services with introduced methods and technologies (geology and meteorology) from the projects.

**Capacity development has facilitated sustainability**

**In all countries, however, staff turnover in ministries and public agencies is high and constitutes a risk for the continuity of activities and sustainability of results.** This problem is typically attributed to low pay, a poor work environment, and the availability of jobs for skilled staff in the private sector or donor-financed projects.



### 5.3.3. Strategies employed in order to maximize sustainability

**Supporting the development of ownership at the policy level is crucial to ensure sustainability – here, Finnish cooperation has made a significant contribution** through working closely with national governments and agencies in the process of drafting new laws, setting up new institutional arrangements, drawing up national strategies for e.g., export development. In the case of the school reform project in Ukraine, the strong demand-driven nature of the intervention already indicates the substantive ownership of the process by the Ukrainian ministry – here the role of Finnish support is to work with the Ministry in contributing to the achievement of goals identified in its vision for reform.

As stated above, a case-by case approach is needed. In Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, Access to Justice, providing free legal aid, appears to have proven a popular success and the Tajik government is taking steps to ensure that the financial resources needed to continue programmes are forthcoming. Yet, ownership results only from a process which includes internalising the cultural aspects of needed changes and this is not always observed. In the Kyrgyz Republic, the level of institutional ownership in the water sector interventions apparently remains weak among Kyrgyz institutions and beneficiaries.

In general, FLC projects have potential to achieve a very strong degree of ownership among the CSOs and the beneficiaries, which is important given their focus on the needs of communities and persons in disadvantaged positions. Evidence shows that beneficiaries value their experience of projects and continue to use knowledge and skills acquired through their participation in FLC-funded activities. For instance, a project in Ukraine that targeted integration of internally displaced women through entrepreneurial mentorship scheme has seen the continuation of the networking among entrepreneurs post project, according to the feedback received by the ET, while an FLC project supported in Moldova focused on recognising fake news and led to the introduction of an elective subject on this matter in Moldovan schools.

**There has not been a clearly defined strategy in place that would specify the rationale for decision-making regarding sustainability, including decision-making on continuation or termination of support. The absence of exit strategies and clear trigger points represents a gap in the programmatic approach of MFA.** The decision-making trace regarding the selection, termination, continuation of projects across phases is not clear enough, according to the documentation and interview feedback reviewed by the ET. There is no end-of-phase reporting, for instance, for the portfolio as a whole that would clearly set out the rationale for such decisions.

The WEI II brochure, presenting the second phase of the Wider Europe Initiative, stated that the most successful projects from WEI I had been retained. However, certain interventions that had performed effectively under WEI I were phased out at quite short notice due to the decision to focus support only on the poorest countries of the region. The evidence reviewed by the current evaluation shows that, among those for which Finnish support ended, there are cases of projects that were able to continue with funding from other donors (e.g., the European Humanities University), while others were not able to continue (or a trace of subsequent post-funding activity is difficult to find), or had completed their planned work by the time of termination. A trace of donor coordination over such handovers of projects is not evident in the documentation made available to the ET.



In the countries selected for continuation of long-term ODA project support, the decision-making on the portfolio has also not been explicitly recorded in the documentary trace accessed by the ET (which includes internal MFA memos). A number of projects in Central Asia have continued across phases, with the rationale that this would allow the projects to build towards sustainability, although detailed planning for sustainability is not set out.

There is, as can be expected, variation seen on the question of sustainability planning between those interventions where Finland is the sole donor, and multi-bi projects where Finland is one of a group of donors – in the latter case, MFA's funding decisions are not as contingent on sustainability planning as they are when Finland is the sole donor.

**MFA's approach to promoting sustainability has varied across the portfolio. Sustainability plans, strategies for developing ownership among beneficiaries, and clearly defined exit strategies, are generally not prioritised or laid out in detail in programmatic documentation.**

In the Central Asian projects, ownership has taken time to develop at all levels, with variation seen between the cases of the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan – the former country seeing more progress in general, although political and institutional instability has been an impeding factor. By Phase III, the cumulative effects of the patient support provided by Finland (and other donors, where relevant) had led to the emergence of more solid foundations of ownership among the beneficiaries, which has allowed for the phasing out of projects in a manner conducive to the maintenance of effects. For example, the meteorological institute in Tajikistan is starting to use its strengthened capacities to offer services on a commercial basis, while the fishery and aquaculture industry has seen strong ownership development by state authorities, local communities, and commercial organisations, in recognition of the strengthened nature and potential of the sector.

In the case of Ukraine, the question of ownership is paramount because of the linkage of project activities to reform agendas. In the sphere of education, ownership by national stakeholders is strong and is used as the basis for generally effective cooperation with Finland and other donors. In the sphere of structural reforms, ownership is underpinned by the fact that Ukrainian policymakers are responsible for the processes that are the focus of change efforts. A more problematic pattern of ownership development is seen in the sphere of energy efficiency, where an apparent asymmetric power relations situation has emerged in the implementation of the Finnish-supported intervention – as decision-making on funding awards to project proposals lies in the hands of NEFCO, not the Ukrainian state agency for energy efficiency.

With regard to practices adopted at the project level to ensure sustainability, there are common approaches seen across countries and types of modality – e.g., the involvement of local experts in project design and implementation, there is frequent search for multiplier effects through training of trainers and other methods, and knowledge and expertise are integrated into curricular and training programmes. Online resources and portals are commonly used, although sustainability of these resources can be a challenge, particularly post-funding.

For a number of projects, engagement with other donors to seek follow-on funding (or an increase in funding) to supplement or replace the Finnish support is seen (this includes the adoption of Finnish-initiated projects by EU Delegations in Central Asia, the World Bank has also stepped into ensure follow-on funding in cases).



## 5.4. Effectiveness of Finland's Development Cooperation 2018–2021

**EQ4. To what extent have the Country Strategies of 2018-2021/2 achieved their planned results and contributed to the realization of Finland's development policy objectives?**

- EQ4a. What results have been produced until now, who and how many have benefitted from them? What groups were not reached, if any?
- EQ4b. To what extent is implementation on track to achieve the set objectives by the end of 2021? Note any major deviations or risks to achieving objectives and the reasons behind them. Includes analysis by funding instrument.
- EQ4c. Are there any lost opportunities or potential for future engagement in the region?

**Remark on challenges faced by the team when answering EQ4:** As an overarching observation, it should be noted that there are major weaknesses in the quality of reporting on results at the level of Country Programmes. The measurement of results achieved is also impeded by certain MFA indicators being pitched at too high a level to be appropriate to the scale and scope of development cooperation activities supported by Finland. References such as to the “WB Doing Business Report” measure outcomes of Finnish cooperation against in-country developments that MFA action does not control or aim for. This is particularly true for Central Asia, while deemed a little more appropriate for Ukraine where activities aimed at improving business climate in Phase III are at least a continuation of earlier efforts and therefore more likely to have contributed to any achievement in this area. Evaluation reports of individual projects also tend to be weak, with insufficient coverage of results in terms of mapping against the projects' expected results framework. MFA country programmes are not accompanied by detailed reporting that would trace results per impact areas and associated outcomes. Triangulation of information gained from interviews and the surveys as well as through context analysis was used to complement the evidence base and to compensate for the shortcomings mentioned above. The key findings that emerged from that process are summarised in the box below.



#### Box 4 Answer to EQ4 – Main findings

(Finding 4.1) Despite progress observed in all areas, overall achievement of the expected results has been mixed. Achievements of results were evidenced in both the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan in all three impact areas (human rights and rule of law, economic growth, and environmental sustainability). However, results in the latter impact area have not been fully achieved in the case of Tajikistan due to the suspension of funding. In Ukraine, mixed results were achieved across all three impact areas (education, energy, human rights).

(Finding 4.2) There was a noticeable difference between the portfolios in the Central Asian countries, and that delivered in Ukraine, in terms of the programmatic cycle – the former was composed of continuation projects that have been supported over three phases, several of which have come to the end of their funding from Finland in Phase III; while in Ukraine, there were several new projects. While projects in Central Asia have been on track to achieve their targets over the 2018-20 period for the most part, the newly introduced projects in Ukraine encountered significant delays in their start-up phase.

(Finding 4.3) In all countries, implementation has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and the working and travel restrictions in place in the region. Projects have had to cancel or postpone activities, reduce the scope of work conducted. Mediating actions such as moving to online mode of delivery have been adopted, although outreach to persons in disadvantaged positions has been affected because of lack of access to the necessary IT resources.

(Finding 4.4) With regard to coverage of cross-cutting objectives and HRBA, the portfolio in Phase III has continued to address these priorities both in the form of targeted actions and through mainstreaming. However, there are important variations in the integration of cross-cutting objectives in project design and implementation. The application of HRBA has also varied within the portfolio and across phase of the projects (see EQ5).

(Finding 4.5) As shown in EQ5, the mix of instruments deployed in the portfolios in all countries has been effective and has allowed MFA to make a meaningful contribution and maximise the resources. Synergies within the portfolio remain implicit for the most part – there is scope to render synergies more explicit.

(Finding 4.6) The evaluation team found no evidence that opportunities or potential for future engagement were missed by Finland's development cooperation. In Ukraine, the programming responded to demand-driven dynamics and new investments were made in major interventions addressing core reform agendas. In Central Asia, the reduction of funding does not allow much room for taking on new opportunities. The foreseen renewal of cooperation with Uzbekistan in the 2021-2024 Strategy for Central Asia shows that Finland has remained alert and flexible enough to respond to opening opportunities for collaboration.



### 5.4.1. Results from the latest country strategies and their beneficiaries

**In both the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan some results were achieved in all three impact areas (1) more equal societies and strengthened realisation of human rights and rule of law, 2) sustainable and inclusive economic growth, and 3) environmentally sustainable society). However, results in the third impact area have not been fully achieved in the case of Tajikistan due to the suspension of funding and lengthy procedures for project approval.**

As stated in the Country Strategy for Development Cooperation with the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan for the 2018-2021 period, the rationale for support was underpinned by Finland’s 2016 development policy, which committed Finland to *“Support Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, the poorest countries of Central Asia. Finland’s support will be used to strengthen human rights, the rule of law, the business environment, water resource management, and climate change preparedness.”*

The 2019 annual review of results produced by MFA Finland ranked performance of the portfolio as a whole, in both countries, as ‘yellow’ or ‘Satisfactory (generally on track – but adjustments and/or speeding up necessary), i.e. achievement of 60-80% of the target’. However, the MFA report provides little information detailing how this assessment was arrived at, the nature of issues, arising and action points to address them. Table 4 Achievements of results per impact area in Tajikistan and the Kyrgyz Republic summarises the actual achievements of the results per impact area, as reported by the implementing organisations.

**Table 4 Achievements of results per impact area in Tajikistan and the Kyrgyz Republic**

IMPACT AREA	ACHIEVEMENTS <sup>28</sup>
Impact area 1: More equal societies and strengthened realization of human rights and rule of law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Free legal aid centres have provided legal aid to tens of thousands of citizens in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan.</li> <li>The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was signed in Tajikistan in 2018 and ratified in the Kyrgyz Republic in 2019.</li> <li>The Law “On Legal Aid” along with amendments to five other laws and Codes has been adopted on 22 of April 2020 in Tajikistan. A new version of the Law on “Free Legal Aid” was drafted in order to introduce important amendments to strengthen the quality of legal aid services, as well as increase coverage and recipients of the state-funded legal aid system in the Kyrgyz Republic.</li> </ul>
Impact area 2: Sustainable and inclusive economic growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capacity studies that focus on environmental sustainability and job-rich growth support produced in the Kyrgyz Republic ; the elaboration of the State Export Development Programme for the period of 2021-2025 (EDP-2025) and in the elaboration of the mechanism for functioning the law “On State Services” in Tajikistan; the development of a new State Programme on Reducing the Level of Unregistered (Informal) Employment in Tajikistan for 2019-2023 and its Implementation Plan (adopted in September 2019); the State Programme on improving work standard-setting and wages in Tajikistan for 2020-2027 was developed.</li> <li>232 companies (in 2020) supported through export promotion activities in the Kyrgyz Republic; in Tajikistan, the Trade Support Institutions (TSIs) supported 41 (15 headed by women) Small-Medium Sized Enterprises with more than 200 staff (79% women) in 2020; women entrepreneurs were supported in both countries through mentorship schemes; Export contracts secured in the Kyrgyz Republic (USD 18 million).</li> </ul>

<sup>28</sup> Development cooperation activities have contributed to the achievements of expected results as demonstrated by the following evidence, which map against the outcome indicators included in the results framework to the extent the available data allow





Impact area 3: Environmentally sustainable society	Activities were implemented only in the Kyrgyz Republic as projects planned to be implemented in this area in Tajikistan are on hold. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Strengthened dialogue between Kazakhstan and the Kyrgyz Republic on the issues of the Chu-Talas basin; concept preparation for the mechanism of joint development and decision-making;</li><li>• Geo-portal hosting digitalised maps have been launched and utilised.</li></ul>
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Sources: Country reviews, Volume 2

**In Ukraine, results have been achieved with varying success across all three impact areas.**

Finland’s development cooperation support for Ukraine over this period has been implemented alongside the overall contribution made by Finland to stabilisation efforts of the Ukrainian authorities and international community related to the ongoing challenges faced since 2014, including the aftermath of the violation of Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity. In total, more than EUR 56 million has been provided by Finland over 2014-2020 to support development cooperation projects, the work of international organisations, humanitarian aid and crisis management work, secondment of experts to the OSCE Monitoring Mission, and experts in border control, elections, anti-corruption measures, and public administration reform (MFA 2020d). The development cooperation portfolio has formed part of this broader package of support, with the Embassy of Finland in Ukraine playing a key coordinating role in oversight.

The development cooperation portfolio in Ukraine has comprised four interventions mapped onto the three impact areas. Three out of four interventions are new, while Finland’s support to the CoE Action Plan for Ukraine is a continuation of support that commenced under Phase II. In addition, Finland continued to support development cooperation activities implemented by the OSCE in Ukraine and the management of the FLC portfolio (not included in the results framework).

The 2019 annual review of results produced by MFA Finland ranked performance of the portfolio as a whole as ‘yellow’ or ‘Satisfactory (generally on track – but adjustments and/or speeding up necessary), i.e. achievement of 60-80% of the target’. The MFA report identifies some issues with project implementation for all three impact areas, although no action points were presented in the review. Table 5 Achievements of results per impact area in Ukraine summarises the actual achievements of the results per impact area, as reported by the implementing organisations.



**Table 5 Achievements of results per impact area in Ukraine**

IMPACT AREA	ACHIEVEMENTS
Impact area I: Ukrainian basic and vocational education are reformed to meet European standards and the education system is appreciated by citizens.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modernisation agenda of basic education (elementary school) – development of: new curricula for grades 1-3; professional teacher standards; teacher standards for teaching Ukrainian SL/L2 in primary education; new teacher professional development system based on European experience.</li> <li>• Direct beneficiaries of the project are The Ministry of Education and Science, Teacher Training Institutes and their staff, teachers, pupils for whom Ukrainian is not a native language</li> <li>• VET reform- The project that addresses Vocational Education and Training reforms has been delayed and the ET was not in a position to assess its progress (no documentary evidence relating to progress in implementation was made available. Interviewees could not comment on the progress in implementation).</li> </ul>
Impact area II: Improved investor confidence in the Ukrainian energy sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress has been made towards the development of a concept for a Green Energy Fund.</li> <li>• EIB investment of multi-million in energy efficiency project has been unlocked.</li> </ul>
Impact area III: Ukrainian legislation, institutions and practice are better in line with European standards in the areas of human rights, the rule of law and democracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The introduction of a rehabilitative approach to offenders in the penitentiary system.</li> <li>• Increased alignment of internal regulations of the prosecution service with CoE standards.</li> <li>• Amalgamation of communities and capacity building of public administration as part of the decentralisation reform.</li> <li>• Ratification of Protocol No.16 to the ECHR in 2018.</li> <li>• The establishment of an individual constitutional complaint mechanism and concrete measures to execute specific judgements of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR).</li> </ul>

Sources: Country Reviews, Volume 2, and CoE Action Plan for Ukraine 2018-2021, CoE Progress Review Report (1 January 2018 – 31 December 2019)

As noted in the country review for the Kyrgyz Republic, **certain indicators set by MFA for measurement of achievements can be seen as problematic, as they are pitched at too high a level to be appropriate to the scale and scope of development cooperation activities supported by Finland.** For instance, the Country Strategy states that: *“The first expected outcome under this impact area [sustainable and economic growth] is a diversified and expanding private sector that provides decent working conditions. The outcome will be measured by country specific analyses such as the Economist Intelligence Unit Country Report, and WB Doing Business Report.”* In the case of Ukraine, in contrast, reference to such indicators as the ‘World Bank Ease of Doing Business’ index, can be regarded as more appropriate to the case of the portfolio as activities have continued under Phase III that work towards business climate improvement (e.g., CoE’s work on anti-corruption measures).

#### **5.4.2. Extent to which the implementation is on track to achieve the set objectives by the end of 2021**

**For the most part projects in Central Asia have been on track to achieve their targets over the 2018-2020 period** (according to documentary analysis and stakeholder consultations). **However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was not possible to conduct all planned activities during 2020-21. The outreach to people in most disadvantaged positions was also negatively affected due the transfer of activities into online mode.** According to the evidence reviewed (reporting and feedback) all projects have encountered difficulties because



of the COVID-19 pandemic, which have led to changes and reductions in the workplans of projects, with a knock-on effect seen among the beneficiaries, including vulnerable populations who are target groups for several projects. The COVID-19 pandemic and response measures taken by the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic have also had an unprecedented impact on the justice system. Courts and other important government services, such as crisis centres for victims of domestic violence, have closed, reduced their activities, or changed their operations. This has negatively affected access to justice and legal aid, especially for vulnerable groups: women and children at risk of violence, people with disabilities, undocumented migrants, homeless people, refugees. As a response, project implementing organisations opened a hotline accessible to all. However, the successful experience of rolling out free legal aid to persons in disadvantaged positions has been hit by a steep drop in numbers of persons applying (in part because the activity had to move online, which reduces its accessibility to its target audience). In the Kyrgyz Republic the numbers of people referring to the FLA Centres dropped from 8 169 people in 2019 to 3 865 people consulted in 2020 (country review).

The Aid for Trade activities in Tajikistan have been also affected negatively by restrictions on cross-border travel, which affected on trade flows. ICI projects have been affected most, as communication between Finnish and Kyrgyz partners was limited to the online mode.

**In Ukraine, all of the three newly introduced projects in the education and energy efficiency portfolio encountered significant delays in their start-up phase**, for a range of reasons. Finnish involvement in the TVET skills project was held up as the process of identifying the role to be played by Finland in project implementation took a significant amount of time, according to feedback from stakeholders. The energy efficiency and school reform projects both took time to set up and become fully operational – notwithstanding a long lead-in time for the school reform project, for instance, involving an extensive identification exercise. Both projects had to adjust their management structures and the composition of expert teams.

The COVID-19 pandemic has further added to delays across all projects – although it has prompted adjustments that can lead to more effective implementation further into the projects (e.g., better use of online materials in the school reform project than originally planned).

**Both the school reform and energy efficiency projects in Ukraine have achieved a varying degree of completion of planned activities** (according to the documentary review and feedback from stakeholders). The education project had to adapt to changes in the MOES and shifts in emphasis of the project. Some initially planned activities were transferred to other organisations, e.g., UNICEF, and were replaced by new activities at the request of the MOES. Other changes were necessary in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Both the project's own reporting and the 2020 evaluation report note that the project was too slow in its move from face-to-face activities onto tele/online mode of delivery. Where the project had more control over the context of implementation, more progress has been made –e.g., capacity-development activities for teachers and trainers; development of online resources; and support to the MOES in information campaign activities aimed at the Ukrainian public. In those matters where the project had less influence over the context, progress has been more difficult, and even stalled –e.g., the project could not proceed with the planned publication of textbooks because the required manuscript were not submitted to the project. The project also could not conduct the planned summer camps for linguistic minorities due to the COVID-19 restrictions in 2020.

The energy efficiency project has encountered a backlog in the first two years of implementation. The 2020 external project evaluation report noted that a pipeline of projects had been created. The



current evaluation's review of NEFCO websites shows that completed FUTF-funded projects had encountered delays in the course of their implementation due to the COVID-19 pandemic. There is a risk that the project pipeline can be affected by the pandemic, thus rendering completion of projects within the project lifespan problematic.

The Finnish support to the CoE takes the form of a financial contribution that is then deployed across the projects included in the CoE Action Plan for Ukraine, mapped against the broad remit covered under the mandate of the Country Office's operations. This has included, inter alia, work on constitutional and legal reforms, minority rights, justice sector reform, decentralisation and local government reform, implementation of the Istanbul Convention, etc. Many of the project activities represent continuation projects that the Office has worked on for many years. Many, moreover, focus on the process of engagement rather than being tied to achieving concrete results within a specified time frame.

**The 2019 MFA annual results report for the Ukraine country strategy (MFA 2020a) notes a number of areas where progress has been less than expected:** *“Constitutional amendments on decentralization are still pending, the electoral reform is incomplete, the Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence has not been ratified, and recommendations on protecting minorities’ linguistic and educational rights have not been fully implemented. The objective aiming to reduce the number of public institutions posed certain challenges.”* However, the current report notes that the mentioned delays can all be related to exogenous factors, i.e., should not be attributed to shortcomings of project-level activity. To give an example, ratifications of constitutional amendments is the responsibility of parliament, not the CoE.

**With regard to coverage of cross-cutting objectives, HRBA, gender equality, the Central Asia portfolio in Phase III has continued to address these priorities in the form of targeted actions and through mainstreaming. Integration of cross-cutting objectives is most evident in the work of the UNDP and ILO.** The portfolio relating to Impact area I is linked to human rights protection, protection of the right to decent work, maternity rights, rights of people with disabilities. The Leave No-one Behind (LNOB) Principle is integrated by targeting persons in most vulnerable positions from remote rural areas, women, persons with disabilities, and victims of domestic violence. The cross-cutting objectives of gender equality and environmental sustainability have been integrated in Finland's trade-related activities in the region, e.g. through a dedicated programme for women entrepreneurs, jobs creation for women, and incorporating environmental assessments into studies. The ICI portfolio incorporates environmental sustainability through the focus of its work. Other aspects of mainstreaming were not identified by the ET. Integration of HRBA varies across the Central Asia portfolio. In the case of the rule of law portfolio, integration of the HRBA is evidenced by the independent evaluation reports. In the case of trade promotion, HRBA is neither presented in the project document nor explicitly referred to in the accompanying project progress reports. No integration of HRBA in ICI-run project implementation has been identified.

Integration of cross-cutting objectives (gender equality, HRBA) has varied within the portfolio. The CoE Action Plan can be seen as a programme of targeted actions that, in combination, address human rights, non-discrimination, rights of persons in disadvantaged positions (minority groups, IDPs), gender equality. MFA Finland has increased its contribution to the work of the CoE Ukraine through the secondment of gender advisers, who are posted for a 3-year period to support the Country Office in its work (both with regard to the internal portfolio of projects, to support gender



mainstreaming in project activities; and with regard to the CoE's engagement with Ukrainian institutions and communities). The evidence shows that the two gender advisers posted to date have made a significant contribution, not only to work conducted in Ukraine, but more broadly to CoE offices in the Eastern Partnership region, and to the CoE as a whole through co-authoring a toolkit for implementing CoE guidelines on gender mainstreaming.

FUTF is a targeted action with regard to environmental sustainability. The project conducted an HRBA analysis at the start of the project, and the call for project proposals includes the requirement for applications to demonstrate gender and human rights sensitivity. However, the project itself does not appear to mainstream gender or integrate considerations of HRBA into project selection criteria. The Learning Together project integrates HRBA in the design and conduct of its activities (e.g., development of curricula and standards). It also contains a component that targets the needs of minority language groups. The project does not report on the nature of gender mainstreaming within the project – reporting only contains gender disaggregated numbers of participants of project activities.

**Funds for Local Cooperation help maintain close links with civil society**

**FLC is regarded as an important aspect of the work of the Unit for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, not only with regard to its value in development cooperation, but also as a means of achieving synergies with Finland's foreign policy priorities in the region.** The FLC projects implemented in countries not covered by country strategies for development cooperation represent the only form of development cooperation activity supported by Finland, and therefore provide an important means of maintaining a presence, contributing to donor coordination. The survey responses on FLC received from all relevant Finnish diplomatic missions covering the 11 countries of the region noted the benefits of FLC for establishing and maintaining close links with civil society organisations, and for maintaining visibility of Finland as a donor that supports activities addressing communities' needs. FLC projects often tackle sensitive issues that are difficult to address at national level or through large-scale interventions, while small-scale grass-roots initiatives can build traction and lead to positive effects. Examples seen include work on integrating civil society in policy development in Turkmenistan, confidence-building among conflict-affected communities, addressing social stigmas and prejudice, assisting persons in vulnerable positions to gain economic independence, activities aimed at improving human rights conditions of persons detained by the police, and preventing torture.

**The modalities of Finnish development cooperation in the region had varying success in achieving the planned results, with multi-bilateral and multilateral / regional projects showing the strongest results.** The results achieved in the case of Central Asia, where long-term, multi-phase projects have reached the end of their cycle, can be attributed to a considerable extent to the ability of multilateral partner organisations such as UNDP, ILO, and FAO to leverage Finnish resources with their expertise, relations with national stakeholders, and global experience. This has ensured that interventions were able to gain traction and reach the desired targets notwithstanding often difficult challenges faced en route. Support to the CoE's Action Plan for Ukraine has allowed Finland to make a contribution to key structural reform processes in Ukraine. The focus here is on process – often the results will take considerable amount of time to become fully visible, but the constant engagement of CoE with national stakeholders, including government ministers and officials, parliamentarians, and professional groups, is an essential ingredient in building a platform for long-term effects.



Despite the fact that the ICI projects have been in place across three phases, there is still insufficient qualitative and quantitative data relating the cumulative effects achieved. Assessment of results is also difficult because other organisations and donors (such as the World Bank) are also engaged in supporting capacity -development of the same institutions, in certain cases. The early experience with private consulting companies has demonstrated a need to introduce measures to address certain shortcomings which have arisen and can be regarded as having affected progress towards results to at least some extent (see EQ5).

### 5.4.3. Lost opportunities or potential for future engagement in the region

**In the case of Central Asia, it is difficult to consider that opportunities were lost, given that the overriding factor that influenced the nature of support was the decision to reduce Finland’s commitment during Phase III.** The Country Strategy for Central Asia (MFA 2018a, p.19) notes: *“Cuts in Finland’s development funding have taken a heavy toll on aid programmes in Central Asia. During the strategy period the existing programme shrinks substantially 2019 and all present projects will be completed by the end of the strategy period.”* In this context, it would not be realistic to take on new opportunities. The priority was to ensure that the existing portfolio completed the planned activities prior to being phased out.

For the forthcoming 2021-2024 Strategy in Central Asia, it is noteworthy that Finland will be renewing development cooperation with Uzbekistan, responding to the opening up of opportunities for collaboration. The planned application of Nordic experience in regional cooperation is also significant, as it can serve to leverage Finnish expertise in addressing the challenges seen with regard to Central Asian regional cross-border relations.

**Regarding Ukraine, the programme of development cooperation saw significant new investments made by Finland into major interventions addressing core reform agendas in the Ukraine.** This signifies that opportunities were taken well by Finland, responding to demand-driven dynamics.

## 5.5. Management of Finland’s Development Cooperation, 2018-21

### EQ5. How has the development policy and cooperation been managed?

- EQ5a. How effective has the policy formulation, strategic planning, selection of interventions, partners and instruments been?
- EQ5b. To what extent is programmatic, regional or sector coordination points of view, RBM as well as synergies guiding the decisions made?
- EQ5c. To what extent has the Ministry’s guidelines on Human Rights Based Approach been applied in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation?
- EQ5d. What were the strengths and weaknesses of planning and implementation? What could the Ministry do to improve its management for impact, sustainability, effectiveness and relevance? How?



#### Box 5 Answer to EQ5 – Main findings

(Finding 5.1) The cuts seen in recent years in Finland's funding of development cooperation, staffing reductions and staff turnover in the MFA have had a negative effect on the ability of MFA to manage the development cooperation portfolio, include in terms of monitoring and learning.

(Finding 5.2) In the management of the programmatic cycle, the MFA is strongest at the identification and formulation stages which now benefit from extensive interaction between relevant MFA and external stakeholders. There is a well-established and comprehensive set of procedures used by MFA in screening project proposals. However, the extent to which monitoring, reporting, and analysis of lessons learned is achieved varies across the portfolio and is a gap at the level of the portfolio as a whole.

(Finding 5.3) Similarly, while HRBA is afforded strong emphasis at the identification and formulation phases of new projects, subsequent implementation and monitoring varies.

(Finding 5.4) There is no overarching strategic framework that would bring together all strands of development cooperation work conducted by the Unit, and which would also show the linkages to the work of other MFA departments in the target region in development cooperation. The two Country Strategies do not cross-reference each other and therefore appear to exist in isolation from one another, even though they are managed by the same regional unit. Inter-regional learning is not evidenced in the strategy documentation.

(Finding 5.5) Finland's ongoing partnerships with implementing organisations (multilateral and regional) are well-established, as are the ICI institutional relations. The new modality of engaging private consulting companies to implement key reform related projects requires close monitoring, as issues have arisen in the start-up phase in particular.

(Finding 5.6) The Fund for Local Cooperation has been used well to support small-scale projects that tackle important issues, often of a sensitive nature. It provides an invaluable link between the MFA teams and beneficiary civil society organisations. However, its use remains strongly limited by the availability of human resources at Embassy and MFA level.

### 5.5.1. Effectiveness of policy formulation, strategic planning, selection of interventions, partners and instruments

All development cooperation is managed by a small MFA team in Helsinki. The programmes delivered in Central Asia are supported according to different models – for the Kyrgyz Republic the Embassy of Finland to Kazakhstan is involved, whereas for Tajikistan the team of the roving ambassador to Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan is involved. For Ukraine, the Embassy of Finland to Ukraine is engaged, with the team there also committed to supporting the range of activities in humanitarian assistance, crisis management and other aspects of Finland's ongoing response to Ukraine's crisis situation. During the current, third phase, of the period under evaluation the primary focus of development cooperation managed by the Unit for Eastern Europe and Central Asia has been the implementation of the Country strategies for development cooperation with the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan (2018-2021) and Ukraine (2018-2022).



**A key feature of the 2018-2021 period relates to the ongoing effects of funding cuts introduced after WEI I, which have had impacts in terms of human resource capacities in the development cooperation sphere, compounded by frequent rotation of staff.** Whereas the WEI I MTE could report that Finland was regarded positively in the region as a whole as a trusted donor with a hands-on approach, by 2021 this status had been maintained only in three countries. As noted in the MTE of WEI II in 2016, the moves to reduce resource allocations were seen as a concern – and the outcomes are visible now, in the current phase.

The change in approach and the implications of the funding limitations have come to be a recurring theme in the evidence streams of the current evaluation. Operational staff have noted the impacts seen in their work, and the over-stretch of staff resources has been evidenced in the limitations seen in staff responses to the evaluation – a symptom of the institutional memory gaps that have been caused by staff rotation of staff and compounded by gaps in the documentary trace. This, according to the feedback received, has limited the ability of MFA to engage in management of the development cooperation portfolio. This is recognised in the fact that the Unit had been exempt from having to follow RBM procedures to the same extent seen in development cooperation activities implemented in other regions during the evaluation period.

**These factors affect MFA’s ability to operate effectively as a ‘learning organisation’, in the case of development cooperation in this region, as the net result is that insufficient attention is paid to incorporating lessons learned, engaging in effective monitoring, and reporting on results. Coverage of impact and sustainability, in particular, are afforded insufficient attention in the reporting by MFA.**

In the case of both Central Asian countries, the portfolio in Phase III represents continuation of projects started under Phase I, although as noted in the previous section, there has also been a process of phasing out existing interventions.

In the case of Ukraine, alongside the continuation of Finland’s contribution to the CoE Action Plan for Ukraine the portfolio in Phase III has included **several new interventions, a new sector (education sector reform), and a new direction in terms of project delivery** chosen through the engagement of private consulting companies to lead the implementation of interventions. The portfolio has also included delivery of an EU-funded (EUR 2 million) component integrated into the school reform project.

**For the continuation of interventions in both Country Strategies, an appraisal process was conducted by MFA which the Unit was able to refer to in confirming the decision to continue funding.** In the case of Tajikistan, however, as noted under EQ4 above, the actual continuation has been affected by suspension of activities in the case of certain interventions. **In the case of the new interventions introduced in Ukraine, a rigorous identification procedure was followed by MFA** (where relevant in cooperation with other donors, in the case of EU4Skills). As noted above, the demand-driven nature of the identification of sectors, focal activities for interventions, and partner organisation has been a key feature in Ukraine in this phase.

**Across the three countries, an effective continuation of Finnish support is seen with the respective multilateral and regional implementing organisations engaged in multi-bi interventions, bilateral projects, and framework agreement activities (CoE and OSCE).** The set of partner institutions is well-established, having worked across several phases, and provides support through the national, regional and global resource networks that the respective organisations are able to leverage. Selection of multilaterals has been largely “opportunistic”,





based on their substance know-how and their thematic alignment with Finland's policy priorities. The ICI projects continued in Central Asia, supporting important spheres that map against Finland's priorities. The management continued according to a well-established pattern, with the Finnish institutions leading in day-to-day implementation, liaising with the MFA on a regular basis. Selection of ICI interventions have been based on "Finnish added value" principle (development policy principle at the time of selection) and by selecting organisations which already had contacts and cooperation in the countries concerned. The new projects in Ukraine included engagement of an existing partner (NEFCO), with which MFA has previously worked in the country. The education sector projects have, at the request of the Ukrainian Ministry of Education and Science, involved Finnish partners from the education sector (University of Helsinki, Finnish National Agency for Education), while MFA selected two private consulting companies to manage the implementation of new projects.

In Central Asia, Finland has continued funding development cooperation activities via multi-bi (UNDP, ILO, FAO) and ICI instruments as a sole donor. **This mix, combined with the long-standing pattern of relations between MFA and the implementing partner organisations, has allowed the Unit to maintain effective oversight of the portfolio from distance** (interview feedback from MFA staff).

**In Ukraine, MFA Finland's level of involvement in day-to-day management of interventions is proportionate to the level of funding it provides.** In the case of the CoE Action Plan for Ukraine, management commitments are relatively low, given that Finland is one of a group of donors. Feedback from the CoE elicited for the current evaluation indicated the strong value attached to Finnish support, from both the perspective of the Country Office team and the headquarters staff in Strasbourg. The close liaison between CoE Kyiv and the Embassy of Finland, as well as with MFA staff in Helsinki, was remarked upon – including the proactive stance of the embassy staff in joining in policy dialogue related activities conducted by the CoE on key issues in Ukraine and the provision of feedback on reporting developments seen under the Action Plan. The MFA also contributes through the secondment of a full-time gender equality adviser attached to the CoE Country Office.

In the case of education portfolio interventions, the EU4Skills project is led by GIZ with financial contributions from Poland and Finland. Finnish expertise is also embedded in the project design, with Finland responsible for a component and its results areas. The school reform project, which is funded by Finland, is the main component and also integrates an EU-funded component, requiring considerable management from the MFA side through the involvement of the embassy's education counsellor and other staff. Feedback from MFA respondents noted the labour-intensive nature of the management of this project to date, which has included adaptation to EU RBM requirements.

**The FLC instrument has continued to be used across all 11 countries covered in the evaluation during Phase III.** The review of evidence, including detailed feedback received from Finnish embassies and diplomatic teams responsible for the activities in the 11 countries, indicates **that the instrument is considered an important tool not only for delivery of activities that respond to the needs of target institutions and communities. It is also seen as a means for MFA staff to maintain close ties with civil society**, often developing strong relations with CSOs that have implemented several rounds of projects. Despite its small financial volume (average of EUR 60,000, see portfolio analysis), the instrument is important for MFA staff who operate from distance, outside of the partner country, to be able to sustain their engagement. That way, for example, the embassy in Bucharest is able to take part in donor coordination in



Moldova through the FLC instrument, and roving ambassadors and their teams are able to use the FLC projects as a medium to keep close contact with developments in the countries they cover. The management of FLC projects is straightforward, but does require intensive interaction (as MFA staff conduct project site visits and hold regular meetings). MFA respondents noted that, even if funding were to increase, the human resource capacity to manage more projects is not available. Monitoring of FLC projects is challenging from distance and, thereby, the approach has been to select “secure and performing” interventions and/or FLC partners, tested already by other donors.

### 5.5.2. Guidance of decision making

**There is no separate policy that covers the region as a whole, as Finnish development cooperation activities map against the broader framework of EU policy and strategy,** as declared in the respective country strategies. At the level of strategic planning of the Unit for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, analytical reconstruction indicates a fragmented approach in which three directions are covered: i) Country Strategies (for Central Asia, and Ukraine) which cover programmes with attendant results frameworks in which the contributions of interventions towards impact areas are embedded; ii) Strategies for country-level or sub-regional level implementation of the Fund for Local Cooperation (e.g., FLC activities in Moldova are programmed and

managed by the Embassy of Finland to Romania; FLC activities in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia are managed by the Roving Ambassador to the South Caucasus region; FLC for Belarus is overseen by the Embassy of Finland to Lithuania, etc.); iii) A framework agreement covering support to the OSCE (ODA-related) in this target region managed by the mission of Finland to the OSCE Secretariat in Vienna.

**There is a programmatic gap in terms of an overarching strategic framework that would bring together all strands of development cooperation work conducted by the Unit, and which would also show the linkages to the work of other MFA departments in the target region in development cooperation.** While this is considered (according

to feedback received by the evaluation) to be an acceptable situation in terms of internal logic of the MFA, for external users the picture is fragmented. The net result is that the contribution of Finland in the development cooperation sphere is less visible.

**The two Country Strategies do not cross-reference each other and therefore appear to exist in isolation from one another, despite the fact that they are managed by the same regional unit. Inter-regional learning is not evidenced in the strategy documentation.**

Having noted all of the above, however, it can be stated (based on the evidence reviewed) that the introduction of Country Strategies for development cooperation has strengthened the alignment of Finnish activities with the needs of the partner countries, with a noticeable Phase III increase in demand-driven dynamics in the case of Ukraine. The focus on the country level allows for a clear presentation of the aims and objective of the country-level portfolios, which are accompanied by results frameworks that show how Finnish support maps against three impact areas in each case. The evidence reviewed for the evaluation shows that in each case there is effective coordination of the development cooperation activities management, and close coordination with MFA staff based in the ministry in Helsinki.

Country strategies facilitated more effective coordination and management



**The introduction of country strategies for development cooperation for the three focal partner countries in Phase III has facilitated effective coordination of programmatic, regional and sectoral perspectives.** This has been evidenced, inter alia, through coordination between the MFA teams responsible for the country development cooperation portfolios, MFA sector and thematic advisers, and MFA diplomatic staff.

The evaluation's review of evidence relating to the introduction of the three new projects in Ukraine has shown the depth and breadth of the work conducted within the MFA (involving a wide range of inputs from advisers in preparation for the Quality Board decision-making process). The need to ensure close coordination with the work of other donors has also led to intensification of work at the project identification and formulation stages.

While a considerable amount of evidence was seen by the evaluation team regarding the setting up of projects, there is less evidence regarding practices in reviewing project performance during implementation and decision-making on continuation or phasing-out of projects.

### **5.5.3. Application of the Human Rights Based Approach in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation**

**There is a well-established and comprehensive set of procedures used by MFA in screening project proposals.** The MFA has a firm stance on funding only projects which demonstrate that they are human rights sensitive. However, in those interventions where Finland is a small donor, this is not always possible to ensure –e.g., a representative of one multilateral organisation responded to the survey conducted for this evaluation that application of a human rights based approach is not a requirement within that organisation.

**Monitoring of the HRBA, as well as gender equality and cross-cutting objectives, has scope to be improved.** There is variation across the projects in the portfolios with regard to the extent to which monitoring takes place and is reported upon. There are cases where projects do not report on these priorities at all. See coverage under Relevance and Effectiveness.

### **5.5.4. Strengths and weaknesses of planning and implementation**

**Strengths:** The identification and formulation stages of project design are robust and comprehensive, with a strong set of procedures, and the involvement of inputs from thematic and sector advisers (e.g., through the Quality Assurance Board) as well as programmatic experts in the MFA. The support to multi-bi interventions and the long-standing relations with implementing partner organisations act as solid foundation for the portfolio, which facilitates complex engagement with key policy, sectoral and institutional change agendas. Finland's strengths in key policy areas (such as education), thematic priorities (such as the environment), and Finnish technical expertise, are generally drawn upon effectively.

**Weaknesses:** The resource cuts seen in the MFA's development cooperation work over the 2009-2021 period serve as a constraint on Finland's development cooperation capacities in the sphere of management. – the hands-on approach praised by stakeholders in the WEI I phase is not so evident in 2021 (see section 5.5.1). Procedures for analysing results, deriving and acting on lessons learned, and decision-making over the continuation or termination of projects are not sufficiently



developed, which leads to lacunae in the management processes used in the oversight of the portfolio. The oversight by MFA of the implementation of projects by private consulting companies is not currently sufficient – the delays seen in new projects in Ukraine should have seen more active intervention from the MFA’s side.

When Finnish experts have insufficient knowledge of the local contexts within which they are working, this can contribute to delays and problems in implementation. For instance, the identification exercise for the school reform project was not sufficiently detailed and informed by the understanding of the Ukrainian context. This resulted in an under-specified project design that required subsequent significant modifications, contributing to delays seen in the project start up.

There are weaknesses with regard to learning from lessons of previous work conducted, drawing on lessons from across the portfolio (within countries and across countries covered by the Unit); and with regard to ensuring that reporting (whether by the MFA staff, by project teams, or by external evaluations of interventions) is sufficiently detailed in terms of the coverage of results achieved. Further, there is a gap in reporting on HRBA implementation in the interventions covered in the portfolio.

According to the evidence reviewed, **there is a range of lessons to be learned from the experience of the innovative new interventions brought in during Phase III in Ukraine, which can be relevant for future work in all countries covered by the Unit moving forward:**

**The role of donor coordination has become an important aspect in the formulation and delivery of donor supported activities** – the case of Ukraine shows that there are considerable efforts involved in ensuring effective coordination, and the appointment of an education sector counsellor to the embassy in Kyiv has allowed MFA Finland to make a significant contribution to the donor coordination sphere.

**The demand-driven dynamics that served as a catalyst for the development of both the NEFCO activities and the school reform project stand as important features of Phase III**, and indicate a significant step in the work of the Unit’s development cooperation profile. In both cases, the interventions bring Finland’s contribution to the heart of key reform processes underway in the country.

**The modality of appointing private consulting companies to oversee implementation follows a pattern used extensively by other donors such as the EU. However, the trade-off is that these companies cannot leverage the same extensive network of resources that multilateral or regional organisations can, and do not have the same remit to engage in communication with governmental and other stakeholders.** Companies do not have in-house expertise and need to hire external experts – this has proved to be a problematic issue in the case of both projects, as Finnish experts are not familiar with the Ukrainian context (which is essential for implementing reform agendas) and have taken time to adapt to the requirements of the tasks. The decision-making models in both projects have required significant adjustments to render them fit for purpose.



## 5.6. Coherence of Finland's Development Cooperation

### EQ6. To what extent have the development cooperation activities of the Department for Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia been coherent with regard to:

- EQ6a. Coherence within the portfolio managed by the Department for Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia.
- EQ6b. Coherence with other Finnish-funded development cooperation activities implemented in the target region.
- EQ6c. Coherence with development cooperation in the target region supported by the broader donor community, including the European Union and its Member States.

#### Box 6 Answer to EQ6 – Main findings

(Finding 6.1) There has been strong implicit internal coherence within the portfolio of development cooperation of the Department, although explicit linkages and synergies between the work of projects addressing the same sector and themes are less visible.

(Finding 6.2) Coherence with the activities of other donors is not defined in detail in programmatic documentation at portfolio or intervention level for the most part, although de facto there has been a significant increase in donor coordination related work, essential in the countries in which Finland operates given the high density of donor support.

(Finding 6.3) Where Finland's financial contribution is a relatively small part of a broader donor funding arrangement, MFA has shown that it is adept at leveraging Finnish expertise, as seen in the secondment of MFA gender advisers to the CoE country office in Ukraine.

(Finding 6.4) Whereas coordination between the Unit for Eastern Europe and Central Asia and other MFA departments with regards to the development portfolio takes place, the evaluation could identify only few examples of actual synergies that have been developed between activities.

### 5.6.1. Coherence within the portfolio of country-level actions

**There has been strong implicit coherence within the portfolio, phase by phase.** Within the WEI I framework, the 5 thematic clusters served to group the wide range of interventions relating to these themes, implemented across the 11 countries. In Phase II, the reduction to the two focal countries Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan allowed for a concentration of efforts in a more compact portfolio, which addressed key priorities of the partner countries, drawing on Finland's expertise in key sectors. The addition of Ukraine, as a response to the crisis situation, was achieved through effective deployment of resources, although this portfolio necessarily differed to that seen in Central Asia. In Phase III, the introduction of country strategies for development cooperation has, as reviewed earlier in the report, allowed for focused use of resources that respond effectively to national priorities, and reflect Finland's key emphases in its development policy, e.g., with regard to promotion of the rights of persons in disadvantaged positions.



However, across all three phases the current evaluation can refer to a **gap with regard to the explicit identification and exploitation of internal coherence within the portfolio**. It remains the case that the programmatic cycle does not systematically address the issue of cohesion within the portfolio – for instance, Quality Board decisions do not, according to the evidence reviewed, sufficiently address linkages across projects, project documentation (including reporting) does not sufficiently (for the portfolio as a whole) detail synergies with other interventions addressing the same sector or similar themes/target groups, and so on. There are cases of good practice that do address these issues, which could therefore serve as useful examples to other projects.

The Fund for Local Cooperation projects are used by MFA diplomatic missions to ensure complementarity with development cooperation activities (in the three countries for which country strategies are in place), and with foreign and trade policy where relevant.

The country reviews in Volume Two cover the question of the extent and nature of synergies that have been identified and exploited across interventions in more depth.

### **5.6.2. Coherence with other Finnish-funded development cooperation activities**

The evidence shows that coordination does take place between the Unit for Eastern Europe and Central Asia and other MFA departments with regards to the portfolios of development cooperation activities managed by those departments in the same region. Often the activities address similar core themes and target groups (e.g., persons with disabilities). **The documentary trace does not contain a great deal of information about actual synergies that have been developed between activities, however.** One positive example of such synergies is represented by the Higher Education Institutional Cooperation project FishEDU, a partnership between the University of Eastern Finland and the Kyrgyz National Agrarian University. The activities have included interaction with the FAO fisheries project, and training cooperation with the Finnish environment institute's work in the Kyrgyz Republic.

### **5.6.3. Coherence with development cooperation of other donors**

As noted earlier in the report, there are now substantive procedures and structures in place to facilitate donor coordination in the partner countries. In the case of Ukraine, this aspect of work is covered by the Embassy of Finland, while in the cases of the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan the processes are engaged with from distance.

**Coherence is addressed at the intervention level rather than through the Finnish country strategy level**, as the latter is used rather for internal management purposes by the MFA. In interventions implemented by multilateral or regional organisations (e.g., UNDP, CoE), **the coordination of Finnish-supported projects with those of other donors is achieved through the in-country presence of the implementing partner**, which guarantees close and frequent contact with other donor representations as well as with the national governmental focal points.



## 6. Conclusions

### 6.1. What works – Opportunities and Strengths

#### Policy objectives in the region

**13. The development policy priorities of Finland and accompanying guidelines have been well integrated and applied in the formulation and implementation of the development cooperation activities.**

*This conclusion relates to findings 1.3, 1.4, 6.1.*

While there is no dedicated policy of Finland towards this region, and these countries are not priority countries for Finland's development cooperation according to the policy framework, there has been strong alignment with development policy priorities. These have been reflected in the thematic priority areas addressed in Wider Europe Initiative I and II, and the identification of the three impact areas embedded in the results frameworks of the country strategies for development cooperation. While the WEI I represented an ambitious initiative to achieve broad coverage of the whole region of eleven countries, the narrowing down of the geographical scope to focus on three partner countries in subsequent WEI II and the current country strategies has been well justified – it has allowed Finland to concentrate resources on the two poorest countries in the region, and a country in need of sustained international support to respond to the profound socio-economic, political and security related crises it has faced since 2014.

**14. There has been strong coherence and complementarity between Finland's development cooperation activities and foreign and security policy priorities in the region.**

*This conclusion relates to findings 1.6., 1.7.*

As an integral part of foreign policy there is a strong organic linkage of development cooperation activities with the overarching foreign policy priorities and diplomatic activities, for example as seen in synergies between policy dialogue and the thematic issues addressed in the development cooperation portfolio. The nexus between development and security was a focus under WEI I, as a reflection of the development policy priorities at that time. This has remained in place through support to the work of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, and other activities that focus on conflict resolution at the level of communities, cross-border relations, water resource challenges in Central Asia. Across the broader region of eleven countries the FLC instrument is regarded by MFA as a valuable means of supporting foreign policy objectives, not least with regard to the visibility it provides for Finland's relations with the partner countries.



## Strategies and programmes and their implementation

### **15. Across the 2009-2021 period Finland has maintained a strong track record and reputation as a donor committed to addressing core challenges that face the partner countries.**

*This conclusion relates to findings 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 4.1, 4.2, 4.6, 6.2.*

Drawing on the core tenets of Finland's approach to development cooperation laid out in the development policy frameworks that have covered this period, the portfolio of development cooperation interventions has tackled key priorities of the partner countries and their populations, in the spheres of economic development, the environment, good governance and human rights, social sustainability and inclusivity. This has included a readiness to address sensitive issues, in order to contribute to tangible improvements in the life conditions experienced by persons in vulnerable positions, persons with disabilities, ethnic minority populations. The promotion of gender equality has been a constant emphasis, and Finland's work on this issue is commendable, as is the commitment to inclusivity, improving tolerance, and contributing to the amelioration of inter-ethnic relations in challenging contexts.

In the current 2018-2021 phase there has been an important development in the demand-driven nature of Finland's cooperation, in which Finland's strengths in the spheres of education and energy efficiency have been recognised by the partner country and formed the basis of a request for Finland's support to core reform processes. This marks a qualitative and quantitative step-up for Finland's development cooperation in this region.

### **16. The mix of instruments used to implement the development cooperation portfolio has been well selected and has secured results in a holistic fashion, from policy level down to the level of communities and individual beneficiaries.**

*This conclusion relates to findings 4.5, 5.5, 5.6.*

Selection of modalities and instruments has been good and responsive to the operating environment, across relevant levels: multilateral implementers have enabled work that brings in the policy level, drawing on their well-established partnerships with national institutions, as well as with Finland. ICI implementers are selected based on their technical capacity, and are often the only specialist institute in this sphere in Finland. FLC has created a link to the civil society.

Selection of multilaterals has been largely "opportunistic", based on their substance know-how and their thematic alignment with Finland's policy priorities. Selection of ICI interventions have been based on "Finnish added value" principle (development policy principle at the time of selection) and by selecting organisations which already had contacts and cooperation in the countries concerned. Monitoring of FLC projects is challenging from distance and, thereby, the approach has been to select "secure and performing" interventions and/or FLC partners, tested already by other donors. It is notable, that the selection of Ukraine's education sector support was demand-driven and re-requested directly from Finland's Ministry for Education by Ukraine.

When taking stock of the net results of the portfolio of development cooperation, a strong pattern emerges of a holistic approach in which Finland adopts a multi-faceted strategy for addressing the priority themes and sectors it works in. This can include support to relevant organisations in





securing important changes to legislation and regulations, that can pave the way for change at the institutional level, and transformation in attitudes and practices. Examples here include the sphere of the rights of Internally Displaced Persons, the rights of persons with disabilities, expansion of export opportunities alongside the protection of the interests of local communities. The Finnish commitment to a HRBA and promotion of gender equality and social inclusion run across this holistic approach.

**17. In the programmatic cycle MFA Finland is strongest at the identification and formulation stages; the availability of human resources poses some constraints to the effective management of the whole programmatic cycle.**

*This conclusion relates to findings 5.1, 5.2, 5.3.*

The procedures used by the MFA for identification and formulation of projects is comprehensive and all-encompassing, involving inputs from sectoral and thematic advisers as well as MFA teams covering the partner countries. The use of appraisal missions and consultations has become a strong feature of the approach. This allows for a rigorous appraisal of the proposals, in which project documentation is subject to scrutiny against all relevant MFA guidelines. There is a particular focus on alignment with Finnish policy priorities and HRBA. The threshold of funding only projects which are HRBA sensitive or higher is strictly applied.

In line with the need to coordinate the introduction of new interventions with the broader donor community, the emphasis on including interaction with donors and the partner country government in the identification and formulation stage is increased. The coordination with other donors can be labour-intensive, according to feedback from MFA staff, compounded in Ukraine under Phase III with the need to align with EU standards in RBM. The workload implications involved in expanding the portfolio of interventions, adding new sectors and thematic priorities, and enlarging the geographical scope (such as the inclusion of Uzbekistan in the next phase and potential regional activity) will require a commensurate increase in human resource allocations by MFA.

## **Development impact and sustainability in the region**

**18. Finland's long-term commitment to supporting development cooperation interventions has facilitated the achievement of tangible and sustainable results.**

*This conclusion relates to findings 1.5, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.3.*

In line with Finland's approach to development cooperation, there has been an emphasis on long-term support of interventions. This has required patience and flexibility on the part of the MFA to give implementing partners and beneficiaries the time needed to build confidence, overcome challenges, put the necessary legislation and procedures in place, integrate new practices, change attitudes. Finland has gained a deserved reputation as a reliable, understanding donor, prepared to work with all stakeholders in order to reach the point where results can become sustainable. The stand-out achievements in the portfolio are the FAO fishery project, the work of UNDP and other organisations in broadening access to justice.

**19. Financial support to the OSCE and CoE allows Finland to make a contribution to the important work of these mandated organisations.**

*This conclusion relates to findings 1.6, 2.2, 6.2., 6.3.*



The status of the OSCE (including the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities) and the CoE allow these organisations to engage with the policy, legislative, judicial, institutional spheres in the countries of the region and gain traction where other external actors can find it challenging to achieve progress. However, both organisations have limited financial resources – thus the support of constant donors such as Finland is vital in allowing their work to proceed. Finland has a track record of active support to both organisations, including through jointly run activities, the work of Finnish experts.

**20. The Fund for Local Cooperation is an important instrument that serves to complement development cooperation activities in the core partner countries and sustain Finland’s development cooperation in the other countries of the region.**

*This conclusion relates to findings 1.4, 5.5, 5.6.*

The FLC is regarded very highly by the beneficiary civil society organisations which participate in the implementation of activities, and by MFA Finland country teams. For the CSOs, the level of funding provided is attractive, as it allows them to work on small-scale but meaningful projects that are within their capacity to deliver. The popularity of the FLC programme is reflected in the high number of applications received each year. Through Finland’s support, which includes the proactive engagement with project teams provided by MFA staff, supplemented by policy dialogue activities and visibility events, the CSOs are able to address important topics that are often sensitive in nature. These map against beneficiary needs, and also reflect Finland’s development policy priorities.

For MFA staff, the FLC represents a means to maintain strong links with civil society, thereby achieving a feedback loop with the grass-roots.

## **6.2. What does not work – Challenges and Limitations**

### **Policy objectives in the region**

**21. The absence of a dedicated policy or overarching framework for development cooperation with the region results in fragmentation and reduced visibility.**

*This conclusion relates to findings 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 5.4, 5.5, and to conclusion 1.*

Notwithstanding the alignment achieved with Finnish development policy priorities noted under conclusion 2, the fact that there is no dedicated policy for the region or an overarching framework for development cooperation that would cover all eleven countries, means that a fragmented pattern is in place. This is shown through the fact that the country strategies for development cooperation are not explicitly linked with each other; country or sub-regional strategies for FLC are formed not on a pan-regional basis covering all countries for which the Unit for Eastern Europe and Central Asia is responsible; the framework agreement with the OSCE also stands alone, not linked to other elements of development cooperation support in the region. This can be regarded as a limitation for the Unit’s management and oversight of the portfolio as a whole and contributes to reduced visibility of Finland’s development cooperation with the region, both within the MFA and in the partner countries.



It can also be noted that development cooperation activities in this region are rarely covered in reports and other documentation relating to Finland's development policy as a whole.

## **22. Management of the implementation, monitoring and reporting of the portfolio and projects can be improved.**

*This conclusion relates to findings 4.3, 4.4, 5.1, 5.2.*

There are significant lacunae in the programmatic cycle with regard to oversight of implementation, and the conduct of monitoring and evaluation of development cooperation activities. This relates to individual interventions, country portfolios, and the Unit's development cooperation portfolio as a whole. There is evidence in substantial differences in terms of the application of HRBA guidelines, monitoring of cross-cutting objectives, the content and quality of evaluation reports on interventions, project period reporting. This variation renders the task of overseeing the portfolio difficult to achieve, compounding the challenges faced because of human resource limitations in the MFA, and the need to manage from distance in the case of the Central Asian countries.

The gaps in the monitoring and reporting seen at the intervention level and the aggregate level, in particular with regard to impact and sustainability, serve as limiting factors in the MFA's ability to function as a 'learning organisation.' Lessons learned from phases are not sufficiently analysed and integrated into the planning for subsequent programmatic activities. The institutional memory gap is compounded by the limited human resource allocation to development cooperation and the frequent rotation of staff.

## **Strategies and programmes and their implementation**

### **23. Strategic planning of the development cooperation activities can be improved.**

*This conclusion relates to findings 3.2 and conclusion 10.*

Even if the evidence points to strong internal coherence within the portfolio of interventions per partner country, and notwithstanding the robust procedures in place for identification and formulation of interventions, there is a need to improve the strategic planning that underpins the development cooperation activities. This would ensure that there is a clear set of procedures and a decision-making trace behind the formation of the overall portfolio. Procedures for sustainability planning, identification of exit strategies, procedures to use when phasing out interventions, are currently not sufficiently clearly set out or used.

### **24. Synergies across the portfolio can be better exploited.**

*This conclusion relates to findings 5.4, 6.1, 6.4 and conclusion 9.*

While there is implicit internal coherence within the country portfolios, and across the portfolios in the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan, there is a need to establish more explicit linkages across the portfolio (both within and across countries covered by the Unit). This could include all instruments. This is an issue that could be integrated into the identification and formulation stage, overseen by the Quality Board.



### 6.3. Summary of main lessons

Based on the above conclusions, the team has identified five main lessons that could be relevant for other similar geographical contexts and the overall advancement of Finland's development policies.

Finland's long-term commitment to supporting development cooperation interventions is key to achieve tangible and sustainable results.

To be effective, country strategies need to rely on an adequate mix of instruments. The present evaluation has highlighted some comparative advantages for each modality used in the region.

A unique comparative advantage of Finland is based on its flexible approach to cooperation and its reputation as a donor committed to addressing core challenges.

It is important to strike a balance between structure and flexibility. Without a clear overarching framework, results are likely to be fragmented, opportunities of synergies missed, and visibility reduced. Within such structures, however, there needs to be room for flexibility and adaptability of the MFA's approach.

Investing sufficient resources in monitoring and reporting is essential to ensure that lessons learned are sufficiently analysed and integrated into the programming cycle.



## 7. Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on the issues identified in the set of conclusions above.

### 7.1. Strategic recommendations

#### **1. Consider strengthening internal strategic planning and establishing an overarching vision for development cooperation for the whole region covered by the Unit**

*This recommendation relates to conclusions 9, 10, 11, 12 and partially to conclusions 1, 2 and 3.*

The framework would provide a practical tool for internal use by MFA staff, in the work of Unit for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, by diplomatic missions, and other relevant units, in establishing a holistic overview of the development cooperation portfolio as a whole, and the ways in which the contents of the portfolio complement each other. The framework could identify potential synergies within the portfolio and be used as a means of verifying the exploitation of these synergies. It could build on the strong coherence and complementarity between Finland's development cooperation activities and foreign and security policy priorities in the region.

It would also serve as a valuable means of raising the visibility and salience of the contribution made by Finland for external stakeholders, in the partner countries, in implementing organisations, and the donor community.

#### **2. Adopt a more participatory approach to the formation of its development cooperation programming in the region.**

*This recommendation relates to conclusion 10.*

In order to ensure effective communication with national stakeholders in the partner countries and with other members of the donor community, increased emphasis could be attached to sharing information on Finland's priorities with stakeholders during the preparation phase of country programmes for development cooperation and individual interventions. This could include proactive outreach to involve stakeholders in consultations, which can be conducted as part of policy dialogue activities.

In all countries, continuation of active participation in Steering Committee and Board meetings is recommended to actively promote Finland's priorities.

To assist in the strengthening of procedures, the MFA is recommended to involve thematic advisors in analysing the coherence of the portfolio managed by the Unit and use their technical knowledge to provide advice how coherence could be improved. Assessment could be carried out from a sector perspective and combined with CCO/HRBA.



The Department is recommended to introduce regular (for instance, bi-annual) strategic joint planning workshops following the example of the Departments of Africa and Asia. This could include self-evaluation type exercises to assess results and to facilitate strategic planning at the Department level.

## 7.2. Management recommendations

- 3. The MFA is recommended to ensure that there are sufficient human resources and capacity for the project cycle management within the Unit to respond to the increasing funding planned for the next phase, and the coverage of an additional country (Uzbekistan).**

*This recommendation relates to conclusions 5, 12.*

The MFA is recommended to ensure that there are sufficient human resources and capacity for project cycle management within the Unit to respond to the increasing funding planned for the next phase, and the coverage of an additional country (Uzbekistan). Given the amount of feedback from MFA staff regarding the current level of overstretch, there is a risk that the development cooperation portfolio for the forthcoming phase can be compromised, if this resourcing issue is not addressed.

It is also important that project management capacity of the staff could be developed through appropriate capacity development and training.

- 4. The Unit's approach to Results-Based Management could be strengthened.**

*This recommendation relates to conclusions 11, 12.*

As the forthcoming country strategies for development cooperation covering the period 2021-2024 include Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning plans, and given the challenges faced in Ukraine in the current face in adapting to EU requirements for RBM, it is recommended that enhanced procedures are put in place by MFA to ensure a strengthening of the Unit's RBM capacities. This could be matched by the requisite human resources and other necessary resourcing.

This will allow the unit to strengthen the application of RBM in all aspects of programme management, through the enhancement of procedures for the review of project performance, to ensure more balanced oversight is maintained across the programmatic/project cycle, and the development of results frameworks that are SMART in nature. The aim could be to improve the procedures employed for planning for, monitoring and reporting on sustainability, including in the post-funding stage.

Procedures for monitoring and reporting impact of Finland's support require strengthening, to allow for more effective tracing of results and identification of the factors that have facilitated or hindered impact. This could include more systematic monitoring of impact seen post-funding, and the analysis of unintended impact.



In order to improve its management for impact, sustainability, effectiveness and relevance, the MFA needs to ensure that the programme and projects have adequate monitoring systems. The MFA could continue focusing on the quality of project proposals and ensure that they include appropriate monitoring systems which will enable tracking performance, results, and contribution to the overall goals of the Country Strategy. More focus could be put on defining concrete impacts and related impact indicators, which would guide the implementation of various phases of the projects.

Programmatic approach could be strengthened by ensuring synergies and setting up programme-level goals and monitoring systems. In addition, one area for further development is to define what the regional approach means and what added value it would bring. At present, the projects in regional or multi-country programmes are implemented as stand-alone interventions and regional benefits are not defined. If synergy and coherence of interventions is expected, this could be planned at the outset and resourced accordingly.

The projects could include proper background and situation analysis to justify the support and targeted thematic areas. The proposals could also include a stakeholder analysis which would help to identify synergies. In addition, the programme would benefit from gender and human rights analyses, which would also guide the projects' focus and help the projects also to address human rights and gender considerations.

The Unit is recommended to enhance monitoring of and learning from its development cooperation interventions within its portfolio. This can be done by commissioning regular external evaluations, which could include all bilateral interventions and ICI projects. The Unit could find ways to participate in the evaluations of the implementing multilateral organisations. This would enhance the MFA staff's own capacity as well as serve to verify the results achieved by the multilateral organisations. Regarding ICI projects, emphasis could be attached to assess and identify ways to maximise Finland's added value.

## **5. Continue with the current blend of instruments.**

*This recommendation relates to conclusions 4, 6, 7.*

The development cooperation portfolio in the region has achieved an effective blend, per country, of the instruments used to deliver interventions – both with regard to the results achieved on the basis of the net effects seen across the portfolio's coverage from policy through to grass-roots levels, and the management of the portfolio. The enhanced strategic planning recommended above could include the maintenance – now rendered explicit – of this effective balance.

If resources allow, it could be considered that the FLC instrument could receive more support (per country), in order to expand the number of beneficiary CSOs/activities supported. This can be achieved through selecting one or more CSOs to act as programme coordinators, responsible for day-to-day management of an enlarged network of (sub-)projects, which can be funded via cascade funding, as often practiced by other donors, e.g., for community based projects. This would increase the multiplication effects of FLC, enhance further the benefits for Finland's visibility, while not adding to the workload of embassy or diplomatic mission staff.



**6. Introduce measures to mainstream civil society partners in the programmatic activities of the development cooperation portfolios of Finland by building on the strong track record established by the FLC instrument in the region.**

*This recommendation relates to conclusion 8.*

In order to build on the strong track record established by the FLC instrument, and as a means to mainstream civil society into the development cooperation work of the Unit, it is recommended that beneficiary civil society organisations can be involved in various aspects of the programmatic cycle. This can include, inter alia, conducting consultations with beneficiary CSOs (and by extension, their beneficiaries) on MFA plans for forthcoming new interventions; engagement of beneficiary CSOs in monitoring tasks covering implementation of interventions relating to their sphere of expertise; involvement in policy dialogue activities.





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# Annex 1: Terms of Reference

## EVALUATION ON DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION CARRIED OUT BY THE DEPARTMENT FOR RUSSIA, EASTERN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA, INCLUDING THE WIDER EUROPE INITIATIVE (WEI)

### 1. Background

This evaluation is one commissioned by the Development Evaluation Unit (EVA-11) of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. It is based on the multi-year rolling evaluation plan for centralised evaluations 2020-2022, prepared in consultation with the various departments and other stakeholders. The overall purpose of the evaluation is to inform the Ministry on the achievements of its development policy<sup>29</sup> and cooperation in the region over the past decade, and to support the Ministry in deciding how to best achieve its policy objectives and to enhance its management of the programme in the region at strategic level.

The following presents the Terms of Reference for the Evaluation on Development Cooperation and carried out by the Department for Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, including the Wider Europe Initiative (WEI). The evaluation will be conducted by an independent evaluation team recruited by Particip GmbH – Niras Finland oy, in the period October 2020 to May 2021.

#### 1.1 Description of the broader context and evaluand

Finland carries out bilateral development cooperation in the following 11 Eastern European and Central Asian countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan.

The department for Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia is responsible for

- Political, trade political, commercial and economic, and international development cooperation issues related to bilateral relations, the EU's external relations and multilateral institutions in respect of these countries;
- Regional organisations and other cooperation forums;
- Administration of financing for Baltic Sea, Barents and Arctic cooperation and related international financial arrangements
- Issues related to the Northern Dimension.

The Unit for Eastern Europe and Central Asia (ITÄ-20) is responsible for, inter alia, the preparation, presentation and handling of development cooperation projects in the ministry's internal coordination system and management and supervision of their implementation. In addition, the Roving Ambassadors for Central Asia (ITÄ-21) and for the South Caucasus (ITÄ-22) perform important duties such as facilitating the development cooperation processes in the region and managing local cooperation funds among others.

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<sup>29</sup> The policy aspect is included in this evaluation, even though the term is not repeated below.

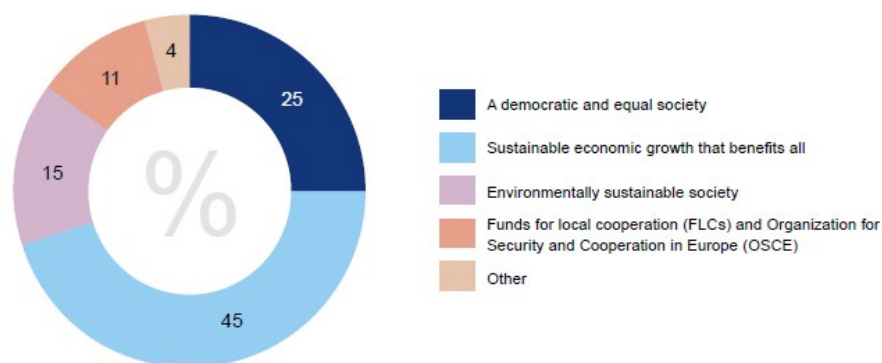


At the moment, Finland's bilateral development cooperation in Eastern Europe and Central Asia is implemented mostly in Ukraine, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. In Central Asia, projects carried out by UN organisations and institutional cooperation are being financed. Ukraine is supported for example through the CoE the EBRD and the World Bank. During the 2020/2021 new funding decisions will be made for program projects.

Finland's development cooperation in Eastern Europe and Central Asia has consisted of a number of bilateral and multi-bilateral projects that have been managed by the unit responsible for the development activities over the years<sup>30</sup>. **The Wider Europe Initiative (WEI I) 2009-2013** included a broad range of different interventions, mainly implemented by international organisations and funds. The subsequent **WEI II in 2014- 2017** showed an increased focus on the least developed countries in the region and on fewer thematic areas. This included two programmes: 1) the Green Economic Partnership Programme for Central Asia, focusing on Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, and 2) support for democracy, which was available in all countries in the region. The budget for the development cooperation programme covering the countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia for 2014–2019 was around EUR 40 million.

**Strategy** for Development Cooperation for the **Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan** was developed for the period of **2018-2021**. Finland's development cooperation with the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan complements the EU Strategy for Central Asia. Finnish development cooperation is aimed at supporting economic, social and environmental sustainability in the Kyrgyz and Tajik societies, as based on experiences gained from the region since 2009. The graph below shows the planned budget allocation for the country strategy in these two countries.

Planned budget allocation 2018–2021 (total funds 14.8 million euros)



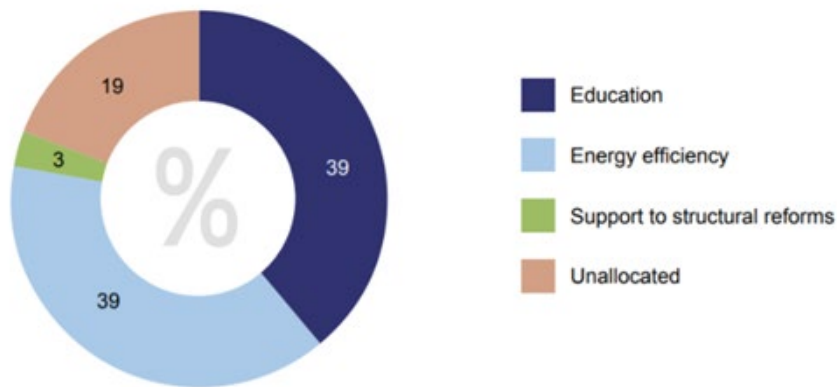
Under this programme, the development cooperation projects and programmes can be either regional covering both countries or country specific, and they are implemented by UN organisations or Finnish government authorities in the form of institutional cooperation. One notable exception is the Programme for Finland's Water Sector Support to Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, which is administered by the Finnish Environment Institute, but the actual projects are implemented by UN organisations or INGOs. In both countries Local Cooperation Funds are used to support the local civil society initiatives.

<sup>30</sup> See list of projects in Annex 2



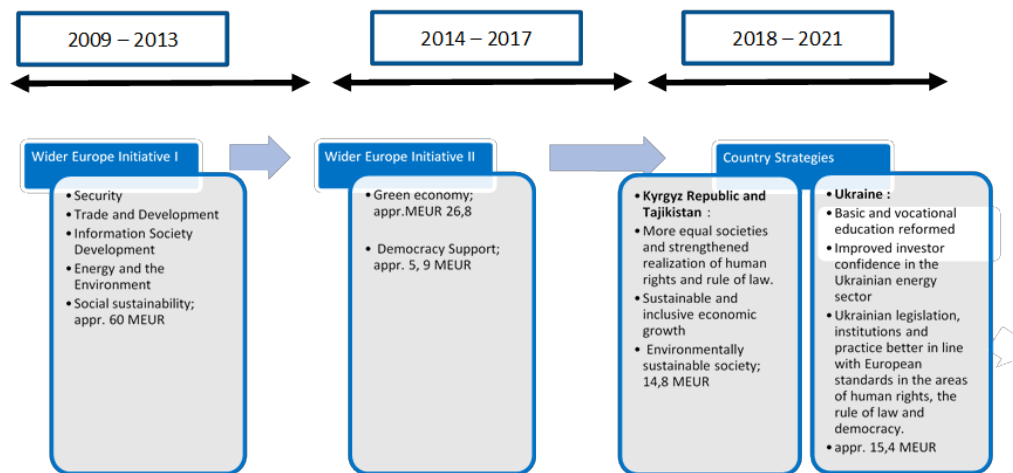
Ukraine was classified as a developing country in 2006, and funding of cooperation was transferred to the development cooperation budget. In 2009, Ukraine became one of the target countries for Wider Europe Initiative; in 2009-2013, the main objective of cooperation was mitigation of and adaptation to climate change. The strategy for development cooperation in Ukraine for 2018-2021 supports EU's Russia policy. Since the conflict broke out, Finland's support to Ukraine has totalled more than EUR 50 million, and has included development cooperation, humanitarian aid, demining, crisis management and expert secondments. The main sectors of cooperation in the current programme are education and energy efficiency. Finland also supports structural reforms. The graph below shows the planned budget allocation for the country strategy.

Planned budget allocation 2018–2021 (Total funds 15 397 000€)



The Ministry has just completed the planning for the next Country Strategies and Development Cooperation Programmes during the spring of 2020. The 2021-2024 country programmes for development cooperation for Central Asia (the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan) and Ukraine are being finalized at the time of commissioning this evaluation.

The following graph summarizes the key phases of development cooperation carried out in the region over the last decade.



Finland's development policy Results Report 2018 to the Parliament highlighted the following results:

*“Regional trade and jobs for Central Asia Businesses and public officials in the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan have been developing their foreign trade practices with Finnish assistance in a supported UNDP programme. Between 2015 and 2017, nearly 7,000 entrepreneurs received support for trading practices or training enabling them to boost production and make value chains more efficient. Public officials were provided with training in foreign trade practices and in the lowering of trade barriers. Uzbek and Kyrgyz companies were able to conclude large export contracts with European, Asian and Russian customers. The value of the contracts totalled about USD 400 million. There has been demand for clothing, nuts, milk products and dried fruit. The project has created nearly 800 new jobs. A mobile application for monitoring market prices of agricultural products was developed in Tajikistan. It has more than 200,000 users.” (Finland's development policy Results Report 2018, p. 40).*

## 1.2 Policy framework for the evaluation

The first phase of WEI was based on Finland's development policy of 2007 and WEI II was based on the development policy Programme of 2012 respectively.

The current development policy has four priority areas, (1) **The rights and status of women and girls**, (2) **Sustainable economies and decent work**, (3) **Education and peaceful democratic societies** and (4) **Climate and natural resources**. The priority areas were defined in the Government report on development policy and cooperation (2016). They also set the structure for the development policy Results Report 2018 that covered the period 2015-2018. A fifth policy priority area relates to humanitarian assistance. The priority areas are also recognized in the latest Government Programme (2019-2022). The interventions funded by the department during 2016 – 2019 contributed to all four development policy priority areas as either their primary or secondary objective.



For each priority area, the Ministry has developed a theory of change (ToC), with outcomes and outputs identified as well as the linkage to the Agenda 2030 and Sustainable Development Goals at impact level. Each development policy priority area also has a set of indicators to measure progress against the intended results. The policies on crosscutting objectives and human rights based approach need to be observed in all interventions, including the design of evaluations. These will be observed in all country programmes 2021-2024 in line with the instructions for the country strategy and programme formulation by the Ministry.

The present Government Programme also forms an important policy framework for the evaluation.

Agenda 2030, Human Rights Based Approach in Finland's Development Cooperation as well as RBM in Finland's Development Cooperation are similarly part of the relevant policy framework. The norm on institutional development cooperation<sup>31</sup>, as well as the guidelines on civil society in development cooperation are somewhat relevant to the current assignment.

The National Sustainable Development Strategy 2040 in the Kyrgyz Republic and the National Development Strategy 2016–2030 in Tajikistan are relevant to the policy framework for this evaluation. For Ukraine, the Medium Term Action Plan Until 2020 and the Priority Action Plan adopted by the Government of Ukraine in April 2017 set the goal of “increased standards of living and quality of life via sustainable economic development”. The Government, with the assistance of the UNDP, is also preparing the Sustainable Development Strategy for Ukraine 2030 and the National Action Plan on the Strategy Implementation by 2020.

Similarly, the priorities of the guidance of the EU Strategy for Central Asia, and the guiding principles of the EU's Russia policy are part of the policy framework. The EU development cooperation in Ukraine is guided by the ENP and implemented through the 2018–2020 Single Support Framework (SSF). Finland's development cooperation in Ukraine is in line with the ENP and is closely coordinated and partly implemented with activities included in the SSF. Finland's development cooperation in Ukraine is also well in line with the following Ukrainian Medium Term Action Plan priorities.

### **1.3 Results from previous evaluations**

The development cooperation activities in the region have undergone several evaluations. An evaluation in 2009 examined development cooperation in the region since the 1990s. A Mid-Term Evaluation of the Wider Europe Initiative I was carried out in 2012, and on Phase II, in 2016. Some of the main conclusions of the 2012 evaluation entailed that the WEI I provided a comprehensive response to the complex challenges and needs of the partner countries and regions, drawing on key strengths in Finland's own capacity and experience. Interventions were seen by stakeholders as being very relevant to the needs of a wide range of beneficiary groups in the WEI countries. The WEI has provided a cost-effective mechanism for Finland to engage in development cooperation activities that have produced tangible value with relation to the financial commitment of Finland to WEI. The development of synergies between WEI interventions could have been afforded greater attention by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

The 2016 evaluation on WEI II noted that the programme overall is very relevant, that it has been implemented largely as foreseen, and that is producing expected outputs. Some of the assumed synergies between components and projects as well as the Central Asian regional initiatives have

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<sup>31</sup> Instituutioiden välisen kehitysyhteistyön instrumentti, IKI –normi.



not materialised. A more elaborate and realistic strategy could have been helpful in relation to the choice of interventions and formulation of project design requirements that support the strategy. The reduction of staff is a cause of concern and it could be compensated with the more active use of sector advisers, outsourcing of administration and joint monitoring and evaluation with other donors. The 2016 evaluation was used to inform the next country strategy and programme for the region.<sup>32</sup>

Other evaluations have also been conducted, especially at project level. See Annex 3.

## **2. Rationale for this evaluation**

Due to the long history of development cooperation in the region by Finland, there is a need for a holistic understanding of its long-term impacts. Similarly, there is a need for understanding whether any such impact has been lasting and sustainable. The long-standing partnerships, a mix of interventions and their continuum, and a range of evaluations conducted allows for a longer time perspective and a track-record of developments in the region. This is to serve the Ministry not only to develop its development cooperation in the region but also to learn from any lessons that can help scale up impact and sustainability in other regions. As the on-going programme phase has not yet been evaluated against its objectives and targets, this will be included in this assignment. Similarly, it is worthwhile to look at the management of the latest, on-going programme, in order to draw lessons for the implementation of the next programme phase. This evaluation will add value in its holistic and long-term perspective into evaluating the development cooperation in the region as well as drawing wider lessons for the Ministry on maximising impact and sustainability of interventions and country programmes.

The fact that development policy is part of the foreign and security policy should be taken into account in this evaluation. The evaluation is to take into account this wider context and how development policy complements the overall foreign and security policy.

In order to identify the information needs and the focus for this evaluation, the development evaluation unit reviewed relevant documentation and consulted different units and the leadership of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in 2020.

## **3. Purpose and objectives of the evaluation**

In line with the evaluation plan 2020-2022, the Unit for Development Evaluation of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland will commission a strategic evaluation to assess the development cooperation in the region as a whole.

### *Purpose*

The overall purpose of the evaluation is to inform the Ministry on the achievements of its development policy and cooperation in the region over the past decade, and to support the Ministry in deciding how to best achieve its policy objectives and to enhance its management of the programme in the region at strategic level.

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<sup>32</sup> See Annex 3 for the findings, conclusions and recommendations of these evaluations.



The evaluation is mostly forward-looking but also includes summative analysis to respond to the evaluation questions.

The evaluation findings will be used by the Department for Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, the respective embassies, other relevant departments, and the Development Evaluation Unit by the Ministry.

### *Objectives*

The objectives of the evaluation are to produce evidence and present well justified conclusions on the following:

1. To assess the impact(s), if any, of Finland's development cooperation carried out in the region by the Department for Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia;
2. To assess the scope of the impact(s) and their relative significance to development in the area;
3. To assess the levels of sustainability of the achieved results and impact;
4. To assess the results achieved by, and management of, the current country strategies;
5. To analyse the reasons explaining success and/or failure in performance and in reaching a lasting impact, including the operational context, human aspects and resources; and
6. To provide recommendations that will serve the Ministry in developing its strategic planning, management and response in the region as well as drawing the broader lessons on how to increase impact and sustainability, in advancement of Finland's development policy objectives.

## **4. Scope of the evaluation**

The overall period under evaluation is 2009-2021. It is expected that the evaluation of relevance, impact and sustainability will cover the full period of time. For issues related to effectiveness and management, the emphasis is likely to fall upon the period 2018 – to present, in line with the on-going country strategies, although recognising that higher-level results may have their origins in the prior period.

The evaluation is to cover all of the funding instruments: multi-bi and institutional cooperation instruments as well as the FLC to a relevant extent but maintain a strategic high level focus.

Special emphasis should be on evaluating the approach that builds on focusing in least developed countries, use of multi-bi and institutional cooperation instruments, focusing on chosen themes and objectives of this assignment. The final scope will be agreed during the inception phase.

## **5. Issues to be addressed and evaluation questions**

This evaluation builds on the findings of several evaluations and studies that have already been published.<sup>33</sup> These include, among others, the mid-term evaluations of the Wider Europe Initiative phases I and II that have been utilized for planning. The evaluation will also draw on evaluation

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<sup>33</sup> See Annex 3 for the findings, conclusions and recommendations of these evaluations.





reports of individual interventions implemented under WEI I and II, as well as relevant evaluations of instruments, strategies, policies. Such documents provide part of the basis of comparison against the current situation and any visible positive developments.

The detailed evaluation questions and the methodology to best support the achievement of the evaluation purpose and objectives have been defined in cooperation between EVA-11, the reference group, the EMS Coordinator and the Team Leader recruited by Particip GmbH – Niras Finland oy and will be finalized during the Inception Phase.

Evaluation criteria covered by this evaluation are ‘effectiveness’, ‘impact’ and ‘sustainability’. In addition, questions to do with planning and implementation are included under the heading of ‘management’. The criterion of ‘relevance’ will also be factored into the evaluation process, in order to achieve comprehensive analysis of impact and sustainability.

The following five main evaluation questions are to be answered in this evaluation, with analysis of on the sub-questions:

RELEVANCE (during 2009-2021)

**1. To what extent have Finland’s development cooperation been relevant, with regard to:**

- The needs of the partner countries (disaggregated by the perspectives of the citizenry, governmental and non-governmental organisations, commercial sector, etc.).
- Alignment with the overall priorities of Finland’s development policy and development cooperation.
- Alignment and complementarity with the foreign and security policy, including economic relations.

IMPACT (during 2009-2021)

**2. What has been the impact(s), if any, of Finland’s development cooperation carried out in the region by the Department for Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia?**

- What have been the most significant and transformative impact(s) contributed to by Finland and why? This includes analysis of impact by social, environmental and economic as well as human rights perspectives. What have been the levels where the impact(s) have taken place?
- What have been the scope and extent of the impact(s);
- What has been Finland’s role and added value in contributing to the impact(s)?
- What negative and/or unintended impacts have taken place, if any? Why?

SUSTAINABILITY (during 2009-2021)

**3. What has been the level(s) of sustainability of the results and impact achieved over the period of time?**

- For which of the results and impact areas is there evidence that the benefits achieved are lasting? Why?



- What has been the extent of sustainability of results and impact in terms of a) financial, b) economic, c) social, d) environmental, and e) institutional capacities of the systems needed to sustain net benefits over time? Includes analyses of resilience, risks and potential trade-offs.
- What strategies have the Ministry employed in order to maximize sustainability? Which of them have been the most successful and why? Have projects and programmes adequately planned for sustainability?

EFFECTIVENESS (during 2018-2021)

#### **4. To what extent have the Country Strategies of 2018-2021 achieved their planned results and contributed to the realisation of Finland's development policy objectives?**

- What results have been produced until now, who and how many have benefitted from them? What groups were not reached, if any?
- To what extent is implementation on track to achieve the set objectives by the end of 2021? Note any major deviations or risks to achieving objectives and the reasons behind them. Includes analysis by funding instrument.
- Are there any lost opportunities or potential for future engagement in the region?

MANAGEMENT (during 2018-2021)

#### **5. How has the development policy and cooperation been managed?**

- How effective has the policy formulation, strategic planning, selection of interventions, partners and instruments been?
- To what extent is programmatic, regional or sector coordination points of view, RBM as well as synergies guiding the decisions made?
- To what extent has the Ministry's guidelines on Human Rights Based Approach been applied in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation?
- What were the strengths and weaknesses of planning and implementation? *What could the Ministry do to improve its management for impact, sustainability, effectiveness and relevance? How? Consider structures, approaches and processes.*

#### **6. General Approach and Methodology**

The evaluation design should map against and reflect the characteristics of the WEI and the MFA's development cooperation in the target countries, and the purpose and scope of the evaluation exercise, as presented above. This requires a design that reflects the complex and evolving nature of this cooperation over the 3 phases in which it has been delivered (2009-13, 2014-17; 2018-21), which have seen both continuity of approach (with regard to key sectors, priority issues, continued support to a range of interventions, etc.) and changes introduced into the focal areas and scope of support (e.g., responding to the crisis situation in Ukraine; a narrowing of the WEI into a smaller cluster of countries, etc.). The evaluation design, and the attendant analytical framework, need to be able to capture the complex dynamics of the evolution of the WEI, and to facilitate the extraction and analysis of evidence relating to the impact and sustainability of development cooperation implemented under the WEI. The following key features of the design and framework are foreseen<sup>34</sup>:

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<sup>34</sup> For more details, see Annex 4.



- Use of the underpinning Theories of Change, and establishing an overarching one, the evaluation will be theory-based but geared towards providing practical recommendations.
- Multiple levels of analysis
- Longitudinal analysis across the various programme phases and their respective developments.
- A range of comparative dimensions.
- Different types of analysis needed
- Incorporating a gender-sensitive framework and cross-cutting objectives.

An evaluation matrix is expected to be developed during the inception phase and annexed to the inception report. The evaluation matrix is expected to reflect the use of gender-sensitive framework and addressing relevant cross-cutting objectives.

Methods of data collection and analysis should reflect the complex nature of the evaluation subject matter, and map against the evaluation matrix. Multiple methods are expected to be used to validate the findings. There is a need for both quantitative and qualitative information. The evaluation team is expected to cater for both needs, also in case of potential limitations with the availability of baseline and/or indicator data.

**The methods foreseen for this evaluation include, but are not restricted to:**

- Documentary analysis (including content analysis of policy and programmatic documentation, intervention-level documents; analysis of statistical data relating to interventions; analysis of relevant reports of the MFA, implementing partners, governmental and non-governmental reports from the target countries);
- Stakeholder consultations (feedback through face-to-face interviews by national experts, focus group discussions, internet-based interviews; written feedback)
- Online surveys (made available in English and Russian versions) to elicit quantitative and qualitative feedback from a range of respondents
- Budgetary analysis, if needed, (to understand aid volumes and allocation/expenditure patterns; inform sampling)
- If relevant – media analysis (e.g., coverage of results achieved); public opinion data analysis (e.g., perceptions of the effects of Finland’s support).
- The key sources of results information available are (not exhaustive):
- Programme level evaluation reports, except for the current country programme (see Annex 3)
- Project level evaluation reports (see Annex 3)
- Project level reports (to various degree).

Due to the travel restrictions caused by Covid-19, country visits are not foreseen at the time of finalising these ToR. However, the situation will be periodically reviewed. Appropriate methodological solutions will be applied in order to compensate for the likely absence of field visits, to ensure that sufficient coverage is attained across all necessary aspects of the evaluation. This will include the use of information from other sources outside the immediate stakeholders (e.g., statistics and comparison material). The team is encouraged to use statistical and quantitative evidence whenever possible. Attention to triangulation and overall, holistic analysis should be given.

A sampling approach will be used to achieve representative coverage, to the extent possible. The sampling will be established on basis of an in-depth desk study of the existing documentation, and consultations with staff members of Department for Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia and other MFA staff and other important stakeholders.



It is imperative that representatives of the wide range of relevant stakeholders be engaged, to achieve balanced and representative coverage of the broad set of perspectives relating to the initiative and its interventions. These should include relevant governmental and non-governmental sector representatives from the target countries, as well as commercial organisations, research institutions etc. involved in implementation national experts, representatives of implementing partner organisations, final beneficiaries, etc. This stakeholder engagement should be conducted in line with a participatory approach, which should also be gender-sensitive and inclusive.

## **7. The evaluation process and time schedule**

The evaluation will take place during 2020/2021. It began in August 2020 by nominating the reference group and launching the process for identifying Team Leader candidates. The evaluation follows the general phasing of the Evaluation Management Services framework used by the Evaluation Unit. The timetables are tentative, except for the final reports.

### **Phase A: Planning phase:**

- Preparation of the draft Terms of Reference for discussion with the evaluation Reference Group;

### **Phase B: Start- up phase: October 2020**

- Start-up meeting (online), **9 October 2020**, followed by finalisation of the ToR and submission for approval, recruitment of the evaluation team members;

### **Phase C: Inception phase: November 2020 – early January 2021**

- Kick-off meeting, **3 November 2020**
- Submission of Draft Inception Report, **8 December 2020**
- Meeting to discuss the Inception Report, **15 December 2020**, followed by an administrative meeting,
- Final Inception Report, early January 2021;

### **Phase D: Implementation phase: January – March 2021**

- Implementation of data-gathering and analysis, conduct of consultations and surveys (early January-March 2021)

### **Phase E: Reporting/Dissemination Phase: end of March – end of May 2021**

- Findings, conclusion and recommendations (FCR) workshop, **end of March 2021**
- Draft Final Report submission **first week of April 2021**;
- Meeting on draft final report **third week of April 2021**
- Final Report by **first week of May 2021**;
- Public Presentation, **last week of May 2021**.

## **8. Deliverables and reporting**

The language of all reports and possible other deliverables is English.



**Phase A:** TL submit the draft ToR in liaison with the Evaluation Manager and the Coordinator of Evaluation Management Services.

**Phase B:** Presentation of the approach and methodology by the Team Leader.

**Phase C:** (Draft and final) Inception report including the evaluation plan and desk study. The inception report consists of the evaluation desk study (Part I – broader policy, strategy and programme levels) and evaluation plan which includes the following: Context analysis; Initial findings and conclusions of the desk study, including hypotheses; Constructed theory of change; Finalisation of the methodology and summarized in an evaluation matrix including evaluation questions, indicators, methods for data collection and analysis; Final work plan and division of work between team members; Tentative table of contents of final report; Data gaps; Detailed implementation plan for stakeholder consultations with clear division of work (participation, interview questions/guides/notes, preliminary list of stakeholders and organisations to be contacted); Communication and dissemination plan; Capacity development plan for the emerging evaluator; and Budget. The structure of the main report and annexes or additional volumes shall be agreed upon in the Inception meeting.

**Phase D:** Final report (draft final and final versions) and methodological note by the quality assurance expert.

The final draft report must include abstract and summaries (including the table on main findings, conclusions and recommendations). It must be of high and publishable quality. It must be ensured that the translations use commonly used terms in development cooperation. The consultant is responsible for the editing, proof-reading and quality control of the content and language.

Production of the first draft of the 4-pager for communication purposes will be the responsibility of the TL/Evaluation Team of each evaluation. The first draft shall be provided simultaneously with the first draft of the final report.

The final report must include abstract and summaries (including the table on main findings, conclusions and recommendations) in Finnish, Swedish and English. The final report will be delivered in Word-format (Microsoft Word 2010) with all the tables and pictures also separately in their original formats.

The revised reports have to be accompanied by a table of received comments and responses to them.

In addition, the Ministry requires access to the evaluation team's tools, data sets or interim evidence documents, e.g., completed matrices, although it is not expected that these should be of publishable quality. The MFA treats these documents as confidential if needed.

Each deliverable is subjected to specific approval. The evaluation team is able to move to the next phase only after receiving a written statement of acceptance by the MFA.

In addition to written deliverables, the team leader and the team are expected to participate in workshops and give oral presentations, often supported by PowerPoint slides (esp. during phases D and E). Should the Covid-19 situation allow, the publication event will be held in Helsinki, with evaluation team members present. In addition, the team leader and other team members will give short presentation of the findings in a public Webinar. This presentation can be delivered from distance. In the event of continued travel restrictions, these two publication events may be combined.



The consultant is expected to provide agreed visual materials, such as minimum of 3 alternatives for cover picture, for EVA-11 acceptance.

## **9. Management of the evaluation**

The Evaluation Manager of EVA-11 will be responsible for the overall management of the evaluation process. The Evaluation Manager will work closely with other units/departments of the Ministry and other stakeholders in Finland and abroad.

This evaluation is managed through the Evaluation Management Services (EMS).

There will be one Management Team responsible for the overall coordination of the evaluation. This consists of the EVA-11 evaluation manager, the evaluation Team Leader and the EMS Coordinator.

A reference group for the evaluation will be established and chaired by the Evaluation Manager. The reference group is constituted to facilitate the participation of relevant stakeholders in the design and scope of the evaluation, informing others about the progress of the evaluation, raising awareness of the different information needs, quality assurance throughout the process and in disseminating the evaluation results. The mandate of the reference group is to provide quality assurance, advisory support and inputs to the evaluation, e.g., through participating in the planning of the evaluation and commenting deliverables of the consultant. The use of a reference group is key in guaranteeing the transparency, accountability and credibility of an evaluation process and in validating the findings.

The evaluation team will be managed from distance by the TL. This requires careful planning to ensure that a common, consistent approach is used, in order to achieve comparability of the data gathered and the approach used in analysis. The TL will develop a set of clear protocols for the team to use and will convene regular online team meetings to discuss the approach. During the process particular attention should be paid to strong inter-team coordination and information sharing within the team.

The evaluation team is responsible for identifying relevant stakeholders to be interviewed and organising the interviews. The Ministry and embassies will not organize these interviews or meetings on behalf of the evaluation team but will assist in identification of people and organisations to be included in the evaluation.

## **10. Quality assurance**

### *Internal quality assurance*

The consortium implementing this evaluation will put in place a three-layer system of quality assurance<sup>35</sup> for all products/reports: at the level of the Team Leader of the individual evaluation, through the EMSC/DSC and through in-house senior QA advisors.

Consultant is in charge of the impeccable quality of English, Swedish and Finnish texts of the reports and related proofreading. The Finnish speaking senior evaluator will be responsible for Finnish translations of good quality.

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<sup>35</sup> For more, see Annex 4.



All deliverables shall be of publishable quality. The evaluation team should make their best efforts not to exceed the total length of 80 pages for the main evaluation report. A separate volume on annexes may be produced. It will be agreed during the inception phase, which of the final deliverables are to be published. The inception report should also outline the structure of the main report and the planned contents of the annex(es).

The report should be kept clear, concise and consistent. The report must follow the draft writing instructions and template provided by MFA and it should contain, inter alia, the evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations. The logic between those should be clear and based on evidence.

The final draft report(s) will be sent for a round of comments by EVA-11. The purpose of the comments is only to correct any misunderstandings or factual errors.

#### *External quality assurance*

It should be noted that internationally recognized expert has been contracted by EVA-11 as external peer reviewer for the whole evaluation process. The person interacts directly with EVA-11 and provide expert opinions on the planning and implementation of the evaluations. EVA-11 may or may not integrate any such external advice as part of their overall feedback and management responses of the evaluation.

### **11. Expertise required**

The evaluation team should consist of international and national experts, and an emerging evaluator. It is foreseen that the core evaluation team consist of three senior experts. One senior expert shall be nominated as the Team Leader. The expertise requirements for the Evaluation Team Leader/ Team are:

- Strong expertise focused on business management; economics and green economy; energy and natural resources; democracy support; institutional support; education sector and VOT; economic, social and environmental sustainability; and climate change.
- Strong expertise and experience in conducting impact evaluations and analysing sustainability.
- Expertise on applying the human rights-based approach in development policy and cooperation as well as evaluating it. This includes interventions enhancing the rights of women and girls as well as persons with disabilities.
- Knowledge of the geographical region and its regional development and context.
- Experience in centralized, policy level evaluations in development policy and cooperation, with a strategic focus.
- Readiness to use a variety of evaluation methods (e.g., survey, in-depth interviews, participatory methods etc.) as well as readiness and availability to disseminate the evaluation results and recommendations in the way that it supports managing and learning of the Ministry's staff and management.
- Familiarity with RBM and measuring development results.
- Understanding of Finland's cross-cutting objectives.
- Familiarity with development policy and cooperation and Finland's main goals and priorities in development policy and cooperation.



- Knowledge of funding instruments and processes of multilateral and bilateral development agencies.
- Should be flexible, available as well as able to commit and allocate sufficient amount of time to the entire evaluation process, including when faced with unexpected changes.

## **12. Budget**

The foreseen total budget for the evaluation is Euro 370 000, excluding VAT. The final budget will be agreed based on the Inception Report, methodology and work plan.

## **13. Mandate**

The evaluation team is entitled and expected to discuss matters relevant to this evaluation with pertinent persons and organisations. However, it is not authorized to make any commitments on behalf of the Government of Finland or the Ministry. The evaluation team does not represent the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland in any capacity.

All intellectual property rights to the result of the Service referred to in the Contract will be exclusive property of the Ministry, including the right to make modifications and hand over material to a third party. The Ministry may publish the end-result under the Creative Commons license in order to promote openness and public use of evaluation results.

## **14. Authorisation**

Helsinki,

Anu Saxén  
Director  
Development Evaluation Unit  
Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland

## **ANNEXES:**

### **1 KEY DOCUMENTS**

### **2 LIST OF DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION PROJECTS 2009-2021**

### **3 FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF PROGRAMME LEVEL EVALUATIONS 2009-2019, LIST OF EVALUATIONS 2010-2020**

### **4 DESCRIPTION OF LEVELS OF ANALYSIS AND INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE**





## Annex 2: People Interviewed

Name	Organisation	Position	Location
Marina Kitaigorodski	Abilis Foundation	Programme Coordinator	Finland
Patrick Sandström	FILHA: Finnish Lung and Health Association	Special Adviser	Finland
Harri Pietarila	FMI	Head of Unit	Finland
Joanna Ljubov	FMI	Project Manager and Research Scientist	Finland
Matti Eerikäinen	FMI	Head of the Working Group, International Projects	Finland
Stella Selinheimo	FMI	Project Manager	Finland
Jaana Lohva	GTK	Project Manager, Team Leader	Finland
Irina Ambrosin	MFA Finland	Office of the Ambassador of Finland for Central-Asia, Attaché	Finland
Juhani Toivonen	MFA Finland	Former Deputy Director of ITÄ 20, Former Ambassador	Finland
Katja Tiilikainen	MFA Finland	Senior Adviser, Gender Equality (former Gender Adviser in the CoE office in Ukraine)	Finland
Marja Liivala	MFA Finland	Roving Ambassador	Finland
Marjo Ahvenainen	MFA Finland	Programme Officer for CA	Finland
Matti Kääriäinen	MFA Finland	Councillor, former Ambassador	Finland
Mika Vehnämäki	MFA Finland	Commercial Counsellor, TUO-10	Finland
Minni Hyrkkänen	MFA Finland	Project Officer, Political Department POL-01	Finland
Paula Malan	MFA Finland	Senior Senior Adviser, Development Policy (Education) KEO-20	Finland
Sannamaaria Vanamo	MFA Finland	Deputy Director General of the Department for Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia	Finland
Satu Pehu-Voima	MFA Finland	Former Senior Adviser, Development Policy (Education) KEO-20	Finland
Tiina Markkinen	MFA Finland	Senior Adviser, Human Rights and the Rule of Law, Department for Development Policy	Finland
Anne-Marie Grouev	National Institute for Health and Welfare, Finland	Development Manager,	Finland
Marika Pohjola	Statistics Finland	Planning Officer	Finland
Ulla Maarit Saarinen	Statistics Finland	Planning Officer	Finland
Kati Pritsi	SYKE	Project Manager	Finland
Tea Törnroos	SYKE	International affairs Unit, Division Manager	Finland
Roseanna Avento	University of Eastern Finland	Global Development Manager, FishEDU	Finland
Sofiia Nishaeva	University of Eastern Finland	Project Program Coordinator	Finland
Guray Vural	CoE	Advisor in RMDR Division responsible for Ukraine (and other EaP countries)	France



Name	Organisation	Position	Location
Matthew Barr	CoE	Head of Resource Mobilisation and Donor Relations (RMDR),	France
Sergei Bazarya	CoE	Advisor in the Programming Department responsible for Ukraine (and other EaP countries),	France
Verena Taylor	CoE	Director of the Office of the Directorate General of Programmes (ODGP),	France
Elena Novikova	EcoFloris LLC	Director (Production of berry tea sets and herbal teas for the HORECA segment)	Kyrgyzstan
Bakyt Kulov	FAO	IT Specialist	Kyrgyzstan
Dinara Rakhmanova	FAO	Assistant Representative	Kyrgyzstan
Mairam Sarieva	FAO	Monitoring, Control and Surveillance Coordinator	Kyrgyzstan
Tom Shipton	FAO	Chief Technical Adviser CTA	Kyrgyzstan
Stella Selinheimo	FMI	Project Manager	Kyrgyzstan
Vitalii Zaginaev	Kyrgyz Integrated Hydrogeological Expedition	Hydrogeologist	Kyrgyzstan
Ainura Osmonalieva	Legal Clinic Adilet (NGO)	Former Project Coordinator	Kyrgyzstan
Chinara Imankulova	Ministry of Agriculture and Melioration	Chief Specialist, Department of Fisheries	Kyrgyzstan
Zhyldyz Ryskulova	Ministry of Justice	Deputy Director, FLA Coordination Center	Kyrgyzstan
Baikadam Kuramaev	Ministry of Labour and Social Development	Head of International Cooperation Department	Kyrgyzstan
Zhanyl Alybaeva	Ministry of Labour and Social Development	Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Development	Kyrgyzstan
Olivia Gruzdova	n/a	Freelance Consultant	Kyrgyzstan
Tursunbek Akun	n/a	Former Ombudsman of the Kyrgyz Republic	Kyrgyzstan
Lolakhon Baimatova	National Statistics Committee	Head of International Cooperation Department	Kyrgyzstan
Alexander Wolters	OSCE Academy	Principal	Kyrgyzstan
Kenjekan Sultanbaeva	Private Entrepreneur (tour guide)	Private entrepreneur	Kyrgyzstan
Arslan Miiashev	Public Foundation 'Mountain Societies Development Support Programme'	Executive Director of MSDSP KG	Kyrgyzstan
Jyldyz Suleimanova	Public Foundation 'Mountain Societies Development Support Programme'	Branch Manager	Kyrgyzstan
Elnura Emilkanova	Public Fund 'Inclusive Education'	Head of the PF	Kyrgyzstan
Ainura Eshenalieva	Public Fund 'Media Policy Institute'	Media Specialist	Kyrgyzstan
Nurlan Tokonov	Public Fund AVEP	Director	Kyrgyzstan
Zinaida Shabolotova	SCIESU	Former Local Project Coordinator, versatile geological expert	Kyrgyzstan
Malik Abakirov	The Guarantee Fund	Chairman	Kyrgyzstan
Ainura Alymbekova	UNDP	Project Coordinator	Kyrgyzstan
Aisuluu Mambetkazieva	UNDP	Project Coordinator	Kyrgyzstan
Daniele Geltz	UNDP	Former AFT Project Coordinator	Kyrgyzstan



Name	Organisation	Position	Location
Simone Boneschi	UNDP	Chief Technical Advisor, Rule of Law	Kyrgyzstan
Urmat Takirov	UNDP	Head of Solutions Mapping at UNDP Accelerator Labs	Kyrgyzstan
Gocha Aleksandria	ILO	Specialist in Workers' Activities, Decent Work Technical Support Team and Country Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia	Russia
Mehrafuz Jonmamadova	Aga Khan Foundation	Senior Office Manager	Tajikistan
Nekruz Asmatilloev	Aga Khan Foundation	Project Manager	Tajikistan
Francesco Straniero	EUD	Programme Officer	Tajikistan
Giuseppe Aristei	EUD	Programme Officer	Tajikistan
Aziz Gulamadshoev	Main Department of Geology (Government of Tajikistan)	Project Manager	Tajikistan
Rahmonbek Bakhtdavlratov	Main Department of Geology (Government of Tajikistan)	Deputy Head of GUG	Tajikistan
Saida Inoyatova	Ishtiroq League of Disabled Women	Director	Tajikistan
Mavluda Rafieva	NGO SAFI	Director	Tajikistan
Nagzibek Chiniev	OSCE	Coordinator of Finnish projects	Tajikistan
Favziya Nazarova	Public Foundation Notabene	Director	Tajikistan
Najmiddin Gulomiddinov	Public Organization RuralInvest	Project Coordinator	Tajikistan
Loik Nusratov	SALAC	Director	Tajikistan
Nazokat Isaeva	SYKE	Project Coordinator	Tajikistan
Muzaffar Shodmonov	Tajikhydromet	Head of International Relations Dept., Project Focal Point	Tajikistan
Alisher Karimov	UNDP	Team Leader	Tajikistan
Parviz Akramov	UNDP	National Project Coordinator	Tajikistan
Saidahmad Ikromov	UNDP	Project Manager	Tajikistan
Liliia Hrynevych	Borys Grinchenko Kyiv University (Ministry of Education and Science in 2016-2019)	Vice-rector for scientific and pedagogical and international activities (former Minister of Education and Science)	Ukraine
Marta Stetsyk	Charitable Foundation Step Forward	Co-founder, Chairwoman	Ukraine
Olena Lytyvenko	CoE	Deputy Head of the Kyiv Office,	Ukraine
Yulia Burtseva	Donetsk Oblast Institute of Postgraduate Pedagogical Education	Acting Rector	Ukraine
Rodion Kolyshko	Institute of Professional Qualifications	Director	Ukraine
Nataliia Protsenko	Ministry of Education and Science	Expert on VET at the Reform Support Team	Ukraine
Roman Shyyan	Ministry of Education and Science	Deputy Director on the New Ukrainian School at the Reform Support Team	Ukraine
Irina Shumik	Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine	Director General of the Directorate of Vocational Education	Ukraine



Name	Organisation	Position	Location
Valerii Kotsiuba	Ministry of Energy of Ukraine (before – State Agency on Energy Efficiency and Energy Saving of Ukraine)	Head of International Relations Department	Ukraine
Anna Prokayeva	NGO Center for social and media initiatives	Director	Ukraine
Tetiana Skliar	NGO Insha Osvita	Facilitator and Designer of Educational Programs	Ukraine
Halyna Buzan	NGO Living Planet	Project Manager	Ukraine
Pavlo Serd	NGO Smart Education	Editor of the site 'New Ukrainian School'	Ukraine
Viktoria Topol	NGO Smart Education	Editor-in-Chief of the New Ukrainian School website	Ukraine
Grynyk Yegor	NGO Ukrainian Nature Conservation Group	Forest Expert	Ukraine
Larysa Samosonok	NGO Vzayemodiya Plus	Project Manager	Ukraine
Bogdan Yaremchuk	NGO Creative Studio Dreamstep	Director	Ukraine
Mykola Bodnariuk	Opryshenska Secondary School	School Director	Ukraine
Yulia Tyshenko	Ukrainian Center for Independent Political Research	Head of the Democratic Processes Support Program	Ukraine
Oksana Zabolotna	Ukrainian Educational Research Association	Member of the Board	Ukraine
Liudmyla Chernikova	Zaporizhia Oblast Institute of Postgraduate Pedagogical Education	Vice-Rector	Ukraine



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# Annex 4: Approach and Methodology

## Theory-Based Evaluation

The evaluation adopted a Theory-based evaluation (TBE) approach, with the aim of identifying explanatory factors that underlie achievements, problems encountered, the effectiveness of mediating measures adopted. The evaluation process has been guided by the reconstructions of the underlying Theories of Change, and the hypotheses generated to accompany each evaluation question.

The Evaluation Design and Analytical Framework mapped against the attributes of the Evaluand, and the need to combine, effectively, ex-post evaluation exercises of two periods (2009-13 and 2014-17), with an evaluation of the ongoing 2018-21 period in which as specific emphasis on management and effectiveness was included.

## Unit and Levels of Analysis

The central ‘Unit of Analysis’ of the evaluation, the Evaluand, was identified as all aspects of development cooperation activity conducted by the Department for Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia over the period 2009-2021. The nature of the Evaluand has evolved over this period (e.g., with regard to the size of the portfolio, the number of countries engaged in cooperation, the programming and management of the portfolio).

The engagement with the relevant Levels of Analysis formed an important aspect of the evaluation, to allow for aggregation of evidence that could provide a holistic understanding of the Evaluand. This engagement was also used in tracing the implementation of the portfolio across levels, e.g., when examining the extent to which cross-cutting objectives, the human rights-based approach and other relevant aspects have been translated from policy priority to practice on the ground. The levels of analysis relevant for the evaluation can be placed into interlinked clusters (policy and programming, geographic, and stakeholding).

### *Policy and programmatic sphere*

- Policy level (national policy level of Finland and beneficiary/partner countries, EU policy, etc.);
- Programmatic level (programming and management);
- Implementation level (of individual interventions within the portfolio).

### *Geographical levels of analysis*

- Global level (e.g., UN strategies, promotion of SDGs; global health pandemic);
- Regional level (including sub-regions of Central Asia and Eastern Europe);
- Country level (including population / citizenry).
- Within the national level, the following levels of analysis can be regarded as relevant for the evaluation:
  - Sector/thematic
  - Institutional
  - Community
  - Individual



These levels of analysis were used in the application of the evaluation matrix in aggregating results from project to programme and country-wide understanding of the contribution of Finland's development cooperation in the target region.

### ***Stakeholder levels***

A detailed stakeholder mapping was compiled during the Inception Phase and presented in the Inception Report. Within the analysis of stakeholder groups, the following levels were identified:

National-level governmental and state institutions

Sectoral and system-wide level (e.g., education system reform, trade sector);

Organisations and institutions (beneficiary institutions, international and national implementing partner organisations);

Community level (e.g., association of entrepreneurs, rural communities);

Individual level (including participants in project activities).

## **Temporal and Comparative dimensions**

### ***Longitudinal dimension***

The coverage of the three distinct sub-periods (2009-13, 2014-17, 2018-21) presented an opportunity to engage in longitudinal analysis of certain aspects relating to the Evaluand (e.g., regarding the evolution of the approach to programming and management of the portfolio; and analysis relating to interventions that have been supported continually over two or three phases). The ET encountered significant challenges in achieving longitudinal analysis, however, because of gaps in the evidence base (documentary and institutional memory related).

### ***Comparative dimensions***

Drawing on the levels of analysis outlined above, the analytical framework incorporated a range of comparative dimensions, covering temporal (three phases); geographical (regions and countries); instrument/modality (bi-lateral and multi-bilateral, ICI, etc.); sector/theme; type of activity (e.g., capacity-building, institutional strengthening, awareness-raising, technical assistance); comparative perspectives among national and international stakeholders; comparisons with the support of other donors, etc.

## **Modes of Analysis**

The evaluation incorporated a range of analytical approaches, appropriate to the requirements of the study. The operationalisation of these modes is presented below.

***Portfolio analysis*** was used to elaborate a detailed understanding of the composition of the portfolio within and across phases, allowing for disaggregation of data by country, sector, modality, etc.





**Comparative analysis** was applied across all relevant comparative dimensions (modalities, countries, phases, sectors, etc.). It was used, inter alia, to trace the evolution of Finnish development cooperation across the period under evaluation, to compare the relative effectiveness of different instruments, to compare the nature of results achieved under varying levels of funding commitments made by Finland, etc.

**Context analysis** was used in order to contextualise the understanding of Finland's development cooperation in the target region. It served as an aid in understanding, inter alia, the extent to which Finnish development cooperation activities have mapped effectively against the needs of partner countries.

**Contribution Analysis** was used to trace causal linkages, and to assess attribution of the results and impacts of the development cooperation activities, including intended and unintended outcomes. The extent to which contribution could be established was dependent on the availability of sufficiently detailed and accurate data.

**Stakeholder Analysis** was used in order to examine the perceptions of key stakeholders of development cooperation covered by this evaluation (through primary data collection and the use of existing, secondary data).

**Organisational analysis** was used in order to examine the effectiveness of the operational model of the Evaluand.

## Data sources

The evaluation identified the following sources and types of evidence to engage with during the implementation phase: documentary evidence, stakeholder feedback, publicly available (internet-based) evidence.

### *Documentary evidence:*

- **MFA documentary sources:** The ET was given access to a wide range of documentation relating to the evaluand, including programmatic documentation, minutes of meetings of the MFA Quality Board, memos produced by diplomatic teams regarding project-related issues, guidelines for the application of approaches to development cooperation activities, etc. Certain limitations were encountered in the extent to which the documentary trace provided a full picture of developments relating to the portfolio (e.g., gaps in the reporting trace, gaps with regard to needs analyses, consultations with national stakeholders, information on decision-making regarding the evaluand, information about coordination with the work of other donors), however these gaps were mediated by use of other source data.
- **Implementing organisation sources:** Documentation emanating from implementing partner organisations (including external evaluations of their work) was analysed in the implementation phase of the evaluation, including descriptions of action / project foundational documents, including results frameworks; final project reports, independent evaluation reports; monitoring data.

**Stakeholder feedback and perspectives:** The evaluation elicit feedback from a wide range of stakeholders, guided by the stakeholder mapping produced in the inception phase.



**Publicly available sources of information (internet-based):** In order to supplement the afore-mentioned sources, and to facilitate contextualisation (and triangulation), the ET engaged with relevant publicly-available sources, including:

- Partner governments' reports, civil society reports, commercial sector reports (on issues relevant for the evaluation);
- Websites of implementing partner organisations (e.g., to verify sustainability of interventions);
- Websites of national-level stakeholders/beneficiaries (e.g., to verify nature and extent of needs, contribution made by intervention to their work, etc.);
- Websites of other donors, reports published by other donors and international organisations;
- Reports produced by research centres, thinktanks;
- Publicly available statistics/sectoral coverage/media coverage relevant to the subject.

## Data collection methods

In line with the Evaluation Design, a blend of qualitative and quantitative data collection methods was used, to facilitate triangulation of findings and the verification of the data collected. Methods included documentary review; consultations; review of publicly available (internet-based) sources. The evidence base comprised primary data, i.e. that collected by the ET; and secondary data, e.g., information available in documentation relating to the evaluand, to MFA policies and priorities, to interventions, and from third-party sources such as reports of other donors, governments, civil society reports, media monitoring reports, etc. The methods are summarised below:

**Documentary review:** The ET engaged in the review of all policy-level and portfolio-level documentation made available by MFA, along with a substantive sample of documentation relating to intervention-level activities. This included coverage of the complete portfolios of interventions implemented in the three case countries of the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Ukraine for the period 2009-21. The review was supplemented by use of Finnish-language memos produced internally by MFA staff, e.g., for the discussion of the results of monitoring missions to the partner countries. Internet-based sources were also used, including available reports produced by implementing partner organisations, beneficiary organisations, media coverage of developments relevant to the portfolio.

**Quantitative data analysis:** The engagement with portfolio analysis conducted in the inception phase continued in the implementation phase. This served as the evaluation's principal form of quantitative data analysis.

### Questionnaire surveys

- Survey of project managers: It was decided that a survey be sent to representatives of implementing organisations of the interventions in the current phase (2018-21), to request their feedback on a series of questions (Likert scale responses, and the possibility to add brief written comments). The survey request was sent to over 30 respondents identified as project managers or senior managers (e.g., head of country office), responsible for oversight of the interventions in the Phase III interventions. However, only 10 responses were received by the deadline – a consequence of the compressed timescale within which



the survey had to be conducted, and also of the ongoing pandemic restrictions which have impacted on access to respondents during the course of the evaluation process. The small number of responses does not allow for quantitative analysis. Instead, the evaluation has drawn on the written responses, which served as valuable additional material to that collected via interviews and written feedback from other respondents.

- **Fund for Local Cooperation survey:** A survey was sent to Finnish embassies and diplomatic missions covering the 11 countries of the region covered in the evaluation. The survey templates are provided in Annex 6. This survey resulted in a 100% response rate, with detailed answers for all questions received from all of the respective diplomatic missions.

**Consultations (interviews and written feedback):** Consultations were conducted during the Inception and Implementation phases of the evaluation and were conducted in both interview mode (primarily or exclusively by teleconferencing or telephone in line with the COVID-19 restrictions) and through eliciting written feedback from a total of 89 respondents. Two country evaluators were engaged (based in Ukraine and the Kyrgyz Republic) to facilitate the conduct of consultations with stakeholders in the three case countries covered by the evaluation. The format of interviews and focus group interviews was semi-structured, drawing on and operationalising the questions embedded in the evaluation matrix for interview use. The actual question sets varied from respondent to respondent.

## Engagement with levels of analysis and the approach to sampling in the evaluation design

The strategic nature of the evaluation, and the complex nature of the Evaluand, require a suitably complex approach to engaging with the evidence base to allow both for aggregation and disaggregation of findings, in order to achieve a holistic and nuanced understanding of the net results achieved by the Evaluand. This approach also needs to be manageable in evaluation terms – i.e. the tasks need to be achievable within the timeframe set for the process and the resources allocated.

Here the operationalisation of the evaluation's engagement with the levels of analysis identified above plays a fundamental role. The current strategic evaluation engaged primarily with those levels that map against the need for holistic understanding of the evidence base, and also allowed for the tracing of the evolution of the Evaluand and the identification of aggregate-level lessons learned to be achieved. While the evaluation engaged with intervention-level data, this level of analysis was not a primary focus (as this would duplicate intervention-level evaluations).

**Level of the Evaluand as a whole:** The diverse nature of the activities covered by the Evaluand (programmable portfolio of interventions, FLC activities, intersection of development cooperation activities with those relating to policy dialogue, foreign and security policy, trade policy) precludes an approach that would engage analytically with the whole of the Evaluand. Rather, the picture of the Evaluand as a whole was formed on the basis of the aggregation of the data analysed.

**Level of the programmable portfolio as a whole:** This level was analysed through the portfolio analysis produced by the ET.

**Level of partner countries:** This level is a key aspect of the evaluation design, as across the whole period this has been a central focus of cooperation (as the majority of programmable interventions and other activities have been country-focused; and from 2018 programming has moved to the country level). The disaggregation by country allowed an entry point to examine all aspects of the Evaluand (programmable portfolio, FLC projects, foreign and security policy, and trade policy intersections with development cooperation, etc.) in a focused manner.



**Country-based approach to sampling:** The evaluation adopted a country-based approach. This was used in order to form a manageable sub-set within the overall total of 11 countries that have been engaged with during the 2009-2021 period. The three countries covered under all phases were selected, i.e.: The Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Ukraine, for which 100% of the portfolio of bilateral and regional interventions conducted in those countries from the portfolio of programmable, multi-year interventions were included in the analysis, to the extent that data was available. The ET was tasked with producing country reviews for the three countries, using the evaluation matrix developed for the evaluation as a whole to guide the engagement with evidence. The three country reviews are presented in Volume Two.

## Approach to implementing the evaluation

The evaluation was conducted in line with the MFA Finland evaluation manual (2018)<sup>36</sup> as well as best practice in development cooperation, drawing on, inter alia, the EU's Better Regulation Guidelines,<sup>37</sup> the United Nation's Evaluation Group guidelines.<sup>38</sup> The main principles followed were:

**Impartiality and independence:** The evaluation team has, in line with the independent nature of the evaluation, aimed to conduct the evaluation in an impartial manner and produce findings and recommendations based on the nature of the evidence reviewed.

**Conflicts of interest:** Potential conflicts of interest were identified (one member of the ET has been involved in the design and implementation of an education sector intervention in Ukraine, and did not cover this aspect accordingly; another member has worked in UNDP in Central Asia, and did not cover the Central Asia portfolio in their work).

**Utility of the evaluation:** The aim of the evaluation is to serve as a learning exercise for MFA Finland, alongside the accountability aspect of the evaluation's review of the performance of MFA Finland's development cooperation portfolio. It thereby aims to contribute to forward-looking planning of MFA's activities in the coming period.

**HRBA:** The evaluation sought to integrate the MFA's Human Rights-Based Approach into the evaluation design and conduct. This included, inter alia, the accordance of equal treatment of all stakeholders in the evaluation process (not regarding their status, gender, nationality).

**Participatory approach:** The ET aimed to ensure that the evaluation includes coverage of the perspectives and experience of all relevant stakeholders, and that the voices of beneficiaries and partners are heard in the evaluation evidence to be presented.

**Gender-sensitivity:** The evaluation adopted a gender sensitive approach through the integration of gender equality concerns into the evaluation design, methodology, use of gender-sensitive indicators.

**No harm approach:** The evaluation ensured that engagement with stakeholders and with the subject matter of the evaluation are treated with sensitivity (and care taken particularly in cases relating to sensitive socio-economic, political, cultural contexts). Care was taken to ensure that

<sup>36</sup> <https://eoppiva.zapter.io/evaluationmanual2018>

<sup>37</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/law-making-process/planning-and-proposing-law/better-regulation-why-and-how/better-regulation-guidelines-and-toolbox\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/law-making-process/planning-and-proposing-law/better-regulation-why-and-how/better-regulation-guidelines-and-toolbox_en)

<sup>38</sup> <http://www.uneval.org/document/guidance-documents>



the evaluation is conducted with full regard for the safety concerns of all stakeholders (including the evaluation team) in line with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic – face-to-face meetings were therefore precluded, with the exception of a small number conducted in-person in Kyrgyzstan (as otherwise interviews would have had to be cancelled as respondents did not want to discuss by telephone).

**Ethics:** The evaluation approach adopted appropriate measures to ensure ethical conduct of the studies, with particular attention given to coverage of sensitive subject matter, and the anonymisation of respondents. The evaluation was conducted in line with the UNEG Ethical code, as per the requirements laid out in the MFA’s Evaluation Manual (2018). The table below summarises key issues:

**Table 6 Key issues for ethical consideration**

<b>Conflict of interest</b>	Potential conflicts of interest have been identified and mediated through allocation of tasks to ET members that do not involve them in direct coverage of projects with which they have had past connections.
<b>Honesty and integrity</b>	Evaluation team members committed to adhere to the UNEG Code of Conduct for evaluators in the UN system, and to accurately presenting procedures, data and findings, including ensuring that the evaluation findings are transparently generated, have full integrity and are unbiased.
<b>Respect for dignity and diversity</b>	The evaluation team respected differences in culture, local customs, religious beliefs and practices, personal interaction, gender roles, disability, age and ethnicity, whilst evaluation instruments are appropriate to the cultural setting.
<b>Rights of participants</b>	Prospective interviewees were given the time and information needed to decide whether or not they wish to participate. Informed consent will be sought in all cases.
<b>Anonymity and confidentiality</b>	All those providing information for this evaluation were informed how that information will be used and how their participation will be reflected (e.g., how their anonymity will be ensured). Evaluation team members will respect people’s right to provide information in confidence and make participants aware of the scope and limits of confidentiality. The evaluation has ensured that sensitive information cannot be traced to its source so that the relevant individuals are protected from reprisals.
<b>Avoidance of harm</b>	The evaluation team sought to minimize risks to, and burdens on those participating in the evaluation. No in-person contact, or travel was required of any team member, because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. (In the small number of in-person interviews in Kyrgyzstan, the country evaluator volunteered to conduct them in-person.)
<b>Data protection</b>	All data generated by the evaluation team remains internal to the evaluation and will not be shared without the express consent of participants. All evaluation team members have signed Non-Disclosure Agreements as part of their contract with Particip, and Particip itself has several safeguards in place. This includes the use of Egnyte as a confidential repository for information-sharing and clear rules and regulations regarding the sharing of data. Finally, Particip has appointed an internal Data Protection Officer to ensure compliance with the obligations pursuant to EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Source: MFA’s Evaluation Manual 2018



## Limitations and approach to mediation

The following factors can be regarded as acting as limitations for the evaluation:

- There are gaps in the documentary trace held by MFA Finland relating to the evaluand (notably – there are no annual reports covering the portfolio as a whole, no final reports were produced by MFA for Phase I or II). This necessitates a process of reconstruction by the ET with regard to the results achieved under those phases, rather than a focus on verification.
- There are also gaps in the institutional memory of MFA regarding the evaluand – this is compounded by the rate of turnover/rotation of staff, and the limited human resources allocated to development cooperation activities within the Department.
- It was assumed that the current evaluation exercise would be able to draw on extensive evidence provided by existing external evaluations and final project reports of interventions contained in the portfolio. However, evaluation reports were available for less than a third of interventions overall, and the contents varied significantly – in some cases detailed evidence was provided, in others the amount of evidence was limited, and in particular coverage of impact was generally thin (even in the cases of interventions that had continued across two or more phases).
- The compressed timescale allocated for the evaluation process served as a limitation on the ET's ability to engage in iterative treatment of the evidence.
- The COVID-19 pandemic and the travel restrictions in place across Europe and the target region precludes the conduct of in-person field work, and missions to Helsinki. In-person contact with beneficiaries was not possible, with the exception of a small number of in-person interviews conducted in Kyrgyzstan – this is a limitation in comparison with standard evaluation practice.
- In the cases of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, the country evaluators at times faced considerable challenges in locating stakeholders with knowledge of the Finnish-funded interventions, and/or who were willing to talk with the country evaluator (unwillingness based on a range of inhibiting factors).

The ET addressed these limitations to the extent possible through the following means:

- The evaluation design sought to achieve breadth and depth of coverage, in which the goal of arriving at aggregate understandings reduced the reliance on particular aspects of the evaluand.
- Triangulation was achieved through documentary analysis, consultations with a broad and representative range of stakeholders, two surveys and the use of a range of sources for contextualisation.



# Annex 5: Portfolio analysis

## Approach and limitations

The Evaluation Team (ET) prepared the portfolio analysis of the programmable development cooperation based on the data extracted from the MFA's financial management system – Ratsu for the period 2009-2020 (as financial data for 2021 was not available yet) in January 2021. The information regarding the project portfolio slightly evolved and changed over the period of the evaluation, thereby posing a challenge with regard to the reliability of the available data. Considering that the additional data identified by the ET was not in a structured format (information mainly available in memorandums and emails exchanges), the ET limited the portfolio analysis to the complete and up-to-date data set obtained from MFA's financial management system. Further, it has to be noted that the portfolio analysis does not cover the whole OSCE portfolio in the region. As this is managed by the Permanent Delegation to OSCE in Vienna, projects within the scope of this evaluation could not be clearly identified from the financial data. However, for the overall analysis on both country and overall portfolio level, the findings from the portfolio analysis have been triangulated by utilizing additional data obtained during the desk review and interviews in order to ensure that the evaluand as a whole is covered sufficiently.

Recoding of data was done by the ET based on the categories relevant to the evaluation purpose/questions, as for instance, data on modalities was not directly available in the data sets. In terms of the geographic specification, ET followed the MFA country categories available from the data set, further editing and categorizing the data for the purpose of analysis. Regional projects were recoded to 'Regional – Other' and 'Regional – Central Asia' based on the available project description. Those that clearly indicated as related to Central Asia were marked under the latter category to keep the nuance in the data. It has to be noted that the regional categories do also include bilateral<sup>39</sup> projects. For instance, FLC projects in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, which are administered by the Finnish Embassy in Kazakhstan, are labelled as "FLC projects Central Asia" in the MFA Financial system.

The analysis used mainly disbursement data ('maksatukset') – in contrary to the commitment data ('myönnöt') to ensure that cancelled projects or those that had been significantly reduced in terms of budget size were reflected. Using the disbursed amounts also allowed for a better analysis of funds per phase, as it reflects the actual released funds/implementation amounts for each reporting year. However, it has to be noted, that disbursements that were still pending in January 2021, when the data was extracted, are not covered by the analysis. Only funding related to actual 'projects' was included in this analysis, meaning that funding related to administrative costs or general portfolio management and monitoring were excluded (based on the project title and descriptions).

To facilitate the analysis by more "generic" sectors, the OECD DAC sectoral codes were re-coded by using the 3-digit macro-sector code instead of the more specific sector codes used by MFA. For four projects sector codes were missing – these were marked as n/a. Based on the 'channel', 'short description' and 'description' columns, implementation channels were recoded by the ET. The following categories were used: CSO/(I)NGO; Finnish state agencies; International Financial Institutions (IFIs); Multilateral other; Multilateral UN; Private companies; other. In few cases

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<sup>39</sup> Bilateral here does not refer to a modality, but refers to country-specific projects, benefitting only one country.

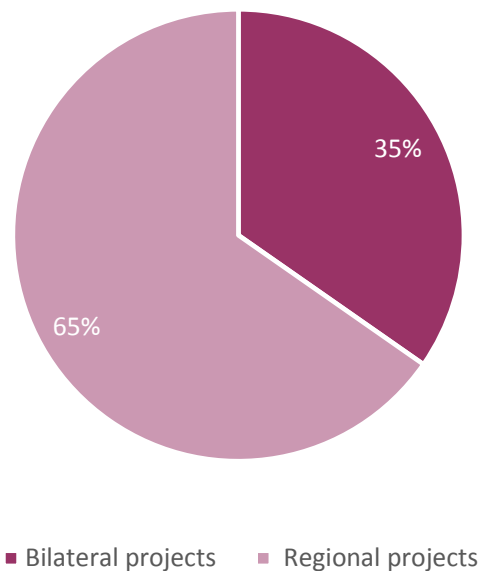


where information provided in the MFA dataset was not sufficient, the ET also used available project documentation to identify the implementing partner. The ET has also recoded modalities of implementation, i.e. bilateral; multilateral; multi-bilateral; INGO modality; ICI; FLC. However, it is important to note that as full and reliable information about the modalities was not available in the data set received from the MFA, only approximate findings can be presented in this regard.

## Overall portfolio

The overall amount of the commitments in 2009-2020 was EUR 137.4 million and the realised disbursements recorded in the system amounted to EUR 110.5 million, 40 supporting a total number of 129 projects<sup>41</sup>. Figure 5 Development cooperation disbursements 2009-2020 per regional and bilateral funding presents the share of funding benefitting regional/multi-country projects and bilateral projects, while Figure 6 shows the disbursements across the three phases.

**Figure 5 Development cooperation disbursements 2009-2020 per regional and bilateral funding**



Source: MFA Ratsu data 2009-2020; Data compilation: Evaluation team.

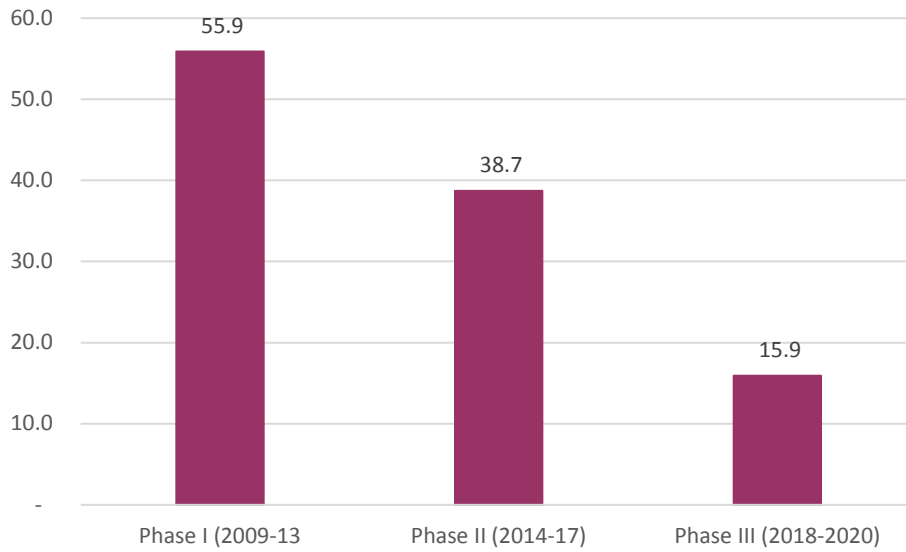
<sup>40</sup> MFA Ratsu Financial reporting data extracted in January 2021. As described above, these amounts exclude funds allocated to administrative tasks, amounting to EUR 2.4 million committed and 1.8 million disbursed.

<sup>41</sup> This is based on the calculation based on the recorded project numbers in the financial management system





**Figure 6 Development cooperation disbursements 2009-2020 per phases in EUR million**



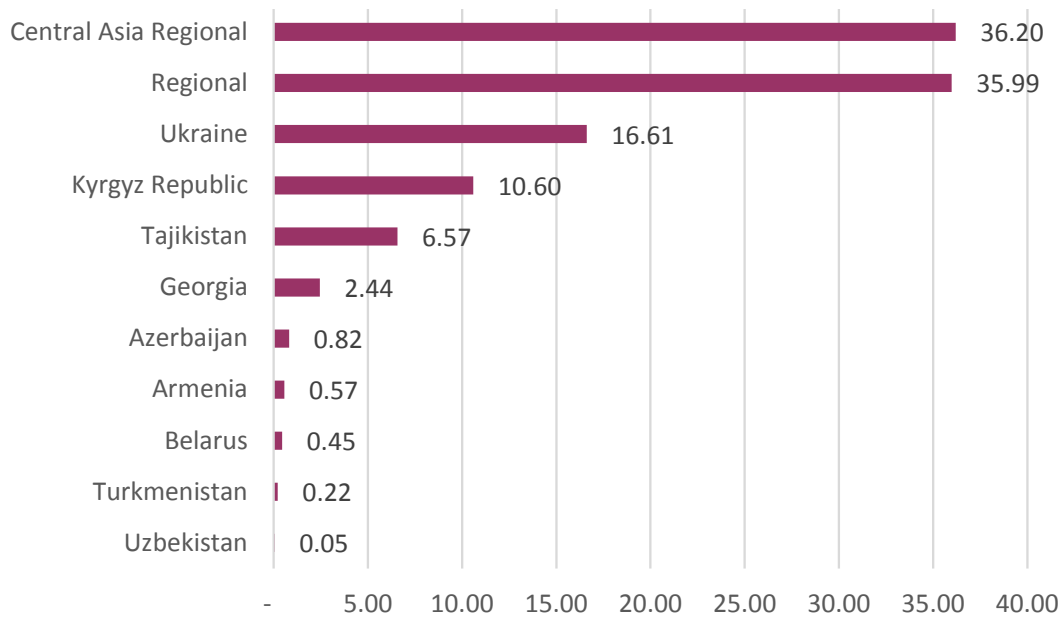
Source: MFA Ratsu data 2009-2020; Data compilation: Evaluation team.

### Geographic focus

Over the period 2009-2021 Finland has supported development cooperation activities in 11 Eastern European and Central Asian countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. The portfolio of interventions includes both single and multi-country/regional interventions. Figure 7 Development cooperation disbursements 2009-2020 per country in EUR million shows the share of disbursed bilateral funds per country for the period 2009-2020, showing that Ukraine, Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan were the largest recipients of Finnish bilateral funding.



**Figure 7 Development cooperation disbursements 2009-2020 per country in EUR million**

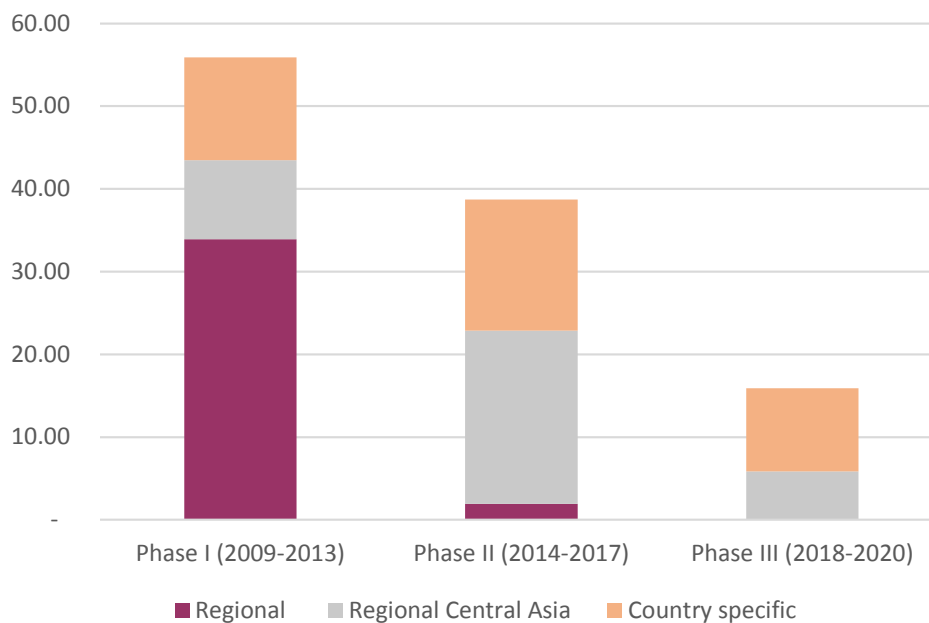


*Source: MFA Ratsu data 2009-2020; Data compilation: Evaluation team.*

Overall, EUR 72.2 million (65% of the total EUR 110.5 million) have been disbursed for regional/multi-country project. As shown in Figure 8 Development cooperation disbursements 2009-2020 per regional and bilateral funding per phase in EUR million, the geographical focus and extent of activity has evolved over the period, with the focus shifting from regional interventions to bilateral projects and regional projects in Central Asia, which are mainly covering Tajikistan and Kyrgyz Republic.



**Figure 8 Development cooperation disbursements 2009-2020 per regional and bilateral funding per phase in EUR million**



Source: MFA Ratsu data 2009-2020; Data compilation: Evaluation team.

Despite the overall allocation has decreased over the years/phases, the country specific allocations have further focussed on Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan – 62% of the disbursed funds in Phase III were directly assigned to these countries. Overall, there was a total number of 29 regional projects (Central Asia and other regional). Armenia is the country with the largest number of implemented projects (23), but as they were all rather small FLC projects, their financial share of the total portfolio is not significant (just above EUR 0.5 million, see Table 7 Number of development cooperation projects 2009-2020).

**Table 7 Number of development cooperation projects 2009-2020**

Country / Zone	Number of projects	Disbursed (in EUR)	Disbursed (in %)
Armenia	23	569,894	0.5
Tajikistan	19	6,569,305	5.9
Regional	17	35,988,485	32.6
Azerbaijan	16	815,549	0.7
Ukraine	15	16,610,311	15.0
Georgia	14	2,441,242	2.2
Central Asia Regional	12	36,200,716	32.8
Kyrgyz Republic	9	10,602,988	9.6
Turkmenistan	4	223,109	0.2
Uzbekistan	2	49,800	0.0
Belarus	1	450,000	0.4
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>129<sup>42</sup></b>	<b>110,521,399</b>	<b>100.0</b>

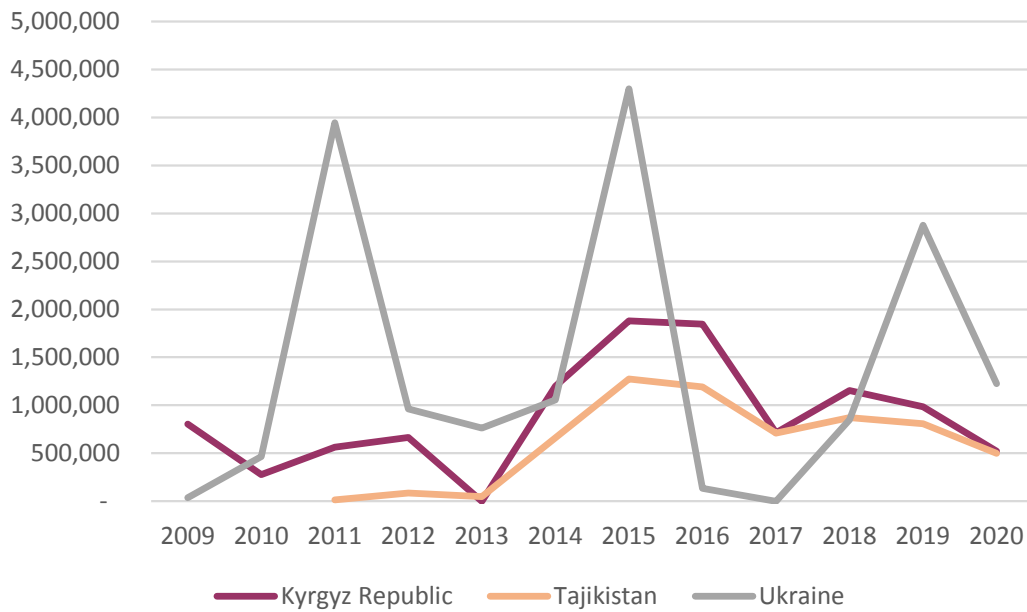
Source: MFA Ratsu data 2009-2020; Data compilation: Evaluation team.

<sup>42</sup> Difference in this data is due to projects 89856901, 89859001, 89859301, which cover two regions and are thus double counted in this table.



Based on the analysis of the annual fund commitments and disbursements over the phases, there has been a degree of continuity within the portfolio, with projects receiving funds over several phases. Figure 9 Development cooperation disbursements 2009-2020 per case country and year in EUR and Figure 10 show the disbursements per case country and per year or phase.

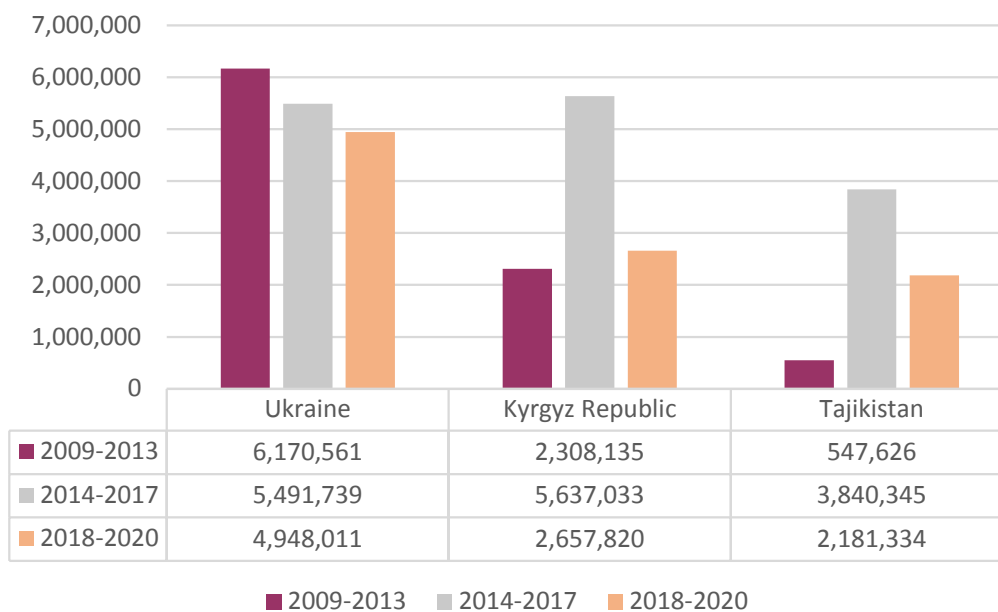
**Figure 9 Development cooperation disbursements 2009-2020 per case country and year in EUR**



Source: MFA Ratsu data 2009-2020; Data compilation: Evaluation team.



**Figure 10 Development cooperation disbursements 2009-2020 per case country and phase in EUR**



Source: MFA Ratsu data 2009-2020; Data compilation: Evaluation team.

## Funding channels

As presented in Figure 11 Development cooperation disbursements 2009-2020 per implementation channels in EUR million the largest funding portion of EUR 54.0 million (48%) has been channelled through UN agencies. This to a large extent also covers the most utilised implementation modality – multi-bilateral.<sup>43</sup> These partner UN agencies include UNDP as the largest recipient, followed by ILO, UNEP, FAO, UNECE, UNFPA and UNITAR. The multi-bilateral modality includes support through International Financial institutions (IFIs), with EBRD as the largest recipient, followed by the World Bank, European Investment Bank and the Nordic Environment Finance Corporation (NEFCO). Based on the recoded data EUR 22 million (21%) were channelled through IFIs%. Other important implementing partners have been the CoE, the Nordic Council of Ministers, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and German Development Cooperation, as well as the private sector to some extent.

EUR 15.3 million, mainly representing the Institutional Cooperation Instrument (ICI) modality, were disbursed through Finnish state institutions.<sup>44</sup> These partner institutes include Finnish Environmental Institute, Geological Survey, Finnish Meteorological Institute, Radiation and Nuclear Safety Authority and National Institute for Health and Welfare. Of the disbursed funds, 8% were channelled through local or International NGOs. This includes the recipients of the Funds for Local Cooperation (FLC), which – as per the analysis – has been applied in as many as 72 projects (out of the total 129). This modality only covers 4% of the total disbursed funds, with average funds of EUR 60,673.<sup>45</sup>

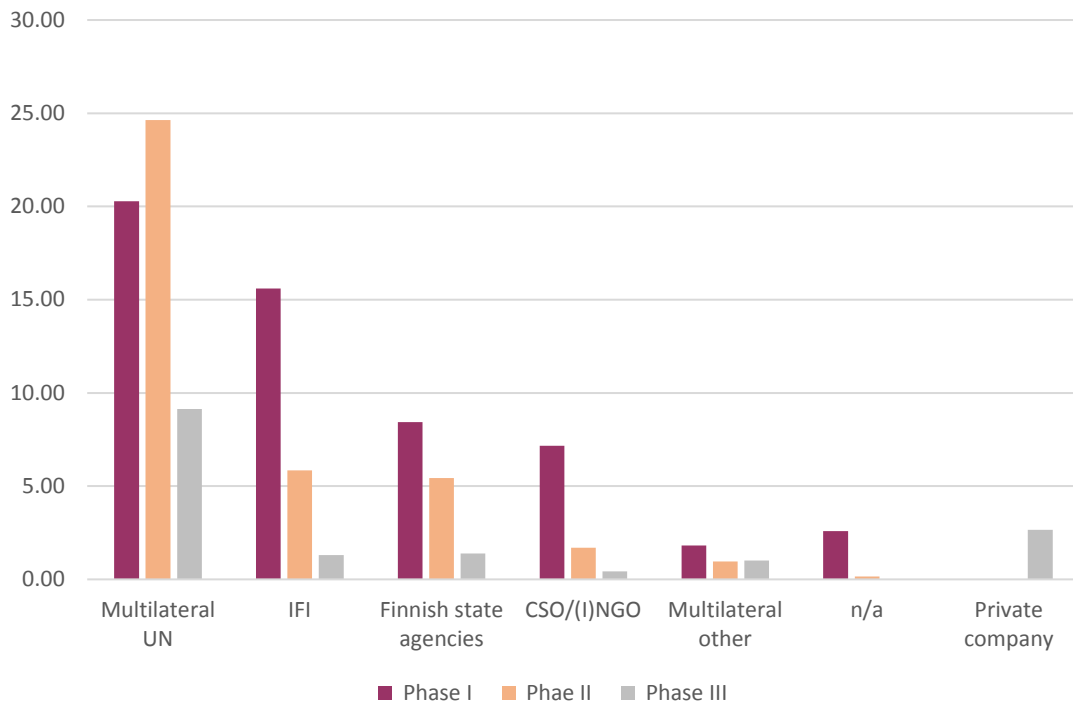
<sup>43</sup> 'Multi-bi' modality refers to a bilateral cooperation that has been implemented by a multilateral agency, in case of the Finnish Development Cooperation evaluated in this evaluation this implies to UN agencies.

<sup>44</sup> Finnish state institution receives the funds based on cooperation with a corresponding partner country institute.

<sup>45</sup> Based on calculated average disbursement amounts in EUR.



**Figure 11 Development cooperation disbursements 2009-2020 per implementation channels in EUR million**



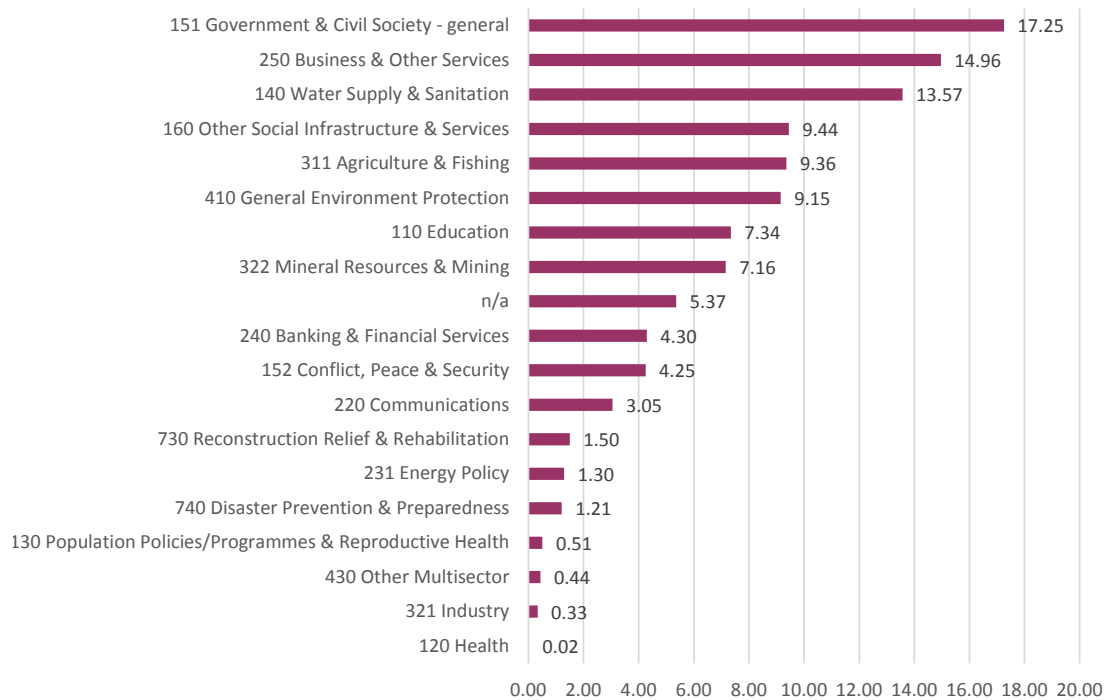
Source: MFA Ratsu data 2009-2020; Data compilation: Evaluation team.

### Sectoral focus and MFA priority areas

Regarding funding per OECD DAC sector classification, when measured in disbursed funds, the largest sectoral focus of the portfolio has been in the Government & Civil Society (16%), Business and Other services (14%), Water Supply and Sanitation (12%), Environmental management related (17% – codes 410 and 322) and Education (7%) (see Figure 12 Development cooperation disbursements 2009-2020 by OECD DAC sectors in EUR million). Table 8 presents the disbursements for the period 2009-2020 per sector and per phase.



**Figure 12 Development cooperation disbursements 2009-2020 by OECD DAC sectors in EUR million**



Source: MFA Ratsu data 2009-2020; Data compilation: Evaluation team.

**Table 8 Development cooperation disbursements 2009-2020 per sector per phase in EUR**

Sectors	Phase I (2009-2013)	Phase II (2014-2017)	Phase III (2018-2020)	Total
151 Government & Civil Society – general	6,548,731	7,144,730	3,557,628	17,251,089
250 Business & Other Services	7,400,000	7,562,000	-	14,962,000
140 Water Supply & Sanitation	5,430,446	7,101,990	1,039,929	13,572,365
160 Other Social Infrastructure & Services	5,051,135	3,842,255	550,000	9,443,390
311 Agriculture & Fishing	1,760,000	2,750,000	4,850,000	9,360,000
410 General Environment Protection	8,568,344	586,125	-	9,154,469
110 Education	512,760	3,600,000	3,228,265	7,341,025
322 Mineral Resources & Mining	3,028,604	3,443,941	690,280	7,162,825
n/a	4,865,205	500,000	-	5,365,205
240 Banking & Financial Services	3,800,000	500,000	-	4,300,000
152 Conflict, Peace & Security	3,807,946	444,806	-	4,252,752
220 Communications	3,050,000	-	-	3,050,000
730 Reconstruction Relief & Rehabilitation	1,500,000	-	-	1,500,000
231 Energy Policy	-	-	1,300,000	1,300,000
740 Disaster Prevention & Preparedness	-	586,327	621,940	1,208,267
130 Population Policies/ Programmes & Reproductive Health	500,000	-	8,000	508,000
430 Other Multisector	-	435,300	-	435,300

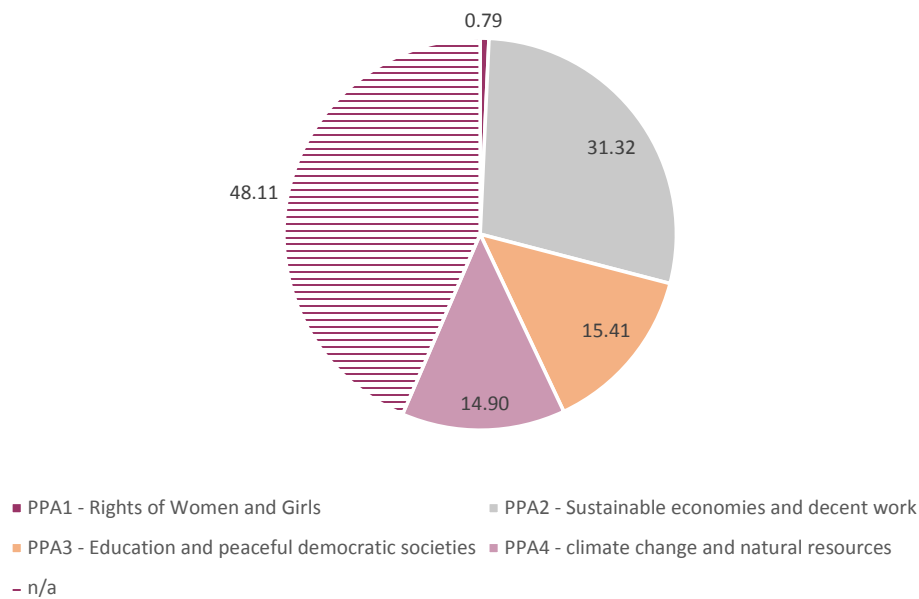


Sectors	Phase I (2009-2013)	Phase II (2014-2017)	Phase III (2018-2020)	Total
321 Industry	82,626	199,097	52,990	334,713
120 Health	-	20,000	-	20,000

Source: MFA Ratsu data 2009-2020; Data compilation: Evaluation team.

Of the 129 projects extracted from the MFA financial management system, only 61 were assigned primarily with the MFA policy priority areas as per Finland’s development policy. The relatively large share of projects without any assigned policy priority area may partly be explained by the fact that assigning PPAs to new interventions in the system was a gradual process, and the use became more systematic only after 2015-16, along with the publication of the 2016 development policy. While Policy Priority Area 2 on ‘Sustainable economies and decent work’ was primarily assigned to only 11 projects, it covers 50% of the budget (calculated based on disbursements for these 61 projects). On the other hand, Policy Priority Area 1 on ‘Rights of Women and Girls’ is primarily linked to as many as 20 projects and covers only 1% of the total funds included in this calculation, as these are mostly small-scale FLC projects. Figure 13 Development cooperation disbursements 2009-2020 by primary MFA policy priority areas in EUR million shows the total disbursements per policy priority area, excluding funds allocated to administrative tasks.

**Figure 13 Development cooperation disbursements 2009-2020 by primary MFA policy priority areas in EUR million**



Source: MFA Ratsu data 2009-2020; Data compilation: Evaluation team.





# Annex 6: Survey templates

## Survey on FLC

### Fund for Local Cooperation – question set for MFA diplomatic missions

#### Evaluation on Development Cooperation carried out by the Department for Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, including the Wider Europe Initiative (WEI)

The Particip-Niras consortium is conducting an evaluation on behalf of MFA Finland, on Development Cooperation carried out by the MFA's Department for Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, including the Wider Europe Initiative (WEI). The evaluation covers the period 2009-2021.

As part of the evaluation we are conducting an analysis of the results achieved under the Fund for Local Cooperation instrument. We would be grateful to receive your brief responses to the following questions, regarding the implementation of Fund for Local Cooperation projects in [NAME OF COUNTRY] during the period 2009-2021.

#### Administration and management of FLC projects:

7. How are the annual priority themes identified? Who is involved in selecting the themes at the country level? How do you ensure country-specific relevance?
8. How many applications are received (on average) per year? How many projects are awarded per year?
9. How are the results achieved by FLC projects monitored? How does MFA follow up on FLC project activities?
10. How do you assess the impact of the FLC in the respective country? How widely is information about FLC project achievements disseminated to broader audiences in the country?
11. In your opinion, how well does the FLC fulfil the requirements of complementarity for Finnish Development Aid?

#### Value and impact of FLC activities:

12. Can you please provide a brief assessment of the value of the Fund for Local Cooperation from the perspective of your diplomatic mission –e.g., *as a means of engaging with civil society in the partner country, as an instrument that allows Finland to contribute to civil society's responses to key priorities through targeted small-scale funding, etc.*
13. Can you please identify up to 5 'Most Significant Change' examples, *i.e. FLC projects which have achieved impressive results during the course of implementation, which have led to subsequent outcomes and impact for the implementing organisations and/or the beneficiary community, etc.*



Can we please request that you submit your responses by **Friday 5 March 2021**, to Isabell Breunig, Project Manager, Particip – [isabell.breunig@particip.de](mailto:isabell.breunig@particip.de).

Thank you in advance for your contribution to the evaluation.

Evaluation team: Dr Stephen Webber (Team Leader), Ms Raisa Venäläinen (Senior Expert), Dr Roman Krajčovič (Senior Expert), Ms Saila Toikka (Emerging Evaluator), Ms Nataliia Baldych (Country Evaluator Ukraine), Ms Rakiia Abdurasulova (Country Evaluator Kyrgyzstan & Tajikistan)



## **Survey for project managers of Phase III**

### **Survey of representatives of implementing partner organisations**

#### **Request to respond to survey**

### **Evaluation on Development Cooperation carried out by the Department for Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland**

Dear respondent,

You have received this request because you have been involved with the implementation of a development cooperation project supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland. Our independent evaluation team has been commissioned by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to review the results achieved by interventions conducted in the period 2009-2021. We are particularly interested in evidence relating to the impact and sustainability achieved by projects.

We would be grateful if you could spare the short amount of time needed to respond to the following brief question set. Two questions ask you to rank your response to a statement, using the scoring in the table provided, on the scale from 1 ('strongly disagree') through to 5 ('strongly agree') The survey should take 10-20 minutes to complete. You can pause the survey any time: save your answers by clicking the "Next" button at the bottom of each page and continue the questionnaire at a later stage by clicking on the link initially sent to your email address.

Survey responses will remain completely anonymous. If you have any questions or comments regarding this evaluation in general, or this online survey, your contact persons are:

Isabell Breunig, Project Manager, E-mail: [isabell.breunig\[at\]particip.de](mailto:isabell.breunig@particip.de)

Carolin Vahar-Matiar, Project Assistant, E-mail: [carolin.vahar-matiar\[at\]particip.de](mailto:carolin.vahar-matiar@particip.de)

For information on the overall commissioning of the evaluation (not related to implementation or tools) your contact person is:

Nea-Mari Heinonen, Evaluation Manager MFA Finland, E-mail: [nea-mari.heinonen\[at\]formin.fi](mailto:nea-mari.heinonen@formin.fi)

We appreciate your input and would like to thank you in advance for your cooperation!

The Evaluation Team



**Section A. Information about respondent and project/s involved with:**

a. Please state which project supported by MFA Finland you have been involved in implementing, and over which period (years):

.....

b. Please state in which position you were involved with the project (e.g., head of country office, project manager, etc.): .....

c. Please indicate your gender: Female  Male   
Other

**Section B: Questions.**

Please indicate in the boxes below the degree to which you agree or disagree with the statements. We would also be grateful to receive your written comments per statement:

1. Did this project commence on schedule?

Yes  No  I don't know  If No, please indicate when it commenced and the reason for delayed start.

2. Has implementation proceeded according to the time schedule?

Yes  No  I don't know  If No, please provide details.

3. Have all planned activities been completed to date as per plan?

Yes  No  I don't know  If No, please provide details.

4. Have any substantial changes been required to the planned activities?

Yes  No  I don't know  If No, please provide details.

5. Has the intended target audience participated in project activities as per plan?

Yes  No  I don't know  If No, please provide details.



6. Has the project been implemented according to the allocated budget?

Yes  No  I don't know  If No, please provide details.

7. Are the following data collected/monitored in the course of project implementation?:

a. Gender of participants of project activities: Yes  No

Please provide relevant details

b. Feedback from participants of project activities: Yes  No

Please provide relevant details

c. (If relevant) Evidence of the application of skills/knowledge acquired by participants of project activities in their subsequent professional activities: Yes  No  Not applicable

Please provide relevant details

d. Application of a Human Rights-Based Approach in project implementation: Yes  No

Please provide relevant details

e. Application of Finnish Cross-Cutting Objectives in project implementation: Yes  No

Please provide relevant details

8. Please indicate, according to the scale 1-Strongly disagree to 5-Strongly agree, your assessment of the project's achievements to date according to the following parameters:

a. Feedback from beneficiaries of the project indicates that the activities are considered relevant for their needs

1 – strongly disagree

2 – disagree

3 – difficult to answer

4 – agree

5 – strongly agree



Comments (optional):

b. The content and format of the project activities have met the expectations of participants.

1 – strongly disagree	2 – disagree	3 – difficult to answer	4 – agree	5 – strongly agree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments (optional)

c. The project is making/has made a significant contribution to the needs of the beneficiary country in the sector / thematic area covered by the project.

1 – strongly disagree	2 – disagree	3 – difficult to answer	4 – agree	5 – strongly agree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments (optional):

9. The project achieved or is on track towards achieving its expected Impact

1 – strongly disagree	2 – disagree	3 – difficult to answer	4 – agree	5 – strongly agree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Can you please provide specific examples of impact achieved/not achieved at the levels of individual beneficiaries, organisations, sectors, etc.

10. Can you please provide a summary of factors that have either facilitated or hindered impact or the prospects for achieving impact.



11.

12. The results of the project have proved to be sustainable, or show signs that sustainability will be achieved.

1 – strongly disagree	2 – disagree	3 – difficult to answer	4 – agree	5 – strongly agree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

13. Can you please provide a summary of factors that have facilitated or hindered sustainability (in terms of financial, institutional, environmental, etc. factors).

14. The net contribution of Finland's development cooperation in the sector covered by this project has been significant.

1 – strongly disagree	2 – disagree	3 – difficult to answer	4 – agree	5 – strongly agree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

15. Are there particular aspects of the support provided by MFA Finland in the development cooperation sphere that you feel warrant particular mention? Please comment below.



Thank you for taking the time to participate in this survey. Your contribution is a crucial source of information for this evaluation.

If you wish to complement the information provided in your answers, do not hesitate to send us additional information or any potentially relevant documents.

Your contact persons are:

Isabell Breunig, Project Manager, E-mail: [isabell.breunig\[at\]particip.de](mailto:isabell.breunig@particip.de)

Carolin Vahar-Matiar, Project Assistant, E-mail: [carolin.vahar-matiar\[at\]particip.de](mailto:carolin.vahar-matiar@particip.de)

For information on the overall commissioning of the evaluation please contact:

Nea-Mari Heinonen, Evaluation Manager MFA Finland, E-mail: [nea-mari.heinonen\[at\]formin.fi](mailto:nea-mari.heinonen@formin.fi)

Thank you very much again for contributing to this evaluation!

The evaluation team

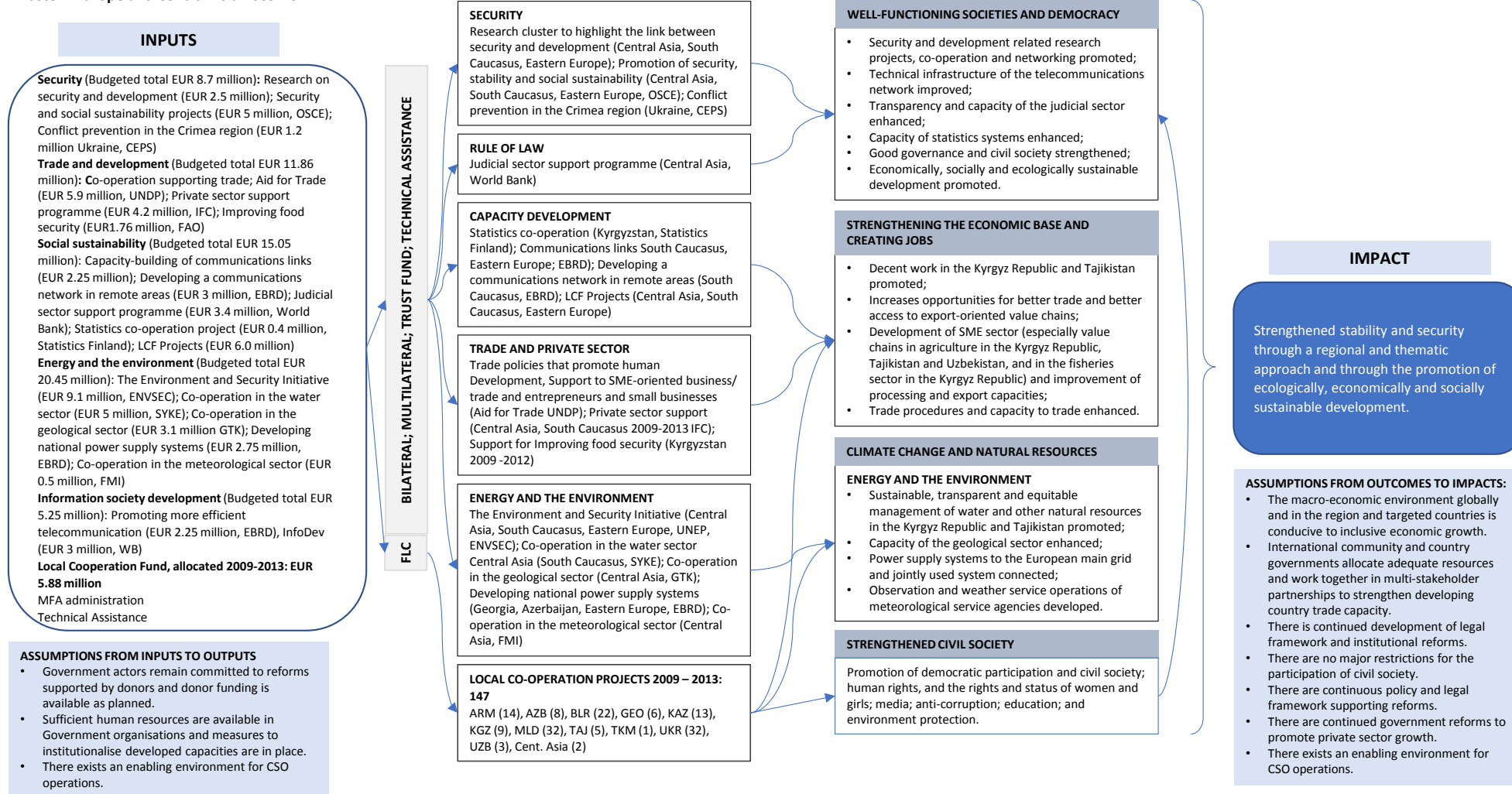


# Annex 7: ToC reconstruction

## TOC WEI I (2009-2013)

### WIDER EUROPE INITIATIVE

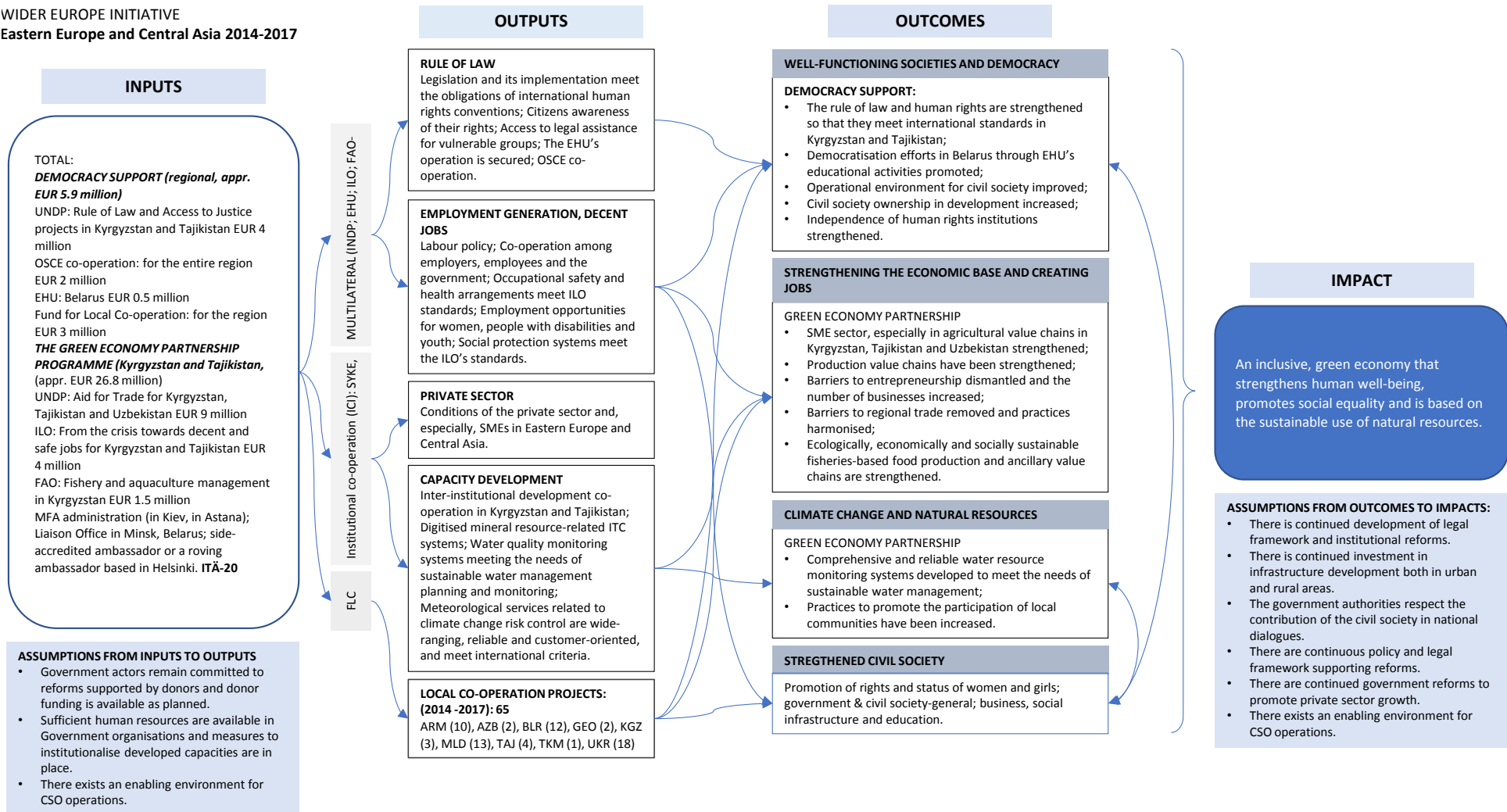
#### Eastern Europe and Central Asia 2009-2014



Source: Evaluation team analysis

## TOC WEI II (2014-2017)

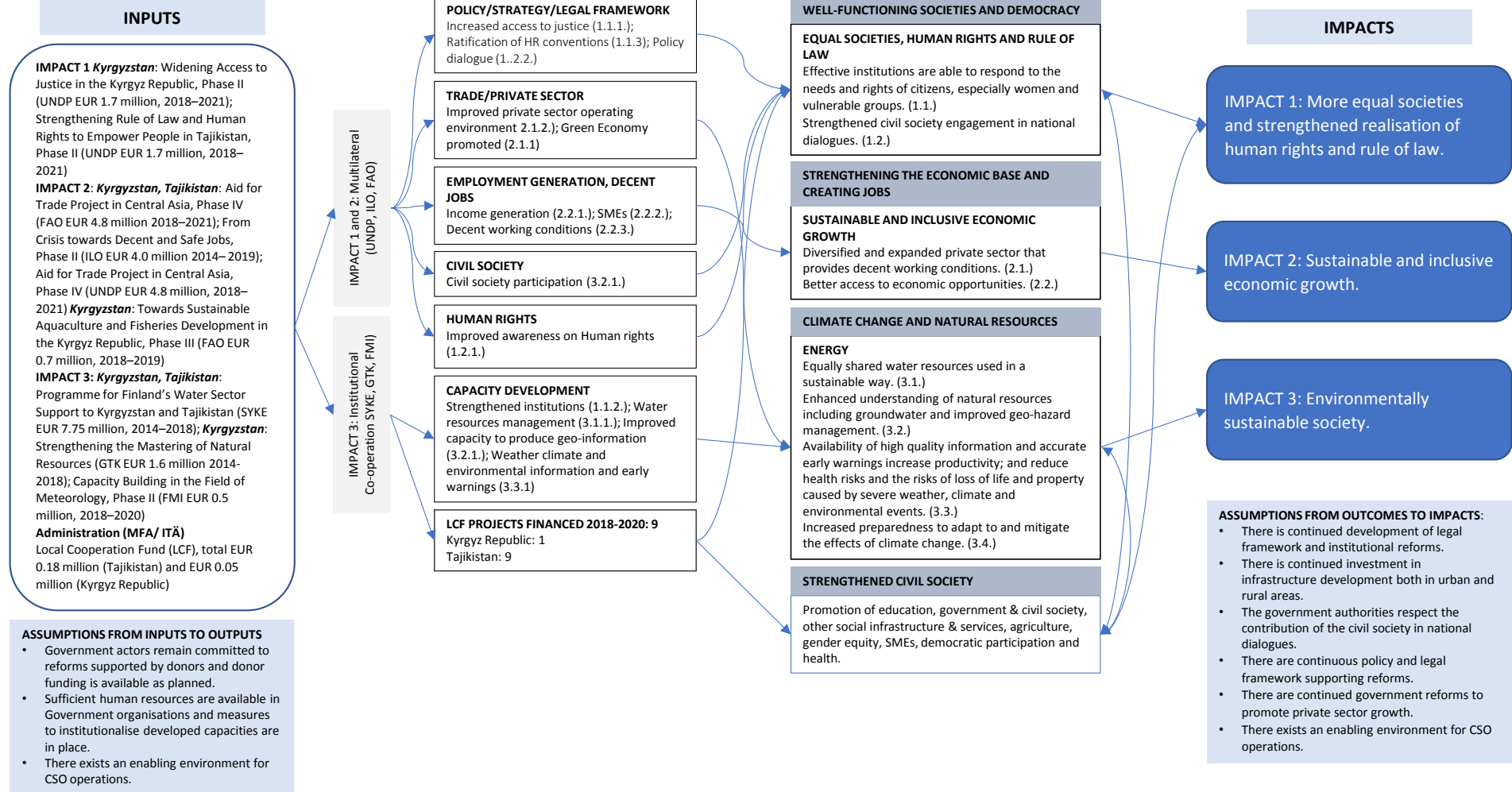
WIDER EUROPE INITIATIVE  
Eastern Europe and Central Asia 2014-2017



Source: Evaluation team analysis

## TOC KYRGYZ REPUBLIC AND TAJIKISTAN

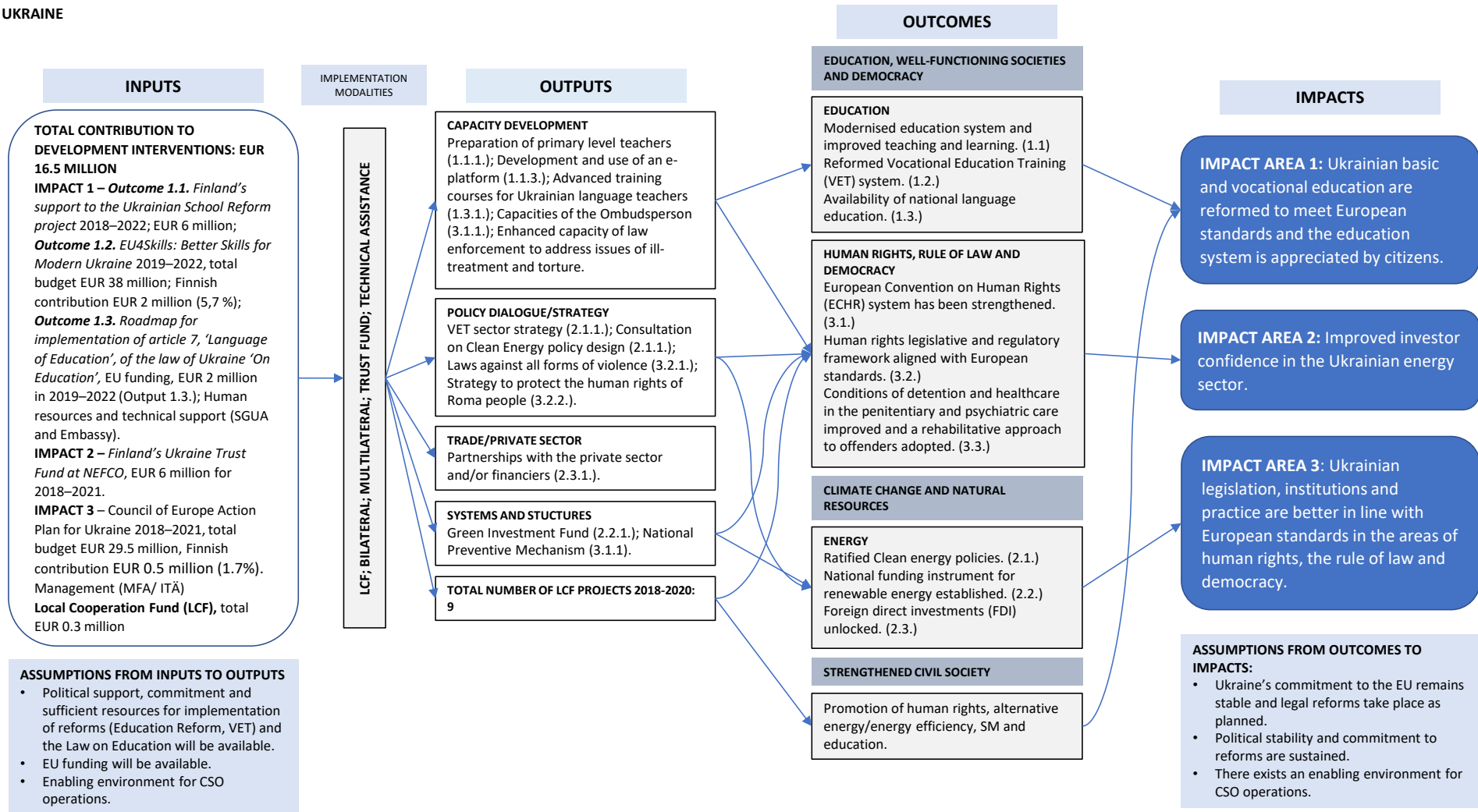
### THEORY OF CHANGE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC AND TAJIKISTAN



Source: Evaluation team analysis

## TOC UKRAINE

### THEORY OF CHANGE UKRAINE



Source: Evaluation team analysis



## IMPACT

The long-term impacts towards which the WEI I and WEI II Initiatives aimed to contribute, are defined as broad vision statements. The impact of WEI I is summarised as follows: “The aim of the Wider Europe Initiative in Eastern Europe is to contribute to stability, security and socially sustainable development. Developing the private sector operating environment and improving infrastructure are also important for the aim of promoting economically sustainable development.” (MFA 2008). The WEI II document “Finland’s Development Cooperation in Eastern Europe and Central Asia 2014 – 2017” (MFA 2013) does not present a specific impact for the initiative. This lack of specific impact statement was also noted in the Mid Term Evaluation (Olesen et al. 2016), which, in the absence of such statement, looked for possible impact through two result areas, namely: “An inclusive, green economy that strengthens human well-being, promotes social equality and is based on the sustainable use of natural resources, and strengthening the rule of law and human rights so that they meet international standards in the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan.”

The recently developed programmes for Ukraine, the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan have defined three broader impacts areas. The Country Strategy for Development Cooperation: Ukraine 2018-2022 (MFA 2018b) and the Country Strategy for Development Cooperation: The Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan 2018–2021 (MFA 2018a) have three impact areas, derived from the National Sustainable Development Strategy for the Kyrgyz Republic 2013–2017 (National Council n/d) and the National Development Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan for the period to 2015 (Republic of Tajikistan 2007). The impact areas are identical for both the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan, as the problems and efforts to address them are very similar. The impact areas for the Country Strategies are as follows:

- Impact area 1: More equal societies and strengthened realization of human rights and rule of law.
- Impact area 2: Sustainable and inclusive economic growth.
- Impact area 3: Environmentally sustainable society.

Impact indicators are not defined for either WEI I or WEI II, nor for the Country Strategy for Development Cooperation Ukraine 2018-2022 and Country Strategy for Development Cooperation the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan 2018–2021. The Country Strategies make a reference to global or national sources of impact indicators such as World Bank GDP per capita Index, EBRD Transition Indicators, Socioeconomic Data and Applications Center’s (SEDAC) Environmental Sustainability Index and Gender Inequality Index V, but the indicators and baselines are not defined.

## OUTCOMES

The outcomes of WEI I and WEI II and Country Strategies for Development Cooperation programmes in Ukraine and the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan are defined at intervention level rather than at programme or initiative level or by theme or priority area as shown in Table 9 Outcome statements of WEI I and WEI II and Country Strategy.



**Table 9 Outcome statements of WEI I and WEI II and Country Strategy**

WEI I	EI II	THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC AND TAJIKISTAN	UKRAINE
<b>WELL-FUNCTIONING SOCIETIES AND DEMOCRACY</b>			
<p><b>SECURITY</b> Promote security and development research projects, cooperation and networking.</p> <p><b>ICT</b> Improving the technical infrastructure of the telecommunications network.</p> <p><b>RULE OF LAW</b> Social sustainability Developing the transparency and capacity of the judicial sector Developing and enhancing the capacity of statistics systems. Including the promotion of good governance, strengthening civil society. The promotion of economically, socially and ecologically sustainable development</p>	<p><b>DEMOCRACY SUPPORT:</b> Strengthening the rule of law and human rights so that they meet international standards in the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan. The EHU's educational activities promote democratisation efforts in Belarus. Operational environment for civil society improves. Civil society ownership in development increases. Functioning conditions of field operations remain at the present level. Independence of human rights institutions strengthens.</p>	<p><b>EQUAL SOCIETIES, HUMAN RIGHTS AND RULE OF LAW</b> Effective institutions are able to respond to the needs and rights of citizens, especially women and vulnerable groups. (1.1.) Strengthened civil society engagement in national dialogues. (1.2.)</p>	<p><b>EDUCATION</b> Modernised education system and improved teaching and learning (1.1). Reformed Vocational Education Training (VET) system (1.2.); Availability of national language education (1.3.). <b>HUMAN RIGHTS, RULE OF LAW AND DEMOCRACY</b> European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) system has been strengthened. (3.1). Human rights legislative and regulatory framework is aligned with European standards. (3.2.). Conditions of detention and healthcare in the penitentiary and psychiatric care are improved and a rehabilitative approach to offenders has been adopted. (3.3.).</p>
<b>STRENGTHENING THE ECONOMIC BASE AND CREATING JOBS</b>			



WEI I	EI II	THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC AND TAJIKISTAN	UKRAINE
<p>Promoting decent work in the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan.</p> <p>Developing the SME sector, especially value chains in agriculture in the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, and in the fisheries sector in the Kyrgyz Republic.</p> <p>Developing trade procedures and promoting the capacity to trade.</p>	<p>GREEN ECONOMY PARTNERSHIP</p> <p>Developing the SME sector, especially in agricultural value chains in the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.</p> <p>Production value chains have been strengthened.</p> <p>Barriers to entrepreneurship have been dismantled and the number of businesses has increased. Barriers to regional trade have been removed and practices have been harmonised.</p> <p>Ecologically, economically and socially sustainable fisheries-based food production and ancillary value chains have strengthened.</p>	<p>SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC GROWTH</p> <p>Outcome Diversified and expanding private sector that provides decent working conditions (2.1.) Better access to economic opportunities. (2.2.).</p>	
<b>CLIMATE CHANGE AND NATURAL RESOURCES</b>			
<p>ENERGY AND THE ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>Promoting sustainable, transparent and equitable management of water and other natural resources in the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan.</p> <p>Enhancing the capacity of the geological sector.</p> <p>Connecting power supply systems to the European main grid and jointly used system.</p> <p>Developing the observation and weather service operations of meteorological service agencies.</p>	<p>GREEN ECONOMY PARTNERSHIP</p> <p>Water resource monitoring systems are comprehensive and reliable, and they meet the needs of sustainable water management.</p> <p>Water management is equitable and practices that promote the participation of local communities have been increased.</p>	<p>ENERGY</p> <p>Water resources are equally shared and used in a sustainable way. (3.1.).</p> <p>Enhanced understanding of natural resources including groundwater and improved geo-hazard management. (3.2.)</p> <p>Availability of high-quality information and accurate early warnings increase productivity and reduce health risks and the risks of loss of life and property caused by severe weather, climate and environmental events. (3.3.) Increased preparedness to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change. (3.4.).</p>	<p>ENERGY</p> <p>Ratified Clean energy policies (2.1.)</p> <p>National funding instrument for renewable energy established (2.2.).</p> <p>Foreign direct investments (FDI) are unlocked. (2.3.).</p>
<b>STRENGTHENING THE STATUS AND RIGHTS OF WOMEN AND GIRLS</b>			
<p>FLC Projects</p> <p>Crosscutting theme.</p>	<p>FLC Projects</p> <p>Project objective.</p>	<p>FLC Projects</p> <p>Project objective.</p>	<p>FLC Projects</p> <p>Project objective.</p>

Source: ET analysis



## INPUTS

The financial allocation towards the implementation of development cooperation activities conducted under the auspices of the Department for Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia over the evaluation period are presented in Annex 5. The ToC graph presents the budgeted allocations as presented in the WEI documentation and Country Strategies. Other inputs include Human Resources and administrative support from ITÄ-20.

## ASSUMPTIONS

The WEI I and WEI II documentation does not identify assumptions, that is, external conditions beyond the control of the project which influence the project performance and achievements, and which need to be realized to achieve results and to move from one result level to another (MFA 2018). Assumptions for WEI II were included in the Logframe which was developed retrospectively. Country Programmes for Ukraine, Tajikistan and the Kyrgyz Republic (MFA 2018a, b), in turn, include intervention-related assumptions at each result level (outputs, outcome, impact). The programme level assumptions are highlighted in Box 7 Programme level assumptions for Ukraine, Tajikistan and The Kyrgyz Republic.

### Box 7 Programme level assumptions for Ukraine, Tajikistan and The Kyrgyz Republic

- Peace/stability continues in the countries of the region.
- The priorities and approach to development cooperation coincide with the regional and subregional and target countries' interests and needs.
- There is continuous political support and enabling legal framework for reforms and cooperation in targeted countries and in the region.
- Partners have and maintain human resources and commitment to reforms and programme activities.
- Adequate financial resources from the Governments and donors are available in order to reach the set objectives.
- Particularly in Ukraine, the Government pursues policies that support Ukraine's commitment to the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with the EU.
- With regards to interventions supported through multilateral organisations, the sectors or themes supported remain as priority areas.
- The role of the Civil Society is recognized and the civil society actors are willing and enabled to stand up for democratic principles for an inclusive society.
- Macro-economic environment globally, in the region and targeted countries is conducive to inclusive economic growth.
- Partner countries and organisations remain committed to achieving gender equality as part of inclusive development outcomes and women's and girls' rights are supported broadly by other development actors.

Source: MFA 2018a, b



# Annex 8: Evaluation Matrix

Sub-question	Indicators/Evidence	Methods of data collection	Sources of evidence	Methods of analysis
<b>RELEVANCE (during 2009-2021)</b> <b>Evaluation question (EQ1): To what extent have Finland's development cooperation been relevant, with regard to</b>				
<p>EQ1a. The needs of the partner countries (disaggregated by the perspectives of the citizenry, governmental and non-governmental organisations, commercial sector, etc.)</p>	<p>Within each phase:</p> <p>Explicit referencing of / evidence of alignment with partner country needs (economic, political, social, environmental) e.g., needs assessment; consultations with governmental, non-governmental stakeholders; partner countries' national strategic plans.</p> <p>Explicit referencing of /evidence of alignment with the needs of partner countries' populations, incl. women, girls, disadvantaged groups (e.g., access to justice, situation with regard to human rights, gender inequality, etc).</p> <p>Explicit referencing of /evidence of alignment with the needs of sectors covered by Finland's development cooperation e.g., (forestry, meteorology, judiciary, etc)</p> <p>Explicit referencing of /evidence of alignment with the needs of institutions, national agencies (e.g., Ombudsperson, Statistics Agency, Ministry of Education, etc).</p> <p>Explicit referencing of/evidence of alignment with the needs of SMEs, civil society</p> <p>Use of baselines, statistical data, e.g., employment data</p> <p>Explicit referencing of stakeholders' assessment of alignment of Finnish development cooperation with the needs</p>	<p>Documentary review</p> <p>Consultations with stakeholders in partner countries; implementing partner organisation representatives; MFA staff (semi-structured interviews/ written feedback)</p> <p>Review of internet-based sources</p>	<p>Programmatic documentation WEI I and II</p> <p>Country strategies</p> <p>Documentation relating to FLC</p> <p>Portfolio analysis (produced by ET)</p> <p>Project descriptions</p> <p>Project evaluation reports</p> <p>Final project reports</p> <p>Reports produced by international organisations</p> <p>Stakeholder feedback</p>	<p>Comparative analysis will be used to trace whether and how Finland's development cooperation evolved over the period 2009-2020 in relation to the changes seen in the partner countries across all levels of analysis (national, sectoral, institutional, individual)</p> <p>Stakeholder analysis will be used to synthesize the viewpoints of different stakeholder groups in order to achieve a balanced and comprehensive understanding of the needs</p> <p>Context analysis will be used to verify the degree of alignment between the needs and the response</p>

Sub-question	Indicators/Evidence	Methods of data collection	Sources of evidence	Methods of analysis
EQ1b. Alignment with the overall priorities of Finland's development policy and development cooperation	<p>Within each phase</p> <p>Explicit reference to/evidence of alignment with relevant Finland's Development Policies (2007, 2012, 2016):</p> <p>Explicit referencing of /evidence of alignment with priorities (incl. HRBA, cross-cutting objectives, No Harm approach, leave No one Behind)</p> <p>MFA staff assessment of alignment</p>	<p>Documentary review</p> <p>Consultations with MFA staff (semi-structured interviews/ written feedback)</p>	<p>Policy and programmatic documentation of MFA Finland (Finland's Development Policies (2007, 2012, 2016))</p> <p>Programmatic documentation of MFA Finland WEI I and II</p> <p>Country strategies; portfolio analysis (produced by ET)</p> <p>FLC documentation</p> <p>Project descriptions</p> <p>Monitoring data</p> <p>Project evaluation reports</p> <p>Final project reports</p> <p>Feedback received from MFA staff</p>	<p>Comparative analysis will be used to examine whether and how Finnish development cooperation in the target region evolved over the period 2009-2020 in response to changes in Finnish development policy</p>
EQ1c. Alignment and complementarity with the foreign and security policy, including economic relations.	<p>Within each phase:</p> <p>Explicit referencing of/ evidence of complementarity with the aims of Finnish foreign and security policy in the countries of the target region in programmatic documentation.</p> <p>Explicit referencing of/ evidence of complementarity with Finnish trade policy in the countries of the target region in programmatic documentation</p> <p>Assessment of MFA staff of alignment and complementary</p>	<p>Documentary review</p> <p>Consultations with MFA staff (semi-structured interviews/ written feedback)</p>	<p>Policy and programmatic documentation of MFA Finland, including WEI I and II</p> <p>Country strategies</p> <p>FLC documentation</p> <p>Portfolio analysis (produced by ET)</p> <p>Project descriptions</p> <p>Monitoring data and project evaluation reports</p> <p>Final project reports</p> <p>Feedback received from MFA staff</p>	<p>Comparative analysis will be used to examine whether and how Finnish development cooperation in the target region evolved over the period 2009-2020 in response to changes in Finnish foreign and security policy, including economic relations</p>
<p><b>IMPACT (during 2009-2021)</b></p> <p><b>EQ2. What has been the impact(s), if any, of Finland's development cooperation carried out in the region by the Department for Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia?</b></p>				

Sub-question	Indicators/Evidence	Methods of data collection	Sources of evidence	Methods of analysis
<p>EQ2a. What have been the most significant and transformative impact(s) contributed to by Finland and why? This includes analysis of impact by social, environmental and economic as well as human rights perspectives. What have been the levels where the impact(s) have taken place?</p> <p>EQ2b. What have been the scope and extent of the impact(s)?</p>	<p>Within each phase:</p> <p>Evidence of impact at the social level (mapped against the expected impact indicators, or against the reconstructed ToC), e.g., change in societal attitudes towards disabled people, gender stereotypes</p> <p>Evidence of impact at environmental level (mapped against the expected impact indicators, or against the reconstructed ToC, e.g., increased disaster preparedness</p> <p>Evidence of impact at economic level (mapped against the expected impact indicators, or against the reconstructed ToC), e.g., increase in job creation via trade, SME development</p> <p>Evidence of impact relating to human rights perspectives</p> <p>Evidence of impact at sectoral level (e.g., positive changes in agriculture, trade, meteorology, education, etc)</p> <p>Evidence of impact at the institutional level (national agencies, specialist institutions, CSOs able to make their contributions to societies)</p> <p>Evidence of impact at individual level (positive changes in lives of women and girls, people with disabilities, minorities)</p>	<p>Documentary review</p> <p>Consultations with stakeholders in partner countries; implementing partner organisation representatives; MFA staff (semi-structured interviews/ written feedback)</p> <p>Review of internet-based sources</p> <p>Synthesis of analyses per phase</p>	<p>Monitoring data and evaluation reports;</p> <p>Final project reports;</p> <p>FLC documentation;</p> <p>Stakeholder feedback;</p> <p>Websites of implementing organisations, websites of beneficiary institutions (e.g., environmental agencies, line ministries (e.g., economic development and trade)</p> <p>Reports of other donors, international organisations, agencies</p>	<p>Stakeholder analysis will be used to synthesize the assessment of impacts as perceived by different stakeholder groups.</p> <p>Contribution analysis will be used to trace Finnish contribution towards socio-economic and environment sustainability in the target countries.</p> <p>Comparative analysis will be used to assess the scope and extent of the impacts.</p> <p>Context analysis will be used to assess Finland's contribution within the broader donor community.</p> <p>Gap analysis will be used to investigate where/if anticipated impact was not achieved</p>
<p>EQ2c. What has been Finland's role and added value in contributing to the impact(s)?</p>	<p>Within each phase:</p> <p>Evidence relating to Finland's role, (e.g., expertise, thematic coverage, innovative approaches)</p>	<p>Documentary review</p> <p>Consultations with stakeholders in partner countries; implementing partner organisation representatives; MFA staff (semi-structured interviews/ written feedback)</p> <p>Synthesis of value added over the phases</p>	<p>Monitoring data and evaluation reports;</p> <p>Final project reports;</p> <p>FLC documentation</p> <p>Stakeholder feedback</p>	<p>Stakeholder analysis will be used to synthesize the assessment of Finland's role as perceived by different stakeholder groups.</p> <p>Comparative analysis will be used to trace continuity and change in Finland's role and added value in the target region over the period 2009-2020</p>

Sub-question	Indicators/Evidence	Methods of data collection	Sources of evidence	Methods of analysis
EQ2d. What negative and/or unintended impacts have taken place, if any? Why?	<p>Within each phase:</p> <p>Evidence relating to:</p> <p>Monitoring of unintended outcomes</p> <p>Mediating measures</p> <p>Adaptation of design, delivery of activities</p>	<p>Documentary review</p> <p>Consultations with stakeholders in partner countries; implementing partner organisation representatives; MFA staff (semi-structured interviews/ written feedback)</p> <p>Review of internet-based sources</p>	<p>Monitoring data and evaluation reports; final project reports</p> <p>FLC documentation reports of other donors, international organisations, agencies</p> <p>Stakeholder feedback</p> <p>Websites of beneficiary organisations, line ministries</p>	<p>Comparative analysis will be used to trace how Finland's development cooperation was adapted to mediate risks and challenges.</p> <p>Context analysis will be used to identify any unintended impacts, including negative</p>
<b>SUSTAINABILITY (during 2009-2021)</b>				
<b>EQ3. What has been the level(s) of sustainability of the results and impact achieved over the period of time?</b>				
EQ3a. For which of the results and impact areas is there evidence that the benefits achieved are lasting? Why?	<p>Within each phase:</p> <p>For each thematic/priority area (mapped against the expected impact indicators, or against the reconstructed ToC)</p> <p>Evidence relating to lasting effects (e.g., in the sphere of trade development, education, fishery, access to justice, etc.)</p>	<p>Documentary review</p> <p>Consultations with stakeholders in partner countries; implementing partner organisation representatives; MFA staff (semi-structured interviews/ written feedback)</p> <p>Review of internet-based sources</p>	<p>Monitoring data and evaluation reports</p> <p>Final project reports</p> <p>FLC documentation</p> <p>Reports of other donors, international organisations, agencies</p> <p>Stakeholder feedback</p> <p>Websites of beneficiary organisations, line ministries</p>	<p>Stakeholder analysis will be used to synthesize the assessment of sustainability as perceived by different stakeholder groups.</p> <p>Comparative analysis will be drawn upon to investigate the patterns of sustainability achieved.</p> <p>Gap analysis will be used to investigate cases in which sustainability was not achieved</p>
EQ3b. What has been the extent of sustainability of results and impact in terms of a) financial, b) economic, c) social, d) environmental, and e) institutional capacities of the systems needed to sustain net benefits over time? Includes analyses of resilience, risks and potential trade-offs.	<p>Within each phase:</p> <p>Evidence relating to financial sustainability of results (e.g., beneficiaries have means to sustain benefits after the end of funding)</p> <p>Evidence relating to economic sustainability of results (e.g., jobs created are sustained)</p> <p>Evidence relating social sustainability of results (e.g., change in societal attitudes translates in societal practices)</p> <p>Evidence relating to environmental sustainability of results (e.g., faster response to weather hazards)</p> <p>Evidence relating to sustainability of institutional capacities (e.g., institutions and agencies use the skills and knowledge acquired as a result of Finland's development cooperation)</p>	<p>Documentary review</p> <p>Consultations with stakeholders in partner countries; implementing partner organisation representatives; MFA staff (semi-structured interviews/ written feedback)</p> <p>Review of internet-based sources</p>	<p>Monitoring data and evaluation reports;</p> <p>Final project reports;</p> <p>Reports of other donors, international organisations, agencies</p> <p>Stakeholder feedback</p> <p>Websites of beneficiary organisations, line ministries</p>	<p>Comparative analysis will be used to analyse the nature and extent of sustainability.</p> <p>Context analysis will be used to analyse risks and trade-offs.</p> <p>Gap analysis will be used to investigate cases in which sustainability was not achieved</p>

Sub-question	Indicators/Evidence	Methods of data collection	Sources of evidence	Methods of analysis
<p>EQ3c. What strategies have the Ministry employed in order to maximize sustainability? Which of them have been the most successful and why? Have projects and programmes adequately planned for sustainability?</p>	<p>Within each phase: Evidence relating to the development and implementation of sustainability strategies By MFA Finland (e.g., at the level of thematic programmes) By implementing partner organisations (at the level of projects) Evidence relating to the integration of multiplier effects into the design of interventions (e.g., train-the-trainer capacity development, changes in university curriculum)</p>	<p>Documentary review Consultations with implementing partner organisation representatives; MFA staff (semi-structured interviews/written feedback)</p>	<p>Monitoring data and evaluation reports; Final project reports; Stakeholder feedback</p>	<p>Comparative analysis will be used to analyse which strategies have been most effective and why Gap analysis will be used to investigate cases in which sustainability strategies/plans were not successful and why</p>
<p><b>EFFECTIVENESS (during 2018-2021)</b></p>				
<p><b>EQ4. To what extent have the Country Strategies of 2018-2021 achieved their planned results and contributed to the realization of Finland's development policy objectives?</b></p>				
<p>EQ4a. What results have been produced until now, who and how many have benefitted from them? What groups were not reached, if any?</p>	<p>For each country strategy: Evidence relating to the achievement of the results per each priority area/sector mapped against the results framework (e.g., in the sphere of trade development, civil society development, human rights, employment, management of water and mineral resources, etc) Within each priority area/sector: Evidence relating to the achievements of targets (numbers of beneficiaries (institutional, individual), types of beneficiaries (incl. women and girls, people with disabilities) Evidence relating to implementation of cross-cutting objectives Evidence relating to integration of HRBA in implementation</p>	<p>Documentary review Consultations with stakeholders in partner countries; implementing partner organisation representatives; MFA staff (semi-structured interviews/written feedback)</p>	<p>Monitoring data and evaluation reports; Final project reports; Portfolio analysis (produced by ET) Stakeholder feedback</p>	<p>Stakeholder analysis will be used to synthesize the assessment of achievements as perceived by relevant stakeholder groups. Comparative analysis will be used to analyse the performance across and within country strategies. Context analysis will be used to investigate cases in which outreach to all target beneficiary groups was not achieved</p>
<p>EQ4b. To what extent is implementation on track to achieve the set objectives by the end of 2021? Note any major deviations or risks to achieving objectives and the reasons behind them. Includes analysis by funding instrument.</p>	<p>For each country strategy: Evidence of sufficient progress towards achievement of expected objectives per each priority area/sector/instrument Evidence of deviations/changes in the course of implementation Evidence of bottlenecks, challenges and mediating measures</p>	<p>Documentary review Consultations with stakeholders in partner countries; implementing partner organisation representatives; MFA staff (semi-structured interviews/written feedback)</p>	<p>Monitoring data and evaluation reports; Final project reports; Stakeholder feedback</p>	<p>Comparative analysis will be used to analyse the prospects of achievements of the set objectives per country strategy, per priority area/sector, per instrument of funding Context analysis will be deployed to delve into the nature of challenges and risks</p>

Sub-question	Indicators/Evidence	Methods of data collection	Sources of evidence	Methods of analysis
EQ4c. Are there any lost opportunities or potential for future engagement in the region?	<p>Potential synergies not addressed by the current portfolio</p> <p>Gaps in meeting needs of target beneficiary institutions/groups within priority areas/sectors</p>	<p>Documentary review</p> <p>Consultations with stakeholders in partner countries; implementing partner organisation representatives; MFA staff (semi-structured interviews/ written feedback)</p> <p>Review of internet-based sources</p>	<p>Monitoring data and evaluation reports;</p> <p>Final project reports;</p> <p>FLC documentation;</p> <p>Portfolio analysis (produced by ET);</p> <p>Reports of other donors, international organisations, agencies</p> <p>Stakeholder feedback</p> <p>Websites of beneficiary organisations, line ministries</p>	<p>Stakeholder analysis and context analysis will be deployed to facilitate the identification of potential opportunities for future engagement in the region</p>
<b>MANAGEMENT (during 2018-2021)</b>				
<b>EQ5. How has the development policy and cooperation been managed?</b>				
EQ5a. How effective has the policy formulation, strategic planning, selection of interventions, partners and instruments been?	<p>For each country strategy:</p> <p>Evidence relating to decision-making processes</p> <p>Stakeholders involved in policy formulation, strategic planning</p> <p>Sources of policy formulation (e.g., past achievements, lessons learned, etc)</p> <p>Rationale for selection of countries covered by country strategies</p> <p>Rationale for selection of thematic areas</p> <p>Rationale for selection of interventions, partners, instruments</p> <p>For other countries not covered by country strategies:</p> <p>Decision-making process regarding the use of FLC</p> <p>Rationale for selection of thematic areas</p> <p>Rationale for selection of interventions, partners</p>	<p>Documentary review</p> <p>Consultations with MFA staff, stakeholders in partner countries; implementing partner organisation representatives; (semi-structured interviews/written feedback)</p>	<p>MFA documentation (minutes etc)</p> <p>Stakeholder feedback</p>	<p>Stakeholder and organisational analysis will be deployed to unpack the decision-making process.</p>

Sub-question	Indicators/Evidence	Methods of data collection	Sources of evidence	Methods of analysis
EQ5b. To what extent is programmatic, regional or sector coordination points of view, RBM as well as synergies guiding the decisions made?	<p>Weight and role of programmatic considerations in decision making process</p> <p>Flexibility in adjusting to political developments /crises in the target countries</p> <p>Considerations regarding sector coverage (Finnish-added value/expertise, needs of beneficiaries)</p> <p>Considerations of synergies/duplication (within MFA Finland, with the work of other donors, multilateral international organisations)</p> <p>Role of RBM in guiding decision- making process</p>	<p>Documentary review</p> <p>Consultations with MFA staff, stakeholders in partner countries; implementing partner organisation representatives; (semi-structured interviews/written feedback)</p>	<p>MFA documentation (minutes etc)</p> <p>Stakeholder feedback</p>	<p>Stakeholder and organisational analysis will be deployed to unpack the decision-making process.</p>
EQ5c. To what extent has the Ministry's guidelines on Human Rights Based Approach been applied in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation?	<p>Evidence of application of the Ministry's guidelines on Human Rights Based Approach in planning, monitoring, evaluation of portfolio as a whole</p> <p>Per instrument of funding: Evidence of application of the Ministry's guidelines on Human Rights Based Approach in planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting, evaluations of individual interventions</p>	<p>Documentary review</p> <p>Consultations with MFA staff, implementing partner organisation representatives; (semi-structured interviews/ written feedback)</p>	<p>Monitoring data and evaluation reports; final project reports; FLC documentation; Stakeholder feedback</p>	<p>Comparative analysis will be used to trace the application of MFA guidelines on Human Rights Based Approach from planning to the implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluations.</p> <p>Gap analysis will be used to investigate cases where the Ministry's guidelines on Human Rights Based Approach have not been applied</p>
EQ5d. What were the strengths and weaknesses of planning and implementation? What could the Ministry do to improve its management for impact, sustainability, effectiveness and relevance? How? Consider structures, approaches and processes.	<p>Evidence drawn from EQ5a-c</p>	<p>Documentary review</p> <p>Consultations with MFA staff, implementing partner organisation representatives; (semi-structured interviews/ written feedback)</p>	<p>MFA documentation (minutes etc.); Monitoring data and evaluation reports; Final project reports; FLC documentation; Stakeholder feedback</p>	<p>Synthesis of analysis produced under EQ5a-c</p>
<p><b>COHERENCE (during 2009-2021)</b></p> <p><b>EQ6. To what extent have the development cooperation activities of the Department for Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia been coherent with regard to:</b></p>				

Sub-question	Indicators/Evidence	Methods of data collection	Sources of evidence	Methods of analysis
EQ6a. Coherence within the portfolio managed by the Department for Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia.	<p>For each phase:</p> <p>Evidence of coherence and complementarity according to following parameters:</p> <p>Sectoral/thematic (e.g., agriculture and trade development)</p> <p>Regional (use of regional vs bi-lateral interventions)</p> <p>Type of beneficiaries (e.g., CSOs, people with disabilities, women and girls)</p> <p>Type of activities (e.g., capacity development, legislative support, etc)</p>	<p>Documentary review</p> <p>Consultations with MFA staff, implementing partner organisation representatives; (semi-structured interviews/ written feedback)</p>	<p>Monitoring data and evaluation reports;</p> <p>Final project reports;</p> <p>FLC documentation;</p> <p>Portfolio analysis (produced by ET);</p> <p>Stakeholder feedback</p>	<p>Comparative analysis will be deployed to investigate the nature of internal coherence of the portfolio</p>
EQ6b. Coherence with other Finnish-funded development cooperation activities implemented in the target region.	<p>For each phase:</p> <p>Evidence of coordination with other development cooperation activities not funded by the Department (e.g., CSO support)</p>	<p>Documentary review</p> <p>Consultations with MFA staff, implementing partner organisation representatives; (semi-structured interviews/ written feedback)</p>	<p>Monitoring data and evaluation reports;</p> <p>Final project reports;</p> <p>FLC documentation;</p> <p>Portfolio analysis (produced by ET);</p> <p>Stakeholder feedback</p> <p>Documentation relating other departments' development cooperation activities in the region</p>	<p>Comparative analysis will be deployed to investigate the nature of coherence within MFA overall development cooperation activities in the target region</p>
EQ6c. Coherence with development cooperation in the target region supported by the broader donor community, including the European Union and its Member States.	<p>For each phase:</p> <p>Evidence of coordination with other donors</p> <p>Sectoral/thematic (e.g., support to education, rule of law, SME)</p> <p>Type of beneficiary (e.g., support to specialist institutes, agencies)</p> <p>Type of activities (capacity development, etc.)</p>	<p>Documentary review</p> <p>Consultations with MFA staff, implementing partner organisation representatives; (semi-structured interviews/ written feedback)</p> <p>Review of internet-based sources</p>	<p>Monitoring data and evaluation reports;</p> <p>Final project reports;</p> <p>FLC documentation;</p> <p>Portfolio analysis (produced by ET);</p> <p>Reports of other donors, international organisations, agencies</p> <p>Stakeholder feedback</p> <p>Websites of beneficiary organisations, line ministries, other donors</p>	<p>Comparative analysis will be deployed to investigate the nature of coherence with other donors funding cooperation activities in the target region</p>



# Annex 9: List of interventions

Project no.	Title / short description	Year / Period	Disbursed amounts <sup>46</sup>
<b>Armenia</b>			
67200002	LCF – Women's Resource Centers in Lori and Kotayq regions	2010	33,000
67200003	LCF – Addressing social problems in close participation with local community and authorities	2010	10,000
67200004	LCF – Support to Mutual Understanding and Tolerance through History Education	2011	29,300
67200005	LCF – Training for younger Armenian decision and policy makers	2011	30,460
67200006	LCF – Women's Resource Centers in Ijevan and Sevan	2011	30,000
67201102	LCF – Support to combating discrimination of women in business in Armenia	2012	33,000
67201103	LCF – Development of Referral Mechanisms for Provision of Solutions to the Identified Community Social Needs based on successful EU practices	2012	16,700
67201104	LCF – The Fourth Working Meeting of Armenian Azeri and Georgian Historians and Civic Activists	2012	28,630
67201105	LCF – Support to establish and develop women owned business in Armenia	2013-2014	33,000
67201106	LCF – Support to disabled women in the regions of Armenia through capacity building and integration to community life	2014-2015	20,000
67201107	LCF – Armenia – Azerbaijan Civil Diplomacy Dialogue	2014-2016	33,510
67201109	LCF – Two YSPS seminars Politics Economy Law Media Society	2014-2016	14,900
67201111	LCF – Support to women entrepreneurship in Armenia	2015-2016	33,990
67201112	LCF – Support to disabled women in the regions of Armenia through capacity building and integration to community life	2015-2016	25,000
67201113	LCF – Strengthening leadership capacities of young women in Armenia	2015-2016	24,100
67201114	LCF – Human rights protection through decreased gender inequity and women empowerment	2016-2017	32,000
67201115	LCF – Support to disabled women in the regions of Armenia through capacity building and integration to community life	2016-2017	20,000
67201116	LCF – Accessibility of information without discrimination	2017-2019	29,444
67201117	LCF – Human right to water and sanitation	2017-2018	22,720
67201127	LCF – Sustainable Reintegration after Voluntary Return with Special Focus on Women	2018-2019	24,640
67201128	LCF – Mimino: to build up confidence and lasting relationship between Georgian and Armenian youth and societies	2019	19,000
67201129	LCF – The Able Disabled: supporting the rights of disabled persons specially of women by awareness raising	2019	13,500
67201130	LCF – Technovation Girls Armenia: promoting the technology skills of the women and girls	2020	13,000
<b>Azerbaijan</b>			
67401001	Monitoring the Administration of Justice in Azerbaijan	2009	77,300
67400002	LCF – Training of female candidates, election team members and election monitors in the regions for the parliamentary elections	2010	50,000

<sup>46</sup> According to MFA Ratsu data 2009-2020

Project no.	Title / short description	Year / Period	Disbursed amounts <sup>46</sup>
67400003	LCF – Familiarize civil society actors from Azerbaijan, Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh on the Åland Islands peace example	2010	61,370
67400005	LCF – Awareness raising on children's rights and problems of early marriage	2011	10,100
67400006	LCF – Improving social and ecological awareness and the rights of the population in the oil producing communities in Azerbaijan	2011	28,244
67400007	LCF – Popularizing the new Law on Domestic Violence in the regions of Azerbaijan	2011	52,500
67401301	Promoting renewable energy in Azerbaijan	2009-2010	81,100
67401606	LCF – Increasing the role of women in the local structures of the political parties	2012	55,037
67401608	LCF – Lobbying the adoption of the national program on UN Resolution 1325	2013-2015	61,998
67401610	LCF – Learning the experience of Finland on quota for women in elected bodies lobbying quota for women and preparation of the women candidates	2014-2016	80,000
67401611	LCF – Agitation of the Law on Domestic Violence improvement of the working mechanisms of the law and initiating the solution of the early marriage	2016-2017	40,000
67401618	LCF – Be Owner of Your Business	2018-2019	27,400
67401619	LCF – Monitoring of Gender Equality in the Municipalities and Agitation of Women for the Municipalities	2018	13,600
67401621	LCF – Initiative to achieve gender equality by expanding the representation of women in municipalities	2019	20,900
67401622	LCF – Decent Employment for All	2019	0
68900002	LCF – Boosting youth activism, leadership skills and sense of responsibility towards their communities	2010	156,000
<b>Belarus</b>			
89000207	European Humanities University (EHU)	2012-2015	450,000
<b>Georgia</b>			
85700002	LCF – Enhancing the capacity of ethnic civil society leaders	2010	84,000
85700003	LCF – Training for Members of Eurasia Partnership Foundation's Youth Bank Program	2010	57,750
85700004	LCF – national integration of ethnic minorities in the Samtskhe-Javakheti, Akhalkhalaki and Ninotshminda regions	2011	80,000
85702301	Recovery of the Georgian Economy, support to the environment sector	2009-2012	1,500,000
85702402	LCF – National Integration and Tolerance in Georgia stage II	2012	79,989
85702405	LCF – National integration and tolerance in Georgia	2013-2014	80,000
85702406	LCF – Underpinning and developing women participation in conflict transformation in Georgia	2016-2017	47,690
85702407	LCF – Securing Human Right to Water	2017	26,000
85702414	LCF – Empowering Women and Girls for Equality and Action	2018-2019	29,353
85702416	LCF – Kakheti Regional Development Foundation	2019	15,000
85702417	LCF – Women Empowerment in South Caucasus (WESC)	2019	27,000
85702418	LCF – Demystifying Gender – For An Objective Classroom Debate	2020	17,000

Project no.	Title / short description	Year / Period	Disbursed amounts <sup>46</sup>
85702419	LCF – Strengthening the System of Education by Inclusion	2020	14,000
89850901	Ingo Aid for training of civil servants in Moldova and Georgia	2009-2013	383,460
<b>Kyrgyz Republic</b>			
67300102	ICI project in the Area of Statistics in the Kyrgyz Republic	2009-2012	348,135
67302301	Support to Fishery and Aquaculture management in Kyrgyz Republic through FAO	2009-2019	3,940,000
67302401	Promotion of Rule of Law in the Kyrgyz Penitentiary System	2009-2010	100,000
67302608	Widening Access to Justice for Legal Empowerment in the Kyrgyz Republic ( Phase I & II)	2013-2020	3,200,000
67302615	Capacity Building in the Field of Meteorology	2013-2019	874,322.60
67302618	Strengthening the mastering of natural resources ( Phase I & II)	2013-2020	1,648,275
67302619	THL/Social Sphere Capacity Building	2014-2016	392,255
67302627	Consolidating Institutional Capacities for National Surface Water Quality Monitoring in the Kyrgyz Republic FinWaterWEI III	2020	0
69001901	OSCE Academy training programme in Kyrgyzstan	2009	100,000
<b>Tajikistan</b>			
67100002	LCF – Developing the living and working conditions for migrant families with special focus on families with one parent	2011	15,000
67102001	Border Management Staff College in Dushanbe	2009	400,000
67102201	LCF – Promoting Stability and Democracy in Tajikistan through Media	2012-2013	50,000
67102205	Strengthening Rule of Law and Human Rights to Empower People in Tajikistan ( Phase I & II)	2013-2020	3,250,000
67102207	Strengthening the mastering of natural resources	2013-2019	1,630,830
67102208	Capacity Building in the Field of Meteorology	2013-2019	764,818
67102209	LCF – Support to Mountain Societies Development Programme in Tajikistan	2012-2014	131,723
67102210	LCF – Support to organize a Central-Asia regional PAL-conference in Dushanbe on 4-5. November 2014	2014	20,000
67102212	LCF – Support to Female Entrepreneurs in Mountain Regions of Tajikistan	2015-2016	70,000
67102216	LCF – Support to Small Entrepreneurs in rural mountainous areas of Tajikistan in the GBAO Region	2016-2017	80,000
67102217	LCF – Fight against torture in Tajikistan and support for the victim of torture and their families	2017-2019	40,000
67102218	LCF – Revive the Culture – Build the Future	2018-2019	12,990
67102219	LCF – School of Independent Life – Employment and economic sustainability of women with disabilities	2018-2019	14,214
67102220	LCF – Promoting community-driven development through strengthening participatory identification of local investments priorities	2018-2019	14,730
67102221	LCF – Center of support and social adaptation for women living with HIV	2019-2020	8,000
67102222	LCF – The platform of like-minded people	2019	14,000
67102223	LCF – Theatre Doc: Centre Stage for Women's Rights	2019	13,000
67102224	LCF – Enhancement of rural women's livelihoods through cashgora goat breeding	2019	40,000

Project no.	Title / short description	Year / Period	Disbursed amounts <sup>46</sup>
67102226	Development of Tajik Surface Water Monitoring by Quality Management and Collaboration FinWaterWEI III	2020	0
<b>Turkmenistan</b>			
52500105	LCF – Advancement of social inclusion and integration of persons with disabilities in Turkmenistan	2012-2013	110,096
52500106	LCF – Enhancing social inclusion of people with disabilities through mainstreaming inclusive approach into vocational training institutions	2015	100,000
52500107	LCF – Empowering CSOs to participate in policy making and social service delivery in Turkmenistan	2018	13,013
52500108	To enhance capacity of Ombudsperson's Office of Turkmenistan to protect human rights	2020	0
<b>Ukraine</b>			
86501101	Crimea Policy Dialogue	2009-2015	149,9663
86501201	Ukraine Cleaner Production Programme	2010-2015	1,600,000
86501301	Capacity building for Development of European – type GEO-information	2010-2014	493,232
86501318	Immediate Measures Package	2014	150,000
86501323	EBRD-Ukraine Stabilisation and Sustainable Growth Multi-Donor Account	2014	500,000
86501324	NEFCO Nordic Energy Efficiency and Humanitarian Support Initiative for Ukraine	2015	3,500,000
86501325	Action Plan for Ukraine 2015-2017	2015	500,000
86501327	WB/Support for the preparation and implementation of transport and logistics reforms in Ukraine	2015	0
86501346	World Bank, Ukraine District heating Sector – implementation support for investment	2016	135,300
86501357	Finland's Support to the Ukrainian School Reform	2017-2020	2,648,011
86501358	NEFCO/Support to energy efficiency renewable energy and alternative type of energy sources in Ukraine Finland's Trust Fund	2017-2019	1,300,000
86501362	EU4Skills: Better Skills for Modern Ukraine	2019-2020	500,000
86501363	CoE Action Plan for Ukraine 2018-21	2019	500,000
86501401	Chernobyl Shelter Fund, ERDB	2011	3,100,000
86501501	Capacity Building of SNRCU in use a mobile laboratory	2011-2012	184,105
<b>Uzbekistan</b>			
66700705	LCF – Reintegration of Victims of Trafficking	2012-2013	49,800
66700712	UN Multi-Partner Human Security Trust Fund for the Aral Sea Region in Uzbekistan	2019	0
<b>Central Asia Regional</b>			
69003111	UNITAR/Strengthening Regional Capacities for Peace	2014	430,000
79807901	Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre	2009-2010	450,000

Project no.	Title / short description	Year / Period	Disbursed amounts <sup>46</sup>
69002601	Occupational safety and health in Central Asia through ILO	2009-2010	228,000
69000102	Geo-sector Information Management System Development and Capacity Buil	2009-2014	339,0487
89859301	ILO/Decent and Safe Jobs in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan	2009-2018	4,000,000
89859001	Finland's Water Management Programme in Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan	2009-2019	8,141,919
89856901	INT/Aid for Trade in Central Asia	2009-2020	13,652,030
69000002	LCF – Promotion of good governance and civil society development	2010-2011	200,000
69002801	Justice Sector Support Facility in Central Asia	2010-2014	4,921,205
69003101	Justice Sector Support Facility in Central Asia	2011-2013	250,000
69002901	ICI Capacity Building in the Field of Meteorology in Central Asia	2011-2014	526,225
69003116	LCF – Harassment of women in the workplace – violation of the right to personal freedom and inviolability	2018-2019	10,850
<b>Regional</b>			
89846401	DASECA, improving sexual and reproductive health of young people	2009	500,000
89887601	EBRD/Water Fund	2010	1,000,000
79812714	LCF – Building a Young Constituency for Peace across the South Caucasus and Turkey	2012	53,651
85702415	LCF – Creative Caucasus Mentorship program	2019	22,900
89852101	Finland's contribution to the Neighbourhood investment Facility-fund	2009-2010	2,000,000
89852201	Projects on the area of human dimension through OSCE/ODIHR	2009-2010	200,000
10200301	Technical cooperation fund	2009-2011	2,300,000
89859201	InfoDev Single Trust Fund	2009-2012	3,000,000
89857401	Environment and Security Initiative	2009-2013	6,100,000
89858001	Wider Europe Initiative, Security and Development Research	2009-2015	2,353,089
10200101	EBRD's ETC Fund and Multi-Donor Cooperation	2009-2015	2,300,000
89859301	Decent and Safe Jobs	2009-2018	4,000,000
89859001	Finland's Water Management Programme in Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan	2009-2019	4,430,446
89856901	Aid for Trade for Central Asia, South Caucasus and Eastern Europe	2009-2020	5,129,970
89886701	Eastern Europe Energy Efficiency and Environment Partnership Fund	2010-2020	2,000,000
89892234	Promotion of the work concerning democracy good governance and stability of the eastern partnership of the EU	2013-2014	29,035
89892396	Participatory Democracy Open Governance & Efficient eGovernment Services (PADOS) in EU Eastern Partnership Countries	2014-2019	569,394.4

# VOLUME 1 • MAIN REPORT



Ministry for Foreign  
Affairs of Finland