



# Final evaluation of three Institutional Cooperation Instrument (ICI) projects in Vietnam

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**ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

AWS	Automatic Weather Station
CCOP	Coordinating Committee for Geoscience Programmes in East and Southeast Asia
CEWAFO	Centre for Water Resources Monitoring and Forecast
CWRPI	Centre for Water Resources Planning and Investigation of Vietnam (current CEWAFO)
DARD	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
DOC	Department of Construction
DOST	Department of Science and Technology
DPI	Department of Planning and Investment
Evira	Finnish Food Safety Authority
FCG	FCG International Ltd
FGFRI	Finnish Game and Fisheries Research Institute (also RKTL)
FIC	Fish Innovation Centre
FLC	Fund for Local Cooperation
FMI	Finnish Meteorological Institute
FWF	Finnish Water Forum
GG-CC	Green Growth and Climate Change
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH
GOF	Government of Finland
GOV	Government of Vietnam
GTK	Geological Survey of Finland
HRBA	Human Rights Based Approach
ICI	Institutional Cooperation Instrument
IFI	International Financial Institution
IMHEN	Institute of Meteorology, Hydrology and Environment
ISET	The Institute for Social and Environmental Transition
Luke	Natural Resource Institute of Finland
MARD	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
MFA	Ministry for Foreign Affairs (of Finland)
MONRE	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
NAWAPI	National Centre for Water Resources and Planning
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NHMS	National Hydro-Meteorological Service of Vietnam
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
ODA	Official Development Assistance (ODA)
PROMOSERV	Promoting Modernization of Hydro-meteorological Services in Vietnam
RAS	Recirculating Aquaculture System

RBM	Result Based Management
RCCA	Research Centre for Coldwater Aquaculture (formerly known as RCCAS)
RCCAS	Research Centre for Coldwater Aquaculture Species
R&D	Research and Development
RIA-1	Research Institute for Aquaculture No 1
RKTL	Riista- ja kalatalouden tutkimuslaitos (FGFRI)
ROM	Results-Oriented-Monitoring
SEDS	Socio-Economic Development Strategy
SIHYMECC	Sub-Institute of Hydro-Meteorology and Climate Change
SYKE	Finnish Environment Institute
TOR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VIETADAPT	Developing and Implementing Climate Change Adaptation Measures at Local Level in Vietnam
VN-HAZ	Vietnam Managing Natural Hazard Project
VND	Vietnamese Dong
WB	World Bank

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **Background**

The Final Evaluation of three institutional cooperation projects in Vietnam was conducted during August 2017–April 2018. The evaluated projects were Promoting Modernization of Hydro-meteorological Services in Vietnam (PROMOSERV), Capacity Building for the Selective Breeding Programmes in Vietnam (RIA-1-RKTL/Luke) and Developing and Implementing Climate Change Adaptation Measures at Local Level in Vietnam (VIETADAPT). All three projects comprised two phases: the initial projects and their second phases.

The main rationale of this evaluation was to provide objective information to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA) of Finland about the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of ICI projects, and to give guidance on the use of this instrument in the transition phase in Vietnam from bilateral development cooperation to wider commercial, political and cultural relations.

The purpose of the evaluation was to provide information for the implementation of Finland's transition strategy for Vietnam in 2016–2020.

The priority objectives of the evaluation were to assess:

1. the impacts and sustainability of the three ICI projects;
2. to what extent they have been able to form a basis for enhancing commercial cooperation between Finland and Vietnam, and created partnerships for future collaboration that is not using Official Development Assistance (ODA) funding; and
3. to what extent the ICI projects have facilitated the internationalization of the ICI implementers and opened up new financing or commercial opportunities for institutions.

The evaluation was conducted during August 2017 – February 2018. The evaluation team has utilised existing documentation and stakeholder interviews as the main data collection methods. The approach and methodology has been participatory, consultative and inclusive. The evaluation methodology applies the principles and guidelines defined in MFA's Evaluation Manual (MFA, 2012), Human Rights Based Approach in Finland's Development Cooperation (MFA, 2015) and Result Based Management (MFA, 2015).

### **Summary**

Typically, the ICI projects were initiated through personal contacts created earlier between professional individuals in the relevant Vietnamese and Finnish institutions. Collaboration was then outlined taking into account the needs of the Vietnamese institutions and the support capacity of their Finnish counterparts. As the capacities and limitations of the institutions were known at the time of the formulation of the projects, the projects responded well to the needs and expectations.

Taking into account the simplified project cycle management of the ICI projects (including straightforward preparation without appraisal, their limited budgets, limited experience of the Finnish institutions in development cooperation and the twinning nature of the projects), the projects have achieved their expected results, as reported in respective completion reports and confirmed to the extent possible in the field. Results and their indicators have not always been very demanding and clear. Some impressive unintended results have also been achieved, especially in support to RIA-1.

So far, no negative impacts of ICI projects have been observed and, in most cases, they are not likely. The only project with a possibility of experiencing some issues in the future is the support to RIA-1. Although the project has addressed environmental concerns and risks associated with free-flow aquaculture from the outset, the fast expansion of the number of private rainbow trout farms in Lao Cai and other northern provinces is something that the ICI project modality is not well equipped to address. Thus, more needs to be done in terms of analysing and mitigating the fish health and environmental risks in the farms.

Vietnam's 2011 – 2020 Socio-Economic Development Strategy (SEDS) – a 10-year strategy – defines three breakthrough areas. The ICI projects were in alignment with those breakthrough areas:

- ❑ promoting skills development (all);
- ❑ improving market institutions (RIA-1/RKTL to some extent);
- ❑ further infrastructure development (PROMOSERV).

The relations between Finland and Vietnam were defined in the *Country Strategy for Development Cooperation with Vietnam 2013 – 2016*, which was the guiding document during the second phase of the three ICI projects. The three ICI projects were in full alignment with the strategy, and according to the Embassy of Finland in Hanoi, ICI projects have contributed to positive bilateral dialogue between the two governments. Specifically, the projects have supported:

- ❑ open access to information and knowledge (PROMOSERV and VIETADAPT);
- ❑ enhanced green economy, improved livelihoods (RIA1-RKTL); and
- ❑ Increased environmentally and economically sustainable income generation and improved implementation of climate sustainability initiatives (all three).

All three projects have, to some extent, promoted the cross-cutting objectives of Finnish development policies – especially bearing in mind the limited resources available for project preparation, limited experience of the Finnish institutions in development cooperation and the sharp focus of the projects on professional twinning.

Under the support to RIA-1 rainbow trout farming has opened up new livelihood opportunities for ethnic minorities, particularly Red Dao and H'Mong, thus contributing to human rights and reduction of inequalities. This new kind of livelihood has replaced less productive sources of income, such as rice farming. Similarly, gender equality has been addressed, as rainbow trout farming has enabled income generating opportunities for women.

All projects have acknowledged climate sustainability, which was the particular subject of VIETADAPT and PROMOSERV. Adaptation to climate change impacts has also been a particular focus of support to RIA-1.

Overall, the projects have strengthened institutional capacities of the Vietnamese partner institutions through improved knowledge and skills development, use of advanced software tools and state of the art equipment. The intended impacts have been mostly achieved while no negative impacts have been observed

The three ICI projects were initiated because Finnish expertise and know-how were already known in Vietnam among a group of specialists who had contacts with their Finnish counterparts. Through these projects the awareness of Finnish expertise and technical solutions expanded across relevant sectors. The partnerships between Finnish institutions and their Vietnamese partners have been very good – far beyond purely professional relations. Collaboration has continued also in periods when projects or their phases have been completed and no decisions on further ICI cooperation have been made.

Although commercial orientation was not on the agenda when the evaluated ICI projects were designed, PROMOSERV and the support to RIA-1 have efficiently promoted relevant Finnish business in Vietnam: meteorological equipment, Recirculating Aquaculture System RAS technology, eye eggs (rainbow trout and European whitefish), fish feed, etc. Also, study tours to Finland contributed to expanding the knowledge and awareness of Finnish technologies among the Vietnamese trainees.

By nature, the ICI projects are twinning projects with minor budgets for procurement of hardware. PROMOSERV and support to RIA-1 have also included some hardware, whereas equipment provided by VIETADAPT is very limited: minor office equipment was purchased locally. The projects' budgets had been reviewed and justified by the ICI Consultant and approved by MFA. The budgets were in the range of around EUR 500,000 – 600,000 per phase, which are typical of ICI projects. Considering that all projects had achieved and, especially the support to RIA-1, exceeded their expected results, the resources have been well used for developing institutional capacity in Vietnam.

ICI instrument is based on peer-to-peer approach as a capacity development approach. The evaluation considers this to be strength of the ICI instrument as well. Working side by side, finding solutions to problems together is a good basis for sustainable partnership as well. On the other hand, the twinning



approach favours narrow bilateral participation, resulting in limited overall impacts and weaker ownership and participation of other public and private partners.

In the beginning – when the first phases were mobilised, there were some difficulties on both sides to understand and cope with the formalities and bureaucracy of the counterpart government. In addition, the hierarchy of the Vietnamese management culture, weak cooperation and collaboration between ministries and government bodies whose mandates are not very clear and often overlapping, as well as weak institutional memory of Vietnamese organisations, especially when new persons take over key positions, have come as a surprise to Finnish institutions. Rotation of desk officers in MFA and subsequent inconsistency in interpretation of the ICI Manual and in supervision of the projects has created confusion among both Finnish and Vietnamese institutions.

The support of the ICI consultant was considered very valuable by the ICI institutions in the formulation of the first projects and at the beginning of their implementation when the Finnish institutions were less familiar with development cooperation in general and MFA's relevant policies and requirements in particular. The duties of the ICI consultant, defined in the job description and TOR are limited to this kind of support to the Finnish institutions in Finland. There are no requirements for the ICI consultant's country-specific expertise and the consultant can travel to partner countries only if specifically requested by MFA. So far there have not been country visits. More country-specific support to Finnish institutions could have helped to avoid minor problems encountered at the beginning of the projects and improved the stakeholder assessment and subsequent enhancement of impacts.

The Vietnamese ICI partners of the Finnish institutions are technical bodies under their respective ministries – directly as secondary level subordinate bodies. They demonstrate very high ownership and commitment to the common goals and continuation of the activities after the completion of the projects. While the partners demonstrate strong ownership, the ownership at the ministerial level and among other stakeholders is less evident – with partial exception of the aquaculture sector.

The main objective of the projects – capacity building of human resources – has proved to be sustainable. The knowledge and skills transferred to the local individuals have benefited them and are used by them in their line of work; the trained individuals have remained in their organisations or at least in the sector (aquaculture) with few exceptions, and some of them have already been promoted to more senior positions. With regards to Finnish technologies, minor equipment and software licences are maintained and continue to be in use in the projects. Only PROMOSERV provided samples of more advanced meteorological equipment manufactured by Vaisala. Vaisala has arranged after sales services in Vietnam that is expected to ensure the sustainability of the equipment over its technical lifetime if well maintained.

**Recommendations**

ICI has been designed to be a relatively simple and straightforward financing instrument for bilateral cooperation between government institutions. As such, it has been quite successfully applied in the ICI projects in Vietnam. However, with minor additional inputs the results and impacts could have been strengthened, as summarised in the matrix below.

*Final evaluation of three Institutional Cooperation Instrument (ICI) projects in Vietnam*

Main findings	Conclusions	Recommendations
Relevance	Very good	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PROMOSERV enhanced the capacity of NHMS in their priority needs – automatic weather stations, weather radars, real-time data quality control, central data management systems, integration of different meteorological data sources, lightning detection, storm cell tracking and weather forecasting. During the evaluation NHMS confirmed that these topics corresponded to their internal priority needs.</li> <li>RIA-1 was highly satisfied with the support received from Luke and Evira, focused on cold water aquaculture, post harvesting issues and food safety technologies, trout and white fish reproduction, genetic breeding, environmental technologies, risk assessment and fish health – all relevant to RIA-1</li> <li>VIETADAPT responded to the identified needs in the key responsibility areas of CEWAFO and SIHYMECC – water resources protection, assessment of climate change impacts on water resources, exchange and provision of water resources data and information and application of new technologies and relevant research on climate studies.</li> </ul>	The ICI projects responded well to the needs of the partner institutions.	None
Coherence	Good	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PROMOSERV was developed within the framework of the Vietnam Meteorological and Hydrological Development</li> </ul>	The ICI projects contributed to the implementation of relevant	None

<p>Strategy and the National Action Plan to Respond to Climate Change, thus being coherent with main relevant Vietnamese policies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support to RIA-1 contributed to the implementation of the National Strategy to Develop Aquaculture of Vietnam and to the Master Plan of Fisheries Development of Vietnam and Vision to 2030, plus positive inputs to the Overall Plan of Cold Water Fisheries Development and Vision.</li> <li>• VIETADAPT contributed to implementation of the key Vietnamese programme, strategy and action plan on climate change, being well in line with the Vietnamese priorities.</li> <li>• ICI projects have provided additional goodwill for bilateral dialogue between the two governments and supported the country strategy in open access to information and knowledge; enhanced green economy and improved livelihoods; and increased environmentally and economically sustainable income generation and improved implementation of climate sustainability initiatives.</li> </ul>	<p>Vietnamese policies and strategies at a technical level; and, to some extent, supported the country strategy.</p>	
<p>Effectiveness</p>	<p>With problems</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All three projects have, to some extent, promoted the cross-cutting objectives of Finnish development policies – especially bearing in mind the limited resources available for project preparation, limited experience of the Finnish institutions in development cooperation and the sharp</li> </ul>	<p>Bearing in mind that ICI is a simplified instrument and the projects are relatively small focused on capacity building, the projects have (selectively) promoted the cross-</p>	<p>More resources to the preparation and mobilization of new cooperation between Finnish and partner institutions: more time and resources and country-specific sup-</p>

<p>focus of the projects on professional twinning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PROMOSERV addressed gender equality by organizing a gender equality workshop.</li> <li>The main benefits and impacts of VIETADAPT were limited to increased capacities of the participating institutions, whereas the expected motivation and encouragement of local stakeholders was less effective – at least in short term.</li> </ul>	<p>cutting objectives.</p> <p>The remaining challenge is to generate ownership among higher level authorities and other stakeholders.</p>	<p>port and advice (MFA, Embassy of Finland, eligible consultants)</p> <p>More thorough stakeholder analyses; senior officials/managers of relevant key organizations to participate in advisory committees/boards (ICI institutions, Embassy of Finland, eligible consultants)</p>
Impact	Good	PROMOSERV
	Very good	RIA-1
	With problems	VIETADAPT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All three projects have substantially increased institutional capacities of the recipient institutions: knowledge, skills (use of advanced software tools) and equipment, as well as English skills.</li> <li>PROMOSERV produced most intended results and the project purpose was achieved in most areas. Additionally, PROMOSERV paved the way for a concessional credit project of Vaisala, with FMI as a sub-contractor.</li> <li>The introduced lightning detection technology has greatly increased the early warning capacities of NHMS.</li> <li>The weather services of NHMS to end-users located in flood-prone areas need further development, customer satisfaction surveyed in 2017 indicted high dissatisfaction.</li> </ul>	<p>The projects have achieved very good results – most of the expected (though partly loosely defined) results as well as some impressive unintended results, with good impacts on the partner institutions and varying wider impacts.</p> <p>Due to the limited scope and limited direct contacts with the Vietnamese society, some risks prevail and wider impacts remain unachieved.</p> <p>The definition of the ICI consultant's tasks in TOR is rather limited.</p>	<p>More inputs to risk assessment (ICI institutions, ICI consultant)</p> <p>Communication between ICI institution, ICI consultant and MFA to be intensified, the role of the ICI consultant (their TOR to be revised) to be more proactive and dynamic and ICI institutions to be encouraged to be more dynamic and ambitious (MFA)</p> <p>Close collaboration with Business Finland and other relevant bodies, early information of relevant Finnish</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With inputs from Finland two new aquaculture species – rainbow trout and whitefish – have been approved for production in Vietnam.</li> <li>• While the economic benefits of cold water fish farming are significant and accessible to women and ethnic minorities as well, there are environmental and fish health risks.</li> <li>• CEWAFO and SIHYMECC have applied and replicated the capacity developed by VIETADAPT in assignments for Vietnamese customers.</li> <li>• The proposed climate adaptation measures in Tan Thanh district under VIETADAPT applying a highly participatory method have not been actively implemented.</li> <li>• Although commercial orientation was not on the agenda when the evaluated ICI projects were designed, PROMOSERV and the support to RIA-1 have efficiently promoted relevant Finnish businesses in Vietnam.</li> <li>• ICI is considered a useful instrument for internationalization by the Finnish institutions but, so far, only FMI – together with Vaisala – have been successful to develop further business in Vietnam. Even Vaisala's project with FMI as a subcontractor is funded by Finnish concessional credit.</li> <li>• After first phase the ICI consultant focused more on supervision and quality assurance in project formulation and reporting.</li> </ul>		<p>clusters and identification of relevant business partners in Vietnam (ICI institutions, ICI consultant, Business Finland, FWF, etc.</p> <p>Joint expansion of successful projects or similar cooperation between the partner institutions to third countries (MFA, ICI institutions and their partners)</p>
Efficiency	Good	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Considering that all projects had achieved and, especially the support to RIA-1, exceeded their expected results, the resources have been well used for increased institutional capacity in Vietnam.</li> <li>• The partnerships between Finnish institutions and their Vietnamese partners have been very good – far beyond purely professional relations. Collaboration has continued also in periods when projects or their phases have been completed and no decisions on further ICI cooperation have been made.</li> <li>• Working side by side, finding solutions to problems together is a good basis for sustainable partnership as well. On the other hand, the twinning approach favors narrow bilateral participation, resulting in limited overall impacts and weaker ownership and participation of other public and private partners.</li> <li>• In the beginning – when the first phases were mobilized, there were some difficulties on both sides to understand and cope with the formalities and bureaucracy of the counterpart government.</li> <li>• The support of the ICI consultant was very valuable in the beginning when the Finnish institutions were less familiar with development cooperation and MFA's relevant policies. After the initial stage the role of the ICI consultant focused more on supervision and quality assurance in project</li> </ul>	<p>The projects have used rather limited resources efficiently, achieved and even exceeded expected results and created close professional partnerships with the support of the ICI consultant. Yet, wider involvement of the Vietnamese society has been limited and the expertise of the ICI consultant could have been expanded.</p>	<p>None (in addition to those above)</p>
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formulation and reporting. Hence the consultant did not have significant impact on the achievement of the defined results.		
Aid effectiveness	Good	PROMOSERV
	Good	RIA-1
	With problems	VIETADAPT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institutional overlapping and weak coordination is typical in Vietnam with negative impacts on inter-sectoral coordination, complementarity and aid effectiveness. However, there was some positive coordination with synergies between PROMOSERV and the support to RIA-1. Overlapping with the World Bank funded VN-HAZ was avoided.</li> <li>• RIA-1 and development of cold water aquaculture has received support from MFA Finland through multiple windows. This is a significant sustainability factor: although there have been gaps in the financing, the interest on results and progress has remained firm both in Finland and Vietnam. The particular strength of MFA as a financing partner in this case has been the flexible use of ICI and FLC instruments in parallel.</li> <li>• VIETADAPT is not well known among the representatives of the international community interviewed in Vietnam, though project results have reportedly been widely disseminated.</li> </ul>	In spite of weak coordination and unclear division of duties between institutions in Vietnam, the ICI projects have avoided overlapping. Yet, involvement of Vietnamese and international stakeholders is not effective, especially in the case of VIETADAPT	<p>Participation in all relevant coordination/information forums, such as the group for GG-CC projects (Embassy of Finland)</p> <p>Project managers/coordinators of ICI projects to meet each other on a regular basis together with the ICI consultant, the Embassy of Finland and the Desk Officer(s) from MFA (MFA, Embassy of Finland, ICI consultant, ICI institutions)</p> <p>More innovative use of available financing instruments, e.g., parallel/complimentary use of MFA's financing windows (PIF, NGO), parallel/joint financing with development banks, etc. (MFA)</p>



Sustainability	With problems	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While the direct twinning partners demonstrated strong ownership, the ownership at the ministerial level and among other stakeholders was less evident.</li> <li>• A small spare part package was supplied with the equipment purchased under PROMOSERV. Vaisala has arranged after sales services in Vietnam that is expected to ensure the sustainability of the equipment over its technical lifetime if well maintained. Overall the average feasible life time of most electronic equipment is only some years in the sector where technical development is fast.</li> <li>• With few exceptions the experts trained in the ICI projects continue to work in the sector, mainly in their institutions.</li> <li>• More needs to be done to secure the sustainability of cold water aquaculture to solve any problems related to production, fish health and environment.</li> <li>• It is challenging to ensure that information and knowledge are shared within the stakeholder organizations.</li> <li>• Prior to <i>Complementarity in Finland's Development Policy and Co-operation evaluation (Bäck et al 2014)</i> only three ICI projects had been externally evaluated during 2008-2013.</li> </ul>	<p>The increased capacities of the partner institutions are sustainable with few individuals leaving their jobs and the institutions mobilized to apply the new skills and tools in other assignments. However, more emphasis is needed to risk identification and information and knowledge sharing.</p> <p>Programmatic accountability and learning from experience is limited because of few self-evaluations and external evaluations.</p>	<p>Partner institutions need to take care that the institutional analysis is well prepared, including stronger involvement of relevant ministries during project design and implementation (ICI project partners)</p> <p>More inputs to external evaluations (in addition to above) (MFA)</p>

## **1. RATIONALE, PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF EVALUATION**

### **1.1 Rationale**

The Final Evaluation of three institutional cooperation projects in Vietnam was conducted during August 2017–April 2018. The evaluated projects were:

- ❑ Promoting Modernisation of Hydro-meteorological Services in Vietnam (PROMOSERV);
- ❑ Capacity Building for the Selective Breeding Programmes in Vietnam (RIA-1-RKTL/Luke); and
- ❑ Developing and Implementing Climate Change Adaptation Measures at Local Level in Vietnam (VIETADAPT).

The evaluation assignment was defined in the Terms of Reference (TOR), attached as Annex 1. The main rationale of this evaluation was to provide objective information to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA) of Finland about the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of ICI projects, and to give guidance on the use of this instrument in the transition phase in Vietnam from bilateral development cooperation to wider commercial, political and cultural relations.

### **1.2 Purpose and Objectives**

The purpose of the evaluation was to provide information for the implementation of Finland's transition strategy for Vietnam in 2016–2020. The evaluation was expected to assess lessons learned from institutional cooperation and ICI as an instrument to promote transition from development cooperation towards commercially based cooperation. It was also expected to give information on to what extent the ICI projects have created awareness of Finnish expertise in Vietnam to support Vietnam's development. In addition, proposals for starting new ICI projects in Vietnam have been submitted to the MFA, and the purpose of the evaluation was to support planning of potential new ICI project(s).

The evaluation was expected to provide information on the support services of the ICI consultant – Group FCG International Ltd (FCG).

The priority objectives of the evaluation were to assess:

1. the impacts and sustainability of the three ICI projects;
2. to what extent they have been able to form a basis for enhancing commercial cooperation between Finland and Vietnam, and created partnerships for future collaboration that is not using Official Development Assistance (ODA) funding; and
3. to what extent the ICI projects have facilitated the internationalization of the ICI implementers and opened up new financing or commercial opportunities for institutions.

The time span to be covered was:

- ❑ PROMOSERV 2010–2016;
- ❑ RIA-1/RKTL 2010–2016; and
- ❑ VIETADAPT 2011–2016.

### **1.3 Main Evaluation Questions**

The evaluation questions, as presented in TOR, are:

- ❑ **Relevance**
  1. How the ICI projects have answered to the capacity needs of the recipient institutions?
- ❑ **Impact**
  2. What are intended and unintended, short- and long-term, positive and negative impacts of the ICI projects on the capacities of the recipient institutions, especially know-how regarding climate change adaptation?
  3. In which ways the projects have been able to benefit local population and authorities? And to what extent have they promoted human rights, gender equality and reduction of inequalities?
  4. To what extent the projects have created mutually beneficial partnerships and favourable conditions to enhance commercial cooperation between Finland and Vietnam? And to what extent have the projects facilitated broader political relations?
  5. To what extent the projects have increased awareness of Finnish expertise and technical solutions to support Vietnam's development needs?
- ❑ **Effectiveness**
  6. To what extent have the projects promoted human rights, gender equality, reduction of inequalities and climate sustainability?
- ❑ **Efficiency**
  7. How well the activities have transformed the available resources into increased capacity in Vietnam?
  8. How have the partner organizations worked together, and what can be learned from institutional cooperation?
  9. How have the support services provided by the ICI consultant (FCG) promoted achievement of the results?
- ❑ **Aid effectiveness**
  10. How have the projects promoted ownership and accountability in partner organisations in Vietnam?
- ❑ **Sustainability**
  11. To what extent have the projects achieved sustainable results, and what are the conditions or factors that are central for sustainability of the results?

❑ **Coherence**

12. How well have the ICI projects succeeded in mutual reinforcement with other policies to achieve their objectives in line with Vietnamese development priorities, MFA's country programme for Vietnam?

The detailed scope and requirements of the assignments are shown in TOR in Annex 1.

## **1.4 Evaluation Methodology**

The approach that was proposed in the second Draft Inception Report in October 2017 has been followed in the evaluation. The methodology has been participatory, consultative and inclusive. The principles and guidelines defined in MFA's Evaluation Manual (MFA, 2012), Human Rights Based Approach in Finland's Development Cooperation (MFA, 2015) and Result Based Management (MFA, 2015) have been applied. The main data collection methods have been review of existing documentation and stakeholder interviews.

An evaluation matrix was designed during the inception. The team has used the matrix in data collection (what data to collect and from whom), data analysis (particularly the sub-questions) and report writing. However, the structure of presenting analysis and findings in the report follows the issues and questions provided in TOR.

The validation of results was done building on two main sources of information, namely documentary evidence available, e.g., in the policies and strategies of the partner countries and plans and reports of the partner organizations of the ICI projects, and data and information collected through interviews and focus group discussions. With respect to ICI projects supporting RIA-1 in cold water aquaculture development, also observation and stakeholder interviews became available during the field visit to Sapa. Triangulation of findings presented in this report is, thus, a combination of views and experiences of persons and organizations involved in the ICI projects and information and data available in the documents.

There were difficulties and limitations experienced in the evaluation process (including changes in the team leadership and composition) that resulted in some adjustment of evaluation methodologies. The second Draft Inception Report proposed a number of evaluation methods that, in fact, were not feasible to apply during a very short in-country mission.

The main findings per each evaluation criterion of TOR have also been analysed using the Results-Oriented-Monitoring (ROM) Review system of the EU, which is built on the OECD evaluation criteria. The grading system is to provide a quick overview of the main conclusions at the level of each evaluation question. A three-grade scale is adopted using the following categories: (i) Green – good or very good; (ii) Orange – with problems; (iii) Red – off track or with serious deficiencies.

The description of the evaluation approach and methods used and limitations of the evaluation is provided in Annex 2. The list of documentation consulted is in Annex 3, the list of persons consulted in Annex 4 and the field mission schedule in Vietnam is attached as Annex 5.

## **2. OVERALL CONTEXT AND EVALUATED PROJECTS**

In this section the Country Strategy for Development Cooperation with Vietnam and the ICI Instrument, Norms and Guidelines are initially described. Also, the projects that were evaluated are introduced. Analysis of all findings, also with respect to influence of the policy context in the performance of projects is included in Section 3 of the report.

### **2.1 Overall Context**

#### **2.1.1. Country Strategy for Development Cooperation with Vietnam 2013 – 2016**

The second phases of the evaluated projects were implemented during the period when Finland's cooperation with Vietnam was guided by the Country Strategy 2013-2016.

Vietnam reached the status of a lower middle-income country in 2010. As is stated in the strategy, during the strategy period bilateral grant-based development cooperation was to continue but be in a state of transition towards a more comprehensive partnership for mutual benefit. The strategy period aimed at transition in Vietnamese and Finnish cooperation, strengthening and diversifying partnerships between Vietnamese and Finnish authorities, institutions, private sector players and civil societies. Available development cooperation instruments were to be used in a comprehensive manner. High-level political and policy dialogue as well as economic, commercial and innovation cooperation were to be further intensified. As a result, the traditional project-based development cooperation between Vietnam and Finland was expected to be gradually replaced by a more comprehensive partnership, responding to the changing needs of a middle-income Vietnam.

According to the strategy, Finland continued supporting Vietnam to foster sustainable use and management of natural resources and enhance climate sustainability, and improve the basis for a knowledge-based society. The main objectives of the strategy were:

1. increased openness and access to information, knowledge, and innovation for all;
2. enhanced green economy that creates entrepreneurial activity and decent jobs;
3. improved sustainability, inclusiveness, equality and climate sustainability of the use and management of forest resources; and
4. sustainable and equal access to improved water supply and sanitation services.

The human rights based approach was to be advanced, e.g., by supporting open access to information and creating livelihoods for the poorest and most vulnerable groups. Implementation of the human

rights based approach and the crosscutting objectives of Finland's Development Policy Programme in all cooperation were to be strengthened.

The country strategy was followed by a transition strategy, documented in *Cooperation between Finland and Vietnam 2016-2020* (MFA 2016). The vision is that, by 2020, the ongoing, bilateral, grant-based development cooperation projects funded by the Government of Finland (GOF) have been successfully implemented and with sustainable results, bilateral trade has grown substantially, and Finland is known in Vietnam as a reliable partner providing economically and environmentally sustainable solutions that contribute to Vietnam's development goal of become an innovative, knowledge-based economy.

Development cooperation in Vietnam focuses on two priority areas of Finland's development policy (2016): developing the economy in order to generate jobs, livelihood opportunities and well-being, and improving access to water and sanitation while promoting the sustainable use of natural resources.

The human rights based approach is a cross-cutting objective and is integrated with all development cooperation. It is also accounted for in trade by emphasising responsible business. Furthermore, all activities underline economic and social equality, including gender equality. The goal is to ensure that development projects funded by Finland achieve sustainable results that have positive, long-term impacts on society.

### **2.1.2. ICI instrument, Norm and Guidelines**

Institutional Cooperation Instrument (ICI) projects refer to the twinning projects between Finnish government agencies or public institutions and peer institutions in developing countries.

The instrument is grounded on the premise that well-performing public sector organisations capable to provide relevant and adequate services for the citizens are at the heart of the operation of any country and tremendously important for the developing countries in tackling the various dimensions of poverty. Therefore, helping public sector institutions improve their work efficiency is one of the most important objectives in building sustainable development.

The instrument is guided by MFA Administrative Order from 2010. Detailed instructions and guidance for ICI projects are provided in the ICI Manual of MFA (current version number 7 dated June 2012). With respect to development policy, Result Based Management (RBM), Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) and key quality criteria applied to all MFA projects, the Manual for bilateral projects (MFA 2016) now provides updated guidance to ICI projects.

The objective of ICI is to strengthen the capacity of public sector institutions in partner countries in developing countries by utilising the expertise that can be found in the Finnish public sector. The idea is that capacity can be best enhanced with the help of colleagues – civil servants from an organisation with similar tasks and responsibilities. The ICI provides means for partner countries to cooperate with public

sector organisations in Finland. In the ICI programme, the capacity development is understood as enhancing and strengthening existing capacities, not building them from scratch. Capacity development has to be based on true needs and institutional priorities of the partner institution.

Since the cooperation is based on the needs in the partner country, most projects focus on one partner country at a time. Support can be directed to a regional agency if the countries involved have approved its mandate and if it entitles the parties to conclude financing agreements.

The modalities for cooperation are explicitly defined with respect to expected roles of project partners, types of activities that are eligible for financing, project budget and its cost categories, and acceptable personnel costs. As per the current administrative norm, the budget of an ICI project should not exceed EUR 500,000. It is not a fixed ceiling, because there are cases where the budget may be significantly higher, i.e., if the project supports cooperation in one of the key sectors defined in the Finnish country level cooperation strategy.

The ICI involves several actors with different roles:

- ❑ The Unit for Development Policy, MFA takes the main responsibility for managing ICI as an instrument of development cooperation with relevant and appropriate management documents and instructions.
- ❑ Regional departments of MFA are responsible for taking project specific decisions, such as financing and monitoring, including approving reports, of ICI projects.
- ❑ Finnish embassies support the regional departments in assessing the relevance of the project concept and project document as well as in monitoring<sup>1</sup>.
- ❑ The Finnish institution, in cooperation with the partner country institution, ensures implementation of the project in accordance with the contract and approved project document.
- ❑ The partner country institution has the final responsibility for ensuring the enabling environment necessary for the capacity development. As the ultimate owner of the project results and activities, it has a crucial role in ensuring that the project is relevant regarding the needs and that the defined results and activities of the project are appropriate. The partner country institution is responsible for local formalities for programme approval, sufficient counterpart funding and allocation of staff, etc.

There is also an ICI Facilitation Consultant (a consulting company contracted by MFA to support ICI projects and partners in Finland). These services are currently provided by FCG International Ltd, Finland. The Facilitation Consultant supports MFA in ensuring that the projects and project documentation meet the normative and qualitative requirements set for ICI projects and development cooperation in general. This is accomplished by support services to the Finnish institution in project planning, implementation,

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<sup>1</sup> Initially the Embassies were only involved in assessing the project concepts and project documents and did not have any role in project monitoring.

monitoring, reporting and communication of results. Different trainings and workshops for the Finnish agencies and MFA are the responsibility of the Facilitation Consultant.

ICI was started in 2008. By September 2016, there have been 121 ICI projects. To date, only few external and independent evaluations addressing ICI projects have taken place. The most comprehensive evaluation was the Case Study on Complementarity in the Institutional Co-operation Instrument that was conducted in 2013 as part of the broader Complementarity in Finland's Development Policy and Co-operation evaluation (Bäck et al 2014). The complementarity evaluation conducted an assessment of a sample of ICI projects in 11 countries in Africa, Latin America and Asia (Vietnam not included). Prior to the Complementarity evaluation, only three ICI projects had been externally evaluated during 2008–2013. Thus, one of the conclusions was that programmatic accountability and learning from experience was reduced because only few self-evaluations and external evaluations were conducted. The ICI complementarity evaluation report presents several other findings and recommendations that resonate well with the three ICI projects in Vietnam. Those common findings will be discussed in subsequent sections of this report.

## **2.2 Evaluated Projects**

### **2.2.1 Promoting Modernisation of Hydro-meteorological Services in Vietnam**

PROMOSERV I was implemented by Finnish Meteorological Institute (FMI) and National Hydro-Meteorological Service (NHMS) of Vietnam in 2010 – 2012. The project was developed within the framework of the Viet Nam Meteorological and Hydrological Development Strategy up to 2020 and the National Action Plan to Respond to Climate Change for the period of 2011–2015. The budget of PROMOSERV I was EUR 492,193.90 from GOF.

The overall objective of PROMOSERV I was the promotion of economic development and reduced risks for the loss of life and property caused by severe weather and climate events in the Vietnamese society. The expected result was enhancing of the capacity of NHMS staff to provide early warning services through the use of modern meteorological technologies.

The capacity building was developed along the participation of NHMS staff in:

- ❑ designing meteorological networks, installation and operation of two pilot Automatic Weather Stations (AWSs);
- ❑ designing weather radar networks, integration and development of composite weather radar products; and
- ❑ designing and developing modern weather services to all sectors of the society.

The capacity building activities were carried out in the form of discussions, exchange of information and best practices, training workshops and seminars, hands-on assistance, study visits to Finland, planning and working together with selected experts and groups at NHMS.



**PROMOSERV II (2013 – 2016)**

PROMOSERV II was continuation of PROMOSERV I and the participants were the same. The overall objective was to reduce risks for the loss of life and property caused by severe weather and climate events in the Vietnamese society. The GOF budget was EUR 499,804.

The expected result of PROMOSERV II was to increase the capacity of NHMS to produce new and improved weather services and products to public and private users through the use of modern meteorological technologies.

The capacity building was developed along the participation of NHMS staff to:

- ❑ installation of a pilot Central Data Management System and real-time, automatic data quality control;
- ❑ installation of a demo version of advanced Forecaster's workstation that allows the integration of satellite, weather radar data and lightning data; and
- ❑ Introducing and training new meteorological technologies (remote sensing and lightning detection).

As in PROMOSERV I, the capacity building activities were carried out in the form of discussions, exchange of information and best practices, training workshops and seminars, hands-on assistance, study visits to Finland, planning and working together with selected experts and groups at NHMS.

**2.2.2 Capacity Building for the Development of Selective Breeding Programs in Vietnam*****Activities preceding the ICI-projects in cold water aquaculture (2001-2005)***

The initiative to introduce rainbow trout farming to Vietnam came up in the scientific cooperation discussions between the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD), Research Institute on Aquaculture No. 1 (RIA-1), Finnish Game and Fisheries Research Institute (FGFRI, alternatively RKTL) and Fish Innovation Centre (FIC) at the end of 2001. RIA-1 is a public service organisation under MARD. These discussions led into a series of interventions in cold water aquaculture that received financial and technical support from Finland.

A feasibility study assessing the economic potential, environmental impacts and market potential was finalised in 2004. Ecologically suitable conditions for rainbow trout farming in Vietnam exist in highland areas (altitude approximately 1,500 m above sea level). About 35% of the water resources suitable for cold water aquaculture are located in the Northern Mountain provinces, 60% in the Central Plateau with 5% scattered across provinces in Central Vietnam. The study identified the neighbouring provinces of Lao

Cai and Lai Chau in North-Western Vietnam and Lam Dong in Central Vietnam as suitable for cold water aquaculture.

In 2004 RIA-1 decided to establish a demonstration pilot farm for trout farming in Thac Bac, near Sapa town in Lao Cai. RIA-1 developed a proposal for *"Introduction of Rainbow Trout Culture in Northern Vietnam – Establishment of Pilot Farm"*. The total budget of the project was EUR 372,781. The project received EUR 100,000 grant from the Fund for Local Cooperation (FLC), managed by the Embassy of Finland. The Ministry of Fisheries (now MARD) contributed EUR 222,265 in total. The contribution came from two different departments of the Ministry: EUR 96,177 from the National Fishery Extension Centre and EUR 126,088 from the Department of Planning and Investment. EUR 50,516 was contributed by Lao Cai Province. Funds from the Embassy were allocated mainly to training of Vietnamese staff on technology, initial seed materials (eye eggs of rainbow trout and fish feed from Finland), coordination and consultancy services, and some key construction and equipment. The pilot farm was designed in Finland. Funds from the Ministry of Fisheries of Vietnam were allocated mainly to farm construction, procurement of locally available equipments and operating expenses (running expenses including feed). Funds from Lao Cai Province were allocated mainly to providing the farm site (area 3 ha), roofing the tanks and fencing the area. The first batch of 150,000 trout eggs arrived from Finland in February 2005. The pilot project demonstrated that rainbow trout can grow well in Vietnam.

In addition to RKTL, several other actors from Finland were involved with the feasibility study and in the pilot project. These included FIC, Savon Taimen Oy, Rehuraisio Oy and Technology centre Teknia.

### ***RIA-1/RKTL (2010-2012)***

Institutional cooperation between RIA-1 and RKTL continued in 2010 when the ICI-project *"Capacity Building for the Development of Cold Water Aquaculture"* was started. The implementation period of the project was September 2010 – December 2012. The project partners were RIA-1 from Vietnam and RKTL, MTT Agrifood Research and Finnish Food Safety Authority (Evira) from Finland. The total budget of the project was EUR 534,691 from GOF.

The overall objective of the project was to contribute to the development of an efficient, competitive and sustainable value-added, cold water aquaculture sector in Vietnam with special reference to rainbow trout and marketing. The project supported RIA-1 in several planned results:

- ❑ National Cold Water Strategy is established;
- ❑ the Thac Bac pilot farm has become the Centre of Cold Water Aquaculture;
- ❑ RIA-1 is capable to implement the national breeding strategy for rainbow trout in Vietnam;
- ❑ the risks in the fingerling production at Thac Bac station of RIA-1 have been assessed and the need for quality system is known;

- ❑ RIA-1 is aware of environmental risks and cost-beneficial measures to reduce environmental load and is capable to demonstrate these measures to the industry in Vietnam; and
- ❑ RIA-1 has capacity to demonstrate to the industry the advantages of post-harvest processing technologies and efficient marketing channels as part of the business model of value-added aquaculture.

The capacity building activities of RIA-1 staff took place both in Vietnam and in Finland. The main forms were on-the-job training mostly provided by the RCTL, MTT Agrifood and Evira staff during their missions to Vietnam, short-term training courses in Finland, and workshops and seminars in Vietnam.

### ***RIA-1/LUKE (2014-2016)***

The new phase of the project was called *"Capacity building for the development of selective breeding programs in Vietnam – Special focus on climate change and environmental sustainability"*. The three-year project started in January 2014 and ended in December 2016. The project partners remained the same as in Phase 1. However, RCTL and MTT Agrifood Research merged into the Natural Resources Institute of Finland (Luke) in January 2015. Hence, the number of Finnish partners was reduced to two, namely Luke and Evira. The total budget of this project phase was EUR 603,693 (GOF funding).

The overall objective of the project was to support poverty alleviation through strengthening the capacity of RIA-1, which enables RIA-1 to be in charge of sustainable development of the freshwater aquaculture sector in Vietnam to meet the increasing challenges of achieving environmental sustainability and adapting to climate change. The more specific objectives were that RIA-1 will achieve the full capacity to:

- ❑ plan, carry out, and develop sustainable selective breeding programs with special emphasis on adaptation to climate change, fish health and environmental sustainability; and
- ❑ provide selective breeding and diagnostics of fish diseases.

The activities were structured along three result areas, namely:

- ❑ optimisation of the cold water selective breeding programme and broodstock management,
- ❑ fish health and control services, and
- ❑ development of foundations for *Pangasius* to move towards sustainable selective breeding programs.

Under these areas eight results were defined and that aimed, among other things, to increase the farming and climate change adaptation capacity of Research Centre for Coldwater Aquaculture in Sapa (RCCA), bring the RCCA staff to the level where they have the capacity to produce rainbow trout next generations using selective breeding methodology and enhance the future selective breeding R&D capabilities of RIA 1. Similarly, the project planned to increase the capacities of RCCA and RIA-1 in fish

health diagnostics and advisory services and to increase the operational capacity of the Aquatic Animal Health Control in Lao Cai province. With respect to Pangasius, the project intended to increase the capacity to design broodstock/ base population breeding and enhance the future R&D capabilities of RIA-1 and other cooperating partners to improve Pangasius via selective breeding.

Similar to the first project phase, the capacity building activities of RIA-1 staff took place both in Vietnam and in Finland. On-the-job training, short-term training courses and workshops and seminars in Vietnam remained among the key activities.

### ***Finnish inputs to cold water aquaculture development in 2016-2017***

Two other interventions have recently contributed to the development of the cold water aquaculture sector in Vietnam and in the business relations between Finland and Vietnam.

In 2016 a Short-Term Consultancy for Business Identification Mission in the Fisheries sector was conducted. This was a broader study assessing the potential of companies from Finland to supply technologies, equipment – such as Recirculating Aquaculture System (RAS), fish feed, fish disease diagnostics to Vietnamese markets. The study focused on business-to-business partnerships and supported the implementation of the Transition Strategy.

In 2017, RIA-1 received an FLC grant (EUR 114,605) from the Embassy of Finland for the project *"Enhancing cold water aquaculture sustainability via transfer of Finnish water saving and environmentally friendly technologies"*. The project aimed to ensure that the newly installed RAS system in the Research Centre for Cold Aquaculture Species is technically completed and viable, to provide technology and knowledge transfer to private farmers in water saving and RAS technologies and to establish relationships with Finnish companies providing RAS technology, design and consultancy. The project was completed in December 2017.

## **2.2.3 Developing and Implementing Climate Change Adaptation Measures at Local Level in Vietnam**

### ***VIETADAPT I (2011-2013)***

The objective of VIETADAPT I, which was implemented between October 2011 and December 2013 by Geological Survey of Finland, was to contribute to the Vietnam National Target Program to respond to Climate Change (2008), the National Climate Change Strategy (2011) and the National Action Plan on Climate Change for 2012 – 2010 (2012) by developing climate change adaptation measures at local level in close cooperation with local stakeholders. The budget from GOF was EUR 499,883.

GTK subcontracted Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE) for the project and the Vietnamese partner organisations were the Vietnam Institute of Meteorology, Hydrology and Environment (IMHEN), on behalf of the Sub-Institute of HydroMeteorology and Environment of South Vietnam (SIHYMETE), and the Vietnamese Centre for Water Resources Planning and Investigation (CWRPI), coordinated the activities in Vietnam. These organisations operate under the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE).

VIETADAPT I concentrated its activities on two case study provinces: Ba Ria – Vung Tau and Thanh Hoa. The activities focused on:

- ❑ evaluating climate change and socio-economic development scenarios;
- ❑ assessing human development and climate change impacts on the environment;
- ❑ identifying, modelling and mapping vulnerabilities and risks on surface and groundwater resources; and
- ❑ supporting the development of local climate change adaptation strategies by interdisciplinary science –stakeholder communication.

### **VIETADAPT II (2015-2016)**

The overall objective of VIETADAPT II was to contribute to the implementation of the Vietnamese National Target Programme to Respond to Climate Change and the Strategy on Climate Change by identifying feasible adaptation measures to natural hazard and climate change impacts on groundwater and surface water (environment) resources at the local level. The project was implemented between 01/01/2015 and 31/12/2016 with a total budget of EUR 499,990.

The Sub-Institute of Hydro-Meteorology and Climate Change (SIHYMECC) and the Centre for Water Resources Warning and Forecast (CEWAFO) coordinated all local activities in Vietnam.

VIETADAPT II concentrated its activities in two case study areas, the Tan Thanh district in the Ba Ria – Vung Tau province in Southern Vietnam and the Hau Loc district in the Thanh Hoa province in Northern Vietnam. The activities focused on:

- ❑ improving knowledge on local hydrogeological, hydrological and environmental conditions;
- ❑ raising awareness of local vulnerabilities to natural hazards and climate change impacts;
- ❑ understanding local socio-economic and climate change impacts on the living environment and water resources;
- ❑ developing local risk assessment and climate change adaptation measures together with local experts, stakeholders and decision makers;
- ❑ understanding local policies and functions on water resources, natural hazards and climate change impact management;
- ❑ enhancing the development of no-regret adaptation measures; and
- ❑ training of local experts and stakeholders.

### 3. FINDINGS

#### 3.1 Relevance to Capacity Needs of Partner Institutions

##### 3.1.1. Relevance

Typically, the ICI projects were initiated through personal contacts created earlier between professional individuals in the relevant Vietnamese and Finnish institutions. This information was not found in project documentation but was discovered in interviews. Collaboration was then outlined taking into account the needs of the Vietnamese institutions and the support capacity of their Finnish counterparts. As the capacities and limitations of the institutions were known at the time of the formulation of the projects, the projects' design and objectives responded well to the needs and expectations.

PROMOSERV contributed to enhancement of the capacities of NHMS in specific thematic areas that were selected through an internal assessment workshop. The thematic areas the project focussed on were: automatic weather stations, weather radars, real-time data quality control, central data management systems, integration of different meteorological data sources, lightning detection, storm cell tracking and weather forecasting. During the evaluation NHMS confirmed that these topics corresponded to their internal priority needs.

The workshops, training courses and visits to Finland contributed to increasing the knowledge in meteorological technology, which is being used along the implementation of a current *Vietnam Managing Natural Hazard Project (VN-HAZ)* funded by the World Bank.

A high satisfaction level with the results was observed in NHMS. However, NHMS reported that other thematic areas of high interest, such as meteorological laboratory for calibration of weather sensors, hydrological modelling and flash flood forecasting, could not be included in the project scope due different reasons – mainly because of budget limitations and because some thematic areas are not dealt by FMI (in Finland).

Similarly, RIA-1 was highly satisfied with the support received from Luke and Evira. It is evident that each phase of Finnish support has built on the achievements of the previous cooperation phase. The formulation of phases has been based on practical and pragmatic needs assessments conducted jointly by RIA-1, Luke and Evira. This has resulted in realistic project designs with a focus on the improvement of technical and scientific capacities of RCCA and RIA-1.

As such, RIA-1 has a wide mandate to carry out scientific and technological research in aquaculture. Its functions include scientific research, technology transfer (including domestication of new imported species) and education and training, such as provision of training for technical staff and fisheries extension staff. Consultancy and services for aquaculture, fisheries and fish processing as well as conservation and development of fishery resources in Northern provinces of Vietnam are within the mandate of RIA-1. The support from Finland has particularly contributed to the building of the facilities of the

Research Centre in Cold Water Aquaculture Species (RCCA) and the capacities of its staff in Sapa in Lao Cai province.

Among the issues covered were cold water aquaculture, post harvesting issues and food safety technologies, trout and white fish reproduction, genetic breeding, environmental technologies, risk assessment and fish health (disease prevention, diagnostics and treatment). These have all been relevant to RIA-1. According to RIA-1 records, 13 staff members participated in one or more short course in Finland. At present four of them work at RIA-1. While the turnover has been quite high at the senior staff level, most of them remain in the aquaculture sector (one in MARD, one in RIA-3, one in academia and three in the private sector). RCCA has 20 trained staff members and they have remained at the Centre. The seminars organised had quite large attendance beyond project partner staff, e.g., the 2016 Workshop on RAS and selective breeding had 79 participants and the second "*Fish Health Day*" in 2015 had 47 participants: in addition to fish farmers from Sapa region also attendants from other provinces as well as staff from regional and local animal health authorities participated.

CEWAFO is a sub-ordinate centre of the National Centre for Water Resources Planning and Investigation (NAWAPI) under MONRE. CEWAFO is assigned to:

- ❑ propose and realise water resources planning: water allocation; water resources protection, prevention and remediation of harmful effects caused by water at national scale, inter-provincial river basins and inter-provincial waters;
- ❑ perform basic investigation and protection of water resources, investigate and assess water resources, assess climate change impacts on water resources and the harm caused by waters, carry out inventory of water resources and surveys on the status of water resources exploitation, use and discharge of wastewater into water sources, assess the self-protection ability and build up corridors to protect the waters;
- ❑ construct, manage and operate the national water resources monitoring and observation system, give warnings and forecast on water resources, establish the database on water resources planning and investigation, exchange and provide water resources data and information;
- ❑ carry out research and apply technologies aiming at water saving and using efficiency; rehabilitation of contaminated, degraded and depleted waters; carry out research on geothermal hot, mineral water and investigate geo-engineering and geologic hazards relating to water; and
- ❑ provide services relating to water resources and environment, geo-engineering, geology and minerals, mapping and other related services.

SIHYMECC is a sub-institute of IMHEN under MONRE, carrying out IMHEN's activities in the south. These include:

- ❑ climate and meteorological research;
- ❑ hydrology and surface water resources studies;

- ❑ oceanography;
- ❑ environmental research; and
- ❑ application of new technologies and relevant research on climate studies.

Based on documentary evidence and information received through interviews, the capacity building by VIETADAPT has been highly relevant to the Vietnamese partners – responding to the identified needs in their key responsibility areas, such as water resources protection, assessment of climate change impacts on water resources, exchange and provision of water resources data and information and application of new technologies and relevant research on climate studies. In particular, VIETADAPT focused on capacity building in identifying and introducing feasible adaptation measures to national hazards and impacts of climate change, and building trust between scientists and local decision makers and stakeholders.

In VIETADAPT I SYKE was subcontracted by GTK but during the implementation SYKE was not able to provide the expected expertise, due to changes in staff and slow replacement/recruitment procedures. This was a (minor) disappointment to SIHYMECC, which was the responsible Vietnamese partner for surface waters in the project.

The mandates of the Vietnamese and Finnish counterparts are, naturally, different. In order to better respond to the needs and expectations of the Vietnamese institutions, Finnish institutions have joined their forces in a couple of cases: Luke/RKTL with Evira for the support to RIA-1 and GTK (in the beginning) with SYKE who brought in hydrological expertise. The mandate of NHMS extends beyond meteorology to hydrology, which in Finland is the area of expertise of SYKE – not FMI. During the field mission NHMS expressed their wish to collaborate in the area of hydrology as well.

Overall, the grading for relevance is very good:

Grading for relevance		All projects
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### 3.1.2. Coherence

Vietnam's 2011 – 2020 Socio-Economic Development Strategy (SEDS) – a 10-year strategy – highlights the need for structural reforms, environmental sustainability, social equity and emerging issues of macroeconomic stability. It defines three breakthrough areas:

- ❑ promoting skills development, particularly for modern industry and innovation;
- ❑ improving market institutions; and
- ❑ further infrastructure development.



The ICI projects were in compliance with the breakthrough areas:

- ❑ promoting skills development (all);
- ❑ improving market institutions (RIA-1/RKTL to some extent);
- ❑ further infrastructure development (PROMOSERV).

PROMOSERV was developed within the framework of the Vietnam Meteorological and Hydrological Development Strategy up to 2020 and the National Action Plan to Respond to Climate Change for the period of 2011 – 2015. Hence, it is coherent with main relevant Vietnamese policies. The participation of PROMOSERV at World Bank panel of donors and the interest to look for complementarity with VN-HAZ project was very positive.

The support to RIA-1 has contributed to the implementation of the National Strategy to Develop Aquaculture of Vietnam up to 2020 and to the Master Plan of Fisheries Development of Vietnam to 2020 and Vision to 2030. Further, with the support from the ICI project, Research Institute in Aquaculture No. 1 was able to contribute to positive changes in the operating environment by providing inputs to the drafting of the Overall Plan of Cold Water Fisheries Development to 2020 and Vision to 2030 (MARD 2015).

As mentioned in Section 2.2.3 above, VIETADAPT was designed to contribute to implementation of the key Vietnamese programme, strategy and action plan on climate change and its focus was, therefore, well in line with the Vietnamese priorities.

The relations between Finland and Vietnam were defined in the *Country Strategy for Development Cooperation with Vietnam 2013 – 2016*, which was the guiding document during the second phases of the three ICI projects. The ICI projects were in full compliance with the strategy, which stated that as a small development partner, Finland can support Vietnam in reaching its overall development goal by concentrating its efforts on selected niche sectors where it can produce added value and complementarity through its long experience of development cooperation with Vietnam and its acknowledged know-how. According to the Embassy of Finland in Hanoi, ICI projects have provided additional goodwill for bilateral dialogue between the two governments. For example, FMI and Vaisala have frequently been mentioned in dialogues between Vietnamese authorities and the Embassy. Specifically, the projects have supported:

- ❑ open access to information and knowledge (for instance, PROMOSERV raised awareness of the benefit of meteorological services to the Vietnamese society and economy and VIETADAPT provided a platform to discuss and share information between scientists and stakeholders);
- ❑ enhanced green economy, improved livelihoods (RIA1-RKTL); and
- ❑ increased environmentally and economically sustainable income generation (RIA1-RKTL); and improved implementation of climate sustainability initiatives (for example, PROMOSERV improved early warning services, thereby reducing human and economic losses and

contributing to sustainable development, and raised awareness on climate change adaptation measures; and a main focus of VIETADAPT was sustainable use of groundwater resources under changing climatic conditions.

The grading for coherence is good:

Grading for coherence		All projects
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### 3.2 Effectiveness

Under effectiveness, the evaluation was expected to assess the extent to which the projects have promoted human rights, gender equality, reduction of inequalities and climate sustainability.

Based on review of documentation and interviews, all three projects have, to some extent, promoted the cross-cutting objectives of Finnish development policies – especially bearing in mind the limited resources available for project preparation, limited experience of the Finnish institutions in development cooperation and the sharp focus of the projects on professional twinning:

- ❑ Human rights and reduction of inequalities have mainly been promoted in the support to RIA-1.
- ❑ Gender equality has been particularly addressed in PROMOSERV and the support to RIA-1. All projects have aimed at balanced gender participation in training.
- ❑ All projects have acknowledged climate sustainability, which is the focus of VIETADAPT. Adaptation to climate change impacts has been a particular concern in the support to RIA-1. VIETADAPT II introduced adaptation options for sustainable water management at local level.

Although PROMOSERV was quite technical in nature, it addressed gender equality by the organisation of a gender equality workshop. The interviews confirmed that the reported results of this workshop were very positive and favoured the coordination with other similar initiatives and contacts with existing women organisation bodies.

Additional social benefits can be expected later; as a result of the modernisation of the meteorological infrastructure NHMS will be able to generate more accurate weather forecasts and disseminate timely early warnings to the entire population and local communities.

Under the support to RIA-1 rainbow trout farming has opened up new livelihood opportunities for ethnic minorities, particularly Red Dao and H'Mong, thus contributing to human rights and reduction of

inequalities. This new kind of livelihood has replaced less productive sources of income, such as rice farming. Similarly, gender equality has been addressed, as rainbow trout farming has enabled income generating opportunities for women, too. RIA-1 in general is a gender-balanced work place (44% of the staff and 50% of the directorate are women) and RCCA is an equal opportunity employer, offering opportunities to men and women representing different ethnicities (Red Dao, H'Mong, Thai, Lu, Tay, Nung and Kinh) from five provinces.

VIETADAPT aimed to contribute to reduction of inequality by securing the availability of fresh water to all people living in the coastal case study areas and by raising awareness and preparedness of local people to climate change impacts, thus reducing the vulnerabilities of local communities. According to reports, groundwater resources of the case study areas were studied in the field, additional data gathered, updated climate data studied, and several models were run to simulate the groundwater flows in aquifers of the case study areas. The generated groundwater flow models predicted the future status of aquifers in changing climatic conditions and with different pumping rates. As a result, adaptation options were made prepared. When it came evident that climate change is not the major threat to freshwater resources and the environment, recommendations were given beyond climate change adaptation and water resources management, seeking potential for implementation of climate change adaptation measures within the following 10-year land use development plans, preferably also at national level, directly supporting the implementation of climate change policies and natural resource protection efforts at local level.

In Tan Thanh district, visited during the field mission, the actual achievement in this regard was insignificant. Out of the seven recommended measures for climate change adaptation three targeted directly at surface or groundwater resources: (i) monitoring wastewater discharge into river in industrial areas; (ii) managed aquifer recharge; and (iii) groundwater protection by pumping well relocation. Based on the information received in the field, only the first of the above recommendations has been implemented and only at the district level. This suggests that the main benefits and impacts were limited to increased capacities of the participating institutions (SIHYMECC and CEWAFO), whereas the expected motivation and encouragement of local stakeholders has not been effective – at least in short term.

VIETADAPT encouraged involvement and training of young female experts. Gender equality awareness was also one major part of the questionnaire surveys conducted by the Vietnamese project partners in the case study districts.

Adaptation to climate change impacts has been a particular focus of support to RIA-1, especially in the second ICI project. This has been relevant, considering that Vietnam is among the most vulnerable countries to effects and impacts of climate change, also in aquaculture, temperature and water availability being the main limiting factors for cold water aquaculture. The project addressed climate sustainability through studying how the temperature tolerance of rainbow trout could be improved to further develop selective breeding possibilities. The installation of the RAS system at RCCA increased its

farming and climate change adaptation capacity. The work in Pangasius breeding strengthened the capacities of RIA-1 and its National Broodstock Centre for Freshwater Aquaculture in Hai Duong. The salinity tests revealed that through selective breeding Pangasius populations that can grow in increasingly saline waters can be produced.

By focusing on developing feasible local climate change adaptation measures VIETADAPT directly contributed to climate sustainability and its focus on freshwater promoted equitable and sustainable management of natural resources and environmental protection.

The grading for effectiveness is with problems:

Grading for effectiveness		Understandably, twinning projects cannot comprehensively promote all cross-cutting objectives; commitment of some key stakeholders was not strong.
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### 3.3 Impact

#### 3.3.1. Impacts on Partner Institutions

Overall, the projects have increased institutional capacities of the Vietnamese partner institutions through improved knowledge and skills, use of advanced software tools and state of the art equipment. The intended impacts have been mostly achieved whereas negative impacts have not been observed. All three projects have substantially increased institutional capacities of the recipient institutions: knowledge, skills (use of advanced software tools) and equipment. In addition, the English skills of the staff were improved because the baseline level was not as good as expected in all cases.

PROMOSERV II, which built on PROMOSERV I, produced most of the intended results and the project purpose was achieved in most of the areas. Additionally, PROMOSERV paved the way for a concessional credit project of Vaisala, with FMI as a sub-contractor, to provide Finnish equipment to NHMS. This project is described in Section 3.3.3 below.

A national survey was carried out in late 2017 with 1,041 questionnaires on the quality of the weather services of NHMS distributed to end-users located in flood-prone areas in 18 provinces. Having the survey carried out by NHMS after the project indicates ownership and interest in further development of the meteorological services and tailoring them to end-users based on their expectations. The survey confirmed that television is the most effective information channel in regard to warnings on disasters. However, almost 50% of the respondents were not satisfied with the quality of web products of NHMS, which should be improved. An indication of the high interest on weather services was high willingness to pay for better products.

Similarly, the two ICI projects that supported RIA-1 achieved most of their objectives (results and purpose). The most significant impacts of the RIA-1 projects are the setting up of an entirely new sub-sector of aquaculture (cold water fish farming) and the emergence of a new research centre (RCCA). The two ICI projects were successful in addressing the main capacity development needs of RIA-1 and RCCA in Sapa. RIA-1 and RCCA staff has the capacity to serve as a facilitator of the cold water aquaculture development in Vietnam. The staff is now capable to plan and carry out sustainable selective breeding programmes and pay attention to fish health issues and adaptation to climate change. RCCA has the facilities and staff to provide selective breeding services and selective diagnostics of fish diseases. With inputs from Finland two new aquaculture species – rainbow trout and whitefish – have been approved for production in Vietnam. Parallel to Finnish ICI-projects, RIA-1 has benefited from Russian support (since 2011) that has resulted in sturgeon being included in the list of approved aquaculture species in Vietnam. The fast rate of expansion of rainbow trout farming can be considered an unintended impact (see Section 3.3.2 below).

While the economic benefits are significant and accessible to women and ethnic minorities as well, the field visit to Sapa provided evidence that there are environmental and fish health risks that are not yet effectively checked. The profitability of trout farming is increasingly known around the area and families construct tanks without consulting any authorities. For example, about 30 farms along Ban Khoang watershed have no water treatment facilities. Farms draw water from the creek and discharge it untreated back to the creek which is a significant risk both from the water quality and fish health point of view.

Although the project addressed environmental concerns and risks associated with free-flow aquaculture from the outset it seems that more needs to be done in terms of fish health and environment. In the RIA-1/RKTL project environmental concerns were among the key result areas and the intention was to increase awareness of RIA-1 of environmental risks and cost-beneficial measures to reduce environmental load and be capable to demonstrate these measures to the industry in Vietnam. The activities included, e.g., environmental training to RIA-1 staff in Finland and in Vietnam, and subsequent development and adoption of environmental technologies and best practices for the management of RCCA. An important function of RCCA is to serve as a demonstration site to the industry. Also, private fish farmers received training in enhanced environmental practices and technologies in a workshop in 2011. The practice of organizing workshops for sector stakeholders and fish farmers has continued by the RIA -1 / LUKE project. RCCA's capacity to provide fish health diagnostics and services was developed during the the second ICI project. The installation of the RAS system is also a significant step towards environmentally sound cold water aquaculture.

The fast expansion of the number of private rainbow trout farms in Lao Cai and other northern provinces (see Section 3.3.2) is a phenomenon that is not common in ICI projects. The projects were well designed to meet the capacity development needs of RIA-1 and RCCA but have not adequately addressed the capacity needs of fish farmers. However, the ICI modality itself is not geared to supporting livelihood development of poor communities or private fish farms. Thus, it is likely that increasing the

sustainability of fish farms in the region will require some additional measures directly targeting at the farms and the capacities of farm owners and provincial and district authorities working on animal health and environmental pollution issues.

VIETADAPT I and II targeted at climate change adaptation and, therefore, the successful capacity building was particularly focused on climate change adaptation. As reported and confirmed in interviews, trained young experts SIHYMECC and CEWAFO applied their new skills, e.g., conducted vulnerability assessments, carried out groundwater and surface water modelling, and presented the outcomes to local stakeholders. In addition to the intended capacity building of the partner institutions, VIETADAPT has also contributed to the improvement of their financial prospects. CEWAFO and SIHYMECC are able to make use of their improved human resources, software and equipment capacities in other provinces provided that they are paid by their customers. CEWAFO and SIHYMECC have already gained revenues from such assignments and demand is likely to continue. CEWAFO has applied vulnerability assessment and modelling in an assignment, e.g., when investigating and assessing availability of water for a private development of an industrial zone in Hung Yen province; and SIHYMECC has developed climate change action plans, e.g., in Can Tho.

VIETADAPT II introduced a highly participatory approach in identifying and assessment of risks and vulnerabilities in two case districts: Hau Loc in Thanh Hoa province and Tan Thanh in Ba Ria - Vung Tau province. The impact of piloting the approach in the two districts/provinces seems low – the districts have been testing fields of increased capacity rather than models for the replication of the approach and methodologies. The project is not well known at the provincial level among the sector departments, e.g., Department of Construction (DOC) and Department of Science and Technology (DOST). Moreover, the implementation of the recommended adaptation measures has been sluggish in Tan Thanh in spite of a number of workshops and seminars their representatives attended. At least in shorter term, the main impacts of the capacity building and the project are limited to the (successfully) increased capacities of the partner institutions. They will be able to apply and replicate the piloted approach also in other districts and provinces.

One additional impact of VIETADAPT is the number of presentations and scientific articles published in internationally recognised media, prepared jointly by Finnish and Vietnamese scientists who participated in VIETADAPT. This was especially achieved by creating contacts and communicating the project results with member countries and experts of the Coordinating Committee for Geoscience Programmes in East and Southeast Asia (CCOP).

### **3.3.2. Benefits to Local Population**

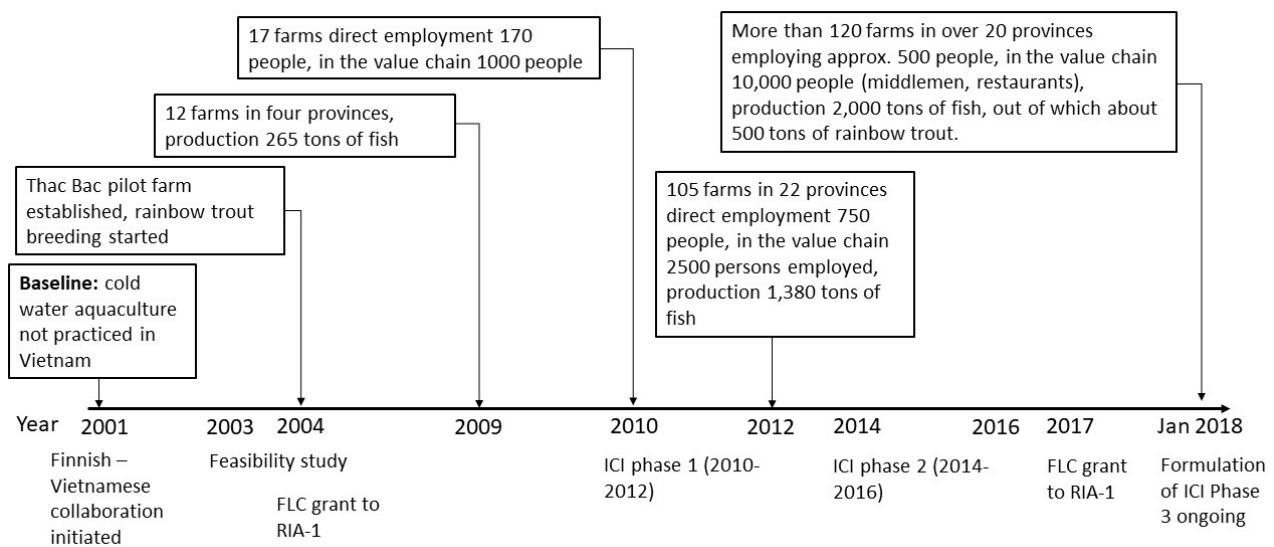
The impacts of the ICI projects on local population and authorities vary from case to case.

The introduced lightning detection technology has greatly increased the early warning capacities. Early warnings are important information. PROMOSERV included a threemonth trial period (by Vaisala);

thereafter NMHS extended the contract with Vaisala. The lightning detector network to be installed under the concessional credit project of Vaisala will further increase the quality and capacity of lightning detection. Hence, the middle and probably long term overall impact of the project will be very high.

In 2015 the RIA-1/LUKE project conducted a Quick Scan survey to assess the social and economic impacts of cold water aquaculture in Lao Cai. The fish farmers were satisfied with the economic impacts (employment opportunities, increased income, development of infrastructure and services). Similarly, positive social impacts were evident (improved opportunities for women, youth and ethnic minorities). Among the negative impacts, some conflicts among local people and disagreements on the use of water were mentioned. Also, some respondents were concerned that the growth of fish farming has been too fast and uncontrollable. However, few were concerned about the water quality.

The establishment of the pilot facility in Thac Bac was an unprecedented success; interest in cold water aquaculture has grown dramatically and production of rainbow trout (and subsequently also sturgeon, outgrowing of whitefish is about to start) has been expanded by private farmers at a tremendous speed, as shown in Figure 1 below).



**Figure 1: Timeline of Finnish support to cold water aquaculture in Vietnam and the development of the sector in the highlands of Vietnam (Source: ICI project reports for years 2001 -2012 and RIA-1 records for year 2018)**

According to records of RIA-1/RCCA, about 70% of the farms practicing cold water aquaculture are in Lao Cai province. There is another cold water aquaculture cluster around Dalat, Lam Dong province in Central Vietnam and then a number of scattered farms across Northern provinces.

The total water volume in fish tanks constructed in Sapa area alone has reached about 31,000 m<sup>3</sup> (RIA-1/RCCA records 2017 data). There are few companies with a volume of 2,000-3,000 m<sup>3</sup> but a vast majority are small-scale producers having just one or two tanks (volume 50-200 m<sup>3</sup>). One of the visited farms was run by a company with annual production of 40 tons of rainbow trout and a gross income of

1.5-2 billion VND (approximately EUR 60,000). The professionally run fish farm employs eight workers. At the other end of the spectrum is a family farm that the son had started to build in 2015 with his father joining in later. They have already constructed half a dozen tanks in their former rice fields. Their production in 2017 was two tons of rainbow trout with a gross income of 330 million VND (approximately EUR 12,000). Also, smaller, one tank farms were observed during the field visit.

VIETADAPT II introduced a highly participatory approach in prioritisation of risks associated with climate change and subsequent adaptation measures in the two case areas – Hau Loc district in Thanh Hoa province in Northern Vietnam and Tan Thanh district in Ba Ria – Vung Tau province in Southern Vietnam. The recommendations and measures were developed together with experts, stakeholders and decision makers – mainly chairpersons of Commune People’s Committees or their designated representatives. According to the Completion Report, this was very valuable while developing feasible recommendations and adaptation measures to meet the real needs of the case study areas. As reported and verified in Tan Thanh district and Ba Ria – Vung Tau province, the recommendations have only partly been implemented. Probably the main reason for limited commitment or resources for implementation was that – with the exception of DONRE – the key provincial level sector departments, such as DOC and the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD), and the department in charge of resource allocation – the Department of Planning and Investment (DPI) did not participate in the prioritisation in spite of invitations.

### **3.3.3. Partnerships, Commercial Cooperation and Political Relations**

The three ICI projects were initiated because Finnish expertise and know-how were already known in Vietnam among a group of specialists who had contacts with their Finnish counterparts. Through these projects the awareness of Finnish expertise and technical solutions expanded across relevant sectors.

The partnerships between Finnish institutions and their Vietnamese partners have been very good – far beyond purely professional relations. Collaboration has continued also in periods when projects or their phases have been completed and no decisions on further ICI cooperation have been made.

Although commercial orientation was not on the agenda when the evaluated ICI projects were designed, PROMOSERV and the support to RIA-1 have efficiently promoted relevant Finnish businesses in Vietnam.

PROMOSERV promoted successfully commerce and partnerships between Finland and Vietnam. Vaisala was known and had done business in Vietnam before the introduction of the ICI instrument. In fact, PROMOSERV was initiated through Vaisala whose Vietnamese contacts in NHMS expressed their interest in professional cooperation with FMI. PROMOSERV contributed to the expansion of Vaisala’s reputation and business in Vietnam, including the EUR 20 million contract with NHMS on establishment of a nation-wide meteorological infrastructure with the financing of the concessional credit. The contract



includes weather radar and lightning detection networks, spare parts, and a software toolkit for weather forecasting and training provided by FMI as a sub-contractor.

The study tours to Finland contributed to expansion of the knowledge of Finnish technologies among the Vietnamese trainees, albeit the short duration of the tours and intensive training limited the opportunities to learn more of the technologies that Finland can offer. High interest among NHMS and other institutions to collaborate with Finnish public agencies and/or Finnish private companies was confirmed in the field mission. NHMS is a public-profitable organisation that looks for external opportunities and commercial services to complement the national budget allocations.

Finland was the first country to support cold water aquaculture in Vietnam. Thus, the projects with RIA-1 have increased awareness of Finnish technologies and expertise in Vietnam and other countries because RIA-1 is heavily engaged in South-South collaboration. For example, RIA-1 has provided expertise to partners in Venezuela and Cuba and frequently hosts international study tours. RIA-1 expressed the evaluation team their interest in initiating cold water aquaculture development in other South-East Asian counties.

Early on the Finnish-Vietnamese cooperation in aquaculture incorporated Finnish companies that provided both technical advice and equipment and other inputs (e.g. fish eggs and fish feed) from Finland – activities that continue still today.

The initial construction of RCCA was based on Finnish design. When it started its operation, rainbow trout eggs and feed were imported from Finland. The latest development was the design and installation of RAS, which was designed in Finland and incorporated technical components and software bought from Finnish companies. The FLC project in 2017 financed some additional components to the system and a study tour to Finland for Vietnamese fish farming companies.

RAS technology is not a new technology as such because RAS units are used in shrimp farming and marine hatcheries in Vietnam. However, the cold water aquaculture production requires its own techniques and solutions. It was well justified that both services (e.g. RAS design) and equipment were procured from Finland.

Some rainbow trout farmers import fertilised/eye spots trout eggs from Finland. At present a market exists for fish feed from Finland. Competition is there, eye spots eggs or fingerlings are also imported from USA and China. Among others, Vietnamese and Dutch companies compete in the fish feed market.

VIETADAPT was the most conventional twinning project in the sense that it did not include any procurement from Finland. They tried to promote Finnish business interests by introducing Finnish companies to Vietnamese trainees and sharing information on potential business opportunities in Vietnam to Finnish companies.

The role of these ICI projects in facilitating the internationalization of the ICI implementers and the extent to which new financing or commercial opportunities for the Finnish institutions differ from institution to institution because of their strategic priorities.

FMI has participated in development cooperation since 1970s, and since 2002 internationalization and development cooperation have essentially been part of FMI's strategy. ICI projects have helped FMI to be involved in international projects, e.g., ten projects financed by the World Bank in different countries. In Vietnam, however, FMI has not yet been successful in international bidding. As mentioned above in Section 3.3.2., PROMOSERV resulted in a contract of EUR 20 million between NHMS and Vaisala with the financing of a Finnish concessional credit.

In the case of Evira, their strategy 2014-2020 highlights the role of international cooperation in securing food safety. Evira is part of European Union networks and global cooperation bodies within the sector. ICI cooperation complements these activities. However, the strategy does not incorporate expansion of Evira's activities to foreign countries.

Luke has recognised internationality as a cornerstone of its activities with regard to both quality and impact of research. Therefore, internationality is an elementary part of Luke's new strategy (in process in April 2018). Luke is a unique combination of scientific expertise in the fields of terrestrial and aquatic bioproduction and processes, and the value chains of the products and services related to processes in forestry, agriculture and horticulture, aquaculture and in natural aquatic and terrestrial environments. The ICI-projects in Vietnam have helped Luke to strengthen the applicability of its aquacultural expertise internationally. Currently, Luke is negotiating several international agreements of potential fisheries sector development projects, where the Vietnam case is an important reference for Luke. South-East Asia is currently one of the strategic focus areas for Luke, where they aim to increase cooperation also in other bioeconomy sectors.

GTK's strategy of 2016 indicates demand to internationalize its operations. Successful bidding requires good international references and CVs. They have been developed for South-East Asia and tropical countries with the help of the VIETADAPT projects. GTK has started fruitful communication with Asian Development Bank (ADB), local partners and other international organizations and donors to develop and bid for water related and climate change adaptation projects in South-East Asia and beyond. So far, more concrete results remain to be seen. GTK also communicates with Finnish private sector to endorse its internationalization and develop joint bids.

Overall, ICI is considered a useful instrument for internationalization by the Finnish institutions but, so far, only FMI – together with Vaisala – have been successful to develop further business in Vietnam. Even Vaisala's project with FMI as a subcontractor is funded by Finnish concessional credit.

The grading for impact is assessed project by project:

Grading for impact: PROMOSERV		Good
Grading for impact: support to RIA-1		Very good (unexpectedly wide adoption of cold water fish farming in poor mountainous areas)
Grading for impact: VIETADAPT		With problems (weak commitment to and implementation of climate adaptation measures by authorities in spite of strong commitment and ownership of key partners)

### 3.4 Efficiency

#### 3.4.1. Use of Resources

By nature, the ICI projects are twinning projects with minor budgets for procurement of hardware. PROMOSERV and support to RIA-1 have included some hardware, whereas equipment provided by VIETADAPT is very limited: minor office equipment and field measurement equipment were purchased locally. The projects budgets had been reviewed and justified by the ICI Consultant and approved by MFA. The budgets were in the range of around EUR 500,000 – 600,000 (consisting only of GoF funding) per phase and were typical of ICI projects. Considering that all projects had achieved and, especially the support to RIA-1, exceeded their expected results, the resources have been well used for increased institutional capacity in Vietnam.

In general, the efficiency of PROMOSERV can be considered good; the human and financial resources were used and managed correctly. The expenditure of PROMOSERV I was 93.6% and PROMOSERV II 100% of the approved budget. The reason for the difference between the actual expenditure and the budget of PROMOSERV was the cancellation of the budget by MFA (about EUR 31,000), due to the expiration of MFA's budget resources originated from the GOF annual budget of 2009. The expiration of the allocation was observed by FMI in August 2012 and resulted in late revision and corresponding cuts of the project budget in 2012.

PROMOSERV, like other ICI projects, was mainly a capacity building twinning project. Therefore, the share of the meteorological equipment was very low (less than 5 %). The equipment was provided to demonstrate what kind of modern meteorological equipment is available.

The two projects supporting RIA-1 in cold water aquaculture have been successful in using the limited resources efficiently. The expenditure of the first project was 100% of the budget and the second 99.4 % of the approved budget. Fixed assets (investments) consisted 27% of Phase 1 expenditure and 17% of Phase 2 expenditure. Some reallocation of expenditure was approved, for example to organise more

workshops for the fish farmers.

VIETADAPT was implemented within its budget frame (VIETADAPT I 99.8%, VIETADAPT II 100%) with considerable reallocation of savings in travel and accommodation for the benefit of additional working time and minor procurement (computers data storage, software and field equipment) and minor outsourced services (translation, interpretation and design and printing of leaflets). Reallocation had been approved by the Board and they have obviously improved the cost-efficiency of the project.

The discussions during the visit to RCCA in Sapa suggest that the centre is mobilizing significant amounts of operating budget from its own operations. However, given that the ICI guidelines of MFA and subsequently the templates for ICI project documents and reports do not incorporate any information on financial contribution of Vietnamese partners, the matter of counterpart funding was not discussed with any of the partners during the evaluation.

#### **3.4.2. Lessons from Institutional Cooperation**

As already mentioned in Section 3.3.3., the partnerships between Finnish institutions and their Vietnamese partners have been very good – far beyond purely professional relations. Collaboration has continued also in periods when projects or their phases have been completed and no decisions on further ICI cooperation have been made.

Peer-to-peer is a very effective capacity development approach and this is the strength of the ICI instrument as well. Working side by side, finding solutions to problems together is a good basis for sustainable partnership as well. On the other hand, the twinning approach favours narrow bilateral participation, resulting in limited overall impacts and weaker ownership and participation of other public and private partners.

In the beginning – when the first phases were mobilised, there were some difficulties on both sides to understand and cope with the formalities and bureaucracy of the counterpart government. In addition, the hierarchy of the Vietnamese management culture, weak cooperation and collaboration between ministries and government bodies whose mandates are not very clear and often overlap, as well as weak institutional memory of Vietnamese organisations, especially when new persons take over key positions, have come as a surprise to Finnish institutions.

Rotation of desk officers in MFA and subsequent inconsistency in interpretation of the ICI Manual and in project supervision has created confusion among both Finnish and Vietnamese institutions.

As can be seen from the continuation of the mutual collaboration after PROMOSERV, e.g., in the concessional credit project, the relations and cooperation between FMI and NHMS (and Vaisala) have been very good. NHMS also confirmed a great interest to continue collaborating with Finnish agencies as

well as their availability to expand the areas of cooperation involving other Finnish and/or Vietnam institutions.

Collaboration between the Finnish ICI partners and RIA-1 has been smooth. The Finnish staff has been hard-working and very supportive to RIA-1 and RCCA staff. Working with foreigners has increased the confidence levels of the staff. Finnish experts have helped RIA-1 and RCCA to see the potential and opportunities for rainbow trout in the region. Working with a high value species has helped to bring up the identity of the RCCA.

Similarly, VIETADAPT has had a positive impact on the revenue generation of CEWAFO and SIHYMECC, as mentioned in Section 3.3.1. CEWAFO has also applied groundwater modelling in Red River and Mekong deltas. The careers and scientific recognition of the key persons who participated in the project have progressed. For instance, CEWAFO's current Director and Deputy Director took their office while participating in the project.

### **3.4.3. ICI Consultant**

The duties of the ICI consultant have been defined in the job description (2012) in Finnish language and in TOR in September 2016 in English. For the purpose of this evaluation, only the first (job description) is meaningful because the latter (TOR) did not become effective during these ICI projects. The main tasks of the ICI consultants were:

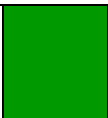
- ❑ general information about ICI instrument and its characteristics;
- ❑ provide support to Finnish organisations on project management, good practices on a responsive basis, case by case;
- ❑ supervision, ensuring the compliance of reporting with formal requirements;
- ❑ reporting to MFA on possible deficiencies in project implementation; and
- ❑ provide an opinion of proposed changes to project scope.

According to the job description, the ICI consultant's team consisted of three individuals and the consulting was limited to supporting Finnish institutions in Finland – without any travel to Vietnam.

The support of the ICI consultant was very valuable in the formulation of the first projects and at the beginning of their implementation when the Finnish institutions were less familiar with development cooperation in general and MFA's relevant policies and requirements in particular. Yet, the formulation of the indicators of results, e.g., of VIETADAPT I and both RIA-1 projects could have been better. Those indicators reflect activities/outputs rather than achievement of results. The ICI consultant's support was highly appreciated by the Finnish ICI institutions. After the initial stage the role of the ICI consultant focused more on supervision and quality assurance in project formulation and reporting. Hence the evaluation considers that the ICI consultant did not have significant impact on the achievement of the defined results.

The ICI institutions have been satisfied with the support received from the ICI consultant but see some problems with MFA behind. Due to staff rotation in MFA, the role of the ICI consultant versus MFA changed over time; some desk officers truly outsourced (the defined duties) to the consultant, whereas others duplicated the work done by the consultant. Simultaneous reporting of all ICI projects keeps the ICI consultant very busy and, thus, less responsive at times. Another problem encountered at the project level is the schedule of invoicing set by MFA. Actually, all project activities to be invoiced in certain year have to be completed by the end of November.

Overall, the grading for efficiency is good:

Grading for efficiency		All projects
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### **3.5 Aid Effectiveness**

There is some institutional overlapping and weak coordination in the fields of hydro-meteorology, water resources monitoring and management and climate change, with negative impacts on inter-sectoral coordination, complementarity and aid effectiveness of numerous donor projects. On the other hand, there was some positive coordination with synergies between PROMOSERV and the support to RIA-1. Significantly, overlapping with the World Bank funded VN-HAZ has been avoided.

Unlike the other two ICI projects, RIA-1 and development of cold water aquaculture has received support from MFA Finland several times through multiple windows: starting with the feasibility study in 2004, the first FLC grant to set up Thac Bac centre that later became RCCA, two ICI projects, and the second FLC grant in 2017. This is a significant sustainability factor: although there have been gaps in the financing, the interest on results and progress has remained firm both in Finland and Vietnam. The particular strength of MFA as a financing partner in this case has been the flexible use of ICI and FLC instruments in parallel.

The introduction of the participatory assessments of hazards and prioritisation of adaptation measures by VIETADAPT is not well known among the representatives of the international community interviewed in Vietnam, e.g., Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ), the World Bank and the Institute for Social and Environmental Transition (ISET)-International Vietnam, as observed in the field mission, although results of the project have reportedly been widely disseminated.

The grading for aid effectiveness is varies between the projects, as seen below:

Grading for aid effectiveness: PROMOSERV and RIA-1		Overlapping with other projects avoided, coordination between other projects, including each other
Grading for aid effectiveness: VIETADAPT		Further need to publicise good achievements

### 3.6 Sustainability

All Vietnamese ICI partners expressed interest and availability to expand ICI collaboration to further enhance the impact of the projects. The Vietnamese ICI partners of the Finnish institutions are technical bodies under their respective ministries – directly as secondary level subordinate bodies. They demonstrate very high ownership and commitment to the common goals and continuation of the activities after the completion of the projects. While the partners demonstrate strong ownership, the ownership at the ministerial level and among other stakeholders is less evident – with partial exception of the aquaculture sector.

The above issue is echoed in the findings of Bäck et al (2014) who argued that ICI projects will be sustainable only if they are adequately embedded in the organisational set-up and management of partner organisations, with due consideration given to the political context. The reason to this was that it was not ascertained systematically enough in the design and implementation of the projects.

The capacity building and training activities of PROMOSERV were practical and positive but mainly oriented to the use of technological tools, data processing software, equipment installation, operation and preventive maintenance. Although these activities are important and necessary they alone do not ensure the sustainability. A small spare part package was supplied with the equipment purchased under PROMOSERV and Vaisala has arranged after sales services in Vietnam that is expected to ensure the sustainability of the equipment over its technical lifetime if well maintained. Overall the average feasible life time of most electronic equipment is only some years in the sector where technical development is fast. Other supplies were limited to demo versions of software. For longer term sustainability a meteorological calibration laboratory would be required.

RIA-1 has strong ownership on the methods and approaches. In the field mission it became evident that the staff and management of RIA-1 feel that they have been on the driver's seat. The cooperation was started based on Vietnamese interests and priorities expressed by MARD in 2001. The support from Finnish partners has helped them to set up a new centre and build up RIA-1's capacity to the extent that

it has been sharing fish breeding expertise within MARD, especially with RIA-2 and RIA-3. RIA-1 also provides training to extension staff working under MARD.

The capacity building of RIA-1 is sustainable because with a few exceptions the trained experts continue to work in RIA-1. RIA-1 has demonstrated its capacity of successful introduction of new commercially viable aquaculture species and provision of extension services in Lao Cai (team of four extension officers). RCCA operates on solid foundation, relying partly on resource mobilisation through its commercial activities (selling fingerlings, operating a restaurant). Service charges on laboratory and diagnostic services to the fish farmers could be considered in the long run.

While the evaluation considers the results sustainable at the level of RIA-1 and RCCA, more needs to be done with securing the sustainability of the cold water aquaculture as it is now practiced in about 120 farms in Vietnam. Farmers in Lao Cai are in a privileged position because RCCA with its laboratory facilities and extension staff is available with the knowledge needed to help farmers to solve any problems related to production, fish health or environment, such as limited water resources or reusing water from the same stream. An issue that warrants further look is how and from which institutions the extension and veterinary services for farmers engaged in rainbow trout (or sturgeon and white fish) production in other twenty or so provinces are organised. This is an issue for the project partners (RIA-1, Evira and Luke) to bear in mind in the design of the next ICI project. Provision of services in fish health diagnostics is a useful example, given that this is the topic where the planned results were not fully achieved in the second phase. This is particularly important in the Vietnamese context with customers preferring to eat fresh and raw rainbow trout as sashimi. Therefore, the quality of raw fish, specially the existence of zoonotic metacercariae and the residues of antibiotics or harmful chemicals is a concern.

CEWAFO and SIHYMECC have strong ownership in the methods, models and approaches introduced under VIETADAPT. On the other hand, the ownership at province (Ba Ria – Vung Tau) and district (Tan Thanh) is weaker. As reported in Section 3.2, the recommended measures for climate change adaptation have only partially been implemented at the district level by January 2018. Considering quite substantial efforts and resource allocation to the introduction at the district level, the effectiveness is limited as – based on interviews in Vietnam – the project is not well known at the provincial level and among relevant institutions in Hanoi, including IMHEN, the parent organisation of SIHYMECC. Directors of IMHEN had participated in workshops and seminars organized by VIETADAPT but, as rather common in Vietnam, information is not properly spread within the institutions. MONRE (the Ministry level) was unwilling to meet the evaluation team.

Capacity building of VIETADAPT is also sustainable; with two exceptions<sup>2</sup> the trained experts continue to work in partner organisations, which have adequate resources to maintain assets and software

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<sup>2</sup> A young female SIHYMECC scientist has left due to a personal family matter and a young male CEWAFO scientist has left to continue his studies.



provided. The impact of pilots on stakeholders other than the direct ICI partners seems very limited and unsustainable. It is challenging to ensure that information and knowledge are shared within the stakeholder organisations.

The grading for sustainability is with problems:

Grading for sustainability		The ownership of twinning partners was strong – of ministerial level and other stakeholders lower. Cold water aquaculture has problems with fish health and environment.
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#### **4. CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS**

The key conclusions and lessons drawn from the above findings are summarised below.

Taking into account the simplified project cycle management of the ICI projects, including straightforward preparation without appraisal, their limited budgets, limited experience of the Finnish institutions in development cooperation and the twinning nature of the projects, the projects have achieved very good results – most of the expected results as well as some impressive unintended results, especially by RIA-1 in developing and extending a new livelihood of cold water aquaculture.

Yet, the impacts could have been substantially stronger. The relations between the Finnish institutions and their Vietnamese partner institutions have been really good, much deeper and friendly than what would be necessary for purely professional twinning. These relations have been maintained after the end of the projects even when potential financing of the continuation of the collaboration was not available because of the budget cuts of MFA. The ownership among the partners has been very strong. The problem is that the Vietnamese partners are technical bodies at the first or second level under their parent ministries. The partners have not paid adequate attention to proper stakeholder assessments, having thus missed out some potential linkages to other Vietnamese government and private institutions. The knowledge of the good work and results achieved has not been well adopted and internalised at higher levels – not to speak of other relevant sectors. Also, the interest and ownership at higher levels is rather weak. A lesson learnt is that more work should have been allocated at the preparatory phase to the involvement and creation of ownership among the stakeholders responsible for operationalisation, implementation and scaling up of the models and approaches introduced in ICI collaboration.

There is a high number of Vietnamese and international stakeholders working on climate change in Vietnam. They include government bodies, International Financial Institutions (IFIs), organisations under the United Nations (UN), non-governmental organisations (NGOs), etc. Based on the findings in the field these actors know little about what others do in the sector – with the exception of the Mekong Delta

where a climate change is on the top of the coordination of the donor activities. There is a risk of overlapping activities and repetition of efforts. It was brought to the attention of the evaluation team after the field mission that there is an informal group called *GG-CC projects* (for green growth and climate change) meeting on a monthly basis in Vietnam (Hanoi). This group is chaired by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Even this informal group is not very widely known by relevant stakeholders but should be at least informed about the ICI and other Finnish efforts related to climate change (and green growth).

So far, no negative impacts of ICI projects have been observed, and in most cases, they are not likely. The only project with a possibility of risks emerging is the support to RIA-1. Although the project has addressed environmental concerns and risks associated with free-flow aquaculture from the outset, it seems that more needs to be done in terms of fish health and environment. These issues and how best to deal with them could be addressed as part of the formulation of the new ICI project in 2018. While the economic benefits are significant and accessible to women and ethnic minorities as well, the visit to private fish farms in Sapa area provided evidence that environmental and fish health risks remain. There is also a risk that products imported from Finland (feed, RAS technology) could be replaced by cheaper low-cost options – even fake products labelled as genuine products. (There is plenty of such know-how in Vietnam and in the neighbouring China.)

The scope of the ICI projects was rather narrow, focusing on the capacity building of technical institutions through twinning and the projects were prepared with limited resources. It cannot be expected, therefore, that they would have promoted all cross-cutting objectives of Finnish development cooperation. It is positive that all of them have promoted these objectives to some extent:

- ❑ Human rights and reduction of inequalities have mainly been promoted in the support to RIA-1.
- ❑ Gender equality has been particularly addressed in PROMOSERV and the support to RIA-1. All projects have aimed at balanced gender participation in training.
- ❑ All projects have acknowledged climate sustainability, which was the focus of VIETADAPT and PROMOSERV. Adaptation to climate change impacts has been a particular concern in the support to RIA-1.

Similarly, the ICI projects have also supported Finland's *Country Strategy for Development Cooperation with Vietnam 2013 – 2016*. They have provided additional goodwill for bilateral dialogue between the two governments and supported, particularly:

- ❑ open access to information and knowledge (PROMOSERV and VIETADAPT);
- ❑ enhanced green economy, improved livelihoods (RIA1-RKTL); and
- ❑ increased environmentally and economically sustainable income generation and improved implementation of climate sustainability initiatives (all three).

The projects were designed to respond to priority needs of the Vietnamese partner organisations and this explains why they were also in high compliance with the breakthrough areas of SEDS 2011 – 2015:

- ❑ promoting skills development (all);
- ❑ improving market institutions (RIA-1/RKTL to some extent);
- ❑ further infrastructure development (PROMOSERV).

The impact of the ICI consultant in the beginning – at the time of the design and mobilisation of the first projects/phases was very important and highly appreciated by the Finnish ICI institutions. Over time, when these institutions became more familiar with their partners, MFA's requirements, and local conditions and bureaucracy, the role of the ICI consultant became more like an extended arm of MFA in project administration – providing support on a responsive basis to the institutions on the one hand and assuring the quality (compliance with the minimum requirements set out in the ICI Manual) as a pre-reviewer of MFA on the other. The duties of the ICI consultant, defined in the job description and TOR are limited to this kind of support to the Finnish institutions in Finland. There are no requirements for the ICI consultant's country-specific expertise and the consultant can travel to partner countries only if specifically requested by MFA. So far there have not been country visits. More country-specific support to Finnish institutions could have helped to avoid minor problems encountered at the beginning of the projects and improved the stakeholder assessment and subsequent enhancement of impacts.

The main objective of the projects – capacity building of human resources – has proved to be sustainable. The knowledge and skills are repeatedly used and benefitted from; the trained individuals have remained in their organisations or at least in the sector (aquaculture) with few exceptions, and some of them have already been promoted to more senior positions. Minor equipment and software licences are maintained and in use. Only PROMOSERV provided samples of more advanced meteorological equipment manufactured by Vaisala. Its technically and economically feasible life time may be only some years (due to rapid technical progress and possible lack of maintenance) but it can be expected that Vaisala's after sale services and proper maintenance will contribute to their operation through the technically feasible life time, e.g. more than ten years for data loggers.

Developing business in Vietnam is a long process. The Finnish ICI institutions have made themselves widely known in Vietnam and also in the region in their respective sectors. They consider that the best benefits from ICI cooperation to them are references for further cooperation, e.g. in projects financed by IFIs, and familiarisation with the local physical, institutional and business environment. So far, the only concrete spin-off is the concessional credit project of Vaisala with FMI as a sub-contractor.

Although commercial orientation was not on the agenda when the evaluated ICI projects were designed, PROMOSERV and the support to RIA-1 have efficiently promoted relevant Finnish business in Vietnam: meteorological equipment, RAS technology, fish feed, etc. Also study tours to Finland contributed to expansion of the knowledge of Finnish technologies among the Vietnamese trainees.

## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

ICI has been designed to be a relatively simple and straightforward financing instrument for bilateral cooperation between government institutions. As such, it has been quite successfully applied in the ICI projects in Vietnam. However, with minor additional inputs the results and impacts could be strengthened.

- ❑ More resources are recommended to be allocated to the preparation and mobilisation of new cooperation between Finnish and partner institutions. The institutions might need more time and resources and, especially, additional country-specific support and advice should be made available to them, for example by the Embassy of Finland and/or eligible consultancy.
- ❑ In order to create stronger ownership among at higher level (parent) organisations and among other stakeholders – public and private – they should be involved in the projects from the very beginning. Senior officials/managers or their representatives of organisations that are important for the implementation/replication/upscaling of project outputs should be invited in advisory committees/boards. The identification of the key players would require more thorough stakeholder analyses at the preparatory phase and, probably, more country-specific support. (Experience suggests that even the Vietnamese partner institutions are not necessarily capable of identifying all relevant stakeholders due to their concentration on technical/scientific aspects and due to the barriers between different organisations in Vietnam.)
- ❑ In order to avoid overlapping, to share experiences and to promote awareness of Finnish know-how and technology, Finland (Embassy, Business Finland and ICI institutions) should actively participate in all relevant forums, such as in the informal group for *GG-CC projects*.
- ❑ In addition to stakeholder analysis, more inputs are also needed to risk assessment. Some projects, like PROMOSERV, may not involve significant risks, whereas some, such as aquaculture, could be affected by serious risks that might destroy the good results afterwards. For example, possible health hazards associated with trouts (excessive remains of hormones or antibiotics) could ruin the new livelihood and result in immense losses and tragedies among fish farmers and others in the business.
- ❑ To enhance programmatic accountability and learning from experience, external evaluations could be more systematically incorporated. Cluster evaluations (several projects of many ICI actors in one country or several projects of one ICI actor evaluated at one go) could be considered as a cost-effective measure.

There has been very limited interaction between the ICI projects in Vietnam – apart from minor collaboration between PROMOSERV and the support to RIA-1 – and with other Finnish interventions. The ICI institutions have encountered similar problems, especially in the beginning. The concessional credit project of Vaisala as a spin-off of PROMOSERV is an example of effective use of MFA's different financing instruments.

- ❑ Sharing the experience and learning from each other could help to avoid problems and improve the performance. This could also apply to enhancing the promotion of the cross-cutting objectives, relevant Finnish bilateral strategies and commercial interests. It is recommended that the project managers/coordinators of ICI projects in Vietnam (or other countries as well) would meet each other, say four times a year. Also, the ICI consultant and the Desk Officer(s) from MFA and, through video links, also relevant embassies could attend these meetings. Similarly, it would be beneficial if the coordinators of ICI projects could receive copies of project documents and annual and final reports of other ICI interventions.
- ❑ In order to better operationalise Finland's transition strategy for Vietnam in 2016–2020, more innovative use of available financing instruments, e.g., the Public Sector Investment Facility (PIF) that replaced concessional credits and the NGO window, is recommended. Finnish institutions can promote Finnish know-how and technology under ICI projects but for that purpose they need to be requested/advised to do so, and ICI norms and manual should allow and facilitate this.
- ❑ In order to intensify the commercial aspects in compliance with the transition strategy, close collaboration with Business Finland and, e.g. Finnish Water Forum in projects related to water and environment is recommended. Relevant Finnish clusters should be informed of the project preparation and relevant business partners in Vietnam identified as a part of the stakeholder assessment.
- ❑ The promotion of Finnish commerce could be further strengthened by expanding the use of ICI instrument in tripartite or regional collaboration. There is indication that ICI projects have created interest among Vietnamese partners in expanding projects or similar cooperation to third countries where both Finnish and Vietnamese institutions may already have positive reputation.

The role of the ICI consultant is rather limited – especially after the initial preparation of the cooperation and the ICI consultant has adopted a low profile attitude – applying the minimum compliance criteria with the manual when reviewing and commenting reporting. The practice of organising regular training and workshops that is part of the TOR of the ICI Facilitation Consultant has not continued in recent years. Staff rotation in MFA and subsequent impacts on the continuity and consistency in project administration, supervision and instructions have confused ICI institutions and the ICI consultant.

- ❑ Communication between the ICI institutions, the ICI consultant and MFA should be intensified. The (quarterly) meetings between these parties proposed above should be organised. The role of the ICI consultant could be reconsidered to be more proactive and dynamic beyond the minimum level. Simultaneously, the ICI institutions should be encouraged to be more dynamic and ambitious, especially in responding to the challenges and possible shortcomings observed in project implementation.

The findings, conclusions and recommendations are in the matrix in Table 1.

**Table 1: Recommendations matrix**

Main findings	Conclusions	Recommendations
Relevance	Very good	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PROMOSERV enhanced the capacity of NHMS in their priority needs – automatic weather stations, weather radars, real-time data quality control, central data management systems, integration of different meteorological data sources, lightning detection, storm cell tracking and weather forecasting. During the evaluation NHMS confirmed that these topics corresponded to their internal priority needs.</li> <li>RIA-1 was highly satisfied with the support received from Luke and Evira, focused on cold water aquaculture, post harvesting issues and food safety technologies, trout and white fish reproduction, genetic breeding, environmental technologies, risk assessment and fish health – all relevant to RIA-1</li> <li>VIETADAPT responded to the identified needs in the key responsibility areas of CEWAFO and SIHYMECC – water resources protection, assessment of climate change impacts on water resources, exchange and provision of water resources data and information and application of new technologies and relevant research on climate studies.</li> </ul>	The ICI projects responded well to the needs of the partner institutions.	None
Coherence	Good	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PROMOSERV was developed within the framework of the Vietnam Meteorological and Hydrological Development Strategy and the National Action Plan to Respond to Climate Change, thus being coherent with main relevant Vietnamese policies.</li> <li>Support to RIA-1 contributed to the implementation of the National Strategy to Develop Aquaculture of Vietnam and to the Master Plan of Fisheries Development of Vietnam and Vision to 2030, plus positive inputs to the Overall Plan of Cold Water Fisheries Development and Vision.</li> <li>VIETADAPT contributed to implementation of the key Vietnamese programme, strategy and action plan on climate change, being well in line with the Vietnamese priorities.</li> <li>ICI projects have provided additional goodwill for bilateral dialogue between the two governments and supported the country strategy in open access to information and knowledge; enhanced green economy and improved livelihoods; and increased environmentally and economically sustainable income generation and improved implementation of climate sustainability initiatives.</li> </ul>	<p>The ICI projects contributed to the implementation of relevant Vietnamese policies and strategies at a technical level; and, to some extent, supported the country strategy.</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Effectiveness</p>	<p>With problems</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All three projects have, to some extent, promoted the cross-cutting objectives of Finnish development policies – especially bearing in mind the limited resources available</li> </ul>	<p>Bearing in mind that ICI is a simplified instrument and the projects are relatively small focused on capacity</p>	<p>More resources to the preparation and mobilization of new cooperation between Finnish and partner</p>

<p>for project preparation, limited experience of the Finnish institutions in development cooperation and the sharp focus of the projects on professional twinning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PROMOSERV addressed gender equality by organizing a gender equality workshop.</li> <li>The main benefits and impacts of VIETADAPT were limited to increased capacities of the participating institutions, whereas the expected motivation and encouragement of local stakeholders was less effective – at least in short term.</li> </ul>	<p>building, the projects have (selectively) promoted the cross-cutting objectives.</p> <p>The remaining challenge is to generate ownership among higher level authorities and other stakeholders.</p>	<p>institutions: more time and resources and country-specific support and advice (MFA, Embassy of Finland, eligible consultants)</p> <p>More thorough stakeholder analyses; senior officials/managers of relevant key organizations to participate in advisory committees/boards (ICI institutions, Embassy of Finland, eligible consultants)</p>
Impact	Good	PROMOSERV
	Very good	RIA-1
	With problems	VIETADAPT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All three projects have substantially increased institutional capacities of the recipient institutions: knowledge, skills (use of advanced software tools) and equipment, as well as English skills.</li> <li>PROMOSERV produced most intended results and the project purpose was achieved in most areas. Additionally, PROMOSERV paved the way for a concessional credit project of Vaisala, with FMI as a sub-contractor.</li> <li>The introduced lightning detection technology has greatly increased the early warning capacities of NHMS.</li> <li>The weather services of NHMS to end-users located in</li> </ul>	<p>The projects have achieved very good results – most of the expected (though partly loosely defined) results as well as some impressive unintended results, with good impacts on the partner institutions and varying wider impacts.</p> <p>Due to the limited scope and limited direct contacts with the Vietnamese society, some risks prevail and wider impacts remain unachieved.</p>	<p>More inputs to risk assessment (ICI institutions, ICI consultant)</p> <p>Communication between ICI institution, ICI consultant and MFA to be intensified, the role of the ICI consultant (their TOR to be revised) to be more proactive and dynamic and ICI institutions to be encouraged to be more dynamic and ambitious (MFA)</p> <p>Close collaboration with Business</p>



<p>flood-prone areas need further development, customer satisfaction surveyed in 2017 indicted high dissatisfaction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With inputs from Finland two new aquaculture species – rainbow trout and whitefish – have been approved for production in Vietnam.</li> <li>• While the economic benefits of cold water fish farming are significant and accessible to women and ethnic minorities as well, there are environmental and fish health risks.</li> <li>• CEWAFO and SIHYMECC have applied and replicated the capacity developed by VIETADAPT in assignments for Vietnamese customers.</li> <li>• The proposed climate adaptation measures in Tan Thanh district under VIETADAPT applying a highly participatory method have not been actively implemented.</li> <li>• Although commercial orientation was not on the agenda when the evaluated ICI projects were designed, PROMOSERV and the support to RIA-1 have efficiently promoted relevant Finnish businesses in Vietnam.</li> <li>• ICI is considered a useful instrument for internationalization by the Finnish institutions but, so far, only FMI – together with Vaisala – have been successful to develop further business in Vietnam. Even Vaisala's project with FMI as a subcontractor is funded by Finnish concessional credit.</li> <li>• After first phases the ICI consultant focused more on supervision and quality assurance in project formulation</li> </ul>	<p>The definition of the ICI consultant's tasks in TOR is rather limited.</p>	<p>Finland and other relevant bodies, early information of relevant Finnish clusters and identification of relevant business partners in Vietnam (ICI institutions, ICI consultant, Business Finland, FWF, etc.</p> <p>Joint expansion of successful projects or similar cooperation between the partner institutions to third countries (MFA, ICI institutions and their partners)</p>
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and reporting.		
Efficiency	Good	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Considering that all projects had achieved and, especially the support to RIA-1, exceeded their expected results, the resources have been well used for increased institutional capacity in Vietnam.</li> <li>The partnerships between Finnish institutions and their Vietnamese partners have been very good – far beyond purely professional relations. Collaboration has continued also in periods when projects or their phases have been completed and no decisions on further ICI cooperation have been made.</li> <li>Working side by side, finding solutions to problems together is a good basis for sustainable partnership as well. On the other hand, the twinning approach favors narrow bilateral participation, resulting in limited overall impacts and weaker ownership and participation of other public and private partners.</li> <li>In the beginning – when the first phases were mobilized, there were some difficulties on both sides to understand and cope with the formalities and bureaucracy of the counterpart government.</li> <li>The support of the ICI consultant was very valuable in the beginning when the Finnish institutions were less familiar with development cooperation and MFA's relevant policies.</li> </ul>	<p>The projects have used rather limited resources efficiently, achieved and even exceeded expected results and created close professional partnerships with the support of the ICI consultant. Yet, wider involvement of the Vietnamese society has been limited and the expertise of the ICI consultant could have been expanded.</p>	<p>None (in addition to those above)</p>

After the initial stage the role of the ICI consultant focused more on supervision and quality assurance in project formulation and reporting. Hence the consultant did not have significant impact on the achievement of the defined results.		
Aid effectiveness	Good	PROMOSERV
	Good	RIA-1
	With problems	VIETADAPT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institutional overlapping and weak coordination is typical in Vietnam with negative impacts on inter-sectoral coordination, complementarity and aid effectiveness. However, there was some positive coordination with synergies between PROMOSERV and the support to RIA-1. Overlapping with the World Bank funded VN-HAZ was avoided.</li> <li>• RIA-1 and development of cold water aquaculture has received support from MFA Finland through multiple windows. This is a significant sustainability factor: although there have been gaps in the financing, the interest on results and progress has remained firm both in Finland and Vietnam. The particular strength of MFA as a financing partner in this case has been the flexible use of ICI and FLC instruments in parallel.</li> <li>• VIETADAPT is not well known among the representatives of the international community interviewed in Vietnam,</li> </ul>	In spite of weak coordination and unclear division of duties between institutions in Vietnam, the ICI projects have avoided overlapping. Yet, involvement of Vietnamese and international stakeholders is not effective, especially in the case of VIETADAPT	<p>Participation in all relevant coordination/information forums, such as the group for GG-CC projects (Embassy of Finland)</p> <p>Project managers/coordinators of ICI projects to meet each other on a regular basis together with the ICI consultant, the Embassy of Finland and the Desk Officer(s) from MFA (MFA, Embassy of Finland, ICI consultant, ICI institutions)</p> <p>More innovative use of available financing instruments, e.g., parallel/complimentary use of MFA's financing windows (PIF, NGO), parallel/joint financing with development banks, etc. (MFA)</p>

though project results have reportedly been widely disseminated.		
<b>Sustainability</b>	<b>With problems</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While the direct twinning partners demonstrated strong ownership, the ownership at the ministerial level and among other stakeholders was less evident.</li> <li>• A small spare part package was supplied with the equipment purchased under PROMOSERV. Vaisala has arranged after sales services in Vietnam that is expected to ensure the sustainability of the equipment over its technical lifetime if well maintained. Overall the average feasible life time of most electronic equipment is only some years in the sector where technical development is fast.</li> <li>• With few exceptions the experts trained in the ICI projects continue to work in the sector, mainly in their institutions.</li> <li>• More needs to be done to secure the sustainability of cold water aquaculture to solve any problems related to production, fish health and environment.</li> <li>• It is challenging to ensure that information and knowledge are shared within the stakeholder organizations.</li> <li>• Prior to <i>Complementarity in Finland's Development Policy and Co-operation evaluation</i> (Bäck et al 2014) only three ICI projects had been externally evaluated during 2008-2013.</li> </ul>	<p>The increased capacities of the partner institutions are sustainable with few individuals leaving their jobs and the institutions mobilized to apply the new skills and tools in other assignments. However, more emphasis is needed to risk identification and information and knowledge sharing.</p> <p>Pprogrammatic accountability and learning from experience is limited because of few self-evaluations and external evaluations.</p>	<p>Partner institutions need to take care that the institutional analysis is well prepared, including stronger involvement of relevant ministries during project design and implementation (ICI project partners)</p> <p>More inputs to external evaluations (in addition to above) (MFA)</p>



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PROMOSERV: UHA2015-024078 (79812722), UHA2012-005168 (79812722), UHA2011-006885 (79812201)

RIA1-RKTL: UHA2015-024443 (79812721), UHA2013-003972 (79812721), UHA2011-007312 (79800206)

VIETADAPT: UHA2014-048915 (79812701), UHA2011-007855 (79812701)

## Terms of reference

### Final evaluation of three institutional cooperation (ICI) projects in Vietnam

#### 1. Background to the evaluation

##### 1.1. Context

In Vietnam, Finland's grant-based bilateral programmes will come to an end in 2018, and the focus of bilateral relations between the countries is increasingly shifting towards mutually beneficial economic cooperation and more comprehensive partnerships. Finland's *Country Strategy for Development Cooperation with Vietnam 2013–2016* outlined that although bilateral grant-based development cooperation continues, the transition towards a more comprehensive partnership for mutual benefit is advanced. The country strategy also stated that the period aiming at transition is used to strengthen and diversify partnerships between Vietnamese and Finnish authorities, institutions, private sector players and civil societies, and the partnerships should be sustained. Institutional Cooperation Instrument (ICI) was seen important in building capacities and partnerships, and in Finland's transition strategy, *Cooperation between Finland and Vietnam 2016–2020*, it was chosen as one instrument to advance transition.

ICI was created to finance capacity development projects, in which Finnish governmental institutions

cooperate with their partner agencies in developing countries to increase capacity. ICI projects are always based on partner organizations demand, their strong ownership and commitment to the project. Activities aim at developing new services or forms of service delivery, improving service delivery, organizational development, re-arranging working processes, improving skills, networking or internationalization. In Vietnam, ICI projects have also strengthened the basis for commercial cooperation between Finland and Vietnam.

## **1.2. Description of the projects to be evaluated**

***Promoting Modernisation of Hydro-meteorological Services in Vietnam, PROMOSERV (2010– 2016, € 991 998)***

The ICI project of the Finnish Meteorological Institute (FMI) worked for increased capacity of the National Hydro-Meteorological service of Vietnam (NHMS) by training its key personnel. NHMS is working under the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of Vietnam (MONRE). Responsibility of the project was transferred to the Central Forecasting Office during 2016 with a new coordinator in Vietnam. The project was located in the Hanoi area.

Phase I was implemented during 2010–2012. The starting point for this project was lack of ICT, modern forecasting tools and service production approach in NHMS strategy and implementation. The aim of the project was to increase capacity of NHMS in the reduction of natural disaster risks and in the adaptation of Vietnamese society to climate change. The project provided early warning services in the Red River delta, improved modern weather radar tools and technologies and enhanced capacity of NHMS management staff. This was done by capacity building including on the job training, workshops and study tours to Finland.

Phase II (2013–2016) aimed to produce new and improved weather service and products to public and private users. The Project improved the capacity of the NHMS in terms of service delivery, observation technologies and data management, leading to improved weather services and products available to its public and private customers and end users. During the Phase II new technologies were introduced, such as lightning location technology and weather forecasting tool SmartMet. In addition, NHMS organized a gender equality workshop in autumn 2015, which was targeted to all regional offices, their managers and workers.

The project has also cooperated with a concessional credit project in which the lead contractor is Vaisala, aiming to deliver weather radars and lightning detectors to Vietnam, and the project owner is NHMS. This project, however, has not started to date. Full scale SmartMet installation is planned to be deployed by the concessional credit project. Finnish Meteorological Institute acts as Vaisala's subcontractor in this concessional credit project. FMI provides training to the Vietnamese experts in order to use the equipment. The purpose is to create opportunities to engage a modern weather radar

network in Vietnam.

***Capacity Building for the Development of Selective Breeding Programs in Vietnam, RIA1- RKTL (2010–2016, € 1 138 384)***

The project was implemented by the Finnish Game and Fisheries Research Institute, which became Natural Resources Institute Finland since 2015, and Research Institute for Aquaculture No.1 (RIA1) in Vietnam. It was carried out in the poor mountainous areas of the Northern and Central parts of Vietnam, especially in Sapa area.

The project objective was to enhance cold water aquaculture, improve climate sustainability of the fishing industry, and minimize its environmental impact. One part of the project was to enhance fish health of cold water fish. Furthermore, the project aimed to provide alternative livelihoods for the ethnic minority men and women in poor and remote areas.

The first phase of the project was implemented during 2010–2013, and the second phase in 2014–2016. The project aimed at improving capacity of RIA-1 and its partners, Can Tho University and Binh An Fishery Research Institute, to plan, carry out and develop selective breeding programs, and to provide selective breeding services to the large aquaculture sector of Vietnam.

The project supported two prioritized freshwater aquaculture sectors to meet the increasing challenges of environmental sustainability and to adapt to global climate change: pangasius (*Pangasiidae*) farming and cold-water aquaculture. More focus was given to the latter. The ability to diagnose fish diseases was improved and the staff of Research Center for Cold Aquaculture Species (RCCAS) and local farmers were trained in nursing, grow-out and fish health management skills. Farming and climate change adaptation capacity of RCCAS was increased in environmentally sound way in phase II by designing and constructing a water recirculation system.

***Developing and Implementing Climate Change Adaptation Measures at Local Level in Vietnam VIETADAPT (2011–2016, € 999 873)***

The Geological Survey of Finland (GTK) implemented the project VIETADAPT I during 2011–2013. The project developed preliminary climate change adaptation measures and identified risks. The main purpose was to increase the capacity of the Vietnamese partners to support the development of climate change adaptation measures for sustainable use of water resources, mainly by training young Vietnamese experts like geologists and hydrologists. In phase I the partners were Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE), Vietnam's Institute of Meteorology, Hydrology and Environment (IMHEN) and National Centre for Water Resources Planning and Investigating (CWRP).

VIETADAPT II was implemented during 2015–2016 together with the Sub-Institute of Hydro-Meteorology and Climate Change of South Vietnam (SIHYMECC) and the Centre for Water Resources Warning and Forecasting (CEWAFO), which both work under the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of Vietnam (MONRE). The main beneficiaries were SIHYMECC and CEWAFO which received research information for their decision making and develop their practices and instruments.

The project produced digital surface and groundwater maps and adaptation measures. It was implemented in two case study areas, Tan Thanh in Ba Ria Vun Tau and Hau Loc in Thanh Hoa. Vietnamese partners conducted research on climate change impacts on groundwater and surface water, and adaptation options. The project operated intensively with local stakeholders and decision makers in order to receive a common understanding on the need of adaptation measures, not only regarding climate change impacts but also intensified exploitation due to socio-economic development.

### **1.3. Previous evaluation**

The projects have not been previously evaluated but the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (MFA) had an evaluation done on complementarity in Finland's development policy and co-operation, which had a case study on Institutional Cooperation Instrument (Evaluation report 2014:1). The report is available at:

<http://formin.finland.fi/public/default.aspx?contentid=299382&nodeid=49728&contentlan=2&culture=en-US>

## **2. Rationale, purpose and objectives of the evaluation**

The main rationale of this evaluation is to provide objective information to the MFA about the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of ICI projects, and to give guidance on the use of this instrument in the transition phase in Vietnam from bilateral development cooperation to wider commercial, political and cultural relations.

The purpose of this evaluation is to provide information for the implementation of Finland's transition strategy for Vietnam in 2016–2020 (Annex 2). The evaluation is expected to assess lessons learned from institutional cooperation and ICI as an instrument to promote transition from development cooperation towards commercially based cooperation. It is also expected to give information on to what extent the ICI projects have created awareness of Finnish expertise in Vietnam to support Vietnam's development needs. In addition, proposals for starting new ICI projects in Vietnam have been submitted to the MFA, and the purpose of the evaluation is to support planning of potential new ICI project/s if the planning will be commenced in autumn 2017.



The evaluation is also expected to provide information on the support services of the ICI consultant Finnish Consulting Group (FCG).

The priority objectives of the evaluation are to assess

1. the impacts and sustainability of the three ICI projects; and
2. to what extent they have been able to form a basis for enhancing commercial cooperation between Finland and Vietnam, and created partnerships for future collaboration that is not using ODA funding
3. to what extent the ICI projects have facilitated the internationalization of the ICI implementers and opened up new financing or commercial opportunities for institutions.

### **3. Scope of the evaluation**

Geographical area to be covered in this evaluation includes the project sites of the three ICI projects in Vietnam. The evaluation team is expected to visit all sites.

The time span to be covered is: Promoserv 2010–2016

RIA-1/RKTL 2010–2016

Vietadapt 2011–2016

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

While the evaluation questions below indicate the priority issues under each criterion, the evaluation team should not limit the evaluation to these questions only.

#### ***Relevance***

1. How the ICI projects have answered to the capacity needs of the recipient institutions?

#### ***Impact***

2. What are intended and unintended, short- and long-term, positive and negative impacts of the ICI projects on the capacities of the recipient institutions, especially know-how regarding climate change adaptation?
3. In which ways the projects have been able to benefit local population and authorities? And to what extent have they promoted human rights, gender equality and reduction of inequalities?
4. To what extent the projects have created mutually beneficial partnerships and favourable conditions to enhance commercial cooperation between Finland and Vietnam? And to what extent

have the projects facilitated broader political relations?

5. To what extent the projects have increased awareness of Finnish expertise and technical solutions to support Vietnam's development needs?

### ***Effectiveness***

6. To what extent have the projects promoted human rights, gender equality, reduction of inequalities and climate sustainability?

### ***Efficiency***

7. How well the activities have transformed the available resources into increased capacity in Vietnam?
8. How have the partner organizations worked together, and what can be learned from institutional cooperation?
9. How have the support services provided by the ICI consultant (FCG) promoted achievement of the results?

### ***Aid effectiveness***

10. How have the projects promoted ownership and accountability in partner organisations in Vietnam?

### ***Sustainability***

11. To what extent have the projects achieved sustainable results, and what are the conditions or factors that are central for sustainability of the results?

### ***Coherence***

12. How well have the ICI projects succeeded in mutual reinforcement with other policies to achieve their objectives in line with Vietnamese development priorities, MFA's country programme for Vietnam?

## **5. Methodology**

The choice of methodology will be left to the evaluation team to propose. With the aim of having an objective and independent evaluation, the team is expected to conduct the evaluation according to international criteria, and professional norms and standards adopted by the MFA. Methodology defines methods of data collection and analysis. It is expected that multiple methods are used, both qualitative and quantitative. Consultations with relevant partners and stakeholders will be conducted. Validation of results must be done through multiple sources. Data is disaggregated by relevant categories.

The evaluation is expected to use the Results-Oriented-Monitoring (ROM) review system that EU uses for external interventions, which is built on the OECD evaluation criteria. The handbook on ROM reviews can be found at [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/news\\_corner/monitoring-and-evaluation/20160817-rom-handbook.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/news_corner/monitoring-and-evaluation/20160817-rom-handbook.pdf)

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

The evaluation is expected to be conducted in in August–October 2017. It will include inception and desk study phases, field work and reporting.

The evaluation team will submit a tentative work plan with curricula vitae of the team members for MFA's approval. Work plan includes division of work within the evaluation team, the number of work days planned to each expert, how work days are divided among evaluation tasks, and a plan for quality assurance.

The assignment will begin with a consultation with the MFA. Before field work a meeting will be held between the team and the MFA. Finland's Embassy in Hanoi can be connected via video link.

Background documents will be provided by the MFA.

At the end of the field mission, the team is expected to present their preliminary key findings and recommendations to the Embassy and MFA via video link.

## **7. Reporting**

The evaluation team is requested to submit the following deliverables:

- Inception report
- Presentation on the field findings
- Draft final report
- Final report
- Presentation on the evaluation findings

Inception report: Before fieldwork and based on the desk study, the evaluation team shall present an inception report including detailed and updated work methodologies, a work plan including selection of field sites, detailed division of labour within the evaluation team, a list of major meetings and interviews planned for the field visits, and detailed evaluation questions linked to the evaluation

criteria in an evaluation matrix.

Draft final report of the evaluation will be submitted to the MFA (7 days?) after the field work. It will combine the desk study and field findings. The MFA will submit comments to the report, which will then be revised based on these comments.

The final report shall be submitted to the MFA two weeks after receiving the comments on the draft final report.

Language of the deliverables is English.

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.

## **8. Quality assurance**

The evaluation team is expected to propose and implement a quality assurance system for the evaluation. The proposal must specify the quality assurance process, methodology, resources and tools.

## **9. Expertise required**

The evaluation team is expected to consist of:

- two or three international experts, one of them nominated as a team leader, and
- national expert/s with good skills in Vietnamese

The evaluation team shall have solid experience and knowledge in the following fields:

- Experience in evaluations, especially final, ex-post or impact evaluations
- Team leader having a proven record of successful team leading of similar evaluations
- Experience in capacity building in development cooperation projects
- Experience in result based management of development cooperation projects
- Experience or knowledge in development country context in aquaculture, knowledge of cold water fish farming is an asset, disaster risk reduction of climate change, knowledge of hydro- meteorological services is an asset, and sustainable use of water resources.
- Knowledge of economic and private sector development, aid for trade or similar fields and transition process from development to commercial cooperation
- Integrating cross cutting objectives in project planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation: promotion of human rights and gender equality, reduction of inequalities and

climate sustainability

Experience from the last ten years will be regarded as the most relevant.

## **10. Budget**

The total available budget for this evaluation is 80.000 euros, excluding VAT, which cannot be exceeded. The amount is a lump sum. The budget will include the fees of the experts and reimbursable costs.

## **11. Mandate**

The evaluation team is entitled and expected to discuss matters relevant to this evaluation with pertinent persons and organizations. However, it is not authorized to make any commitments on the behalf of the Government of Finland.

### **Annexes:**

- ❖ Transition strategy for Vietnam:  
<http://formin.finland.fi/public/default.aspx?contentid=359525&nodeid=49540&contentlan=1&culture=fi-FI>
- ❖ ICI principles and manual:  
<http://formin.finland.fi/public/default.aspx?contentid=326983&nodeid=49356&contentlan=2&culture=en-US>

### **Annexes 1:** Link to the MFA evaluation manual:

<http://formin.finland.fi/public/default.aspx?contentid=288455&contentlan=2&culture=en-US>

## **Annex 2: Outline of an evaluation report**

The quality criteria of an evaluation report have been defined by the OECD/DAC and the EU (see table 11 of the manual). The main components of an evaluation report are outlined below. The outline is not compulsory, but intended as a guideline in defining the appropriate table of contents for a specific evaluation. It is recommended that based on this general outline, the evaluators propose a report outline e.g. in their Inception Report.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- ☐ Providing an overview of the report, highlighting the main findings, conclusions, recommendations and any overall lessons.
- ☐ Includes a summary table presenting main findings, conclusions and recommendations and their logical links
  - Relevance: findings – conclusions – recommendations
  - Impact: findings – conclusions – recommendations
  - Effectiveness: findings – conclusions – recommendations
  - Efficiency: findings – conclusions – recommendations
  - Sustainability: findings – conclusions – recommendations
  - Etc.

### **INTRODUCTION**

- ☐ Evaluation's rationale, purpose and objectives, scope and main evaluation questions

### **DESCRIPTION OF THE CONTEXT AND THE EVALUATED PROJECT/PROGRAMME**

- ☐ Description of the broader context and its influence on the performance of the project/programme.
- ☐ Introduction of the intervention being evaluated: objectives including the cross-cutting objectives, implementation strategies, resources for implementation.
- ☐ Introduction of the stakeholders and their roles, including both final beneficiaries and involved institutions

### **KEY FINDINGS**

- ☐ Empirical data, facts, evidence relevant to the indicators of the evaluation questions.
- ☐ Overall progress in the implementation.
- ☐ Findings by evaluation criteria / issue (e.g. Relevance, Impact, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Sustainability)

### **CONCLUSIONS**

- ☐ The evaluators' assessment of the performance of the project/programme based on the findings in relation to the set evaluation criteria, performance standards or policy issues (e.g. Relevance, Impact, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Sustainability)

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- ☐ Proposed improvements, changes, action to remedy problems in performance or to capitalise on strengths. Recommendations are based on the findings and conclusions. There should be a clear indication of
  - to whom is the recommendation directed (MFA, partner institutions, consultant providing support services, etc.)
  - who is responsible for implementing the recommendation, and
  - when the recommendation should be implemented..

**NOTE:** Findings, conclusions and recommendations are summarized in a table in the Executive Summary of the evaluation report.

## **LESSONS LEARNED**

- ☐ Are there any general conclusions that are likely to have the potential for wider application and use?

## **ANNEXES**

- ☐ the ToR
- ☐ description of the evaluation methodology used
- ☐ limitations of the study
- ☐ lists of information sources e.g. people interviewed, documents reviewed, etc.
- ☐ quality assurance statement produced by the quality assurance mechanism used
- ☐ 1-2 page evaluation brief for communicating the evaluation results, including
  - the key message of the evaluation,
  - who has benefitted and what are the most important positive results,
  - any unexpected impacts,
  - key recommendations and lessons learned.

### Annex 3: Evaluation report quality checklist (OECD/DAC and EU standards)

#### Executive summary

- ☐ contains a clear and representative executive summary of the report
- ☐ summarises the main findings, conclusions, recommendations in a summary table
- ☐ presents overall lessons learned

**NOTE:** The executive summary is the part of the evaluation report that will be read most often. That is why its high quality is very important!

#### Context

- ☐ describes the context of the development programme
- ☐ assesses the influence of the context on programme performance

#### Intervention logic

- ☐ describes and assesses the intervention logic (e.g. in the form of a logical framework) or theory
- ☐ describes and assesses the underlying assumptions and factors affecting the success of the programme
- ☐ takes into account the evolution of the programme

#### Sources of information

- ☐ describes the sources of information (documents, interviews, other) used so that the adequacy of the information can be assessed,
- ☐ explains the selection of case studies or any samples,
- ☐ cross-validates the information sources
- ☐ critically assesses the validity and reliability of the data

#### Methodology

- ☐ annexed to the report explains and justifies the evaluation methodology and its application, including techniques used for data collection and analysis
- ☐ explains limitations and shortcomings, risks and potential biases associated with the evaluation method

#### Analysis

- ☐ presents clear analysis covering findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons separately and with a clear logical distinction between them.
- ☐ makes explicit the assumptions that underlie the analysis.



**Answers to ToR evaluation questions**

- ☐ answers all the questions detailed in the TOR for the evaluation
- ☐ covers the requested period of time, and the target groups and socio-geographical areas linked to the programme
- ☐ if not, justifications are given

**Limitations**

- ☐ explains any limitations in process, methodology or data, and discusses validity and reliability
- ☐ indicates any obstruction of a free and open evaluation process which may have influenced the findings
- ☐ explains any discrepancies between the planned and actual implementation and products of the evaluation

**Differences of opinion**

- ☐ acknowledges unresolved differences of opinion within the evaluation team

**Stakeholders' comments**

- ☐ reflects stakeholders' comments on the report and acknowledges any substantive disagreements

## ***Evaluation Process, Main Methodologies and Limitations***

### **Evaluation Team**

The evaluation was conducted during August 2017 – April 2018. The evaluation process consisted of three phases: (i) a desk review phase (with interviews in Finland); (ii) in-country mission to Vietnam; and (iii) data analysis and report writing phase. The evaluation approach, methodologies as well as limitations influencing evaluation activities are discussed below.

Danish Management initially proposed an evaluation team of four experts, namely Mr Gianluca Ragusa, International Team Leader (evaluation of RIA1-RKTL project), Mr Hannu Vikman, International Senior Evaluator (evaluation of VIETADAPT project), Mr Luis Hernando Gomez, International Thematic Expert (evaluation of PROMOSERV project) and Mr Nguyen Duc Tam, National Evaluator (inputs to all three project evaluations).

In early December 2017, the team was restructured with Mr Ragusa stepping down and subsequently Mr Vikman assuming the role of the Team Leader. Mr Kristiina Mikkola, International Senior Evaluator, was incorporated in the team with a responsibility to conduct the evaluation of RIA1-RKTL project. Ms Ta Linh Chi, Project Officer, Asian Management and Development Institute (AMDI), Hanoi was responsible for making appointments and field mission arrangements. Ms Chi also provided interpretation services to the evaluation team in some meetings in Hanoi, and in meetings in Ho Chi Minh City and Ba Ria-Vung Tau.

### **Evaluation approach**

The evaluation approach as proposed in the second Draft Inception Report was followed during the evaluation.

In line with the Terms of Reference (TOR), the rationale of the evaluation was to provide objective information to MFA about the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the three (or six, taking into account the two phases of each project) Institutional Cooperation Instrument (ICI) projects implemented in Vietnam, and to give guidance on the use of this instrument in the transition from bilateral development cooperation to wider commercial, political and cultural relations in the relations between Finland and Vietnam. Thus, the purpose of the final evaluation was to provide information for the implementation of Finland's transition strategy for Vietnam in 2016–2020.

The evaluation was also expected to assess lessons learned from institutional cooperation and ICI as an instrument to promote transition from development cooperation towards commercially based co-

operation. It was also expected to give information on to what extent the ICI projects have created awareness of Finnish expertise in Vietnam to support Vietnam's development needs. In addition, proposals for starting new ICI projects in Vietnam have been submitted to MFA, as the purpose of the evaluation was to support planning of potential new ICI project/s.

As with any evaluation, the challenge with this evaluation was to ensure that findings were evidence-based. Therefore, the final evaluation approach included not only a detailed desk review, but a participatory approach, visiting as many stakeholders as was feasible within the time allocated to in-country mission for the experts (Vikman 9 working days, Gomez 8 working days and Mikkola 8 working days in Vietnam).

Another key challenge of the final evaluation was to collect evidence-based information that would be useful to give guidance on the use of this instrument in the transition phase in Vietnam from bilateral development cooperation to wider commercial, political and cultural relations, and to provide information for the implementation of Finland's transition strategy for Vietnam in 2016–2020.

The three ICI projects have different sectors focuses, as has been discussed in the evaluation report. Moreover, the geographical locations of the projects and stakeholders involved were scattered in Vietnam from North to South. Thus, the in-country mission needed to be planned in such a way that adequate time was allocated to the proposed interviews with partner agencies and government agencies in Hanoi, while direct project beneficiaries were visited in each location to the extent possible.

To validate information and understand in greater depth the performance of the projects, key informant interviews and focus group discussions were held at various levels: MFA, the Embassy of Finland, the Finnish ICI institutions, partner institutions in Vietnam, the ICI Consultant, other participants who were trained, local population and authorities, etc.

To this end, the evaluation team has worked together when developing the evaluation framework, analyzing and synthesizing data, and reporting. During the field phase in Vietnam, however, the team was organised in two sub-teams to make the best use of available time and each team member's expertise.

## **Evaluation methods**

The evaluation methodology has been participatory, consultative and inclusive. During the evaluation the principles and guidelines defined in MFA's Evaluation Manual (MFA, 2012), Human Rights Based Approach in Finland's Development Cooperation (MFA, 2015) and Result Based Management (MFA, 2015) have been applied. The evaluation team has utilised review of existing documentation and stakeholder interviews as the main data collection methods.

An evaluation framework (matrix) was developed during the inception phase. It was built on the evaluation questions listed in TOR. In the evaluation matrix the main questions of TOR were substantiated with more detailed sub-questions, suggested indicators and information sources and methods. The team used the evaluation matrix in data collection, data analysis and report drafting. However, the analysis and findings presented in the report follow the issues and questions prescribed in TOR. To the extent possible, data was disaggregated by relevant categories.

The validation of results was done through two main sources of information: documentary evidence available in the policies and strategies of partner countries and partner organizations of ICI projects, and data and information collected through interviews and focus group discussions. With respect to the ICI projects supporting RIA-1 in cold water aquaculture development, also observation and stakeholder interviews became available during the field visit to Sapa. Triangulation of findings presented in this report is, thus, a combination of views and experiences of persons and organizations involved in the ICI projects and information and data available in the documents.

The second Draft Inception Report proposed a number of evaluation methods that, in fact, were not feasible to apply during a very short in-country mission. Several methodologies proposed by the initial team leader proved unfeasible to apply in practice. For example, SWOT analysis does not lend itself well for conducting evaluation interviews with a limited time. In fact, many stakeholders were only able to allocate one to two hours to meet with the evaluators. RIA-1 made an exception to this; the RIA-1 leadership and management even joined in the field visit to Sapa in Lao Cai. This offered an excellent opportunity for dialogue and in-depth discussions.

Field visits were proposed in the Draft Inception Report. In fact, the visit to RCCA in Sapa and visits to some fish farms in the area was the only field visit the team was able to conduct as planned. The field visit in Tan Thanh was less successful. The team was not able to see any concrete outputs, e.g., the planned visit to the Toc Tien landfill to verify the implementation of case-specific recommendations was restricted to an introduction of the landfill in the site office. The team was not allowed to proceed to the actual site.

The logical frameworks of the projects were assessed to ascertain that they built on reasonably well-structured result chains and, thus, provided initial theories of change for the interventions.

In the final report, the main findings per each evaluation criterion of TOR were analysed also by using the Results-Oriented-Monitoring (ROM) Review system of the European Union, built on the OECD evaluation criteria. A three-grade scale is adopted using the following categories: (i) Green – good or very good; (ii) Orange – with problems; (iii) Red – off track or with serious deficiencies. The justification of grades is clearly deduced from the analysis and is, therefore, coherent with the findings provided in the

report in relation to each of the respective evaluation questions of TOR and with the conclusions provided at the level of each project. It is depicted in table below.

Table 1. Grading reference table for criteria and monitoring questions

Colour	Qualitative	Grading reference table for criteria and monitoring questions
	Good/ very good	The situation is considered satisfactory, but there may be room for improvement. Recommendations are useful, but not vital to the project or programme.
	With problems	There are issues which need to be addressed; otherwise the global performance of the project or programme may be negatively affected. Necessary improvements do not however require a major revision of the intervention logic and implementation arrangements.
	With serious deficiencies	There are deficiencies which are so serious that, if not addressed, they may lead to failure of the project or programme. Major adjustments and revision of the intervention logic and/or implementation arrangements are necessary.

### Actual Evaluation Process

The desk review / inception phase became a protracted process that ran from August until December 2017. The review of documents commenced in August, initially focusing on identifying issues for developing the detailed evaluation methodology and tools, especially the evaluation matrix. Preliminary programme for the in-country mission was prepared. Also, a Draft Inception Report was prepared and submitted to MFA on 11 September, 2017. MFA on its comments to the report on 28 September 2017 requested the report to be revised. A second version of the Draft Inception Report was submitted to MFA on 18 October, 2017. MFA provided substantial comments on the second draft on 17 November, 2017. These then led into the restructuring of the team, among other issues. The newly composed team, however, was not requested to revise the second Draft Inception Report, which remained unapproved by MFA.

In consultation with MFA and the Embassy of Finland in Hanoi, it was subsequently decided that the field mission to Vietnam was to take place in January 2018 to avoid any further delays in the evaluation process. Thus, the arrangements for the field mission (meetings, appointments and travel arrangements) took place in December 2017.

During the desk review phase, important meetings took place. The team (Mr Ragusa, Mr Vikman and Mr Gomez) met with MFA and Finnish ICI partners on 26 October, 2017 in Helsinki. Further interaction with

the Finnish ICI actors took place by Ms Mikkola (interviews of Luke and Evira in December, 2017) and by Mr Vikman (meeting with the GTK and ICI Facilitation Consultant, FCG International in December, 2017).

The in-country mission was conducted during 6-19 January, 2018. The meetings during the first mission week (8-12 January, 2018) took place in Hanoi. The full team participated in the meeting with the Embassy of Finland.

Subsequently, Mr Vikman and Mr Gomez focused on stakeholders of PROMOSERV and VIETADAPT projects in Hanoi and also interacted with SIHYMECC and Finpro (Ho Chi Minh City) and provincial level authorities in Ba Ria-Vung Tau and district level authorities in Tan Thanh.

Ms Mikkola and Mr Tam focused on RIA1-RKTL project and met with RIA1 management and staff and visited the laboratory facilities in Bac Ninh. Within MARD, interaction took place with the Directorate of Aquaculture, Science, Technology and International Cooperation Department, Centre for Aquaculture Information and Aquaculture Surveying, Testing and Accreditation Centre. A field visit to Sapa in Lao Cai province was conducted during 14-17 January. The team visited the Research Center for Cold Water Aquaculture and talked to some fish farmers and aquaculture feed agent in Sapa area.

Comprehensive data analysis and reporting phase was conducted during 20 January – 12 February, 2018, initially culminating in the discussion of the main findings and conclusions in the evaluation debriefing session on 24 January, 2018 in Helsinki. The participants to the debriefing session consisted of relevant MFA staff in Helsinki, Embassy of Finland staff in Hanoi and staff from FMI, Luke, Evira and GTK.

The team subsequently completed the analysis of the findings, drew the relevant conclusions and drafted an evaluation report. During this stage the team communicated with each other electronically (email, phone, Skype). The Draft Evaluation Report was submitted to Danish Management on 12 February, 2018. Danish Management sent the report to MFA on 6 March, 2018.

The team received consolidated comments of all stakeholders from MFA on 26 March, 2018. The team has conducted a careful analysis of all comments. The team approached some stakeholders in Vietnam and in Finland in order to seek additional information that was needed for addressing the comments. Subsequently, the draft report has undergone a thorough revision.

All four evaluation team members (Vikman, Mikkola, Gomez and Tam) contributed to the data analysis and writing of the draft evaluation report. International experts (Vikman, Gomez and Mikkola) have addressed the comments and written the final evaluation report. Quality assurance inputs have been provided by Danish Management.

## **Limitations**

There were several challenges and limitations in the evaluation process ranging from the resourcing of the evaluation and changes in the team composition to difficulties experienced in accessing key stakeholders in Vietnam.

The main limitations can be summarised as follows:

- Considering the challenging tasks, the working time allocated for the in-country mission was very nominal (merely 8 or 9 working days per expert).
- Because of the delays in the evaluation process and to avoid further delays, the field mission was finally conducted in January. With hindsight, this was not the optimal time to interact with Vietnamese government organisations. Thus, a significant limitation to the study was the fact that several important government agencies at the central level in Vietnam were not available for meetings with the evaluation team. These included the Department of Animal Health under MARD, the National Agro-Forestry Fisheries Quality Assurance Department (NAFIQAD) and MONRE. Some explained that the proximity of the Vietnamese Tet kept them busy.
- Possibly another reason contributing to the difficulties was the fact that appointments were made by an administrative person from the consultant's Vietnamese partner company who was not familiar with the sectors, their key institutions and persons.

## ***Documentation Consulted***

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12. MFA 2016 Cooperation between Finland and Vietnam 2016-2020
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15. MFA 2017 Terms of Reference Evaluation, Final Evaluation of three institutional cooperation (ICI) projects in Vietnam, 4.7.2017

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## ***Persons Consulted***

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#### **Natural Resources Institute (LUKE)**

5. Dr Jaakko Nuutila, Manager, International Customer Solutions
6. Mr Harri Vehviläinen, Senior Research Scientist, Project Coordinator

#### **Finnish Food Safety Authority (EVIRA)**

7. Dr Perttu Koski, Manager, Senior Researcher, Research and Laboratory Services Department

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8. Mr Harri Pietarila, Head of Unit, Expert Services
9. Mr Alessandro Chiariello, Project Manager, Consulting Services
10. Matti Eerikäinen, Head of Group, International Projects, Expert Services

#### **Geological Survey of Finland (GTK)**

11. Dr Philipp Schmidt-Thomé, International Operations Director
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13. Ms Kristiina Nuottimäki, Geologist, Environmental Geology Unit

#### **FCG International Ltd (FCG)**

14. Mr Jorma Peltonen, Director, Development Consulting
15. Ms Marja Laine, Project Director, Development Consulting

### **Vietnam**

#### **Embassy of Finland**

16. Ms Annika Kaipola, Senior Specialist, Embassy of Finland
17. Mr Marko Saarinen, Senior Specialist, Development Policy
18. Ms Le Thi Thu Huong, Coordinator

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21. Mr Nguyen Tuan Tai, Deputy Director, Aero-Meteorological Observatory
22. Mr Hoang Minh Toan, Chief, Information and Data Division, Aero-Meteorological Observatory
23. Mr Nguyen Duc Thang, Chief, Technical Division, Hydro-Meteorological Information and Data Center
24. Mr Le Minh Hai, Technical Staff, Hydro-Meteorological Information and Data Center
25. Mr Nguyen Dang Quang, Chief, Numerical and Remote Sensing Division, National Center for Hydro-Meteorological Forecasting
26. Mr Doan Van Khiem, Deputy Director, Hydro-Meteorological and Environmental Stations Network Center
27. Mr Le Xuan Duc, Deputy Chief, Meteorological

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28. Mr Nguyen Duc Manh, Deputy Chief, Machine and Instrument Division, Hydro-Meteorological and Environmental Stations Network Center
29. Mr Sai Hong Duong, Deputy Director, Project Management Unit

#### **Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD)**

30. Mr Tran Dinh Luan, Deputy General Director, Directorate of Aquaculture
31. Mr Nhu Van Can, Director of Aquaculture Department
32. Ms Nguyen Thi Trang Nhung, Deputy Director of Science, Technology and International Cooperation Department
33. Ms Nguyen Thi Thanh Huong, Expert, Department of Science, Technology and International Cooperation
34. Mr Nguyen Van Tien, Vice Director of Aquaculture Surveying, Testing and Accreditation Centre
35. Ms Kieu Ngoc Ha, Expert, Centre for Aquaculture Information

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36. Dr (Ms) Phan Thi Van, Director
37. Dr (Ms) Dang Thi Lua, Deputy Director
38. Mr Mai Van Tai, Head of Science and International Cooperation
39. Ms Tran Thuy Ha, Head, Centre of Biotechnics
40. Ms Nguyen Huu Nghia, Head, Centre for Aquaculture Monitoring and Diseases
41. Ms Nguyen Thi Dieu Phuong, Deputy Head, Administration and Planning
42. Mr Ngo Phu Thoa, Coordinator, ICI project phase 2
43. Ms Truong Thi My Hanh, Head, Aquaculture Diseases
44. Ms Nguyen Thi Nguyen, Expert, Laboratory for Bacteriology and Parasitology

45. Mr Nguyen Duc Binh, Head, Laboratory for Environment
46. Ms Nguyen Thi Minh Nguyet, Expert, Laboratory for Environment
47. Ms Nguyen Thi Thu Hoai, Expert, Laboratory for Environment

#### **Vietnam Chefs Association (VICA), Hanoi**

48. Mr Nguyen Thuong Quan, Chairman

#### **Research Centre for Coldwater Aquaculture Species (RCCA), Sapa**

49. Mr Nguyen Thanh Hai, Head, RCCA
50. Ms Tran Thi Chi, Head, Aquaculture Environment and Disease Unit

#### **Fish farmers and other stakeholders, Sapa**

51. Mr Tran Trung Hung, Head, Aquaculture Feed Agent for Sabina
52. Mr Tran Tien Nam, Salesman, Aquaculture Feed Agent for Sabina
53. Mr Ly A Cang, Fish farmer in Ban Khoang
54. Mr Nguyen The Hai, Head, Minh Duc Cooperatives of Cold Water Fish in Ban Khoang
55. Mr Hong Trong Ky, Worker

#### **Vietnam Institute of Meteorology, Hydrology and Climate Change (IMHEN)**

56. Dr (Ms) Huynh Thi Lan Huong, Deputy Director General
57. Ms Tran Thanh Thuy, Director, Department of Science, Training, and International Cooperation
58. Mr Thinh Quang Dang, Deputy Director, Climate Change Research Centre

#### **Centre for Water Resources Monitoring and Forecast (CEWAFO)**

59. Dr (Ms) Nguyen Thi Ha, Director
60. Mr Dang Tran Trung, Deputy Director
61. Mr Nguyen Viet Tung, Head, Department of Science, Technology and International Cooperation
62. Mr Tran Viet Hoang, Technical Officer
63. Ms Trinh Thu Hoai, Administrative Officer,

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**Sub-Institute of Hydro-Meteorology and Climate Change (SIHYMECC)**

- 64. Mr Mai Van Khiem, Director
- 65. Mr Pham Thanh Long, Deputy Director
- 66. Mr Nguyen Van Hong, Deputy Director

**Department of Construction (DOC), Ba Ria - Vung Tau Province**

Mr Nguyen Van Huynh, Deputy Director

**Department of Natural Resources and Environment (DONRE), Ba Ria - Vung Tau Province**

- 67. Ms Nguyen Thi Luyen, Deputy Head, Department of Water Resources and Hydro-meteorology

**Department of Science and Technology (DOST), Ba Ria - Vung Tau Province**

- 68. Mr Nguyen Kim Truong, Deputy Director
- 69. Mr Do Vu Khoa, Head, Department of Technology Management
- 70. Ms Do Quynh Nga, Head, Department of Science Management
- 71. Mr Vu Ngoc Thuan, Specialist, Department of Science Management
- 72. Mr Pham Ngoc Thai, Specialist, Department of

## Technology Management

**Division of Natural Resources and Environment, Tan Thanh District**

- 73. Ms Ngo Thi Hong Bich, Head
- 74. Mr Phan Minh Trung, Specialist

**ISET-International Vietnam**

- 75. Dr Phong Tran, Technical Lead, Vietnam (through Skype)

**Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ)**

- 76. Dr Timothy McGrath, Technical Advisor/Policy Advisory Team Leader, Mekong Urban Flood Resilience and Drainage Programme/Wastewater Management Programme
- 77. Mr Olaf Neussner, Technical Advisor, Mekong Urban Flood Resilience and Drainage Programme

**Finpro**

- 78. Ms Eija Tynkkynen, Commercial Councillor
- 79. Mr Pham Hoang Kinh, Senior Adviser

## ***Mission Itinerary***

**Teams:**
**Sub team 1 (ST1):** Kristiina Mikkola (KM) and Tam Nguyen (TN)

**Sub team 2 (ST2):** Hannu Vikman (HV), Luis Gomez (LG) and Chi Ta (CT)

Date	Activities	
Sat 06/01	<i>Arrival of Hannu Vikman</i>	
Sun 07/01	<i>Arrival of Kristiina Mikkola</i>	
Mon 08/01	<i>Arrival of Luis Gomez</i> <b>Meetings in Hanoi</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Team meeting</li> <li>• Meeting with the Finnish Embassy</li> </ul>	
Tue 09/01	<u>ST1</u> Internal work	<u>ST2</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zu-sammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ)</li> </ul>
Wed 10/01	<u>ST1</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Directorate of Fisheries, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD)</li> <li>• Research Institute for Aquaculture No.1 (RIA-1), management staff, Bac Ninh</li> </ul>	<u>ST2</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Centre for Water Resources Monitoring and Forecast (CEWAFO)</li> <li>• ISET-International Vietnam</li> </ul>
Thu 11/01	<u>ST1</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RIA-1 technical staff, Bac Ninh</li> <li>• Visit laboratories of RIA-1, Bac Ninh</li> </ul>	<u>ST2</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Centre for Water Resources Monitoring and Forecast (CEWAFO)</li> </ul>
Fri 12/01	<u>ST1</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal work</li> </ul>	<u>ST2</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vietnam Institute of Meteorology, Hydrology and Climate Change (IMHEN)</li> </ul>
Sat 13/01	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Team meeting</li> </ul>	
Sun 14/01	Travel to Sapa by road	Flight to Ho Chi Minh City
Mon 15/01	<b>Meetings in Sapa/<u>ST1</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research Centre for Cold Water Aquaculture Species (RCCA) staff</li> <li>• Visit to Sabina agent of fish feed</li> </ul>	<b>Meetings in Ho Chi Minh City/<u>ST2</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sub-Institute of Hydro-Meteorology and Climate Change (SIHYMECC)</li> <li>• Finpro</li> <li>• GIZ</li> </ul>



Date	Activities	
Tue 16/01	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visit to fish farm of Mr Ly A Cang, Ban Khoang</li> <li>• Visit fish to farm of Minh Duc Cooperatives, Ban Khoang</li> <li>• Wrap-up discussion at RCCA</li> </ul>	Travel to Ba Ria – Vung Tau by road <b>Meetings in Ba Ria – Vung Tau/ST2</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Department of Science and Technology (DOST)</li> <li>• Department of Natural Resources and Environ-ment (DONRE)</li> <li>• Department of Construction (DOC)</li> </ul>
Wed 17/01	Travel back to Hanoi by road <i>Departure of Kristiina Mikkola</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Division of Natural Resources and Environment, Tan Thanh District</li> <li>• Visit to landfill</li> </ul> Travel back to Ho Chi Minh City by road and flight back to Hanoi (CT)
Thu 18/01		<i>Departure of Hannu Vikman</i> <i>Departure of Luis Gomez</i>

## ***Evaluation Brief***

The Final Evaluation of three institutional cooperation projects in Vietnam was conducted during August 2017-April 2018. The projects were Promoting Modernization of Hydro-meteorological Services in Vietnam (PROMOSERV), Capacity Building for the Selective Breeding Programmes in Vietnam (RIA-1-RKTL/Luke) and Developing and Implementing Climate Change Adaptation Measures at Local Level in Vietnam (VIETADAPT). All three projects comprised two phases.

This evaluation was to provide objective information to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA) of Finland about the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of ICI projects, and to give guidance on the use of this instrument in the transition phase in Vietnam from bilateral development cooperation to wider commercial, political and cultural relations.

The projects have achieved their expected results. So far, no negative impacts of these ICI projects have been observed and in most cases, they are not likely.

All three projects have, to some extent, promoted the cross-cutting objectives of Finnish development policies – especially bearing in mind the limited resources available for project preparation, limited experience of the Finnish institutions in development cooperation and the sharp focus of the projects on professional twinning. All projects have acknowledged climate sustainability, which was the particular subject of VIETADAPT and PROMOSERV. Adaptation to climate change impacts has also been a particular focus of RIA1-RKTL.

Overall, the projects have strengthened institutional capacities of the Vietnamese partner institutions through improved knowledge and skills development, use of advanced software tools and state of the art equipment. The intended impacts have been mostly achieved while no negative impacts have been observed.

Although commercial orientation was not on the agenda when the evaluated ICI projects were designed, PROMOSERV and the support to RIA-1 promoted relevant Finnish business in Vietnam, e.g., meteorological equipment, Recirculating Aquaculture System, eye eggs, fish feed, etc.

By nature, ICI projects are twinning projects with minor budgets (around EUR 500,000 – 600,000 per phase). The resources have been well used. In addition to human capacity building, PROMOSERV and support to RIA-1 also included some hardware. Working side by side, finding solutions to problems together is a good basis for sustainable partnership. On the other hand, the twinning approach favours narrow bilateral participation, resulting in limited overall impacts and weaker ownership and participation of other partners.

The support of the ICI consultant was considered valuable by the ICI institutions in the formulation of the first projects and at the beginning of their implementation. When the first phases were mobilised, there were some difficulties on both sides to understand and cope with the formalities and bureaucracy of the counterpart government. In addition, hierarchy in Vietnam, weak cooperation and collaboration between ministries and government bodies came as a surprise to Finnish institutions. Staff rotation in MFA and subsequent inconsistency in interpretation of the ICI Manual and in supervision of the projects created confusion among Finnish and Vietnamese institutions.

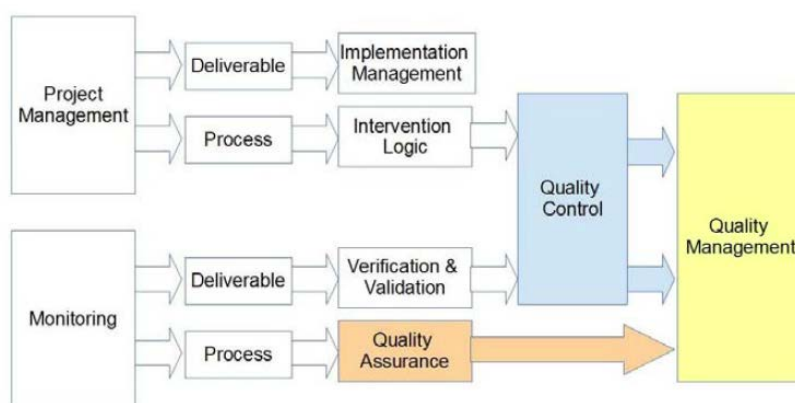
The knowledge and skills transferred to the local individuals have benefited them and are used by them in their line of work; the vast majority of trained individuals have remained in their organisations and some of them been promoted to more senior positions.

ICI has been designed to be a relatively simple and straightforward financing instrument for bilateral cooperation between government institutions. As such, it has been quite successfully applied in the ICI projects in Vietnam. However, with minor additional inputs the results and impacts could have been strengthened.

## **Quality Assurance Statement**

Danish Energy Management (DEM) has established an extensive Quality Management System that has been implemented on all our contracts. As an organisation that believes in continual improvement to meet changing needs and addressing weaknesses that become apparent after putting systems into practice, we constantly update our approach towards quality management to enhance efficiency and effectiveness. The fundamental basis of our approach is two-fold: (1) to make the most of the strengths of our consortium; (2) ensure that quality is inherent in every step of the process.

The Quality Management System as a whole caters for internal and external reviews. It covers contract management, level of performance in the implementation of Technical Assistance assignments, reporting and general compliance with the contract terms. The quality responsibility and oversight is placed with Danish Energy Management & Esbensen as the consortium lead. It means, Danish Energy Management & Esbensen takes full responsibility for quality of the service under this contract. To this end, our proposed Contract Management Team includes a Head of Quality Assurance.



**Figure: The Quality Management System**

The Quality Management System is designed to facilitate a systematic approach that allows the project to continuously improve performance. Its primary aim is to ensure that project activities have been realised and the planned outputs have been achieved in a timely manner without compromising the quality of outputs.

The system rests on two pillars; Quality Control and Quality Assurance. While Quality Assurance applies to processes, Quality Control focuses on monitoring of project implementation and achievement of project results.

### **Quality Control and Assurance**

Quality control is a combination of the assessment of the achievement of the project/programme objectives, and verification and validation of project deliverables. While on the other hand, Quality

Assurance focuses on the process of the implementation and whether the expectations of the Contracting Authority and beneficiaries are being met, both in terms of contractual obligations and client satisfaction. The Head of QA and individuals nominated for providing the technical backstopping will play a crucial role in ensuring that the quality aspects of the project are well managed.

### **Quality Assurance, Home office coordination and Backstopping within this assignment**

We acknowledge that quality assurance is emphasized in ToR. In order to conduct a proper and high-quality QA, we always involve our permanent staff with spot-on experience. We began this assignment with DEM's internal staff, Mr. Karsten Holm, who came with long-term experience in QA of internal and independent monitoring & evaluation projects. He has been working in a large monitoring contract addressing climate and energy issues in ACP countries including the Pacific region, all of which makes him an ideal candidate for QA in this assignment.

In addition to the traditional ex-post quality checkpoint control process of draft evaluation outcomes and deliverables, we have provided proactive and ex-ante QA throughout the mandate, not limiting our self to ex-post reactive control of outputs. We have applied this "proactive" approach in other mandates and have found that it significantly adds value to the overall coherency and reliability of the deliverables and it has also been pivotal in ensuring the quality of the final report of this evaluation.

Another permanent staff of DEM, Mr. Prashanth Pattabiraman, holding strong experience in managing and delivering international projects, has provided home-office coordination and backstopping support on administrative, logistical and other ad-hoc issues to ensure smooth implementation of the project.

### **Code of Conduct**

Danish Energy Management's Code of Conduct is based on loyalty, impartiality and mutual respect. The staff is aware of its contents. DEM has a strong anti-corruption policy and the necessary procedures that ensure that it is implemented and practiced. Our strategy recognises that individual perceptions of corruption vary and it can be complex to provide clear guidance to ensure that our staffs protect the integrity of the company and that they are not placed in a compromising position. It also recognises that corruption takes several forms: bribery and extortion, collusion, other non-monetary incentives and other initiatives that provide the business with an improper advantage. The Danish Energy Management's policy ensures that:

- Increasing client, staff and investor confidence in the company's stability and performance,



- Business disruption is limited and staff time is not distracted from core business,
- Prevent the risk of litigation and prosecution,
- Hold employees and all agents of the company accountable to ethical standards.

## Sustainability Management

Based on a passion for energy, at Danish Energy Management we strive to build a future where energy is applied efficiently and sustainably in an affordable way. Our sustainability strategy reinforces this passion, directly linking our services to the important work that we do both in Denmark and abroad.

To obtain greater impact for scarce energy resources, and strengthen climate efforts, we continuously develop innovative consulting approaches, methods and tools that improve sustainability. We help our clients, partners & stakeholders achieve sustainability – and now we can also measure it – in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)! Our passion for energy is also directly linked to four of the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals, namely: 7, 11, 13 and 17.

Today, we are using our Sustainability Management & Measurement model as a tool for business development and business communication. Implementing this tool is helping our business to become even more sustainable in terms of people, planet and prosperity. This model also makes it easier to communicate work with sustainability within the organization, as well as to partners and all stakeholders.



Danish Energy Management is also a member of the Global Compact, and the principals of the Global Compact have a long tradition in the organization as a whole. In 2003 the Danish Management Group adopted a Code of Ethics and Business Integrity Management System, which was created following the ten (then nine) principals of the **United Nations Global Compact, and the OECD's Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises**, using these as a standard for business practice. In this way, our membership to the Global Compact builds upon more than a decade of work that has been done to systematically ensure that human rights are respected, labor standards are upheld, environmental impacts are minimized in all activities, and corruption is combated in all forms. As we move forward, participating in the Global Compact and working with the SDGs gives us a platform to take the Business Integrity Management System further, by adopting a company vision and strategy that addresses sustainability directly. It is an opportunity to create a clear picture for all of our employees and stakeholders regarding our passion and purpose for working with energy, and how we can measure and benchmark our progress.