

Does the message get through?

Development communications amidst global challenges and polarized discussion

Presentation of the evaluation



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1. What is the evaluation about

11.51 48%

maaliskuu 18, 2023 | 19:27

Ulkoministeriö julkaisee kehitysapua kaunistelevan mainoksen – mutta onko poliittinen vaikuttaminen aivan vaalien kynnyksellä todellakin ministeriön tehtävä?



TWITTER

POLITIikka

Kaksi viikkoa ennen vaaleja ulkoministeriö kampanioi kehitysapu-

11.53 47%

kauppalehti.fi/uutiset/mi

Alma Talent



KL

OMXH
-0.63%

TILAAJILLE

Miksi Suomi jatkaa kehitysapua Venäjälle tukeville maille? Ministeri Skinnari vastaa kritiikkiin

10.3.2023 12:00 | päivitetty 10.3.2023 12:15

[POLITIikka](#) [KAUPPA](#) [ULKOPOLITIikka](#) [VENÄJÄN TALOUS](#)
[YHDYSVALTOJEN TALOUS](#)


Dilemma. Ministeri Skinnarin mukaan kehitysapukysymykseen on olemassa helppo vastaus, mutta

19.26 39%



Politiikka | Hallitusneuvottelut

Kehitysyhteistyö on leikkauspöydällä – Grafiikat näyttävät, millaista se on nyt

Vuonna 2015 Suomessa leikattiin merkittävästi esimerkiksi YK-järjestöjen rahoituksesta ja maaohjelmista kumppanimaiden kanssa. Väistyvä hallitus kasvatti kehitysyhteistyömenoja, mutta ei leikkauksia edeltäneelle tasolle asti.



Venäjän tuhoamia asuintaloja Irpinissä Ukrainassa. Kuva on otettu viime vuoden keväällä. Kuva: VALENTIN OGIRENKO / Reuters

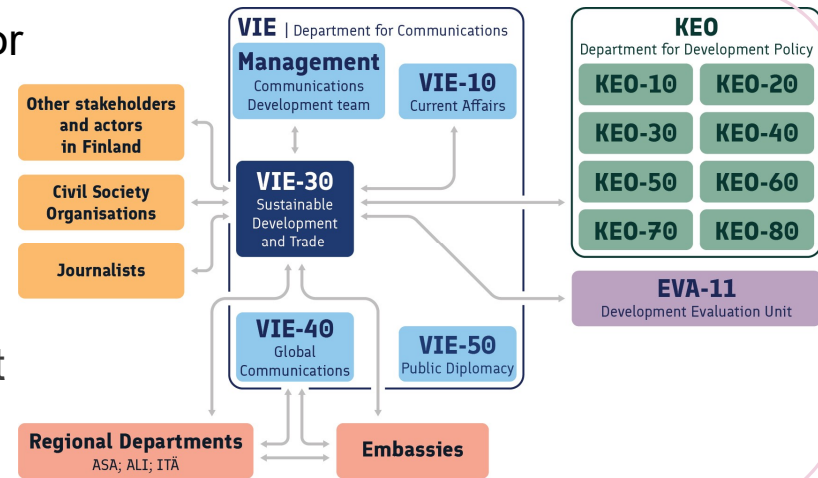
Anni Keski-Heikkilä HS

28.5. 2:00, Päivitetty 28.5. 9:36

Scope



- Development communications in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA) in 2015-22
- Department of communications and especially the role of the **Unit for Communications on Sustainable Development and Trade (VIE-30)**, which works on communications related to the ministry's development policy, development co-operation, external economic relations, and Team Finland



Purpose of the evaluation



- To assess if the work is efficient, and internally and externally coherent
- To examine if the work is effective by looking at the contribution of MFA to the visibility of development co-operation and development policy both in digital and social media as well as in other channels such as the MFA website, public events, and meetings.

Why is MFA communicating about development policy and cooperation – what are the objectives?

People understand the big picture and Finland's role in the global world

People understand that development policy is part of foreign and security policy

People understand that Finland's development cooperation is effective and produces results

People understand that development policy is part of international cooperation and it benefits Finland

Image of development policy and cooperation is updated to correspond to reality

People consider MFA development communications reliable and transparent

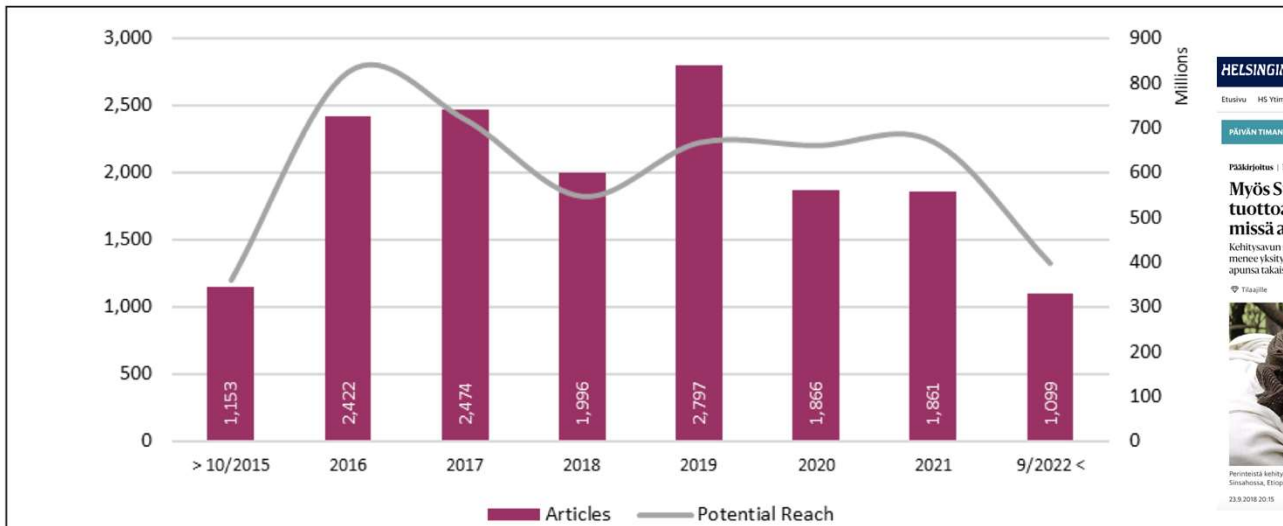
What does the unit for development communications do?

Train, support, spar and coach	Train, support, spar and coach MFA staff on communications
Produce	Produce news and content on current topics
Participate in	Participate in public events
Organise	Organise campaigns
Develop and produce	Develop and produce contents for Kehitys-Utveckling magazine, publications, UM.fi and OpenAid.fi and social media, and update webpages
Engage	Engage with media and journalists
Produce	Produce global education materials
Cooperate	Cooperate with CSOs and other stakeholders



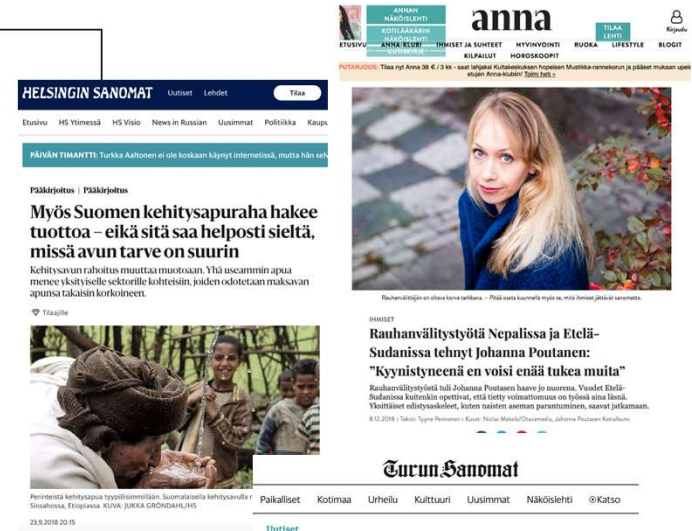
2. Media analysis: Development cooperation in Finnish media, 2015-22

Yearly exposure in Finnish digital media



Potential Reach figures reflect the sum of potential viewership for publications, websites and social media posts. Meltwater’s editorial content partner, [SimilarWeb](#), provides monthly viewership figures of online publications from across the globe. These numbers are based on monthly website traffic, and do not reflect the amount each article has been viewed. Note that the year of 2015 as well as 2022 are not full years.

Source: Media analysis conducted by Meltwater



Selvitys koulutusyhteistyöstä: Suomen tulisi palauttaa rahoitus Unicefille ennalleen

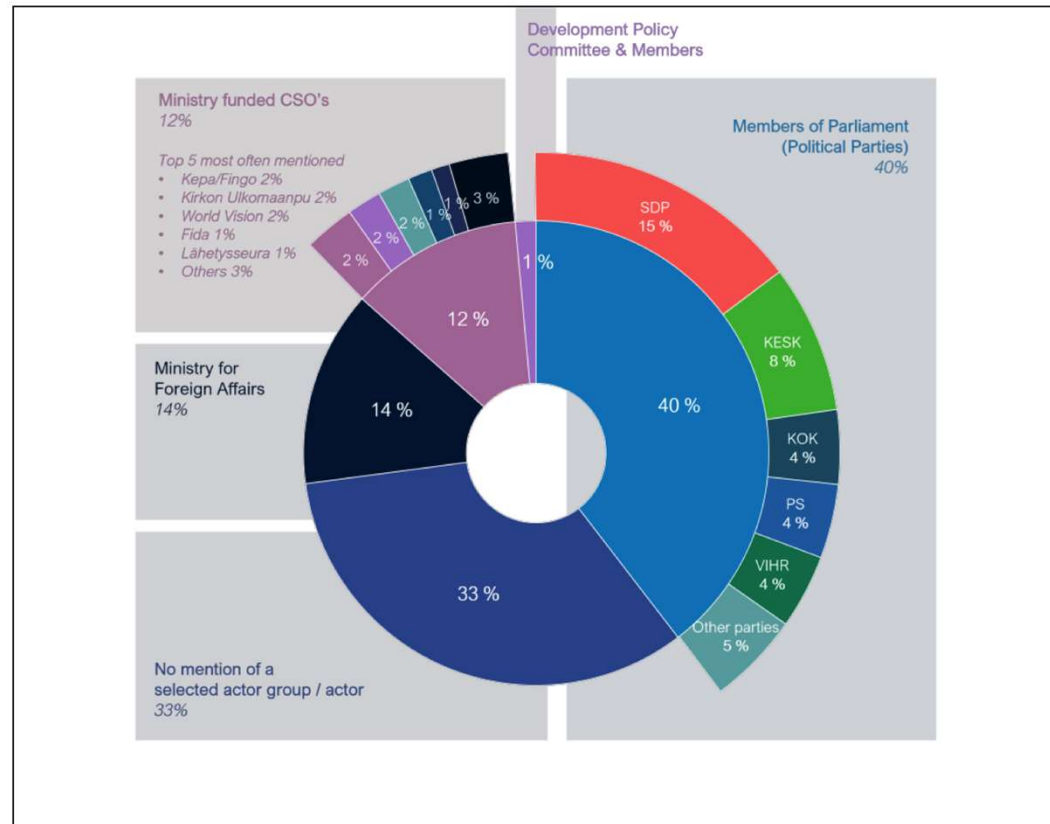
16.08.2018 | Päivitetty 16.08.2018

Ulkoministerin selvityksessä esitetään, että Suomen tulisi palauttaa rahoituksensa ennalleen YK:n lastenrahastossa Unicefissa tukeakseen kehitysyhteistyötä opetuksella.

Selvityksen mukaan Suomen pitäisi vaikuttaa myös EU:ssa, jotta unioni kasvattaisi panostaan koulutuksessa. Lisäksi Suomen tulisi vaikuttaa kehityspankeissa opetuksen kehittämiseksi.

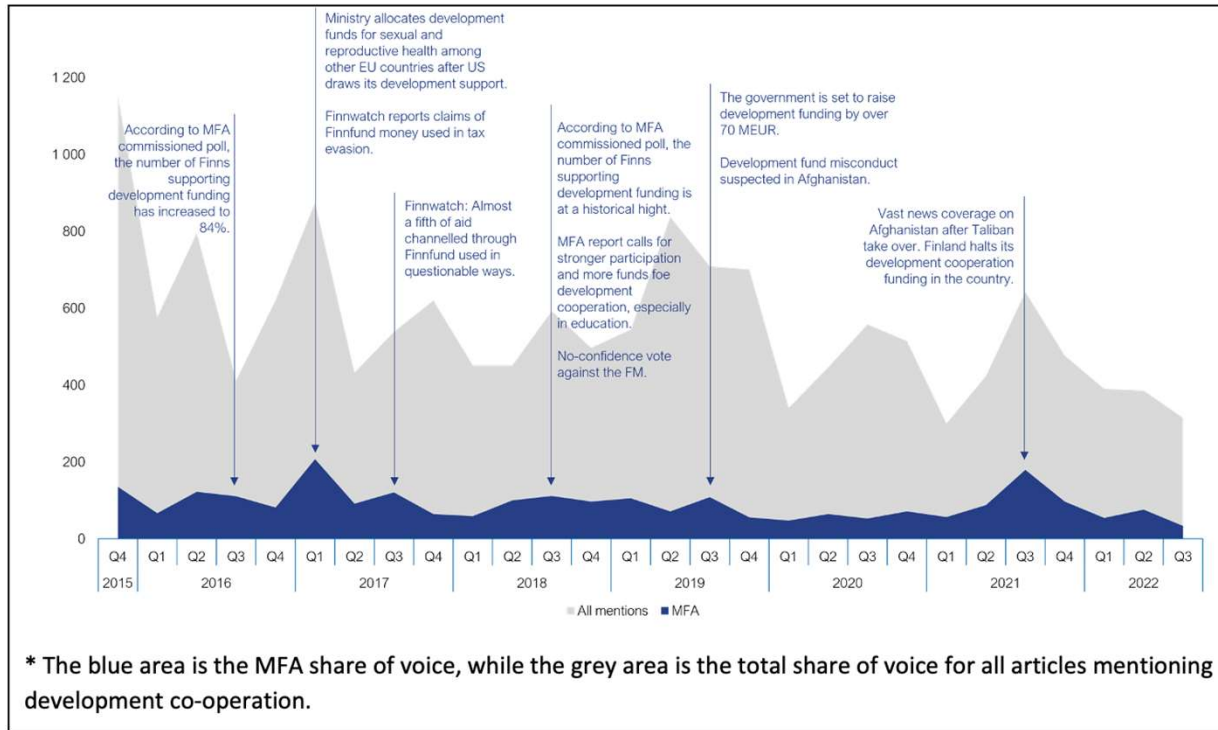
Selvitys liittyy YK:n alaisen kasvatus- tiede- ja kulttuurijärjestö Unescon nimeämään maailmanlaajuisen oppimiskriisiin. Kriisin seurauksena puolet

Actor groups visible in relation to development cooperation



Source: Media analysis conducted by Meltwater

MFA Share of Voice in digital media



Source: Media analysis conducted by Meltwater



Artikkeli on yli 7 vuotta vanha

Ulkomaat

Työpaikat ja yritykset syrjäyttivät kaikkein köyhimät kehityspoliittikan keulakuvana

Kehitysyhteistyön miljoonasäästöt näkyvät muun muassa pitkäaikaisille yhteistyömalleille annetussa tuessa ja järjestöjen rahoituksessa. Yritysten rooli ja muuttunut pakolaistilanne korostuvat ulkoministeriön laatimassa kehityspoliittisessa selonteossa.



Vuoden vanha lapsi leikkii maassa ja tausta Suomen yhdessä kehitysyhteistyökohteissa / EPA



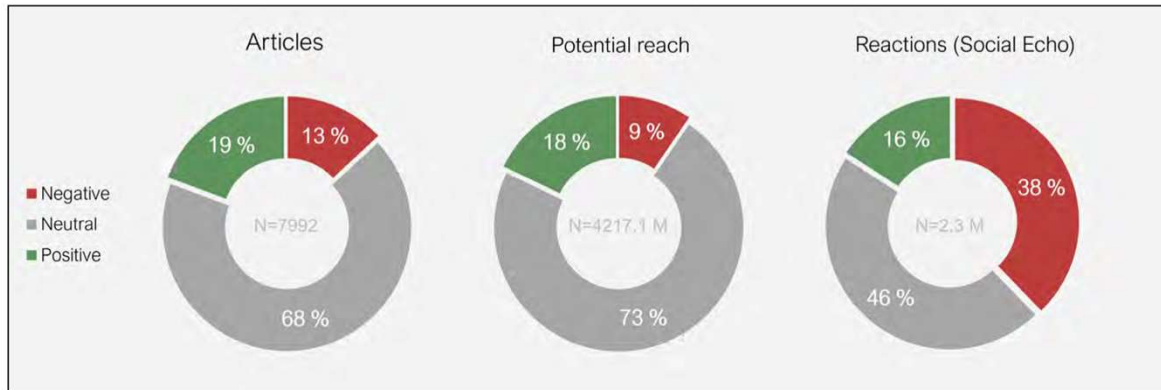
HELSINGIN SANOMAT Uutiset Lohotit Tila Kirjuri Hei Valikko

Ulkomaat | Afganistan
Talebanin voitonhuuma vaihtui konkurssivaltion arkeen: Tyhjä kassakaappi ja tilit näyttävät tulleen uskonoppineille yllätksenä
 Yli kahdeksata terveyskeskuksia on kinni kahden lääkäreiden kiertueella, ja kahdeksan sairaalaa ovat mukana.

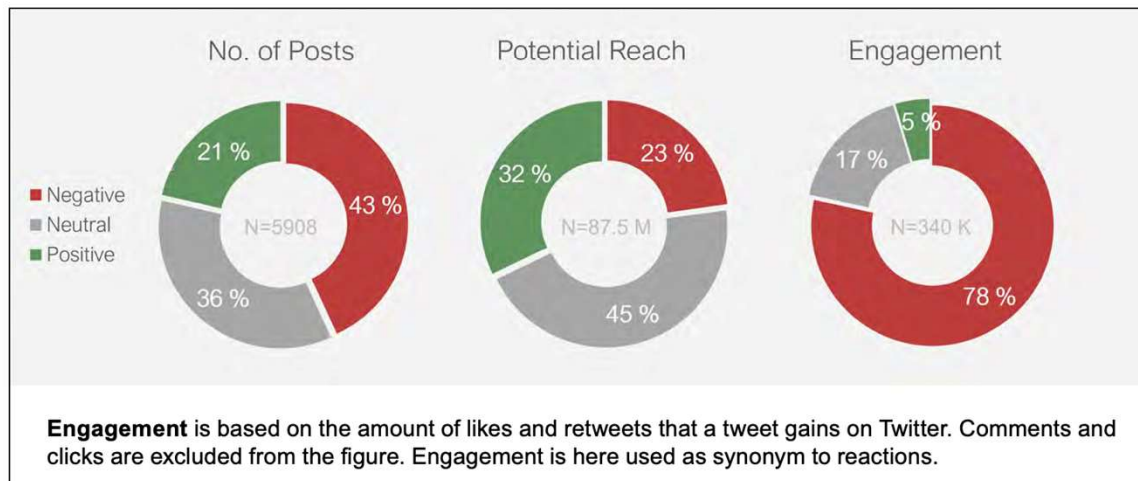


Afganistanin Terveyden hallinnassa olevien terveyskeskusten tyhjyyttä julkaisema kuva. KUVIA. AFGANISTANIN KESKUSPANKKI
Pakka Hakkala HS
 03.10.2021 19:47
JÄÄRIKKE Talebanin ekkänessä hallinnassa ottamien Afganistanin talous on ajautunut vajasta kahdeksan kuukauden romahdusportaaliksi.

Tone of communication, digital media vs Twitter



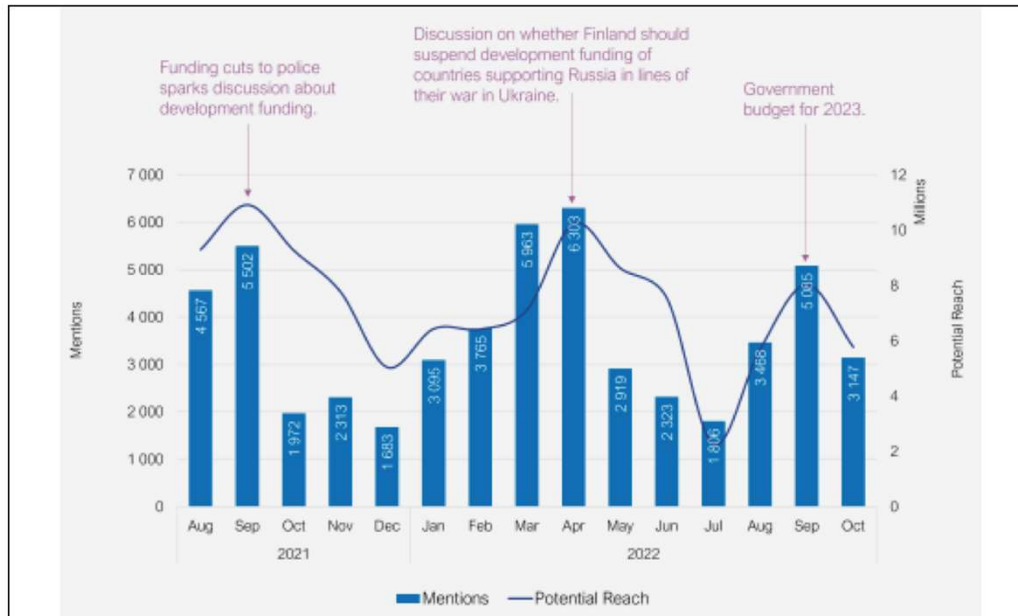
Digital media, October 2015 to September 2022



Twitter, August 2021 to October 2022

Source: Media analysis conducted by Meltwater

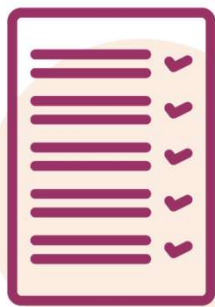
Tweets/mentions on Twitter



Potential reach for Twitter coverage is based on the following of the account. Higher reach figures indicate wider exposure. To keep the data comparable, only desktop reach is accounted for, since mobile traffic has only been collected from 2019 onwards. Traffic from mobile devices usually surpasses desktop viewership, so it is good to keep in mind these users are not included in the reach for this report.

Source: Media analysis conducted by Meltwater





3. Conclusions

Conclusions



Conclusion 1. Although important steps have been taken by MFA, the development communication work is not strategic enough. The strategic objectives and priorities of communications have not been set by MFA. Furthermore, according to interviews, MFA's overall objectives and priorities have not been set, nor clearly articulated, which makes it challenging to set the objectives in development communications



Conclusion 2. MFA has reached the public to some extent, but the visibility is low to those who don't actively follow and search for information or understand the professional jargon.

Conclusions

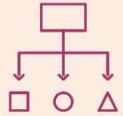


Conclusion 3. The MFA has occasionally influenced public discussion. Physical meetings with targeted audiences have been effective. As there is rarely discussion or debate in the MFA channels, the interactivity is limited. Also, the lack of spokespersons influences the capacity to engage in the discussion.



Conclusion 4. MFA has high capacity for planning the communications, producing content and acting as spoke persons - but the internal synergies have not been fully used.

Conclusions



Conclusion 5. Because of the MFA's overall management arrangements and demands for the development communication unit from all across the ministry, the unit is not able to prioritise and deprioritise its work and therefore it is not as efficient or effective that it could be.



Conclusion 6. The Development Academy for journalists is an important instrument and it creates media networks and maintains contacts with journalists – this could be used even better

Main findings of the Development Academy case study

1. The course has produced an important network of interested and informed journalists. In order to make the most of this network, the MFA's media efforts could be more responsive to the news agenda and the needs of the media.
2. Development policy and co-operation are rarely newsworthy in their own right, but through the Development Academy and other specific efforts, the MFA has helped to make the topic visible to the public.



Development aid is such a 'soft issue' that it gets buried under other topics. People see it as important and something that we should cover, but it's living a life of its own somewhere. If we don't touch it, it doesn't break or disappear.

(Interviewed journalist)

Main findings of the Development Academy case study

3. Interviewed journalists considered MFA's development communication fact-based, but abstract messages and professional jargon limit its reach.
4. The MFA is approached for interviews mostly when a story directly relates to the Ministry. Interviewed journalists usually use other sources for interviews or information on developing countries or wider global development issues.



*It's sometimes **really hard to understand what the message is.** [...] It's like you have to read between the lines to guess the message or call your contact [at the Ministry] to have them explain what the MFA is really trying to say.*

(Interviewed journalist)

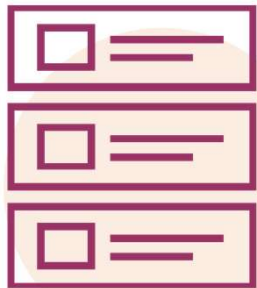
Conclusions



Conclusion 7. CSOs and other stakeholders are significant actors in development communication and global education in Finland, and there are many possibilities for co-operation and co-ordination with them.



Conclusion 8. There are many lessons that could be learned from the development communications in peer countries (Denmark and Sweden) and Finnish CSOs



4. Recommendations to MFA

Recommendations to MFA



MFA's leadership should provide strong support to strengthen the communications function.



MFA's leadership should support VIE-30 to reduce its workload by prioritising and focusing on the strategic communication.



No new functions should be added to the unit without significantly increasing resources and reorganising the work at department level.



Development communications, as well as the whole communication department, needs more detailed strategic and operational plans with priorities, key messages, defined target groups and channels.



Continue outsourcing of services with sufficiently long contracts.



Consolidate development communication materials. Increase plain language and concrete cases in the content.

Recommendations to MFA



VIE should select, coach, and train a group of spokespersons and support other staff with training. MFA experts should be proposed for interviews and presentations, example shown by MFA leadership.



The ministry should be present in new discussion arenas, that already have large audiences and invest more resources to create qualitatively high-standard dialogue.



MFA should continue the Development Academy and use the network of journalists it forms.



Communication contents should be more tailored, and contents linked to the news agenda.



MFA should collaborate and cooperate more with other actors. MFA should continue and strengthen support to global education.



VIE should strengthen the contact with peer countries to share the best practices.