

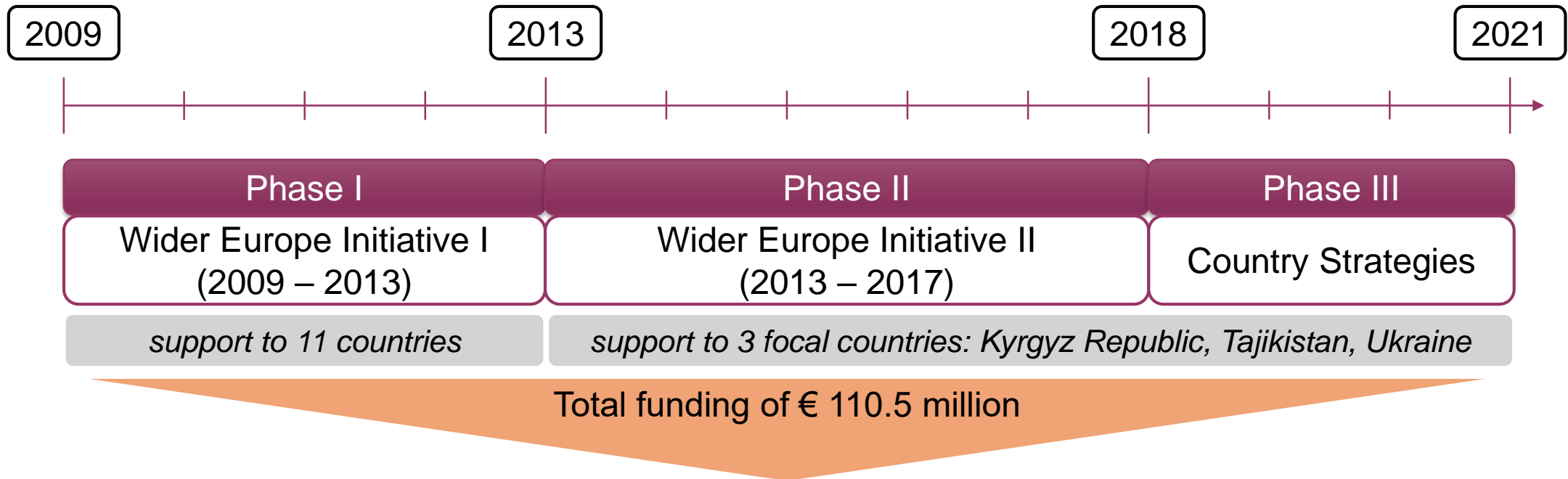
Evaluation on Development Cooperation carried out by the Department for Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, including the Wider Europe Initiative (WEI)

Webinar – 27.05.21

Overview

1. Finland's development cooperation 2009-2021
2. Objectives and purpose of the evaluation
3. Methodology and data collection
4. Key achievements
5. Findings and conclusions
6. Recommendations

1. Finland's development cooperation 2009-2021



Key themes/sectors

- Democracy, good governance, rule of law, human rights
- Environmental sustainability
- Inclusivity, social sustainability
- Economic development
- Education

2. Objectives and purpose of the evaluation

The **overall purpose** of the evaluation was two-fold:

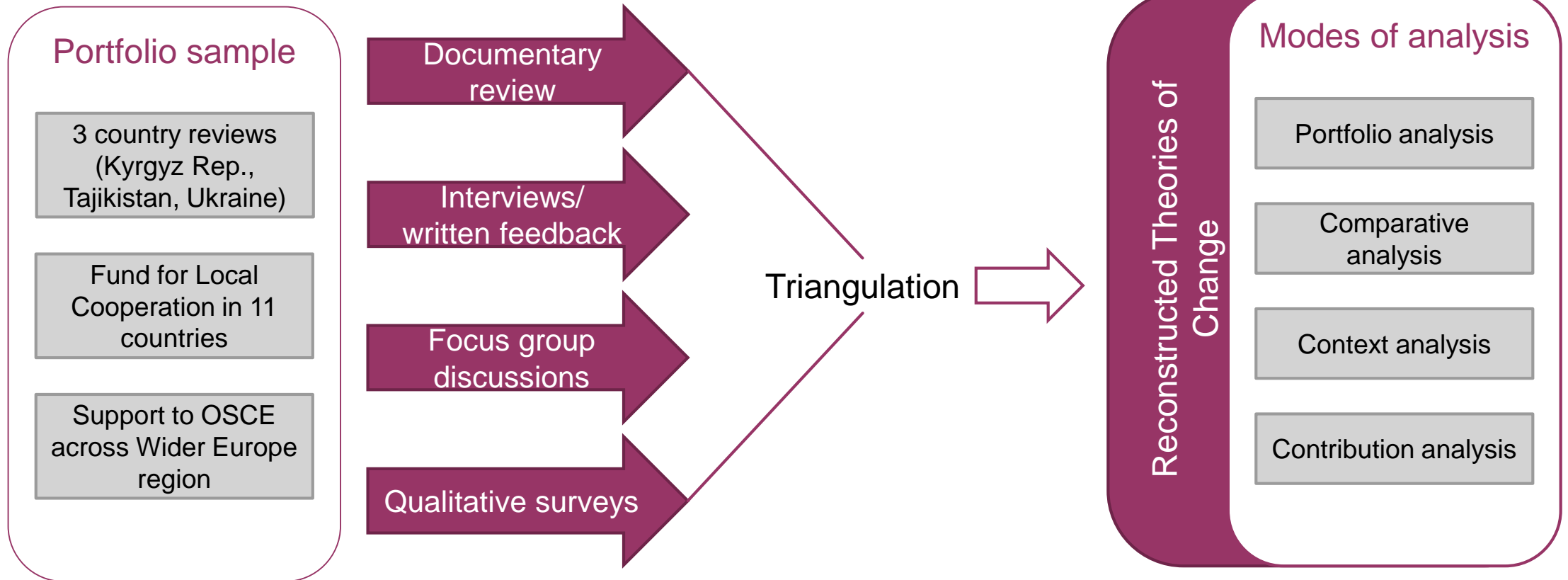
- Summative: assess Finland's contribution to development impact in the region
- Forward-looking: provide information on how MFA could best achieve policy objectives in the future; how to further develop strategies, programmes and their implementation at strategic and management level

The **specific objectives** were formulated in six main Evaluation Questions:

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?



3. Methodology and data collection



Limitations due to COVID-19 pandemic:

- No field visits
- No visits to individual projects
- No face-to-face interviews / focus groups with direct beneficiaries

4. Key achievements - general

- Complex approach – from policy and legislation, through institutional change, to the levels of individuals and communities.
- Promoting and strengthening the rights of persons with disabilities, persons in vulnerable positions - through legislative change, provision of support mechanisms, integration
- Improving awareness of, and changing attitudes and practices towards, human rights
- Tangible improvements for women and girls
- Creating jobs through trade development, reactivating a dormant industry, etc.
- Contributing to conflict resolution processes
- Leveraging Finnish expertise to contribute to sectoral reform processes
- Strengthening environmental sustainability and disaster preparedness

4. Key achievements – country level



Kyrgyz Republic

- The 'Aid for Trade' and Aquaculture and Fishery projects have improved the employment and income possibilities of the rural population.
- Fish farming is now recognized as a potential source of household income.
- The legal and juridical development sector project has made free legal advice accessible for poorer and vulnerable parts of the population, often in remote areas of the country.
- ICI projects have enabled the institutions to modernise and rationalise their work and improve service delivery.
- Measurable impact statements and related indicators are missing in the logical frameworks.



Tajikistan

- Access to Free Legal Aid has significantly increased, especially for women and those in disadvantaged positions.
- Water management-oriented projects have enhanced Tajikistan's water security and promoted the HRBA to clean water and sanitation.
- ICI projects have had transformative impacts in capacity building and enhanced technologies in the meteorology and geology sectors.
- Excellent work has been performed by SYKE in the management of the FinWater WEI II programme.
- FLC projects have had a significant impact on remote rural communities. The use of baselines in most projects was only sporadic, making it difficult to assess achievements



Ukraine

- The 'Learning Together' school reform project has applied Finnish experience in curriculum development, setting professional standards for the teaching profession.
- A range of energy efficiency initiatives, including Finland-Ukraine Trust Fund projects have stimulated investment in innovative green energy infrastructure projects.
- The Decontamination of the Chernobyl Nuclear Power station has been supported by the Finnish contribution to the Chernobyl Shelter Fund
- Finnish mobile radiation detection laboratory continues to be used to detect radioactive material and to check food, public buildings safety etc.
- MFA advisers on secondment to Council of Europe have made significant contribution to gender equality and mainstreaming in the work of the organisation and Ukrainian authorities.

5. Findings & Conclusions (1/3)

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. Findings & Conclusions (2/3)

What works – Opportunities and Strengths

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 to sustain Finland's cooperation in the other countries of the region.

5. Findings & Conclusions (3/3)

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.

6. Recommendations (1/2)

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.

6. Recommendations (2/2)

Management recommendations

3 Ensure **sufficient human resources and capacity** for the project cycle management within the Unit to respond to the increasing funding planned for the next phase, incl. for 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.