EVALUATION

Review of Human Rights-Based Approach in Finland's Development Policy related to Forthcoming Evaluation

Evaluation on Finland's Development Policy and Cooperation

2018/4

EVALUATION

REVIEW OF HUMAN RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH IN FINLAND'S DEVELOPMENT POLICY RELATED TO FORTHCOMING EVALUATION

Final Report

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADA	Austrian Development Agency
BMZ	The Federal Ministry for Economic Development and Cooperation, Germany
CMI	Crisis Management Initiative
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
Danida	Danish International Development Agency
DFID	Department for International Development, UK
EU	European Union
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
GIZ	Gesellschaft fur International Zusammenarbeit, Germany
HIV and AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus and Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
HRBA	Human Rights-Based Approach
ICI	Institutional Co-operation Instrument
IDP	Internally Displaced People
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
IOB	The Policy and Operations Evaluation Department, Netherlands
LCF	Local Co-operation Fund
LGBTI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender/Transsexual, Intersex
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MFA	Ministry for Foreign Affairs (Finland)
MIDA	Migration for Development in Africa
NGDO	Non-Governmental Development Organisation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PWD	Person/People with Disability
RBM	Results Based Management
RWI	Raoul Wallenberg Institute
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
ToR	Terms of Reference
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
Unicef	United Nations Children's Fund

SUMMARY

Background

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (MFA) commissioned this review to assess the evaluability of Finland's HRBA implementation. The purpose of the review was to inform the design of an upcoming evaluation on the implementation of a HRBA in Finland's development policy and cooperation between 2012 and 2018.

The study included a review of the coherence of Finland's HRBA policies, strategies and guidelines; a meta-analysis of evaluations commissioned by the MFA and comparator evaluations done by other Nordic and like-minded countries; and an evaluability assessment. The review was guided by an analytical framework and sources of data included documents and interviews with key MFA representatives. The evaluation team reviewed existing development policies, strategies and guidelines related to human rights and HRBA, and reviewed documentation from a sample of 40 projects. Each of the sampled projects was rated for evaluability using the criteria in the analytical framework. There were several limitations to the study: many of the projects in the approved sample did not have adequate reporting information, and there was little data available on the implementation and experiences of HRBA in Nordic and other like-minded countries.

Findings and Conclusions

Policy analysis

The HRBA has generally increased coherence between the spheres of human rights and development but the definition of the HRBA has remained quite abstract. Different interpretations on its nature, whether a paradigm change, a means to enhance quality, or "one more cross-cutting issue", have over lived within the MFA staff until present. The HRBA seems to be mainly seen as a means to enhance quality within the MFA. Therefore, its underlying potential to be used in discovering the root causes of imbalances of power and resources has not been fully recognized. Human rights related work is implemented by various departments and units of the MFA, which has partly resulted in different policy and conceptual interpretations and implementation practices. The interpretations of the concepts in the like-minded countries also vary, affecting the opportunities for forming common approaches, but still opportunities for mutual learning exist. Interpretations vary from highlighting the power relations and individual empowerment (emphasis on the roles of duty bearers and rights holders) to pragmatism and emphasizing the role of the state.

The linkages of Finland's HRBA with other key policies and frameworks, for example the Sustainable Development Goals (Agenda 2030) and MFA's RBM/TOC, have either not been articulated or have been only superficially elaborated and need to be clarified. Some ambiguity also remains regarding the HRBA and its role vis-à-vis the cross-cutting objectives. Consequently, the understanding and the meaning of these frameworks varies both within the MFA and its partners involved in implementation, and require clearer and more practical upstream and downstream policy guidance. The MFA's guidelines for implementing HRBA have remained quite general and not utilisation focused. In order to understand the role and applicability of HRBA in different aid modalities, sectors, and programmes, general guidelines have not proven to be sufficient. For example, the country strategies as downstream implementation documents reflect the HRBA principles/objectives but up to now they have remained superficial in this respect. Policy dialogue was not addressed as part of the evaluability study.

The MFA management of development policy and cooperation is a fundamental part of HRBA implementation. Internal mechanisms, such as the compliance with standards and principles, including HRBA, is being looked into in the ongoing development cooperation practice reform, and its results would thereby form a good starting point for the HRBA evaluation. With this reform, the more strategic use of HRBA, including in sectors where it has not been widely implemented (such as humanitarian aid and private sector and business endeavours), and enhanced quality assurance may provide a better chance of reaching the desired 'human rights transformative' level and for gaining valuable experiences for the future.

Meta-analysis: evaluability assessment and information gaps

Limited documented information makes assessing the plausibility of achieving the intended results challenging – some positive results were found, which indicates that there are more results, but they are not reported. A majority of documents lack a clear statement of the human rights considerations that the intervention aims to address. Many projects implicitly embody human rights principles in their objectives (e.g. supporting participation, transparency or inclusion) but do not provide an explicit reference to the human rights situation in the country framing the intervention. Most do not define duty bearers and rights holders and although a majority do consider vulnerable groups, this is often a general reference without a diagnosis of what leads to vulnerability and how the intervention will impact them. The plausibility of MFA interventions leading to intended HRBA results is medium to low.

Measuring impact of the HRBA is too ambitious and not feasible. When reporting data is available, the focus is on activities and outputs rather than outcomes and impact. Almost half of the projects sampled did not have monitoring data available and very few provided evidence that there was a baseline conducted at the beginning of the project. There was little evidence of disaggregated data being collected and when it was, it was generally only by gender and not by other factors affecting human rights (e.g. ethnicity, socio-economic factors, disability). There is little HRBA-specific evidence of impact or lessons learned in the sampled evaluations. The feasibility of assessing the impact of the MFA's interventions is low, based on the data available. This is also in line with the

lessons learned from other similar international and MFA's evaluations. It is methodologically possible to assess outcomes to a certain extent within the MFA's regular resourcing and time allocations for centralised evaluations, but not to go beyond that.

Information gaps are related to definition, contextualisation, analysis and monitoring of human rights. There are significant gaps in the definition, contextualisation and analysis of human rights considerations that interventions seek to address. In the sampled projects, a majority of project documents did not include a clear statement of the human rights considerations that the development intervention aimed to address. While project objectives often implicitly include human rights principles (such as supporting participation, transparency or inclusion), the project documents do not include an analysis of the human rights situation in the country, do not define duty bearers and rights holders, and/or do not present a diagnosis of vulnerable groups and the factors that lead to vulnerability.

It is difficult to assess the extent to which the projects have been designed to contribute to human rights results without a clear analysis of the human rights situation in the country of intervention and without a demonstration that the project was designed with an awareness of the national strategies and policies on human rights. In addition, there is little consideration of the factors that contribute to the infringement of rights and whether these are targeted by the MFA-supported intervention. In most of the projects reviewed, the role of each of the actors involved in the project in relation to human rights (with beneficiaries as rights holders and the state as a duty bearer) is not clear. It is not clear whether the projects aim to contribute to the recognition of rights holders and duty bearers, nor of their corresponding rights, responsibilities and obligations. As such, the plausibility of MFA interventions leading to intended HRBA results is medium to low.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Place the evaluation in the context of current development cooperation practice reform within the MFA to utilize to the maximum the results of the reform and inform its further development. Similarly, it should be put in the context of the work on results-based management (RBM), and inform the further development of results maps (theories of change) for Finland's Development Policy Programme priority areas (indicators, targets etc.) in terms of the HRBA. Evaluation should closely cooperate with and/or utilize the results of other relevant and recent evaluations and MFA's internal assessments (e.g. internal country strategy assessment).

Recommendation 2: The objective should be to generate learning that supports the MFA to improve their strategic HRBA and programming approaches further in view of the current MFA's context. It should also contribute to the preparation of the new Development Policy Programme.

Recommendation 3: Consequently, the purpose of the evaluation should be twofold: Firstly, it should produce a compilation of good practice examples and lessons learnt observed between 2012 and 2019 for sharing insights and learning from work done across MFA and potential communication with partners

(learning). Secondly, it should provide an overview of results of Finland's HRBA policy initiatives and development cooperation at different policy and implementation levels (accountability) to the extent possible.

Recommendation 4: Evaluation should be essentially a forward-looking evaluation and theory-based, taking into consideration the development policy practise reform and the RBM efforts by the MFA. It should employ the principles of utilization-focused evaluation.

Recommendation 5: Evaluation questions should remain focused on the current MFA context. Based on the findings of this study and the current context of the MFA, the evaluation questions should focus on how the HRBA is perceived in the results maps (theories of change) and whether there is a need for improvement, if so, what kind; and how the HRBA has and should be taken into consideration in different aspects of the development cooperation practice reform. Accountability assessment should focus on what are, and to what extent have the results/outcomes (evidence-based/informed and/or plausible) of Finland's development cooperation materialized and what the lessons learned are.

Recommendation 6: Given the complexity of assessing human rights results and weak evaluability, the focus should be on outcomes. A mix of qualitative and quantitative methods should be used, but the evaluation should mainly rely on and apply qualitative methods. Evaluation should not be method-driven, but methods need to be applied to the evaluation context. As mixed methods with emphasis on qualitative methods are proposed, the evaluation questions should not strictly follow the OECD criteria. It is proposed that the evaluation framework and matrix will be issue-based.

Recommendation 7: The evaluation should have a significantly broader scope than the evaluability study, but still be restricted, thematically or otherwise. It would be imperative to include most or all aid modalities but include only 1–2 priority areas in the results map or other selected thematic areas (humanitarian assistance, private sector), combined with policy dialogue and mainstreaming efforts. The evaluation should cover the relevant departments and units of the MFA directly involved with implementation of the HRBA in Finland's development policy and cooperation. In order to enable lessons learned, the evaluation should focus on both types of interventions, positive and not so successful examples.

Recommendation 8: Sufficient time, financial and human resources are required to carry out the evaluation in the proposed scope. The budget and time allocated for the evaluation should be at least at the same level or more as in the MFA's gender and women's rights evaluation, which faced similar evaluability challenges. Longer field missions should be considered (two weeks minimum) for not just validating and triangulating the data but also collecting primary data and/or digging out the project-specific information.

Recommendation 9: In the selection of the Evaluation Team, the key selection criteria should be in finding the balance between expertise on HRBA, methodology (mixed, with an emphasis on qualitative methods) and multi-and bilateral programming. The selection of the TL should be based on the proven expertise on team leadership, in addition to the thematic expertise.

Recommendation 10: Maximize lessons learned from the recent Danish and planned SIDA HRBA evaluations. Lessons learned could be in a form of a joint workshop at the end of the exercise, with discussing the results and brainstorming on the best ways forward. As Danish HRBA evaluation is also very recent, it would be advisable to utilise their lessons learned as well and include them in a possible joint workshop.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Aim and purpose of the report

This report is the Draft Final Report on the "Review on Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) in Finland's Development Policy related to the forthcoming evaluation" on the HRBA. The review responds to the Terms of Reference (TOR), detailed in Annex 1.

The Constitution of Finland identifies human rights protection as one of the objectives of Finland's participation in international cooperation. This objective has been introduced into Finland's human rights and development policies. Human rights related work is carried out in different departments and units in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (MFA).

The purpose of this review is to inform the design of an upcoming evaluation on the implementation of a HRBA in Finland's development policy and cooperation 2012–2018.

In this context, the MFA commissioned this study to assess the evaluability of Finland's HRBA implementation. The purpose of this review is to inform the design of an upcoming evaluation on the implementation of a HRBA in Finland's development policy and cooperation between 2012 and 2018 by:

1. Conducting a review of the coherence of Finland's HRBA policies, strategies and guidelines during this period, to analyse interrelations between different policies, strategies and guidelines.
2. Performing a meta-analysis of evaluations commissioned by the MFA and comparator evaluations done by other Nordic and like-minded countries to identify key lessons learned and aggregate and analyse the results and other information produced by different evaluation reports commissioned by different MFA Units and other commissioners. The analysis summarizes what is already known about HRBA implementation through existing evaluations and points out which areas are not yet covered and/or need to be studied further in the upcoming evaluation.
3. Undertaking an evaluability assessment to highlight aspects of the evaluability of HRBA in Finland's development and cooperation policies and activities for the forthcoming evaluation. The evidence from different policies, strategies, guidelines and existing evaluation reports will be transformed into accessible knowledge on HRBA implementation in Finnish development cooperation.

The evaluability study provides options for the scope, evaluation questions, methods, resources and expertise required for the forthcoming HRBA evaluation. The conclusions and recommendations of the assessment are tailored for use by the MFA in the planning and preparation of the forthcoming evaluation.

1.2 Report structure

This report is structured as follows:

- Section 2 provides details on the approach, methodology and limitations of the study.
- Section 3 presents background on Finland's approach to human rights and HRBA and the analysis on the coherence of the HRBA policies, strategies and guidelines during 2012-2018.
- Section 4 provides a meta-analysis of the implementation of HRBA.
- Section 5 discusses international approaches to HRBA.
- Section 6 provides the conclusions on the evaluability of HRBA.
- Section 7 puts forward the recommendations for the forthcoming evaluation.

The annexes include the TOR, analytical framework, list of sources and people consulted, and a list of the projects sampled for the study.

2 APPROACH, METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS

2.1 Overall analytical framework

The review was guided by an analytical framework, provided in Annex 2, which is divided into three sections that correspond to the three parts of the assignment:

- Policy coherence: How coherent has Finland's approach to HRBA in development policy been between 2012 and 2018?
- Meta-analysis: What are the lessons learned based on MFA evaluations in terms of implementing a HRBA in development cooperation interventions? What international evaluations have been carried out on HRBA and what lessons can be drawn from these evaluations in terms of putting HRBA into practice?
- Evaluability: What is the evaluability of HRBA in Finland's development cooperation policies and interventions, based on the analysis on the policy coherence, meta-analysis of the implementation, and the analysis of the international experiences of the like-minded countries?

2.2 Methodology

This section provides an overview of the evaluation team's methods for data collection and data analysis and discusses the limitations of the evaluation. Overall, data sources consisted of documents and selected semi-structured interviews.

2.2.1 Data sources and analysis methods

Document review

The document review was split into three streams, following the questions and criteria in the analytical framework:

Stream 1: Policy analysis

The evaluation team conducted a document review of existing development policies, strategies and guidelines related to human rights and HRBA to assess how they are inter-related and their level of coherence (see Annex 3). The overall picture of MFA's HRBA-related policies was analysed, to see whether there are overlaps or contradictions. The team reviewed HRBA policies executed by MFA, as well as the overlap between HRBA and the four related MFA priorities

The policy analysis assessed the coherence of the development policies and strategies in relation to human rights and HRBA.

on: the rights of women and girls; reinforcing developing countries' economies to generate more jobs, livelihoods and wellbeing; democratic and well-functioning societies, including taxation capacity; food security, access to water and energy and the sustainable use of natural resources. The document review also assessed changes in the way HRBA has been defined in Finnish development policies between 2012 and 2018.

Stream 2: Meta-analysis

The meta-analysis had two sections.

First, the evaluation team conducted a review of the 40 sampled projects against the criteria in the analytical framework. (The sampling strategy and a list of sampled projects are provided in Annex 4.). Where an evaluation was available (in 37% of the sample, or 15 projects), the meta-analysis relied on this information. Where there was no evaluation, the analysis used information available in annual reports or completion reports. In 45% of cases (18 projects), the sampled projects did not have any monitoring information available. The evaluation team assessed the extent to which the documents for the sample of 40 projects provided the data required to undertake an evaluation of Finland's HRBA as an approach in development policy. The team reviewed available evaluation reports and other reporting documents, such as annual, semi-annual or completion reports. When projects did not have results information available, the team reviewed project documents, proposals and applications to assess the design of the projects. The evaluation team also considered the findings of a meta-evaluation on programme-based support to Finnish civil society organisations (Programme-based support through Finnish Civil Society Organizations (2017) and the evaluability study on Finnish support to women and girls and gender equality (Impact evaluability assessment and meta-analysis of Finland's support to women and girls and gender equality (2017).

Second, the evaluation team conducted a comparative analysis of international approaches and definitions of HRBA in Nordic and other like-minded countries, as well as an analysis of the one international evaluation available, commissioned by Denmark. This analysis provided a sense of lessons learned and good practices from other international approaches to human rights and HRBA in development policy.

Stream 3: Evaluability study

The evaluability study analysed the findings of Streams 1 and 2 and drew conclusions on: the extent to which the policies, strategies and guidelines of the MFA were consistent, increasing coherence in the understanding and clear guidance for the implementation of the HRBA in Finnish development cooperation, and where gaps and limitations impeded or did not support its implementation.

Based on the analysis and conclusions, the evaluation team made recommendations for the upcoming evaluation of Finland's HRBA in terms of: its scope, factors to consider, the evaluation questions, methodology and resourcing. It also provided recommendations on how MFA should continue with HRBA.

40 projects were reviewed and a comparison to international experiences was made to assess achievements and lessons learnt.

Conclusions were drawn on coherence and implementation of the HRBA in Finnish development cooperation as well as gaps and limitations.

2.2.2 Semi-structured interviews

The policy analysis and evaluability study were complemented by eight interviews with key MFA representatives to gain a deeper understanding of the interrelations of the different policies, strategies and guidelines relating to HRBA are situated, the changes over time and the perceptions of MFA staff on whether there are gaps in Finland's definition and approach to HRBA. The use of interviews was suggested by the MFA Evaluation Unit, although not included in the Terms of Reference. The interviews were guided by questions set out in the analytical framework. A list of interviewees is available in Annex 6.

2.2.3 Sampling strategy

The meta-evaluation entailed a review of a representative sample of evaluation of the 3,272 MFA projects and the evaluators used a stratified random sampling strategy. The primary criteria for the sampling was those projects that began after 2012 and those Case Types indicated as important for the evaluation by the MFA (Multi-bilateral projects, Bilateral projects, International Nongovernmental Organizations (INGO) support, Finnish Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs) receiving program support, Finnish NGOs receiving project support, Fund for Local Cooperation. The evaluators used this reduced database of 1 321 records to add additional sampling criteria to reduce the size of the portfolio to fit the resources available for this review. These additional sampling criteria included: a) Case type; b) Time period (projects that had begun between 2012-2018); c) Budget (only projects of more than EUR 20 000); d) Program countries (to include key partner countries referred to in Finnish bilateral aid policy);e) Language (documentation available in English); f) General information (only projects with complete information in the database were kept).

When these sampling criteria were applied to the database there were 101 available records. To have a statistically credible sample size (95% confidence level with a 5% margin of error) the sample size was 74 projects. Due to time and resources, the team reviewed half of this number.

Some corrections were added to this original sample to improve the composition of the portfolio, based on discussions with the MFA.

2.2.4 Data analysis

For the evaluability and meta-analysis streams of the review, the team developed a scoring system against which each of the sampled projects were rated using the judgement criteria in the analytical framework. Each project was rated on a scale of 1 to 3 for each of the questions in the analytical framework as detailed below. These ratings were then collated together in a traffic light scoring system to summarise the findings for each question in the analytical framework, as detailed in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Traffic light system used to score evaluability

	Low evaluability. The data rates poorly against the judgement criteria. More than 50% of the sample lacks evidence to support more than one judgement criteria. Major improvements need to be made.
	Medium evaluability. There is data on more than one judgement criteria for more than 50% of the sample but it is not sufficient to support a robust evaluation. Significant improvements could be made.
	Satisfactory evaluability. There is data on a majority of judgement criteria but gaps in consistency. Some improvements could be made.

2.3 Limitations

There were three major limitations for this evaluability study.

The availability of resources: The database provided by the MFA contained 3,272 project records and the evaluation team calculated that resources would allow for the assessment of 37 projects. Our sampling strategy outlines the way in which the evaluation team overcame this challenge and ensured that our sample responds to the needs of the MFA, but limitations remain regarding the statistical credibility of the generalizations that can be made with such a small sample size. As the purpose of the study is to support the development of the methodology and evaluation questions for the forthcoming evaluation, the small sample size should not invalidate the evaluability findings as they give a sense of the main trends in the availability of data in the MFA's overall portfolio.

The availability of data: The original sample approved by the MFA was not scrutinised for the availability of evaluation documents before data collection began. Once all available documents were shared with the evaluation team, it became clear that many projects did not have reporting information, either because the MFA did not have such reports or because the projects had been recently established. One of the projects was in fact a duplicate under a different description.

The evaluation team agreed to review an additional four projects (selected by the MFA) that had recent evaluation reports available. However, even with this addition, only 15 evaluations were available. The evaluation team used annual reports and completion reports to fill gaps, but 18 projects still lacked reporting information, in some instances evaluation reports were missing, in other cases MTR or annual reports were missing

The availability of international data on implementation and evaluation of HRBA: There was little data available on the implementation and experiences of HRBA in Nordic and other like-minded countries. Only one HRBA evaluability study was available, and a limited number of other HRBA documents, such as policies, guidelines and evaluations. This made the mapping of the international experiences (such as reports related to international ODA support to HRBA utilizing OECD DAC databases) challenging.

3 FINLAND'S APPROACH TO HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS AND THE HUMAN RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH

3.1 Background to the policy analysis

The human rights policy of Finland follows internationally binding resolutions and the Government's Human Rights Report.

The constitution of Finland identifies human rights protection as one of the objectives of Finland's participation in international cooperation. The human rights policy of Finland follows internationally binding resolutions and the Government's Human Rights Report, which outlines the foci of the Finnish human rights policy (MFA, 2017a). Human rights have been mentioned in Finnish development policies since the 1990s, following a UN resolution on the interlinkage between security and development, which was later complemented by an additional connection to environment. UN Agencies agreed on the UN Statement of Common Understanding on Human Rights-Based Approaches to Development Cooperation and Programming in 2003 (hrbaportal.org), after which its purpose, the realisation of human rights in development cooperation, has been mentioned in Finland's development policy programmes.

Accelerated by the commitment of subsequent ministers in the MFA in the late 1990s and early 2000s, the human rights perspective in development programmes has been progressively strengthened. A desire to further integrate human rights into development led to a more specific approach to human rights in development policy and cooperation and elaborated in Finland's 2012 development policy programme. For the first time, the HRBA was defined as a core approach of Finnish development policy.

The first Human Rights Strategy (2013) stated that human rights considerations should be included in all spheres of foreign and security policy.

The first Human Rights Strategy, published in 2013 by the Foreign Service, outlined the principles, objectives and procedures of the human rights policy of Finland and mainstreamed them in all Finnish foreign and security policy. It emphasized the principles of universality, which is the basis of Finland's human rights policy, and the indivisibility of rights. According to the strategy, states are primarily responsible for respecting, protecting and promoting human rights. It also states that Finland's human rights policy should be coherent and comprehensive, working to include human rights considerations in all spheres of foreign and security policy. The cross-cutting themes in the strategy were the eradication of discrimination and increasing openness and participation.

The somewhat abstract nature of human rights vis-a-vis their implementation in development cooperation and the limited funding for the operationalisation of human rights principles were seen as a challenging combination in advancing HRBA in Finnish development policy implementation. According to interviews, this led to a growing need for guidelines for HRBA implementation. The Finnish guidelines published in 2015 were created in coordination with different MFA departments that sought to outline a common understanding of the HRBA and how to implement it through different development cooperation channels and instruments.

After the change of government in Finland in 2015, a new development policy programme was created in 2016, strongly interlinked with the recently published Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and with a continuing emphasis on HRBA.

The abstract nature of human rights vis-a-vis their implementation and the limited funding were the central challenges in advancing HRBA.

3.2 Policy analysis – How coherent has Finland's approach to HRBA been in 2012–2018?

3.2.1 About HRBA definition

While there is no universal definition of the HRBA, UN agencies have agreed on some of its general attributes. According to the UN Common Understanding (UNEG 2011, 13), the Human Rights-Based Approach should further the realization of human rights in all development endeavours. Human rights standards and principles should guide development interventions in all programme processes. HRBA identifies rights holders and their entitlements and corresponding duty bearers and their obligations. It works towards strengthening the capacities of rights holders to make their claims and of duty bearers to meet their obligations. The rights holders are entitled to claim for their rights, hold duty bearers responsible for fulfilling those rights, and are obliged to respect the rights of others. The governments and their institutions are seen as judicial duty bearers. They have an obligation also to regulate the action of moral duty bearers, the actors with effect on rights holders' lives, such as parents, civil society, and private companies (Unicef wiki).

HRBA identifies rights holders and their entitlements and corresponding duty bearers and their obligations.

The approach emphasizes the interrelationship and indivisibility of universal rights, seeing all rights, including both social-economic and civil-political rights, as equally important to human dignity. Some definitions highlight the analysis of inequalities and unjust distribution of power as core development problems and impeding factors in development. In these, all human beings are seen as agents of action rather than objects of power or charity (Wiman 2012, 2). This view challenges the former needs-based relationship between development partners and implies a paradigm change for the development sector. In all definitions, the central principles of HRBA are empowerment, participation and accountability.

The HRBA can be justified in different ways, for example according to the following normative, ethical, and pragmatic justifications (Nyamu-Musembi & Cornwall 2004, 2): The normative justification is based on values, putting politics into the heart of development practice as it demands that existing resourc-

es are shared more equally. The ethical justification, which requires a reflection of power dynamics and obligations, emphasizes the right of all people to a certain level of well-being. The pragmatic justification relies on the accountability of the recipient state in implementing policy measures – as rights imply duties, and duties demand accountability.

The Finnish justification of HRBA in development policy is pragmatic, emphasizing the accountability of the states. According to MFA officials interviewed, the UN based definition of the human rights approach was an adequate choice for Finland as it emphasised the UN Conventions and principles and thus a credible basis for acceptance by others, such as the partner countries of Finland. Furthermore, the emphasis on economic and social rights is logical for development cooperation objectives and highlights the development of capacities of duty bearers (government bodies), and partner countries could find the approach beneficial for them. However, according to one interviewee, some partners may fear support given to the partner countries' CSOs, sometimes formed by or supporting the political opposition, and emphasizing the role of rights holders. Their advocacy work on human rights may be mixed with opposition politics.

3.2.2 Development of HRBA policies and strategies

The MFA's approach to HRBA has been developed through three key strategies: the Ministry's Development Policy Programme 2012, its Human Rights Strategy and Action Plan 2013, and its Development Policy 2016. This section examines the human rights content of each of these and assesses their alignment and coherence.

Finland's Development Policy Programme 2012

In the development policy programme of 2012 (MFA, 2012a), HRBA was defined to coincide with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The programme emphasises the values of universality, self-determination, non-discrimination and equality, as well as the participation of all in the definition and implementation of development. These concepts are described briefly but there is no further elaboration on their use. The policy programme did not mention resources to be allocated for the introduction and adoption of HRBA.

Special emphasis was placed on the rights of women and children, ethnic, linguistic and religious minorities and indigenous peoples, the rights of persons with disabilities, people living with HIV and AIDS, and the rights of sexual and gender minorities.

The Finnish HRBA to development was defined to include civil and political rights and freedoms as well as economic, social and cultural rights, stressing the need for the poorest people to know their rights and have the capacity to act for their fulfilment. The four foci of the policy programme were: democratic and responsible society enhancing human rights; green economy with participation and job-creation; sustainable management of natural resources; and human development. Special emphasis was placed on the rights of women and children, ethnic, linguistic and religious minorities and indigenous peoples, the rights of persons with disabilities, people living with HIV and AIDS, and the rights of sexual and gender minorities. The policy programme also outlined a commitment to fight against human trafficking and child labour.

The HRBA was supposed to be included in all development actions. The policy programme lists the development cooperation instruments in use for promot-

ing human rights. It does not refer to HRBA but rather urges the improvement of the effectiveness of international human rights instruments. Humanitarian assistance was outlined as a needs-based activity, independent of development policies.

The Millennium Development Goals (2000–2015) were still in force during the creation and implementation of Finland's policy programme although they were not highlighted in the policy document, having been introduced in previous policies. The guiding principles of HRBA coincided with the MDGs: both emphasize participation, empowerment, and national ownership; their ultimate goal is well-being, human dignity and the eradication of poverty. While the MDGs were narrow, time-bound, and non-mandatory recommendations with indicators, the HRBA covers a large spectrum of rights that are legally binding and formal but with no deadline or clear tools to measure the complexity of human rights issues (UNDP, 2006). This interlinkage, while helpful in adjusting the sequencing and the logics in implementation and particularly in reporting on the achievement of MDGs, was not referred to in the policy programme.

Finland's Human Rights Strategy and Action Plan 2013

The Human Rights Strategy of the Foreign Service of Finland (MFA, 2013a) published in 2013 aimed to unify and mainstream human rights in all segments of Finland's foreign policy. Its cross-cutting themes to guide all activities include non-discrimination and increasing openness and participation. The strategy emphasises the indivisibility of human rights, as well as the equal importance of civil, political, and cultural and social-economic rights. It makes a reference to the development policy programme in its emphasis on economically, socially and environmentally sustainable development, and refers to HRBA in the context of increasing coherence between human rights and development policies through this strategy.

The strategy emphasised the equal importance of civil, political and cultural and social-economic rights.

The empowerment and participation of marginalized and discriminated groups is mentioned as a special target group, and especially groups facing multiple forms of discrimination, such as women and girls belonging to an ethnic minority. According to interviewees, the strategy clarified the role of human rights in the Foreign Service, although HRBA was only referred to in the context of development cooperation. Although it still is valid, the strategy needs an update, according to some interviewees.

In the Action Plan (MFA, 2013b) attached to the Human Rights Strategy, the cross-cutting themes were non-discrimination and increasing openness and participation, aligning with the principles of the UN Common Understanding. The MFA spearheaded two-year projects to implement the cross-cutting themes, including projects on: *Enhancing the human rights and participation of women and girls, enhancing validity and implementation of economic and social rights, particularly participation of marginalized groups*, such as Roma and indigenous people, people with disabilities and LGBTI, and *Increasing participation of civil society*.

The Human Rights Strategy and Action Plan apply to all Finland's foreign and security policies. The Action Plan links its objectives to the work of each MFA department. The interlinkages with HRBA are logical in its objectives, such as

mainstreaming human rights in all foreign and security policies, strengthening the universality of human rights and advancing them in economic relations and cooperation with e.g. EU and partners, taking human rights into account in the conflict management cycle, and strengthening the rule of law in international relations. The Action Plan states that HRBA should cover all development policy, and its mainstreaming will be enhanced through training and guidelines for its implementation.

Finland's Development Policy 2016

The development policy 2016 (MFA, 2016a) emphasizes the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), endorsed by the UN in 2015. According to the policy, the long-term values and principles guiding Finland's development policy and cooperation "include democracy and the rule of law; gender equality and human rights; freedom of speech; a sustainable market economy and sustainable use of natural resources; and the Nordic welfare state, including a high level of education." The HRBA is mentioned, but without reference to duty bearers and rights holders. The relationship between the SDGs and HRBA is logical and mutually reinforcing: while the HRBA offers guidance for implementation of SDGs, the Agenda 2030 can contribute substantially to the realisation of human rights (The Danish Institute for Human Rights, 2016). This connection is not elaborated very thoroughly in the policy, although the technical connection between the SDG objectives and priority areas of the policy has been made.

The relationship between the SDGs and HRBA is logical and mutually reinforcing.

In addition to highlighting the SDGs and human rights as a key goal in Finland's development policy, the development policy document recognizes climate change and the mass migration of refugees and migrants across Europe at the time of creation of the policy. The Finnish value added and the opportunities arising for Finnish expertise and business are highlighted more than in the previous policy.

The development policy priority areas (presented in Table 1) are linked to corresponding SDG goals. While the development policy does not use the concept of cross-cutting objectives, it does refer to the need to take the rights of children and other vulnerable groups, particularly people with disabilities, into account in all activities.

Table 1: Approaches, principles, and cross-cutting objectives guiding Finland's policies 2012–2016

Approaches	Development policy programme 2012	Human Rights Strategy 2013	Development Policy 2016
	HRBA	UN Common Understanding	SDGs, HRBA
Principles	Universality, self-determination, non-discrimination and equality, participation of all	Indivisibility of human rights; equal importance of civil, political, and cultural and social-economic rights	Democracy and the rule of law; gender equality and human rights; freedom of speech; a sustainable market economy and sustainable use of natural resources; and the Nordic welfare state, including a high level of education
Foci/ Objectives	1) Democratic and responsible society enhancing human rights, 2) Green economy with participation and job-creation, 3) Sustainable management of natural resources 4) Human development	To mainstream and unify human rights to all segments of Finland's foreign policy	1) Promoting the rights of women and girls 2) Reinforcing the development countries' economies and generating more jobs, livelihoods and wellbeing 3) Democratic and well-functioning societies, including taxation capacity 4) Food security, access to water and energy and the sustainable use of natural resources
Special emphases/ target groups	Rights of women and children, ethnic, linguistic and religious minorities and indigenous peoples, the rights of persons with disability, people living with HIV and AIDS, and the rights of sexual and gender minorities. Fight against human trafficking and child labour	Empowerment and participation of marginalized and discriminated groups, particularly those experiencing multiple forms of discrimination	Rights of children and other vulnerable groups, particularly people with disabilities
Cross-cutting objectives	Gender equality, reduction of inequalities, climate sustainability	Non-discrimination and increasing openness and participation	

While the three policies/strategies are not fully comparable as their scope, roles and coverage are different, their similarities are easily seen: they all stem from the UN-based human rights interpretation and their ultimate goal is to promote human rights. They also underline the equality of all rights, including civil and political as well as social and economic rights.

The interlinkages and hierarchical order of the principles, objectives, and emphases in the development policies are unclear.

In interviews, the judicial justification of HRBA came out as an important factor in the internal discussions within the Ministry. There has been internal resistance within the MFA regarding the HRBA, and the judicial justification was a factor that had a positive influence on the acceptance of its use. The resistance within the Ministry stemmed from various backgrounds and attitudes: not understanding the role of HRBA, the complexity of human rights requiring judicial expertise and therefore being too complicated to be mainstreamed, or simply a practical argument of why partner countries should be asked to make substantial changes without the resources required to realise them.

The differences between Finland's two development policies are mainly conceptual. In the 2012 policy the HRBA description is clear and concise, while in the 2016 policy the HRBA is mentioned along with the SDGs, with no further elaboration on its role in the policy. Both policies list principles, objectives, foci, emphases, target groups and cross-cutting objectives and although these are all relevant and pertinent per se, their interlinkages and hierarchical order are unclear. The conceptual variation makes the comparisons between the policies difficult as there is no clear equivalence of the concepts used. For example, in the 2012 policy, the term "principles" refers to the UN-based human rights principles, whereas in the 2016 policy it refers to Finland's priorities in development. In addition, there are variations in emphases and target groups in the subsequent development policies.

In addition, the listing of several principles, target groups, or cross-cutting objectives linked to special groups or themes may have become counterproductive, although each of them could be easily defended and pertinent. When their order of priority is unclear and their adoption in programming and activities is complicated by their number, limited resources, and the special expertise needed, it may have led to the omission or only incidental attention to some of them.

3.2.3 HRBA and management of effectiveness

Theory of Change: A theory of change is a description of the connection or process between activities (means and inputs) and desired outputs, outcomes and impacts. It also describes the favourable assumptions that need to be in place to achieve the desired results. As part of RBM work within the MFA, theories of change have been prepared for each policy priority pillar. This work is ongoing and the current versions are presented in Annex 7.

The four priority areas or impacts of the MFA policy are 1) The rights and status of all women and girls have been enhanced, 2) Developing countries' own economies have generated more jobs, livelihood opportunities and well-being, 3) Societies have become more democratic and better functioning, and 4) Food and nutrition security, energy, water, and forests and natural resources. Each impact has an SDG equivalent.

The four theories of change are still in the making and thus, they cannot be assessed as finalized frameworks. In each of them human rights considerations are seen.

- The first, being formulated as a rights-based impact, is quite coherent from means to impacts, addressing the fulfilment of "rights of women and girls of all abilities."

- The third priority area addresses the equality and participation of the people (particularly the vulnerable), transparency and accountability of society. The means are mostly political dialogue, influencing at UN fora, and targeting Finland's funding of UN, international and civil society actors.
- The fourth priority area of food security and access to natural resources refers mostly to access, and not control of the resources. Participatory management of forests and natural resources is mentioned as one option as an output of the Outcome 4. Women, indigenous and local communities, and smallholder farmers are mentioned specifically but not systematically. Improved capacities of both rights-holders and duty-bearers is mentioned sporadically.
- The second priority area is the least coherent from the HRBA perspective. The poor, vulnerable and women are mentioned in places, but the human rights perspective is the most implicit of the four. Among the assumptions of priority area 2, (from means to outputs) there is a notion of MFA managing "to identify the population groups in the most vulnerable situations and target its instruments, partnerships and strategies to support them in most appropriate manner. MFA requires human rights-based approach and cross-cutting objectives' effective integration in all interventions from its partners."

The assumptions in all four priority areas are quite optimistic. For example, the assumption that "Developing countries have access to affordable know-how, sustainable technologies, quality education and skills development to support economic policymaking and private sector development" (priority area 2) is quite ambitious. The assumptions are geared around factors such as coherent policies of the partner government, coordination of the work among international donors, appropriate resources, and favourable financial development.

The assumptions in the theories of change are quite optimistic.

Results Based Management (RBM): Finland's development policies are committed to results-based management to increase the effectiveness and impact of development activities. According to the Ministry's HRBA guidelines of 2013 (MFA 2013c, 7):

The human rights-based and results-based approaches complement one another. Human rights standards and principles define the concrete goals and methods of development cooperation activities, which are implemented, monitored and developed from a results-based perspective. A human rights-based, results-based perspective means that those in the most vulnerable situation can benefit from the results of projects implemented through Finland's development cooperation.

On the other hand, the understanding of HRBA as tackling the root causes of imbalances of power and resources may imply that the fulfilment of the human rights is a complex task, firstly for touching human life from individual to social and cultural levels of society, and secondly for having interlinkages with factors not always foreseen or planned for their complexity. Furthermore, some human rights obligations are acute, requiring immediate action, and others can be realised progressively according to available resources and capacity of the state (MFA 2015, 9-10). This means that despite all rights being equally

important, their urgency may vary. This may complicate RBM thinking. From these points of view, the HRBA may not always be well suited to RBM thinking.

3.2.4 The role of guidelines: developments and gaps

Finland's 2012 policy programme was followed by *Guidelines for implementing the HRBA* (MFA 2013 c). The guidelines defined the outcomes of HRBA to be measured in terms of strengthening the capacities of the partner countries' authorities as well as of the local population. The outcomes included, for example, the development of non-discriminatory legislation, increased awareness of authorities of their human rights responsibilities, strengthening monitoring of human rights implementation on the duty-bearer side, and human rights education, protection of human rights defenders and NGOs, and development in human rights fulfilment of local populations.

HRBA can be tailored to be as effective as possible.

The guidelines state that HRBA can be tailored to be as effective as possible within the country context in bilateral country-level planning. Nevertheless, this should not lead to different interpretations of human rights norms and principles. HRBA was supposed to be adopted also in programmes and projects already under implementation. No further guidance was given on how to make this happen in practice. Dialogue between partnering governments, with civil society and within multilateral organizations was emphasized, as well as training MFA staff and partners in HRBA.

Measuring HRBA should cover both the achievements as well as the means of participation and implementation. The guidelines define "five A criteria" for measuring the fulfilment of social and economic rights: affordability, availability, acceptability, accessibility, and accountability. Otherwise, all programmes should tailor the indicators for each case. The guidelines contained little practical guidance or tools for different actors implementing Finland's development policy.

A more concise Guidance Note was published in 2015 (MFA 2015). According to an interviewee, there were two main innovations in the guidance: the definition of human rights as both an objective and a means, and the creation of a four-level scale to assess human rights considerations in operations – human rights blind, sensitive, progressive and transformative (see Table 2). The scale was inspired by the levels of gender equality already in use.

Table 2: Levels of human rights considerations in development cooperation

Terminology	Definition
Human rights blind – not acceptable level	• intervention ignorant of human rights • risk of unintentional harmful effects not assessed
Human rights sensitive – human rights as a process (minimum acceptable level)	• human rights principles used in programming, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the intervention • basic human rights assessment carried out → sufficient awareness of the human rights situation, unintentional negative effects and contribution to discriminatory structures, norms and practices avoided • may include elements of capacity development or advocacy • no explicit commitment to human rights in terms of expected results
Human rights progressive – human rights as a process and partial integration as expected results	• intervention adheres to human rights principles in its processes • intervention includes expected results furthering the respect, protection or fulfilment of human rights • needs, concerns and capacity of different duty bearers and rights holders are addressed in activities and results • disaggregated data systematically used and analysed in planning and monitoring • may include elements of capacity development or advocacy • root causes in legislation, customs, norms and practices may be unattended
Human rights transformative – human rights as a process and full integration as expected results, with focus on capacity development and advocacy	• root causes in legislation, customs, norms and practices are addressed, in line with human rights standards and principles • human rights guide the identification of expected results • determined action towards capacity development and advocacy • accountability emphasised through programming, framed in terms of rights and obligations • strategic policy dialogue on specific human rights concerns relevant to the intervention

According to the Guidance Note, the HRBA means that human rights are used as a basis for setting the objectives of development policy and cooperation, and the processes are guided by human rights principles. The systematic integration of human rights into development cooperation will take place through strengthening (a) the realisation of human rights as a development result, (b) inclusive, participatory and non-discriminatory development processes, enhancing accountability, and (c) enhancing capacities of rights holders, duty bearers and other relevant actors.

The Guidance Note defined the minimum acceptable HRBA level as 'human rights sensitive'. This level does not entail expectations in terms of the results, only avoidance of negative effects. The aim is that all interventions will be human rights progressive or transformative, but the Note did not set a deadline for this. The identification of expected results is guided by human rights only at the transformative level, i.e. the HRBA is fully functional only at that level.

The Guidance Note pointed out that some human rights obligations will need immediate action, (e.g. prohibition of torture), whereas economic and social rights can be realised progressively as resources allow.

No reference was made on how to apply the HRBA principles of non-discrimination, participation, and equality in the different phases of the policy-to-implementation cycle. These principles, particularly the principle of participation, are also not shown in the MFA's scale of human rights considerations.

According to interviewees, the scale has been useful in concretizing the HRBA but using the scale has proven to be challenging. First, the differences between the levels have been difficult to assess as their descriptions are quite general and can be understood in different ways. This has resulted in varying interpretations about the levels. Furthermore, each project may entail different human rights levels in its components, but only one level can be chosen to describe the project in proposals. Therefore, further elaboration of the scale may be needed, by making a numeric scoring system or providing more precise descriptions of the criteria at each level.

Eradication of poverty: Focus on the root causes of poverty and create poverty eradication strategies with the help of HRBA.

The Guidance Note linked the eradication of poverty with HRBA by emphasizing the role of HRBA in focusing on the root causes of poverty and helping to create poverty eradication strategies. Thus, the HRBA helps to sharpen the priority foci regarding chosen sectors and cross-cutting themes. The Note presented the use of HRBA in the development cooperation instruments, from humanitarian aid to private sector interventions.

According to the Guidance Note, Finland is operationalising the HRBA gradually along with an institutional learning process and more guidance will be available with modifications in instruments, procedures and sector-specific manuals. The previously outlined adoption of HRBA in ongoing activities was not repeated here. According to interviewees, the idea of gradual enhancement of HRBA was seen as a practical and fruitful way of advancing the HRBA: it is easier to apply to some activities and with successful implementation experiences the internal resistance will abate and motivation to adopt it will naturally increase.

The Manual for Bilateral Programmes (MFA, 2016f) defines the HRBA in a similar way to the 2015 Guidance Note. In the Manual, each phase of the programme cycle is tackled with a reference to human rights. The elements in the four levels of human rights consideration are presented in relation to different phases of the programme cycle. It presents a specific HRBA tool, the human rights assessment, as part of the context analysis prior to programming. According to an interview, the human rights analysis should be done prior to the selection of instruments, and even before the selection of sectors, so that it can guide the planning in a more profound way. However, there are no instructions on the coverage and actual role of the assessment in planning.

There is overall guidance on implementing HRBA in different sectors but little sector-specific guidance. One exception is the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sector. A specific HRBA and GESI (gender equality and social inclusion) Manual has been developed for the WASH sector in Nepal, as part of the Finnish WASH project in 2015 (HRBA & GESI Strategy & Action Plan, 2015).

It gives guidance on selecting project areas using the principles of equality and non-discrimination and on ways to undertake an evaluation of an intervention.

To guide development cooperation activities implemented by civil society according to the priorities of Finland's development policy, the Guidelines for Civil Society in Development Policy was published in 2010 (MFA, 2010) and updated in 2017 (MFA, 2017d). The updated version emphasizes the importance of independent, active, and pluralistic civil societies as a precondition to peaceful participation and fulfilment of human rights. Thus, strengthening civil societies is both the goal of Finnish development policy and a means to enhance other policy objectives. In describing HRBA, the guidelines emphasize paying attention to human rights principles in all phases of the policy-to-implementation cycle, to fulfil human rights commitments in developing countries.

The Guidelines for Humanitarian Aid (MFA 2012b) outline the focus of Finland's humanitarian aid on the poorest countries and most vulnerable people. The international community is obliged to fulfil the needs of the recipients of aid and this should be seen as their right. Thus, the recipients must be included in the planning and decision-making of the activities. The central principles to be followed are humanity, objectivity, impartiality, and independence, according to the international principles of humanitarian aid. The HRBA is not mentioned, but these principles follow the approach. It is noteworthy that in Finland's development policy programme created in the same year, humanitarian aid was excluded from the HRBA for the supposed difficulty of applying it in acute crises.

The 2013 Guidelines and the Guidance Note 2015 have had a major role in clarifying and concretizing the HRBA thinking of MFA. The 2013 Guidelines did not provide concrete tools for implementation but strengthened the general understanding of a serious commitment by outlining that in addition to new activities, all ongoing programmes and projects should also adopt the HRBA. The Guidance Note 2015 was more cautious in this regard and recommended the gradual adoption of HRBA. Yet, it took a great leap forward by establishing the four levels of human rights consideration and the minimum acceptable and desired levels.

The HRBA guidelines have clarified and concretized the HRBA thinking of MFA.

Few sector-specific or instrument-specific HRBA guidelines have been made for Finnish development cooperation. There are some HRBA materials available within the UN and for civil society actors. Kepa (the national platform for NGDOs of Finland) has translated Danish guidelines for civil society actors, to serve the Finnish NGOs in HRBA adoption (Kirkemann Boesen & Martin, 2011). In Finland, private sector cooperation is almost systematically left out in HRBA guidance. Private sector integration into HRBA thinking is under development within the MFA as "it is not enough to assume that increasing job opportunities automatically increases equality", as phrased by one interviewee.

3.2.5 Cross-cutting objectives and the HRBA

Cross-cutting issues (cross-cutting objectives since 2012) have been included in Finland's development policies since the 1980s. The themes have varied, with gender equality being the top priority throughout the years. The development policy of 2012 defined reduction of inequality and climate sustainability as

The HRBA aims at reducing inequalities.

cross-cutting objectives, in addition to gender equality. An internal MFA memo (MFA, August 16, 2012) defines the integration of cross-cutting objectives as a concrete and coherent means of promoting human rights in development policy and cooperation, according to the emphases of Finland's human rights strategy. Advancing cross-cutting objectives takes place at three complementary levels: by mainstreaming them in all phases of programme cycle and policy implementation; by complementing that with specific measures when needed; and by integrating the cross-cutting objective into policy dialogue and communications. The means are the same with the implementation of HRBA.

The Guidance Note (2015) defines the connection of HRBA and cross-cutting objectives as follows: The HRBA aims at reducing inequalities. Through a human rights analysis, the root causes of inequalities are identified. HRBA integration into gender mainstreaming means that international human rights commitments are integrated in addressing the root causes of inequalities. In connection to climate sustainability as a cross-cutting objective, applying HRBA considers particularly vulnerable and marginalized groups vis-à-vis the mitigation measures. According to some MFA interviewees, the Guidance Note strengthened the role of HRBA in relation to cross-cutting objectives and may even have overshadowed them.

Finland's development policy of 2016 does not use the concept of cross-cutting objectives but instead, lists the priorities of generating more jobs, livelihood opportunities and well-being; food-security, and access to water and energy; sustainable use of natural resources, more democratic and well-functioning societies, and enhancing the rights and status of women and girls. According to some interviewees, the policy left development actors with uncertainty on whether the cross-cutting objectives exist anymore or not.

In connection with gender equality, the Gender Evaluability Study (MFA 2017b, 17) states that after the introduction of the HRBA, understanding the differences between the HRBA and gender equality has proven difficult for MFA officials. This is not surprising as gender equality and HRBA are considered as "mutually reinforcing concepts, including the understanding that gender equality is both a human right, but also a dimension of development in its own right. Also, human rights are inclusive of, but not limited to, gender related human rights." (UNEG 2011, 19). Thus, while they both pay attention to the power balance between advantaged and disadvantaged groups, they have differences, and specific expertise on both themes is needed to analyse them.

The rights of people with disabilities (PWD) have been included as a cross-cutting issue of Finland's development policies for decades, and this was reinforced in the 2005 Finnish disability policy and in the Government Report on Disability Policy, endorsed in 2007. Along with the HRBA approach, outlined in Finland's 2012 development policy, the principles of gender equality and reduction of inequality support people in particularly vulnerable positions, such as PWD (Sario, 2014). In 2012, the Minister of Development also approved a separate initiative, the "Disability package", on strengthening the rights of people with disabilities in Finland's development cooperation. It emphasized that the rights of PWD should be considered in all development cooperation interventions throughout the whole programme cycle and allocated specific funding for

enhancing the rights of people with disabilities. In 2017, the Ministry launched a disability strategy: *Leaving No One Behind: The Finnish Approach to Addressing the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the Development Cooperation and Policy*. It outlined the Finnish approach as aiming at both mainstreaming disability across policies and programmes and supporting disability-specific interventions.

The Guidance Note (2015) lists several factors to be considered from the point of view of participation and non-discrimination: age, gender, disability, as well as ethnic, religious, and cultural background. Reducing inequalities would be prioritised through a wide context or human rights analysis, revealing the most vulnerable or marginalized groups. Further MFA guidance on the operationalization or prioritization of these is not available. Some officials interviewed for this assignment admitted that this kind of listing may have given space also for unhealthy rivalry among development actors about the priorities.

A reform of guidelines on cross-cutting objectives is under way in the MFA. The connection between cross-cutting objectives and the HRBA will be clarified in the new guidelines, and the intention is also to create some central cross-cutting objectives that would stay constant even with changes of governments and respective ministers. This will be done with a judicial justification based on Finnish legislation, according to an interviewed official. The clarification of the interlinkage of the HRBA with the cross-cutting objectives is very welcome, to avoid the HRBA being seen as "one more cross-cutting issue." A common understanding of the role of HRBA in the MFA should be clarified.

3.2.6 Coherence in the Country Strategies

Country strategies are medium-term plans with a duration of four years that can be slightly modified during their implementation. A country strategy is guided by both the partner country's development strategy and the development policy of Finland. The country strategies cover several instruments used in addition to bilateral cooperation, namely Institutional Cooperation Instrument (ICI), Local Cooperation Fund (LCF) mainly managed by the Embassies, and multi-bi-cooperation funded from bi-lateral sources and implemented through multilateral organizations. Civil society cooperation and business sector interventions are also usually referred to in country strategies.

In the country strategies for the period 2013–2016 (MFA 2013 d-g), the HRBA was referred to along with the cross-cutting objectives. At the time of their creation, there was little practical guidance in place on how the HRBA would be applied in activities. Thus, in one country context description there was an analysis of the current human rights situation (Ethiopia), and another stated that a "broad perspective would be taken regarding human rights" as a thrust to promote the rights and access of people to land, natural resources, etc. (Tanzania). This was not explained further in the strategy. All country strategies highlighted the importance of participation or participatory approaches, and some listed particularly vulnerable groups, such as women and youth, minorities, and PWD (Tanzania), to be considered, or particular issues to promote, such as women's inheritance rights and conditions of prisoners (Zambia). No references to rights holders or duty bearers were made.

According to the Guidance Note 2015, a maximum of three chosen cooperation sectors should first be analysed with sector-specific criteria. These should follow the general principles of non-discrimination and participation, considering the vulnerable, and securing ownership of the partner stakeholders. In the country strategies analysed for this review (MFA 2016 b-e, MFA 2017c), no references were made to an analysis of human rights considerations in any of them, yet this does not mean that analyses have not been conducted. All of them referred to human rights or to a human rights-based approach. In some, HRBA was mentioned along with the cross-cutting objectives: "Finland's development policy priorities, including human rights-based approach and the cross-cutting objectives [were considered]" (Zambia). In others, human rights principles were mentioned in the context of setting objectives: "Promotion of inclusive growth to combat poverty" (Mozambique), or "[The overall objective is] More democratic, inclusive and better functioning society" (Zambia).

Duty bearers were mentioned more frequently than the rights holders. Mostly the duty bearers were referred to only generally, either in terms of strengthening their capacities (Ethiopia) or their systems (Tanzania). The rights holders, when mentioned, were defined mostly as "the most vulnerable people" (Zambia, Somalia), and "women and girls" (Somalia). Only in the Ethiopia strategy were the priority groups or themes more specific, namely the rights of women, people with disabilities, and rural population. For example, LGBTI rights were only mentioned in the Zambia strategy, in the country context description. It was also the only strategy to define press freedom, right to social security and free civil society as its priorities.

None of the strategies referred to human rights considerations when defining objectives concerning cooperation with the private sector or enhancing business development. Neither did the strategies refer to the levels of human rights considerations or set any objectives about them.

The adoption of the approach varies in the country strategies, reflecting the different interpretations of the role and status of HRBA.

In summary, the HRBA has been included as part of the principles and/or objectives of Finland's development cooperation in all analysed country strategies. The adoption of the approach varies in the country strategies, reflecting the different interpretations of the role and status of HRBA. In the country strategies examined for this assignment, there is no indication that human rights analyses were conducted and if they were, it is not reflected in the definition of target groups, target levels of human rights considerations, or within different instruments used in each country, at least at the strategy level.

3.2.7 Procedures of MFA in HRBA compliance

In MFA programming, compliance with human rights standards and principles is ensured by reviewing compliance with the HRBA as part of the overall quality assessment of all interventions being considered for funding. At the first phase, this is done by the responsible geographical or thematic unit of the MFA and after that by the Quality Assurance Group of the Ministry where the level(s) of compliance with HRBA of the intervention are evaluated.

The ongoing reform of operations in the MFA department for development policy will improve these procedures, according to an interview. The objective is to develop the quality system in such a way that the Quality Assurance Group

would assess the compliance with development policy, including the HRBA, in the beginning of the process, to logically ensure the direction of programming. Also, a support team will be created for significant interventions, to strengthen the elaboration of programmes. In addition, instead of different forms and guidelines scattered in the MFA system, consistent guidelines are being developed for the desk officers' needs, including the practical phases of programming, whom to include in which phase in the preparations, etc. The support package will be complemented with training, advice and adequate leadership. Thirdly, the reform entails a process of enhancing strategic leadership to align the direction of development policy with the budget available. The aim is to improve results achievement and guide the allocation of funding.

According to an interview, the MFA as a typical line organization is working in a vertical command chain. Mainstreaming policy changes requires horizontal movement (funding, communication, direction) within the ministry, which is against the current organizational logic. This may have also affected the adoption of HRBA but there is no specific evidence of this.

3.2.8 Overall coherence

Since 2012, the policies of MFA have a unified basis as they all lean on UN Common Understanding and principles and the goal is the realization of human rights. The conceptualisation of HRBA varies somewhat in the analysed policies and remains at an abstract level as an approach in all of them. The paradigm changing nature has, perhaps intentionally, been left undefined, to make the approach more acceptable. It has been used as a factor to increase quality, rather than a tool to discover the root causes of imbalances of power and resources.

The conceptualisation of HRBA varies somewhat in the analysed policies and remains at an abstract level as an approach in all of them.

Without consistent guidance and rooting of the HRBA in Ministry procedures, systems, and work during the first years of HRBA implementation, a range of interpretations of HRBA (from a major paradigm change or quality assurance to "one more cross-cutting issue") have persisted among its users. These different interpretations may continue to live in the minds of the development cooperation administrators and implementers as the HRBA is conceptualized in slightly different ways in various MFA policies and the interlinkages between HRBA and other driving frameworks and factors has not been described.

The central HRBA principles of non-discrimination, equality, and participation are quite abstract, yet demanding when operationalized in development cooperation. While the HRBA emphasizes both the process and the results in promoting human rights, the lack of guidance on the use of the central principles in policy-to-implementation cycle phases may have affected both the processes and the results so far.

Furthermore, guidance on the adoption of HRBA has varied from applying it in all activities, including the ongoing ones, to allowing for flexibility to adopt it where and when best suited. This may have strengthened the perception that adopting the HRBA is voluntary. The HRBA's suitability vis-à-vis some instruments (e.g. humanitarian aid and private sector development activities) has also complicated its coherent adoption.

According to interviewees, despite these challenges, the adoption of HRBA has increased coherence among the spheres of human rights and development where these have found a common ground through HRBA. The MFA's flexibility in interpretation and implementation has also made it possible to select feasible starting points and show direction, create motivation, and even make tools for others to follow.

The Guidance Note 2015 has had a very central role as a strategic and programmatic tool. It is noteworthy that the strategic objectives of a minimum acceptable human rights level (i.e. human rights sensitive) and targeting at least human rights progressive level in all development activities, are outlined in the guidelines (2015) and not in a policy.

Importance of systematic induction and training within the Ministry and among central stakeholders has been underrated in the first years of implementation of HRBA.

It seems, based on the interviews, that the importance of systematic induction and training within the Ministry and among central stakeholders (such as embassy staff, consultants, representatives of partner countries, and CSOs) has been underrated in the first years of implementation of HRBA. The introduction of a new central approach, on top of other previous priorities and principles, would have required a carefully planned promotion plan and the resources to complement it, to avoid unnecessary resistance and various interpretations on its role and implementation as seem to have happened with the HRBA launch. According to the experience of the officials interviewed, internal resistance to HRBA has diminished over time, and particularly in the last few years. This is thought to be mostly due to the positive experiences gained and the HRBA becoming more and more a 'business as usual' within the Ministry.

Therefore, the reform of operations under way in the MFA is a very positive evolution as it can strengthen the systematization of the implementation of development policy, and particularly HRBA, through increased common understanding, feasible tools, and improved strategic leadership. With this reform, the more strategic use of HRBA, including in sectors where it has not been widely implemented (such as humanitarian aid and private sector and business endeavours), may provide a better chance of reaching the desired 'human rights progressive' level and for gaining valuable experiences for the future.

4 EVALUABILITY ASSESSMENT OF MFA'S APPROACH IMPACT AND LESSONS LEARNED OF ITS HRBA INTERVENTIONS

In this section, we assess the extent to which Finland's support for HRBA can be evaluated in a robust and credible manner. This assessment is intended to inform the design of the future evaluation to ensure that it is as reliable as possible with a clear scope, approach and realistic expectations regarding the limitations. This section is based on the meta-analysis of the reporting and evaluation information of the 40 sampled projects, and on the findings of an MFA meta-evaluation of Finland's programme-based support and the findings of the gender evaluability study (2017).

4.1 Evaluability assessment: What is the evaluability of HRBA in Finland's development cooperation policies and interventions?

The evaluability assessment focused on the design of the interventions and the extent to which it is reasonable to expect to find evidence of results impacting on human rights, as well as on the availability and quality of information. The MFA intended HRBA results aim at achieving development outcomes and at contributing to reducing inequalities.

4.1.1 Is it plausible to expect MFA interventions to have been effective in achieving the intended HRBA results?

Summary of overall findings

A majority of documents lack a clear statement of the human rights considerations that the intervention aims to address. Many projects implicitly embody human rights principles in their objectives (e.g. supporting participation, transparency or inclusion) but do not provide an explicit reference to the human rights situation in the country framing the intervention. Most do not define duty bearers and rights holders and although a majority do consider vulnerable groups, this is often a general reference without a diagnosis of what leads to vulnerability and how the intervention will impact them. The plausibility of MFA interventions leading to intended HRBA results is medium to low.

Out of the sampled projects, 36% (15 projects) provided a clear statement of the human rights framework.

Extent to which the document provides a clear statement of the human rights considerations that the intervention aimed to address

Out of the sampled projects, 36% (15 projects) provided a clear statement of the human rights framework pertaining to the intervention, presenting details of the human rights context in the target countries, the legal and policy framework and/or the factors hindering the full enjoyment of rights of the targeted beneficiaries of the intervention. Five projects were in the healthcare sector, including tuberculosis control and health policy and management; four projects pertained to democracy, participation and legislation broadly, while others pertained to forestry policy and management, gender equality organisations and Public Finance Management. A theme running through the 15 projects that did have a human rights framework was that many were related to policy or legislation. However, it is difficult to conclude that the discussion of policies and legislation framing the intervention is thanks to the human rights-based approach or simply to the nature of the project's intervention.

In 62% of the sample (24 projects), the human rights context in which the intervention was working was not discussed at all, with no diagnosis of the human rights situation of the country and no recognition of the national and international strategies and policies framing the intervention. As such, it is not clear to what extent human rights considerations were considered in the design of these projects and the identification of the beneficiaries. This lack of explicit discussion of human rights considerations was evidenced across the sample in all sectors and case types, notably even in projects defined as being specifically in the human rights sector.

This finding helps to provide a basis for our assessment that human rights considerations are not systematically addressed in practice by the interventions funded by the MFA and aligns with our findings during interviews that there is a distinct gap between policy and practice. HRBA requires a detailed diagnosis of the human rights situation to establish the way in which the intervention will support rights holders and duty bearers in a manner that will not exacerbate the infringement of rights, particularly the rights of the most vulnerable.

Evidence that the MFA interventions were clearly defined as relevant to duty bearers and rights holders

Explicit references to human rights in general were routinely absent in the documents reviewed outside of specific sections in the evaluations treating HRBA and cross-cutting objectives. In 30% of the sample (12 projects), the documents explicitly referenced human rights and the fact that it was a duty bearer and/or rights holder that was being targeted by the intervention, while in 53% (21 projects), human rights principles were implicit in the project objectives but not explicitly referenced or discussed. Often, the intended impacts were assumed to be relevant to duty bearers and rights holders, without a discussion of why this should be the case in that context. The description of objectives also did not make explicit the relationship to human rights or human rights principles. The implicit human rights principles included interventions that supported participation, inclusion, transparency and accountability, as well as non-discrimina-

tion. For instance, the proposal for a project in Ethiopia with the Organization for Social Development, through the Fund for Local Cooperation, states that the ultimate goal of the project is to "empower economically disadvantaged women and people with disabilities through the provision of skills and training on how to cultivate and run a small-scale seedling nursery." The objective does not reference human rights or HRBA as such, but implicitly supports the human rights principles of equality, non-discrimination, participation and inclusion.

In 13% (5 projects) of cases, there was no reference to human rights or human rights principles whatsoever. For example, the 2017 *Mid-term Review of Improving the Food Security of Ethiopia: Assessment of Carbonate Rock Resources for Acid Soil Amendment and Balanced Application of Lime and Fertilizers in Oromia Region* found that human rights had not been dealt with in the project documents or in the objectives or activities.

Strong examples of projects in which human rights were explicit in the objectives of the projects were seen in the previous evaluations of programme-based support, particularly as part of the MFA's series of *Evaluations of programme-based support through Finnish Civil Society Organizations* (Volumes I, II and III). For instance, the *Evaluation on the programme-based support: Abilis Foundation* states that the Foundation works to "strengthen the capacity of disabled people's organisations and their members in developing countries so that they can work actively for improvements and realisation of disability rights in society". Similarly, the evaluation of the Finnish Refugee Council states that "the goal of the programme is to increase equality and participation, as well as a better realisation of human rights in selected areas of operation and target groups". In general, these projects focusing on programme-based support to Finnish civil society organisations demonstrated an understanding of the human rights situation framing the intervention and how the objectives of the project would work within this to support rights holders and duty bearers.

Evidence that duty bearers and rights holders were clearly identified and targeted by interventions

30 % of the projects provided a clear identification of the duty bearers and rights holders.

Given that a minority of projects explicitly refer to human rights in the documents, it is not surprising that only 30% (12 projects) of the projects sampled had documents that provided a clear identification of the duty bearers and rights holders targeted by the intervention. This meant that they not only identified the beneficiaries of the intervention but also referred to them as duty bearers or rights holders, providing a clear definition of the respective stakeholders' roles in fulfilling, protecting, respecting or claiming the rights impacted by the project. Again, there was no correlation with the sector that was targeted by the intervention. However, many of the projects that were judged positively on this criterion were those for which the reviewers had to rely on programme documents or applications, as opposed to evaluations or annual reports. This suggests that programme documents and applications require organisations to use HRBA language at the beginning of the project, while the annual reports and completion reports do not. This suggests a superficial integration of HRBA in the early design of the project to fit the requirements of the MFA, rather than a meaningful engagement with what it means to implement a HRBA to development programming. In a similar vein, only evaluations com-

missioned by the MFA have clearly identified duty bearers and rights holders. The series of evaluations commissioned by the MFA to assess *Programme-based support through Finnish Civil Society Organizations* is a clear example of this; each report in the series includes a detailed section discussing rights holders and duty bearers in explicit HRBA terminology, as well as evaluation questions and indicators using this language.

The remaining documents for 65% (26 projects) of the portfolio did not identify duty bearers or rights holders, preferring the term beneficiaries or not discussing the stakeholders at all.

Evidence that the most vulnerable groups were identified and targeted by the intervention

Vulnerable groups were mentioned in two thirds of the projects but often superficially.

Conversely, 65% (26 projects) of the sampled projects do mention vulnerable groups. However, the reference is often superficial, in that it is a passing mention of generic vulnerable groups without a clear identification of the groups and why they are vulnerable. For instance, the project proposal for *SOS Children's Villages in Ethiopia* (Local Cooperation Fund) states that the project targets "the most in need and marginalised women, girls and 500 vulnerable children" but there is no clear description of who these women, girls and children are, why they are vulnerable, and how the intervention will seek to alleviate or at least not negatively affect the factors contributing to their vulnerability. The project on *Sustainable Forest Management and Value Chains* in Tanzania (Bilateral project) discusses vulnerable groups in more detail, identifying the young, the elderly, sick or disabled.

Of those projects that consider vulnerable groups, there is little recognition of the intersectional identities that cause vulnerability, for example, projects refer to women and children as vulnerable groups but do not consider different women's cross cutting identities, such as women from low-income backgrounds, or women with disabilities from minority groups. While documents for 30% of sampled projects (12 projects) referred to multiple factors for vulnerability, it is not clear to what extent these are intersectional. For example, the project undertaken by Hiil Hooyo on *Maternal Healthcare in Somalia* (Project Support) notes that the project will pay attention to and focus on mothers and children with disabilities; while the UNFPA Project in Somalia on the *Wellbeing of Women and Girls* (Multi-bilateral Project) outlines interventions that target marginalised women, adolescents and youth, Internally Displaced People (IDP) and refugee populations with HIV and AIDS. Other examples include *Health Tanzania: Capacity building for health care sector* (Project Support), which supports women and children and children with disabilities and the *Zambia Dry Sanitation Country Programme* (Project Support), which describes how the project has taken accessibility issues into account when building facilities to ensure that the elderly and disabled are able to use them.

4.1.2 Is it feasible to assess or measure the impact of MFA's interventions to support human rights?

Summary of overall findings

When reporting data is available, the focus is on activities and outputs rather than outcomes and impact. Almost half of the projects sampled did not have monitoring data available and very few provided evidence that there was a baseline conducted at the beginning of the project. There was little evidence of disaggregated data being collected and when it was, it was generally only by gender and not by other factors affecting human rights (e.g. ethnicity, socio-economic factors, disability). There were only 15 project evaluations available and only those commissioned by the MFA (five evaluations) included specific questions on human rights and HRBA. The feasibility of assessing the impact of the MFA's interventions is low based on the data available.

Evidence that there exists sufficient baseline data, monitoring data and evidence to assess results and impact of MFA interventions

There is very little information in the portfolio that would be useful in an evaluation assessing the results and impact of MFA interventions on human rights. Of the projects sampled, 45% (18 projects) had no monitoring, reporting or evaluation information available, while 45% (18 projects) had a mixture of annual or bi-annual reports, completion reports or, in a minority of cases, evaluations (37% or 15 projects had an evaluation or mid-term evaluation available). However, most of the reporting data seen by the evaluation team focused on activities and outputs rather than results and impact and only 10% (4 projects) of projects provided evidence that a baseline study or survey had been undertaken. The *Programme-based support through Finnish Civil Society Organizations Meta-evaluation* notes that much of its data was sourced from secondary reports from other donors; such reports were not used in this evaluability study. In the individual *Programme-based support through Finnish Civil Society Organizations* reports, it is also noted that external evaluations are of mixed quality and provide weak evidence of impact (e.g. the reports on *Abilis Foundation, Finnish Refugee Council*).

One could question whether the present systems at the MFA are robust enough to measure impact. The MFA may decide to at least contributions of its projects to outcomes.

Evidence that MFA interventions have been collecting disaggregated data on rights holders (sex, age, ethnicity, migration or displacement status, disability, religion, civil status, income, sexual orientation and gender identity) as part of their monitoring activities

Just 8% of sampled projects (3 projects) provided evidence that the interventions were being monitored through the collection of disaggregated data on rights holders by more than just gender disaggregation. The most detailed disaggregation was in the project *Public-Private-People: Joint and Inclusive Effort Against Tuberculosis in Somalia* (Project Support), which has a baseline study reporting by gender, urban/rural, marital status, education, residence, employment, occupation, age and household size. The *Community-Led Accelerated Water Sanitation and Hygiene in Ethiopia phase III* (Bilateral Project) also collected data by geographic region, gender, disability in its baseline and in reporting on

Only 8 % of the sample used disaggregated data on rights holders, other than gender disaggregation.

activities. There was no evidence in the portfolio of data being reported by other factors important to identity such as race, religion or ethnic group.

Gender-disaggregated data was reported in an additional 20% of projects (8 projects). However, as the *Impact evaluability assessment and meta-analysis of Finland's support to women and girls and gender equality* (2017, 31) notes "gender-disaggregated data is not being systematically included in monitoring activities." As noted in the limitations, the evaluation team had to rely in some cases only on the project document, application or project proposal for some projects that had planned to disaggregate data by gender, but the evaluation team has no evidence that this was done.

In the remaining 72% of the sample (29 projects), we were either not able to tell from the evaluation whether monitoring data had been disaggregated, or it was clear from that data available that disaggregated data had not been collected.

Evidence that evaluations were methodologically sound, e.g. availability of raw data, clear and robust sampling, availability of data collection instruments, evidence of HRBA components in data collection tools

Evaluation reports were available for 37% of the sample (15 projects). Of these, three evaluations do not provide methodologies and two provide only short paragraphs on data collection methods. In the remaining 10 evaluations, the methodologies are generally clear, although only five evaluations included annexes with data collection tools and sources. All those that described their methodologies used a mixed methods approach, with document reviews and interviews providing for the bulk of data collection, relying on mainly qualitative data collection, which aligns with the findings above on the availability of monitoring and reporting data.

HRBA was a particular focus only in few evaluations.

Only the five evaluations commissioned by the MFA contained specific questions and indicators on the implementation of the human rights-based approach. For example, the *Programme-based support through Finnish Civil Society Organizations* series of evaluation reports included sub questions on "How are the human rights principles of participation, equality and accountability embedded in the implementation of the programme?", with indicators on the capacity of staff to work with human rights principles, the extent that human rights principles are integrated in implementation processes, the realisation of human rights principles is monitored and reported. The remaining 10 evaluations available either did not discuss human rights or mentioned human rights in a generalised way if this was one of the objectives of the project.

4.2 Meta-analysis of evidence of results and impact

4.2.1 Is there evidence that Finnish interventions have achieved the desired results or impact?

Summary of overall findings

The portfolio reviewed provides little evidence of impact due to a lack of reporting data that goes beyond activities and outputs. The most robust evidence comes from the MFA's series of CSO evaluations, which discuss the impact of the MFA's interventions directly. However, most do not identify specific human rights impacts, and those that do refer implicitly to HRBA principles like participation and inclusion. Data on the unintended consequences of interventions is sparse, with no reflection on negative unintended consequences and only two examples of positive unintended consequences related to human rights considerations.

Evidence that MFA interventions have had expected impacts on rights holders and duty bearers, including the most vulnerable groups

Impact is defined as positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended (OECD, 2010).

There is little evidence that MFA interventions have had the expected impact on rights holders and duty bearers. Of the 40 projects reviewed, the project documents for 23 projects (57%) did not have any evidence of results, either outcomes or impact. This is not unexpected given the lack of data beyond activities and outputs identified in the evaluability assessment, and for several projects it is premature to consider impact. In addition, some evaluation Terms of Reference did not request an impact assessment, as in the *Evaluation of the UNFPA Somalia Wellbeing of Women and Girls* project (Multi-bilateral project). Outcomes and/or impact were reported in 42.5% of the portfolio (17 projects), although only 20% (8 projects) considered the impact of the interventions. In these eight projects, the quality of data varies; evaluations noted the lack of or contested nature of impact level indicators in reporting in specific sectors like peacebuilding (e.g. *Programme-based support through Finnish Civil Society Organizations* evaluations of CMI and Abilis), and the consistency of data on impact (*Programme-based support through Finnish Civil Society Organizations evaluation* of Taksvärkki). Again, the MFA's series of *Evaluations of programme-based support through Finnish Civil Society Organizations* provided the strongest data on impact, accounting for four of the eight projects with impact reporting, including:

- The establishment of active youth groups in Kenya, Guatemala and Cambodia leading to many children and youth attending schools, moving off the streets to houses, acquiring vocational skills and employment, increasing self-esteem and confidence through empowerment and participation (Taksvärkki *Youth as change agents*).

There is little evidence that MFA interventions have had the expected impact on rights holders and duty bearers.

- Abilis' projects increased the self-confidence and self-esteem of people with disabilities in developing countries, leading to improved community attitudes about disability and creating job opportunities and an increased income for persons with disabilities. In addition, the report notes that "Abilis can fairly claim that its support in Nepal has contributed to significant national legislative reform."

Other funding types, such as INGO, Project and Bilateral also led to evidence of impact, including:

- In the case of Interpedia's project to *Create Access to Education for Children with Disabilities (Continuation)* Project (NGO Project Support), the evaluation report concludes that impacts on the health status of children with disabilities have made "remarkable" progress, with the level of disability of these children moderating or in some cases becoming equivalent to the abilities of non-disabled children, as well as higher access to education and changes of attitudes for children with disabilities, leading to visible integration and socialisation in the community (p.40). On the side of duty bearers, the local government has politically committed to achieving the project's objectives and appears motivated and positive about doing so.

Nevertheless, the impact is not discussed in HRBA terms. The principles of human rights (inclusion, participation, non-discrimination) are implicit in the impact of the projects but are not explicitly discussed in terms of an improvement in the enjoyment of human rights for rights holders or the capacity of duty bearers to respect, protect and promote specific rights.

Evidence that MFA interventions have had positive and/or negative unintended consequences

Evidence of positive unintended consequences was recorded for 10% of the projects.

Evidence of positive unintended consequences was recorded for 10% of the projects (4 evaluations). Again, this data mostly (three out of four) relies on the series of *Programme-based support through Finnish Civil Society Organizations* evaluations commissioned by the MFA. Only two of these relate to human rights considerations. The evaluation of Demo Finland's Frame Agreement project found that female politicians participating in the project had started lobbying for the right of women to own land on their own initiative and the evaluation of Abilis *Frame Agreement* project found that participation in the project had increased the self-esteem of participants, which increased their participation in social activities outside their home, with some feeling able to collaborate more with local authorities.

4.2.2 What are the lessons learned, including in terms of results and impact?

Summary of overall findings

A small minority of project documents provide useful lessons learned for future Finnish policy. Most documents do not consider lessons learned; where they do, they focus on lessons specific to the implementation of a particular project, rather than general hypotheses that could be applied elsewhere. No lessons recorded consider the implementation of HRBA specifically, although some lessons underline the importance of the processes and principles of HRBA, like participation and inclusion.

Evidence that the MFA has identified lessons learned from its evaluations, including in terms of results and impact

This report defines a lesson learned as generalisations based on evaluation experiences with projects, programs or policies that abstract from the specific circumstances to broader situations (OECD, 2010). As such, the evaluation team considered not only whether evaluations identified lessons learned but also the extent to which they were applicable to other projects that could be funded by the MFA, and whether they were related to the results and impact of HRBA informed interventions.

One third of project evaluations (13 projects) included lessons learned, but only six evaluations identified lessons that met the definition set out above. These included:

- The need for a common understanding and interpretation of monitoring indicators among actors undertaking monitoring activities, cultivated through training (Annual report of *Community-Led Accelerated Water Sanitation and Hygiene in Ethiopia Phase III* (Bilateral project))
- That involving diaspora communities in institutional strengthening in their countries of origin is an effective capacity building tool (Evaluation of *MIDA Health Northern Somalia Phase III* (Multi-bilateral project))
- That youth empowerment has a longer-term impact on both society and the individuals participating in the project than the traditional charity "hand-out" approach (*CSO Program Based Support Evaluation: Taksvärkki*)
- That measuring transformative and behavioural change processes requires fundamentally qualitative approaches and that the tendency to over-quantify leads reporting to rely on indicators that are not reliable or realistic for this type of long-term change (*CSO Program Based Support Evaluation: Demo Finland*)

Extent to which the lessons learned are high quality and relevant for the development of future Finnish policy

Of the lessons learned reviewed for this study, none are directly related to implementing the HRBA policy and guidelines, but a number are related to HRBA principles. The lessons from Demo Finland underline the importance of having a pragmatic approach to monitoring the transformative societal change that some interventions funded by Finland do seek (especially in projects that are deemed to be "HRBA transformative"). Lessons from Taksvärkki and the MIDA project in Somalia highlight the strength of results that can come from truly participatory and inclusive approaches to development interventions. The recommendations in the project evaluation for the *Decentralised Forest and other Natural Resources Management Programme – Introduction project* (Bilateral Project) in Zambia also provide some practical guidance on applying the principles of HRBA. It says that the project should ensure that communities understand that the project implementation can support them to exercise their rights (such as control over forest resources), but that they also have responsibilities (such as the sustainable use of forest resources). It also suggests that the project should carefully map the likely impacts on vulnerable groups in the project areas and that all communities should be encouraged to participate actively in project activities.

5 LESSONS LEARNED

5.1 International and Nordic HRBA evaluations

5.1.1 Mapping of relevant HRBA evaluations and lessons learned

As the implementation of the HRBA in the development policy and cooperation has taken place only during a relatively short time, there are only a very limited number of comprehensive evaluations. Several manuals on how to implement HRBA, toolkits and guidance notes, as well as, policy papers and country programmes by other like-minded actors exist, but there are very limited in-depth evaluations looking at the HRBA in the overall context of the development policy and cooperation. Therefore, also the international experiences on the evaluability and how to address the evaluability challenges, for example in terms of methodologies used, are still scarce.

International experiences on the HRBA evaluability are still scarce.

Evaluation of Danish Support to Promotion and Protection of Human Rights 2006–2016

Within the scope of the evaluability study in 2012-2018, Denmark appears to be the only country that has recently analysed the implementation of a human rights-based approach in a development cooperation context. Compared to the other countries studied, lessons learned from the *'Evaluation of Danish Support to Promotion and Protection of Human Rights 2006-2016'* (MFA Denmark, 2018) seem the most relevant for the Finland's forthcoming evaluation. The purpose of the evaluation was to assess Denmark's engagements in the area of human rights (accountability) and to learn from past experiences in order to inform future work (learning, forward-looking). Evaluation was to provide an overview of the results including possible impact that Danish policy initiatives and development cooperation engagements have had on the promotion and protection of human rights within the selected priority areas. It did not go in-depth with individual programmes and projects. A case study approach was used, the results of which provided examples to illustrate the Danish approach and areas of intervention.

The focus of the evaluation was on linkages and synergies between multilateral and bilateral interventions in the same policy area, the effectiveness and efficiency of the strategies chosen to promote human rights, including the choice of activities, partners and modalities. In addition, what constitutes a specific Danish approach and what is its added value were assessed. Evaluation was implemented at the policy and programme levels. Policy level included initiatives at multilateral, regional and bilateral levels. Multilateral level included meetings and discussions in different forums, tabling of general and thematic resolutions, and contributions to international reporting mechanisms. Programme level included a variety of direct or indirect bilateral and multilateral engagements at national; regional or global levels. The main channels of sup-

port at both policy and programme levels include NGOs/CSOs (core support or specific projects), national and international institutions (core support or specific projects), multilateral institutions (e.g. UN) both HQ and country level offices, and different forms of bilateral assistance.

Evaluation faced similar evaluability challenges, as also the findings of this evaluability study indicate. Its findings show that several of the evaluations assessed were questioning the application of indicators at outcome level, making it difficult to assess the achievement of expected results of a programme. Indicators were too ambitious; a baseline was not applied adequately; indicators were output rather than outcome indicators; results beyond activity and output levels were undocumented or unmonitored; or indicators depended on factors outside the control of the programme. The evaluation was thereby carried out in a very similar situation as this HRBA evaluability study shows.

The evaluation *focused on outcomes and was theory-based* (theory of change). In order to respond to the challenges of limited information, the evaluation used *a tailored contribution analysis* primarily to map results of initiatives or engagements within *two selected priority areas* of the Danish human rights portfolio, and to illustrate if there are any synergies between the policy and programme levels. Furthermore, the evaluation assessed *actual and potential barriers and opportunities*. A specific note was made that it is *generally challenging to apply common evaluation methodologies to policy level evaluations*. Instead, when assessing the results of policy engagements, the analysis attempted to assess if Denmark had contributed to a platform for dialogue based on several engagement flows and/or to standard setting and exchange of knowledge in order to work towards its targets, focussing on contribution.

HRBA evaluation of Denmark emphasized a careful scoping to result in focused and relevant evaluation.

In terms of scope, the HRBA evaluation of Denmark (2018) emphasized a *careful scoping* to result in focused and relevant evaluation, as Denmark's support is multifaceted, from policy initiatives as well as dialogue at international or national fora, to direct or indirect programme engagements at various levels together with or through partners. The instruments governing the support are likewise multiple: from strategies and policies to programme and project implementation.

The key evaluation questions dealt with the priority areas in HRBA implementation, with the thematic and modality choices made, and consequently with the results made, particularly the ones leading to *transformational changes*. The factors constraining or influencing the attainment of results and the possible lessons learnt from these were a point of interest. Special emphasis was made on the coherence and synergy between the multilateral and bilateral tracks and how it could be strengthened. The *circumstances* (fora, countries, themes) under which Denmark has been most effective in promoting the human rights agenda, and the *value added of the various channels and modalities* were of interest.

The recommendations of the evaluation could give indications for the focus areas of the MFA's HRBA evaluation. The key recommendations were focussing on *strengthening the linkages between the international policy level, and national policy and programme level, improving knowledge management and measuring*. More specifically, the evaluation stated that the *ability to measure results should be strengthened* and that there is a clear need to identify how to develop a *theory*

of change, implement baseline studies, gather data in the absence of reliable or credible sources, as well as how to formulate measurable and realistic outcomes, impacts and corresponding indictors. It was further recommended that impact indicators could focus more on the experience of the immediate rights holder, as a supplement to quantitative indicators.

The evaluation found out that there is no basis for recommending one modality instead of another or that a particular entry point should be pursued, as it is clear that it all depends on the *context* in which a programme is implemented. It is recommended, however, that whatever modality or entry point is chosen, the cooperation must reflect the *Danish approach and that the implementation guards the principles inherent in that approach.* This requires adequate human, technical and financial resources, strategic choice of partners, flexibility and long-term commitment and a focus on rights holders as well as duty bearers.

Lessons Learned on the Danish Human Rights-Based Approach

The *'Lessons Learned on the Danish Human Rights-Based Approach'* (Piron & Sano, 2017) is an evaluation study carried out by DANIDA. The aim of the desk study was to identify what is specific about the Danish HRBA, including lessons learned from implementation (learning), in particular the extent to which the 2013 guidelines and human rights principles have been operationalised, what difference they have made and their value added. The study also reviewed the HRBA experiences of other bilateral (Sweden, Germany), multilateral (UNICEF, UNDP) and two NGO entities. It also studied how HRBA and the 2015 SDG agenda could be better linked in Danish policy and interventions. The study used a *case study approach*. The selection of the case countries was based on availability of data as well as significant Danish engagement in the promotion and protection of human rights in the countries selected.

The evaluation elaborated *theories of change* for each of the cases as a framework against which results could be measured. The evaluation applied *contribution analysis* in recognition of the complexities involved in assessing effects of addressing human rights at both policy level and through other implementation channels, given the wide range of stakeholders within the field. As establishing clear causal pathways proved difficult, the evaluation documented *contribution rather than attribution*, with an emphasis on the *value added of the Danish engagements*. The case studies offered illustrations of some of the benefits and challenges of the Danish HRBA on the basis of which more generalisable findings have been drawn. Two donor agencies were also studied, along with two multilateral actors and two NGOs.

In terms of expertise of the team, expertise on evaluations and human rights as well as policy related interventions, and strong methodological and analytical skills due to the complexity of the HRBA were required. Knowledge on Danish development cooperation and policy, and proficiency in Danish language of at least one member of the team was deemed necessary. The team had to include members with knowledge on international organisations and mechanisms in the field of human rights. The team consisted of three full-time consultants.

The study indicates that in case of Denmark, the guidance requires MFA staff to balance pragmatism and realism with the integration of these human rights

A selective and pragmatic approach had made the Danish HRBA more feasible.

standards and principles in programmes and policy dialogues. A selective and pragmatic approach had made the Danish HRBA more feasible, recognising trade-offs between human rights and other objectives; accepting the implicit use of human rights; and reinforcing complementarities with other MFA approaches (such as gender and political economy analysis). *Context specificity is strongly emphasized*, and that the starting point should be country - and context - specific.

The study found out that the MFA was successful in introducing its HRBA in a pragmatic way. The reasons for this were *combination of political leadership and technical support* generated ownership across Danida. Including *HRBA as part of the country programming system* made its roll out more systematic, in particular through the *human rights and gender screening tool. Technical support from headquarters* facilitated the decentralised implementation of the approach by Embassies. The study further implied that the *internal review and approval process* seems to have led to a strengthening of the HRBA. It was not possible within the evaluability study to find more information of what the internal and review process exactly is, but its importance should be recognized and further investigated during the MFA's evaluation.

The study indicated that the Danish human rights dialogue is mostly coordinated with other development actors, multilateral as well as bilateral, but that it is becoming more difficult in the current context of closing space for civil society and reduction in the influence of aid. The findings also indicate that *dialogue associated with targeted assistance* might be more effective than linked to other types of assistance (comparison is made to budget support which is not applicable to Finland's support).

According to the study, the M&E had improved though the introduction of *human rights-based indicators* required by the screening tool, but there was still no evidence of solid efforts to document change among e.g. vulnerable groups at the time of the study. Ongoing *monitoring of changes in HRBA processes and results is so far weak*.

The study also showed that Danish approach is stronger at the design stage. The *human rights and gender screening tool played a key role in improving analytical rigour and providing a more systematic focus on the empowerment of vulnerable groups identified as rights holders*.

The study also listed some lessons learned regarding benefits of the HRBA. It emphasized that targeting of the poorest, including the rural poor, to achieve poverty reduction is not a HRBA innovation but is reinforced by it, especially by *non-discrimination, equal access and a focus on vulnerable groups*. The HRBA can provide a more systematic focus on the empowerment of vulnerable groups identified as rights-holders. The study also indicated that the HRBA has probably *reinforced* the Danish MFA's *commitment to women's rights and gender equality, especially the non-discrimination and participation principles*. This was consistently found in all the reviewed activities, even in difficult contexts with little government ownership and societal resistance to gender. Findings also indicate that the HRBA has enabled a broader *focus on the relationships between duty-bearers and rights-holders*, including *beyond state-citizens relations* to also encompass the role of the *private sector*, another significant added-value.

The study findings show that HRBA has enabled the Danish MFA to more systematically consider other human rights standards beyond civil, political and women's rights early on in the policy and programming cycle, including sectoral programming, and has implied greater consistency in its application. This helped Danida also to move beyond targeted, stand-alone human rights projects (e.g. good governance targeted thematic programmes with civil society, parliaments, justice and other accountability bodies).

The study also looked at experiences of other organisations, and Denmark's HRBA experiences seemed consistent with that of other organisations. At the policy level, the reviewed agencies had maintained their commitment to a HRBA overtime. For example, UNDP had integrated human rights with environment, gender and women's empowerment considerations, in line with the SDG agenda. There is also a broad consensus across organisations in the elements of the HRBA. According to the study findings, as in the Danish MFA, human rights principles seemed to be pursued more systematically than standards. In contrast to the Danish approach, a gap between organisational commitments at headquarters and country level practices existed, as found in UNICEF's evaluation or interviews with CARE International staff.

The benefits of a HRBA are consistent with those found for the Danish MFA and in other reviews. HRBA is seen as providing more analytical rigour; a focus on target groups; power relations; and multi-sectoral activities. It also enables political advocacy and collaborative strategies between Governments and civil society. As also in case of Denmark, monitoring the results of a HRBA is often weak across organisations but they can show concrete benefits for poor and vulnerable people. The study noted that qualitative tools can and should complement indicators-based HRBA monitoring.

HRBA is seen as providing more analytical rigour; a focus on target groups; power relations; and multi-sectoral activities.

According to the study, the *SDGs have the potential to drive human rights implementation more strongly than any previous global development agenda* as it is based on a vision of empowered citizens making duty-bearers and international actors more accountable; transparent and accountable institutions; and inclusive and participatory processes of empowerment. SDG goals and targets have significant overlaps with human rights standards and principles, such as the commitment to "leaving no one behind".

Recommendations of the study emphasises the need to identify a minimum core staff resource at the HQ to support implementation with a clear policy lead, access to technical support, improved knowledge management, a simpler and shorter screening tool and updated management guidelines. This includes prioritizing practical advice, in particular *fragile situations, private sector development, and how to support civil society in a more restrictive context*.

In order to demonstrate results, it is recommended that the Danish MFA should *track progress with both HRBA principles and standards* in programming through improved M&E and a focus on how rights-holders benefit from HRBA supported activities. This should include e.g. the *use of qualitative case studies* in addition to human rights indicators. In addition, Denmark should explicitly support human rights integration in the SDGs, linked to both economic and social rights and to civil and political rights implementation, and throughout the three levels of SDG implementation (national, regional and international).

The forthcoming HRBA evaluation of SIDA will focus on learning.

The study started with a thorough portfolio analysis already during the inception phase. The portfolio analysis gave an overview of the Danish engagements as a foundation for the evaluative work assessing results of human rights engagements as well as for the assessment of the possible linkages between the policy track and the development assistance track.

SIDA strategic plans for HRBA evaluation

According to SIDA's strategic plan for centralised evaluations, it is planning to conduct a strategic centralized evaluation of 'Evaluation of the HRBA in SIDA financed development cooperation' starting in 2018 (SIDA's website). At the time or scope of the evaluability study it was not possible to get any further information of their plan, but it seems that their focus is on learning. It would be good for the MFA's Development Evaluation Unit to liaise with them prior starting up its own evaluation and discuss further details. If the evaluations coincide timewise, it would be good for the evaluation teams to investigate possibilities of information exchange and lessons learned. Lessons learned could be in a form of a joint workshop at the end of the exercise, with jointly discussing the results and brainstorming on the best ways forward. This could also include lessons learned from the Danish evaluation, which is very relevant as it was just recently carried out in a quite similar context compared to MFA in Finland.

Other like-minded countries have addressed HRBA with a varying intensity, evidenced by the existence or not of HRBA policies and strategies, and HRBA related evaluations.

Navigating a Sea of Interests: Policy evaluation of Dutch Foreign Human Rights Policy 2008–2013

The Netherlands carried out an evaluation 'Navigating a Sea of Interests: Policy evaluation of Dutch Foreign Human Rights Policy 2008-2013' (IOB, 2014). The Dutch policy evaluation had a dual goal: ensuring accountability for the policy implemented and identifying issues for attention in future policy making. The main evaluation question was to what extent have the efforts made by the Netherlands contributed to better respect for, and the protection and promotion of human rights, given the resources available and considering the circumstances under which policy implementation has taken place. More in detail, the questions were related to policy's rationale and relevance; an overview of the instruments and expenditure; and an assessment of the policy's effectiveness. Policy coherence was addressed to a certain extent.

The scope of the evaluation was ***selective*** and did not include thematic areas, which had been dealt with in other policy evaluations. It had a ***thematic focus*** and included five of the eight priority areas that were defined in the policy document (human rights defenders; equal rights for women; equal rights for LGBT; freedom of expression and internet freedom; business and human rights). The main data collection methods in this evaluation were document review and interviews.

The recommendations included that the human rights *policy should be more explicit* on the reasons for the selection of the priorities, on the envisaged objectives, and on the ways in which the objectives will be reached with the different instruments at hand; *more effective work at the level of EU*; when selecting projects/programmes for the *CSO funding*, more attention could be given to defining the most important needs and to avoiding that the only projects supported are those focusing on human rights promotion, but also on protection, and that despite of limited staff capacity, *support to smaller national NGOs should not be neglected*. Similarly, sufficient staff capacity at all embassies is seen as critical for achieving the standards set in the human rights agenda.

Recommendations also highlight the need to increased *coherence*, not only with policies but also with actual policy dialogue and the link between domestic and foreign human rights policy. Similarly, *strengthening inter-departmental communication and consultation* is highlighted.

Coherence should be increased with policies, policy dialogue and the link between domestic and foreign human rights policy.

The evaluation also pointed out challenges of especially in terms of measuring policy dialogu, as there is often limited evidence of its effects and information on follow-up is generally scarce or absent, and concluded that trying to attribute impacts to Dutch interventions is not possible, which indicates that *contribution* could still be considered. The evaluation focused on five themes which were central in Dutch foreign human rights policy in most of the period under review. The evaluation covered nine countries/territories, and the evaluation team was combined of a mix of evaluation and research expertise, as well as country specialists.

Thematic evaluations

There are some specific evaluations related to the promotion and protection of human rights focusing e.g. on governance, private sector, disability and CSOs focusing on human rights, but they are not broadly focusing on the HRBA and the development cooperation as a whole. According to the NORAD's website, they have just recently completed an evaluation *'UNGP, Human Rights and Norwegian Development Cooperation involving Business'* (NORAD, 2018). The evaluation assesses the extent to which Norwegian development cooperation is involving the business sector safeguards and human rights. Evaluation uses systems analysis and case study approach. It is thematically very specific and related to the private sector, but would assist the MFA's evaluation team in preparing more detailed questions for the evaluation matrix, depending on the scope in which the private sector instruments will be included in the MFA's evaluation.

NORAD's *'Evaluation of Norwegian Cooperation to Promote Human Rights'* (2011) provides examples of the country's contribution to human rights and democratisation. The purpose of the evaluation was to acquire knowledge and draw lessons about the *nature and effect* of support to human rights, with a view to informing future strategies, policies and interventions. It had a dual purpose of accountability and learning. The objective was to provide an overview of allocations for human rights in Norwegian development cooperation and to document and assess the changes brought about by this support in selected areas. The approach was not theory-based, but rather assessing the portfolio (funding flows), and performance-based regarding selected interventions. It included a

mapping study which provided a quantitative overview of Norway's funding support to the field of human rights over the last ten years. The portfolio mapping was based on NORAD's aid database, which covers all Norwegian aid including the various aspects of human rights (HR). It also included human rights profiling in selected countries, desk study, interviews and field missions.

The recommendations of the study were linked to five selected thematic areas, yet they did not really provide strategic level recommendation, but highlighted the need for more ***practical tools and mechanisms in the formulation and allocation*** of development cooperation programmes and projects;

The *'Evaluation on Norwegian Support to Promote the Rights of Persons with Disabilities'* (2012) assessed the support and special merits of the Norwegian interventions in the sphere of the rights of PWD. The latest evaluation from NORAD (2018) *'Support to Civil Society: Guiding principles'* mentions human rights and lists ways of enhancing inclusion, but no reference is made to the human rights-based approach.

SIDA has carried out a desk study 'Experiences and Lessons Learnt from SIDA's *Work with Human Rights and Democratic Governance*' (SIDA, 2008). The study was limited to a desk review of already existing evaluations and did not examine the actual projects or their specific results. The approach was very limited, and the desk study is not very recent, so it not very useful for the lessons learned. Yet the evaluation team could use it as a reference material.

As the thematic evaluation of the European Commission support to respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms (2011) was a quite wide assignment covering all rights, regions and instruments of the Commission's human rights work in non-member countries, it sought ***changes, developments and trends*** rather than assessing outcomes against fixed targets, due to the context specific nature of promoting and protecting human rights. Instead of using a ***normative approach*** with the logic of assessing the benefits gained by the rights holders, the capacity of the duty bearers and strengthening of the accountability mechanisms and monitoring of the system, the evaluation chose to use an ***'institutional' approach*** and assessed how the institution has organized itself to support human rights. This was a choice made due to the inevitably political and strategic nature of the evaluation. When assessing the institutional capacity, in addition to assessing the efforts made to enhance internal organization and capacity, the evaluation looked also at i) the overall capacity of the EC to deal effectively with various dimensions of the human rights agenda, beyond mainstreaming, ii) the existence of sufficient political and management leadership and iii) the willingness and capacity to invest in the overall EU architecture for promoting human rights.

The evaluation, focusing on ***changes and trends rather than outcomes***, addressed key policy and delivery challenges and assessed impact with a feasible scope: rather results and intermediate impacts than long-term impacts, and contribution, determining factors behind successes and failures, and capacity as a favouring factor, rather than attribution.

Australia has produced a number of evaluations during the first 10 years after the turn of the millennium that focused mainly on NGOs and human rights.

For example, in the Rights in the Sight (ACFID, 2009), the primary goal was not evaluating to what extent the activities promote human rights, but rather to understand NGO views on the activities. It provides some lessons learned regarding the benefits of using the HRBA, such as empowering aid beneficiaries, increasing effectiveness and sustainability, and adding impact to advocacy. A broadly qualitative methodology was used, and it was designed to be illustrative of views and activities rather than statistically representative. Special emphasis was put on explaining when people's perceptions, rather than facts, were being described.

Finding feasible lessons learned is also challenging as the definitions of human rights also vary to some extent with countries whose approaches to international development and cooperation policy are similar to Finland (Sweden, Norway, Denmark, the UK, the Netherlands, Canada, Australia, Austria, Germany). Some definitions place most emphasis on individual empowerment (UK / DFID), whereas other definitions highlight the role of the state in respecting and protecting human rights and development (Norway) or focus on power relations (Germany). Some definitions highlight both individual empowerment and the responsibility of duty bearers (Sweden). Denmark's definition differs from the others in that it underscores pragmatism and realism. This makes comparisons and benchmarking with them more challenging as different foci might require different evaluation scopes and methods. Still, mutual learning and benchmarking are recommended around the forthcoming evaluation, keeping in mind the conceptual variations.

Mutual learning and benchmarking with the like-minded countries are recommended around the forthcoming evaluation.

On methodology

The Spanish aid policy and corresponding Cooperation Master Plans have incorporated the HRBA and gender perspectives since 2001. The 2013-2016 Cooperation Master Plan includes an explicit commitment to develop tools that will guarantee the consideration of human rights, gender, environmental sustainability and cultural diversity approaches into Spanish cooperation activities (MFA Spain, 2014). More specifically, the Cooperation Evaluation Policy promotes the mainstreaming of the rights- and gender-based approaches in the evaluation process. As these new approaches are used in cooperation initiatives, the Spanish development cooperation recognized that also the evaluation methods must be adapted and made sensitive to these new approaches (MFA Spain, 2014). In this context, a research and methodological analysis of approaches to gender- and HRBA-sensitive evaluation was commissioned, in order to provide clearer user guidance that will lead to more sensitive and better-quality evaluations. It was realised that evaluators will often use a given method, unaware that other alternatives exist that may be better suited to their specific needs and purposes (MFA Spain, 2014).

Even though not an evaluation ***per se***, a document 'Making Evaluation Sensitive to Gender and Human Rights: Different Approaches' (MFA Spain, 2014) presents the results of the research, and proposes four alternative approaches for sensitive evaluations: a) driven by theory of change; b) stakeholder-driven evaluation approach; c) driven by critical change or a transformative paradigm; and d) judgement-driven summative evaluation approach.

The *theory of change -based approach* will identify, reconstruct or directly formulate a theoretical framework that establishes the causal relationships between the various dimensions of an intervention. Approaches that incorporate different actors into the process can be generically known as *stakeholder-driven* or participatory evaluations.

Stakeholder-driven evaluation approach coordinates participation processes between the various stakeholders, placing particular emphasis on the most underprivileged groups. According to the research, this is appropriate for plural social situations, where the different groups involved in the evaluation can be given legitimacy and bargaining power. The methods include collaborative, empowering, inclusive, pluralist, use-oriented, learning-oriented and responsive evaluation, and are sensitive to the needs of various stakeholders. It can be understood as a process that respects the issues of interest, experiences and values of people, especially those of the poor and minorities, and less powerful. The key aspect is stakeholder involvement and participation in the evaluation process. Sub-systems of legitimation, action and reaction aspects are identified as contributing factors to the participation process.

Subsystem of legitimation covers the key actors viewed as legitimately responsible for the decision, and legitimacy may be conferred legally, politically, or technically. Subsystem of action covers actors who implement the intervention in one way or another. Subsystem of reaction comprises a variety of social actors, who react to the intervention, whether as beneficiaries, non-beneficiaries or as self-appointed defenders of a given group. A fourth subsystem is also included regarding the legitimacy of the evaluation team itself, which means that evaluators should seek out questions formulated by the local people, not only questions of their own invention. The evaluation process should explicitly include questions formulated by a variety of stakeholders. The purpose is not to collect opinions, but to achieve on-going participation in the formulation of the research questions and the data-compilation mechanisms. The data collected must be considered and built in to the decision-making framework of the evaluation and the informative analyses. The participatory process is to increase the awareness and capacity for reflection of participants, leading to greater involvement of individuals in both the evaluation and the real-world situation that the intervention seeks to change.

Critical change evaluation approach seeks to determine where social, economic and political inequalities lie, criticise social injustice, and raise awareness. The evaluation aims to change the balance of power in favour of those less powerful and to represent their own interests more effectively through evaluation. *Judgement-driven summative evaluations* aim to determine the merit, worth, significance or overall validity of an element. This requires establishing criteria, constructing standards, measuring performance and comparing to standards. Then results are synthesised into a judgement of value. The document proposes *use of mixed approaches and multi-methods which seek to use standard criteria in combination with those suggested by the stakeholders*, and considers it as a solution that would respond well to the varied demands and contexts involved in commissioning the evaluation.

The methodologies used in the assessed evaluations vary, but most were based on qualitative research methods, or a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods. The methods for data collection include semi-structured interviews and discussions, geographical HRBA assessments with country examples, thematic or programme assessments, and assessments of particular aid modalities or policy areas. The UNFPA (2014) and UNEG (2014) guidelines for (programming and) evaluating human rights based interventions emphasized the principles of inclusion, participation and assessing power relations: they study groups who have or have not benefitted from the intervention (inclusion), use a participatory approach for the right of the stakeholders to be consulted, and use a context specific analysis, sensitive to empowerment of disadvantaged groups. Addressing power relations are key ethical issues in human rights related evaluations. In the context of the power relations, the evaluators should be sensitive also to their own position of power. Both guidelines paid particular attention also to a quality assurance system within the evaluation resources.

The UNEG guidelines on human rights related evaluation emphasized the importance of a stakeholder analysis, based on five categories of stakeholders: i) duty bearers with decision-making authority, ii) duty bearers of direct responsibilities for the intervention, iii) secondary duty bearers, such as private sector and parents, iv) rights holders who are intended or unintended beneficiaries of the intervention, and v) rights holders who should be represented or are negatively affected by the intervention. The importance of this analysis lies in the fact of easily biased informants, those with easy access or close affiliation to the intervention or its stakeholders.

5.2 Mapping of relevant MFA evaluations and lessons learned

The most relevant of the evaluations carried out by the MFA recently to the HRBA evaluation is the 'Evaluation on Improvement of Women's and Girls' Rights in Finland's Development Policy and Cooperation' (MFA, 2018). Prior to carrying out the evaluation, an evaluability study was done – 'Impact Evaluability Assessment and Meta-analysis of Finland's Support to Women and Girls and Gender Equality' (MFA 2017b). Assessing HRBA has very similar problematics, e.g. related to the availability of data as the evaluation on women's and girls' rights and gender equality had. Both are also conceptually challenging, as programming should be both thematically specific and also mainstreamed. For this reason, lessons learned from both of these are extensively discussed in this chapter.

Impact Evaluability Assessment and Meta-analysis of Finland's Support to Women and Girls and Gender Equality

The evaluability study found out that the plausibility of interventions leading to intended outcomes was medium-low, which is similar to the findings of this evaluability study. The main reason was that *interventions did not clearly state the gendered issues they aim to address, and the goals remained broad and vague*. In addition, they do not have clearly defined goals and intended impacts of the interventions with respect to gender. This was especially the case where gender

was identified as a *cross-cutting issue*. This also resulted in widespread failure of evaluations to address gender issues. Few evaluations contained any specific results based on gender-disaggregated data on outputs, outcomes and impacts, and evaluation methodologies were not sufficiently tailored to ensure that gendered impacts are assessed, or to ensure the deployment of gender-sensitive evaluation tools. *Evidence* on expected impacts on women and girls was considered to be *sparse*, including evidence of unexpected consequences (both positive and negative). The evaluability study also recommended that the upcoming evaluation should clearly outline these evaluability limitations.

As a result of the above, the evaluability study concluded that *quantitative impact study methodology may not be warranted (without investment in widespread primary data collection), and proposed more qualitative, process evaluation approaches and qualitative beneficiary impact stories*. This is in line with what the Nordic and international experiences indicate.

The gender evaluability study found that Finland's approach to gender mainstreaming is clearly defined at the policy level. However, the implementation of gender mainstreaming as part of Finland programming and the evaluation of the effects of gender mainstreaming onto gender equality is poor, resulting in a *gap between the policy and practice*. As reasons the study indicated unclarity of how gender equality is meant to be promoted through the implementation of programmes; gender was thematically mentioned, but not operationalised, and the evidence reviewed does not specify how gender mainstreaming occurred or was intended to occur in practice. Accordingly, the study indicated that the *evidence of impact was considered limited*. Impacts were not systematically documented in evaluations, and results based on gender-disaggregated data on outputs, outcomes and impacts, and evaluation methodologies were not sufficiently tailored to ensure that gendered impacts would be assessed, or to ensure the deployment of gender-sensitive evaluation tools.

The study recommended that the upcoming evaluation of Finland's support to women and girls should be commissioned with a clear understanding of the evaluability limitations, and to include tools and methods to generate new information on gender impacts, *using innovative approaches to address the evidence gap*. It is also indicated, that a good number of evaluation documents say *that interventions have achieved at least some positive impacts, but the extent to which these are documented or reported is generally poor in many of the documents, and few mention gender-specific lessons or impact*.

Regarding the objectives, the evaluability study recommended that the *evaluation objectives should be specific and should align with the gender objectives of the MFA, clearly clarifying the evaluation questions and help define the types of impacts that are to be measured*. It proposed a *limited number of objectives* and *consider the information and evidence available and the context in which the evaluation will be carried out*. Further, the study also proposed that the purpose of the evaluation should be around learning, accountability and/or decision-making about future policies and programmes, and emphasized clear definitions of the key concepts.

Regarding the methodology, a *participatory evaluation approach* was recommended to understand which gendered impacts can be plausibly expected and assessed. To enhance the evaluability, the study recommended that *time and*

effort should be invested in clarifying the gender objectives of the different sampled programmes or projects. The absence of a clear pathway from interventions to impacts and the lack of gender-specific indicators that go beyond activity or output level was proposed to be addressed through a *participatory, learning-focused evaluation approach*. More specifically, *participatory outcome mapping* was recommended to produce more objective and robust findings as to the results that could plausibly be achieved, including *change*. The study noted that if carried out rigorously, this type of evaluation approach *can make up for the lack of a plausible pathways to gender results, as well as the lack of predefined gender indicators in the evaluation framework*. The rationale for using a participatory evaluation approach was also supported by the findings around the lack of a documented approach to gender mainstreaming or gendered approach to programme implementation, as it would be able to capture undocumented examples of best practices in gender programming. This type of participatory, learning-focused evaluation approach would be an ex post evaluation, but it could at least clarify the gender theory of change as it exists in stakeholders and beneficiaries' mind sets. Implicitly, a participatory evaluation approach also *implies adopting a contribution approach to assessing impact*.

The gender evaluability study also included some international lessons learned on evaluating gender in similar contexts, which is helpful in focusing the forthcoming HRBA evaluation. According to the study, reasons for limited data available were related to *lack of gender expertise,* gender *indicators*, and *monitoring* system. The study recommends *establishment of better and robust results management systems at the organisational level, along with a strong commitment to their deployment and use*. This is linked to development of even more specific and tailored gender *guidelines for operation*, incorporation of gender *analysis in every intervention, improvement of monitoring and evaluation at all stages of the project cycle, and ensuring usage* across projects and programmes.

The study recommends establishment of better and robust results management systems at the organisational level.

The second lesson learned was linked to the nature of gender issues themselves, which make changes in women's rights and gender equality difficult to measure, as they are often associated with *many other factors, social norms, practices and customs*. It also takes time to see tangible changes. Due to all these complexities, the study indicates that it is difficult to pinpoint the causality between interventions and possible changes. It proposed assessing *contribution, in particular for policy level evaluations looking at the impacts of a large portfolio of projects and programmes*. Lessons learned also indicate the need to focus on *beneficiaries and project participants' own analysis and qualitative self-assessment of their experience, and results-based management*. This way, people's own analysis of outcomes, learning and knowledge accumulated by them is translated into qualitative and quantitative information, which supports a more *people-oriented management system for development results*. This participatory procedure gathers perceptions and insights from people regarding the benefits and motivations resulting from participating in the programme/project, which is important also for people's own learning, planning and progress.

The study summarized that despite of increased political commitment, there is a gap between gender mainstreaming policies and practice. Weak evaluability is the common finding and is the reason for absence of tangible change or impact in other donor organisations. Weak evaluability is characterised by

The lessons from the gender evaluability study could be useful for the implementation of the HRBA.

lack of gender objectives and expertise, gender-specific indicators, M&E framework, and poor organisation-wide commitment and capacity. In addition, very few best practices are available based on documentation. The study indicates that weak evaluability and gender mainstreaming can be addressed in different ways, but most recommendations are related to improvement of the organisational aspects. In the international cases included in the gender evaluability study, organisations had adopted alternative methodologies, and focus on contribution rather than attribution, specific sectors or themes and not gender considerations across their entire development portfolio.

The gender evaluability study also provides various lessons for the MFA to improve implementation of the gender at different levels and stages, which could be useful also for the implementation of the HRBA. As implementation is not the focus of this HRBA evaluability study, these lessons are not reflected more in detail here, but could be useful for the HRBA evaluation team to look at when preparing the evaluation matrix and defining more detailed questions for the evaluation. However, the study proposes considerations for the future impact evaluations, which include that the in-depth analysis in the evaluation should focus on the policy areas that are clearly promoted through the intervention. It also highlights that some sectors tend to address gender mainstreaming and equality better than other sectors, but generalisation is dangerous, as several studies have recognised that one single person with good expertise and drive can change the situation.

The gender evaluability study recommended that *specific thematic areas should be selected for the evaluation to enable more focused lessons learning*. As part of the objective to identify and validate lessons learned, good practices and examples of innovations that support gender equality and human rights in different areas of intervention or sectors, the study recommends focus on selected thematic areas to explore the differences in gender mainstreaming across sectors, and explore the reasons behind this and identify good practices as well as barriers (resources, time, staff, attitudes) to gender mainstreaming in specific sectors.

Due to the limited and isolated documented evidence of gendered impacts across programmes addressing gender as a cross-cutting issue, the study emphasises *primary data collection, and inclusion of both better performing sectors as well as less those which in this case were less 'gender-prone' sectors*. It also recommends use of secondary sources of data to establish benchmarks, and to identify patterns of evolution across indicators, and where possible, use disaggregated figures for different geographical areas where MFA programmes are being implemented.

One of the key recommendations of the study is to investigate the gap between policy and practice. It is proposed that the evaluation follows the *'translation' of gender policy objectives at each level of the programming cycle* – from the MFA's approach to gender mainstreaming and policy objectives, to the practical implementation of gendered interventions on the ground and integrating a process evaluation component as part of the evaluation was recommended, to investigate the programming processes and the effectiveness question in relation to the implementation of gender mainstreaming. It is recommended that *mainstreaming should be assessed against process indicators, rather than impact-level indicators*.

Evaluation on Improvement of Women's and Girls' Rights in Finland's Development Policy and Cooperation

Based on the recommendations of the evaluability study, Outcome Harvesting (OH) (Wilson-Grau & Britt, 2013) and Process Tracing (Collier, 2011) were considered as evaluation approaches. Process tracing is a case-based approach. It requires focusing on a very limited number of case studies to allow sufficient time for testing alternative causal hypotheses for the emergence of outcomes. In OH as well it is necessary to focus on a set of carefully selected outcome areas, especially when it is to link upstream contribution (Finland's input and activities) to results further downstream, as was the case in this evaluation. These approaches used were to allow zooming into outcome areas to unpack emergent results and reconstruct observed pathways of change.

During the Inception Phase it became clear that, while the main purpose remained learning, the *evaluation should cover a wider scope*, assessing results in a *broad range of themes and contexts* to identify and compile a greater number of gender results for better *generalisation of conclusions*. The *process tracing approach was abandoned,* yet *elements of OH were kept*, including the outcomes definition combining these with a more detailed evaluative framework suitable for capturing also context and process data. For selected results the OH method was applied more in detail, including detailed drafting of outcome, significance and contribution statements. Overall, the outcomes-based approach followed the conceptual thinking of OH, that was inspired by Outcome Mapping (Earl, Carden, & Smutylo, 2002) and Utilization-Focused Evaluation (Patton, 2008). The evaluation *focused on contribution, not attribution*, recognizing that a complex system of multiple actors and factors contributes to various interrelated causal chains of results leading to transformative change.

According to the evaluation, focus was clearly on outcomes, rather than impact, with emphasis on identifying results in the 'sphere of influence' of the interventions (where it is easier to establish plausible links among contribution and results), rather than systemic impacts in its 'sphere of interest' (where impact is desired, yet contribution is more difficult to evidence). Evaluation also tried to identify cascading outcomes in order to establish pathways linking upstream 'process effects' to downstream, impact near results.

Evaluation also looked at outcomes as actor-centred social changes, describing results in terms of behavioural changes in people, organisations, and groups that were influenced directly or indirectly by MFA Finland. Results could be upstream/ immediate (e.g. Finland's cooperation partners changing their programming strategies) or more downstream/ impact-near (e.g. beneficiaries changing their attitude).

There were *three evaluation questions focusing on extent to which the outcomes have materialised, transferred from upstream to downstream results and feedback loops, and how best to improve results through different aid modalities*. Regarding scope, the evaluation did not aim to comprehensively cover all of Finland's work, but a sample of partners, programmes, and projects were selected to develop *good practice examples and lessons learnt* for learning purposes. The sample selection included *case study countries* (three Finland's long-term partner countries; *aid modalities and partners* (multilateral, bilateral including multi-bilateral pro-

The evaluation selected a sample of partners and projects to develop examples of good practices and lessons learnt.

gramming, and CSOs); thematic areas (reflecting MFA's theory of change); *types of programmes and projects*; and *types of policy dialogue/influencing strategies*; and results emerging from the evaluation period. The "gap between policy and practice" indicated by the evaluability study was also examined by addressing *MEL and organisational processes*.

There were several limitations listed in the evaluation report. Regarding evaluability, the report states, that in order to derive good practice examples, the evaluation examined mostly GM1 (significant) or GM2 (principal) marked projects or programmes. In our opinion, the *focus on the 'positives' only left the most challenging part of the supported programmes/projects outside the scope*. It was also noted, that some of the observed changes emerged in a too complex system to determine the extent of the influence. In addition, MFA's core funding and support to country strategies of UN partners was difficult to trace. The evaluation report highlights a *constraint in time during the field mission*.

The evaluation was designed in a *theory-based and data driven approach*, selecting evaluation areas guided by MFA's gender *ToC thematic areas*. The evaluation aimed to understand the contribution mechanisms of Finland's aid modalities, rather than deriving generalizable conclusions on Finland's effectiveness or impact. The case study approach was understood to allow a deeper understanding and increase learning. According to the evaluation report, the bias was to some extent mitigated by including questions on unexpected or unintended outcomes and exploring, where possible, alternative causes for the emergence of results during data collection.

6 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Policy analysis

Conclusion 1:

The HRBA has generally increased coherence between the spheres of human rights and development but the definition of the HRBA has remained quite abstract. Different interpretations on its nature, whether a paradigm change, a means to enhance quality, or "one more cross-cutting issue" have over lived within the MFA staff until present. The interpretations of the concepts in the like-minded countries also vary, affecting the opportunities for forming common approaches, but still opportunities for mutual learning exist.

The MFA has generally followed the UN definition of a human rights-based approach. Although the description of the approach has varied in MFA policies, there is now increased coherence around HRBA at the MFA. The formerly separate realms of human rights and development have found a more common ground in MFA policies and guidelines, which all underline the equality of all rights, including civil and political as well as social and economic rights.

The HRBA was launched and has been used in subsequent development policies since 2012, showing the commitment of the Finnish Government to advance human rights in development cooperation. Yet, there are gaps and differences in how the HRBA is conceptualized and interpreted. The paradigm changing nature of HRBA remains undefined. The evaluability study findings indicate that HRBA is mainly seen as a means to enhance quality within the MFA. Therefore, its underlying potential to be used in discovering the root causes of imbalances of power and resources has not been fully recognized.

The central principles encompassing HRBA, non-discrimination, equality and participation, have been highlighted as important concepts but have not been operationalized to support the process and achievement of results in promoting the human rights.

There are differing interpretations by the like-minded countries in respect to HRBA, from highlighting the power relations and individual empowerment (emphasis on the roles of duty bearers and rights holders) to pragmatism and emphasizing the role of the state. These differences may not enhance forming common approaches and stances, tools and guidance, for promotion and protection of human rights, but still provide an opportunity for exchanging ideas and for mutual learning regarding what works and what does not.

Conclusion 2:

The linkages of HRBA with other key policies and frameworks (e.g. SDGs, RBM/TOC) have either not been articulated or have been only superficially elaborated and need to be clarified. Consequently, the understanding and the meaning of these frameworks varies both within the MFA and its partners involved in implementation, and require clearer and more practical upstream and downstream policy guidance.

Some ambiguity remains regarding the HRBA approach and its linkages to other guiding frameworks, such as SDGs, RBM, and theories of change, as well as its role vis-à-vis the cross-cutting objectives in each development policy programme. These interpretations entail the understanding of the linkages between HRBA and other existing frameworks and principles, such as the interlinkages of the HRBA and the SDGs, i.e. how the HRBA is guiding the implementation of SDGs, and the SDGs contributing to HRBA by establishing clear and concrete objectives for development cooperation interventions.

In this evaluability study it was not possible to fully assess what the actual role of the HRBA is within the MFA and in development cooperation. The HRBA is conceptualized in slightly different ways in various MFA policies, and the interlinkages between HRBA and other driving frameworks and factors has not been properly addressed. As one pragmatic consequence it has been used as a tool to increase quality, rather than a means to discover the root causes of imbalances of power and resources. The application of HRBA varies both within the Ministry and among other users. The launch of HRBA has been gradual and this has left room for different interpretations and uses of the approach in development cooperation. The different actors along the "production chain" of the various development cooperation instruments (from design and planning to evaluation) have adopted the HRBA in different ways.

The process of finalising the theories of change (result maps) for the four development policy priority areas was on-going during the implementation of the evaluability study, and it was not possible to make a thorough analysis of how the results maps currently reflect the HRBA. The preparation of the theories of change for the humanitarian assistance and the CSOs had not yet started. Already one can see that the HRBA has been addressed varyingly in these four priority areas. The different interpretations of HRBA, lack of coherence and the quality of indicators may affect the implementation.

In addition, the understanding of HRBA as tackling the root causes of imbalances of power and resources may imply that the fulfilment of the human rights is a complex task, firstly, for touching human life from individual to social and cultural levels of society, and secondly, for having interlinkages with factors not always foreseen or planned for their complexity. Furthermore, some human rights obligations are acute, requiring immediate action, and others can be realised progressively according to available resources and capacity of the state (MFA 2015, 9-10). This means that despite all rights being equally important, their urgency may vary. This may complicate RBM thinking. From these points of view, the HRBA may not always be well suited to RBM thinking.

Furthermore, the relationship of the HRBA and the cross-cutting objectives, particularly those with empowering nature, e.g. gender equality, is not clear and may cause confusion in prioritizing them and recognizing their interlinkages.

This in view of e.g. of the Evaluation on Improvement of Women's and Girls' Rights in Finland's Development Policy and Cooperation (MFA, 2018) findings, which stated that as gender has been placed within the HRBA duty bearer – rights holder concepts, it has rather limited achieving the gender objectives than promoted them. The evaluation fully recognized the importance of the HRBA, but raised a question on how to place it in the theory of change (results maps) so that it does not limit implementation of other concepts. This should be carefully looked at in the HRBA evaluation.

Part of the development cooperation practice reform, currently under way in the MFA, is to look at how to improve the existing guidelines, including cross-cutting objectives. The connection between cross-cutting objectives and the HRBA will be clarified in the new guidelines, and the intention is also to create some central cross-cutting objectives that would stay constant even with changes of governments and respective ministers. This will be done with a judicial justification based on Finnish legislation, according to an interviewed MFA official. The clarification of the interlinkage of the HRBA with the cross-cutting objectives is very welcome to avoid the HRBA being seen as "one more cross-cutting issue." A common understanding of the role of HRBA in the MFA should be reached.

Coherence has increased with development of results maps (theories of change). Therefore, the development cooperation practice reform under way in the MFA is a very positive evolution as it can strengthen the systematization of the implementation of development policy, and particularly HRBA, through increased common understanding, feasible tools, and improved strategic leadership. With this reform, the more strategic use of HRBA, including in sectors where it has not been widely implemented (such as humanitarian aid and private sector and business endeavours), may provide a better chance of reaching the desired 'human rights transformative' level and for gaining valuable experiences for the future.

Conclusion 3:

The MFA's guidelines for implementing HRBA have remained quite general and not utilisation focused.

The MFA has developed complementary guidelines and tools to support the implementation of the HRBA policy. The understanding of HRBA as both an objective and means to development has paved way for the use of HRBA principles of equality, participation and inclusion. MFA guidelines, particularly the Guidance Note (2015), have been central in efforts to develop a common understanding and adoption of HRBA.

However, to understand the role and applicability of HRBA in different aid modalities, sectors, and programmes, general guidelines have not proven to be sufficient. This is seen in e.g. in the medium to low plausibility of MFA interventions leading to intended HRBA results and affects the evaluability through the lack of evidence of impact or lessons learned in HRBA. The central HRBA principles of non-discrimination, equality, and participation are quite abstract, yet demanding when operationalized in development cooperation. While the HRBA emphasizes both the process and the results in promoting human rights,

the lack of guidance on the use of the central principles in policy-to-implementation cycle phases may have affected both the processes and the results so far.

This finding is similar to that of the development cooperation practice reform, which at the general level has found out that guidelines are not very useful for the intended users. The scale from "HRBA blind" to "transformative" has been useful in concretizing the HRBA but using the scale has proven to be challenging. The evaluability study was not able to fully identify the exact challenges, and that should be looked at in the evaluation. Evaluation should also look at the targets set for different categories of the scale which are currently missing.

Conclusion 4:

The country strategies as downstream implementation documents reflect the HRBA principles/objectives, but up to now they have remained superficial in this respect. Policy dialogue was not addressed as part of the evaluability study.

It is positive, that HRBA has been included as part of the principles and/or objectives of Finland's development cooperation in all analysed country strategies. However, the adoption of the approach varies in the country strategies, reflecting the different interpretations of the role and status of HRBA. In the country strategies examined for this assignment, there is no indication that human rights analyses were conducted and if they were, it is not reflected in the definition of target groups, target levels of human rights considerations, or within different instruments used in each country, at least at the strategy level.

The MFA's internal assessment of country strategies is on-going at the moment. According to the MFA also aspects of using HRBA have been incorporated in the assessment. The HRBA evaluation should make maximum use of this information, and depending on the quality of the assessment results it should be decided whether this information is sufficient. More in-depth assessment of the country strategies in the possible field mission countries should be included in the evaluation.

The evaluability study did not assess Finland's policy dialogue plans and their implementation from the HRBA perspective. Policy dialogue is an important part of the HRBA in the result maps, and thereby should be incorporated in the HRBA evaluation.

Conclusion 5:

The MFA management of development policy and cooperation is a fundamental part of HRBA implementation. Internal mechanisms, such as the compliance with standards and principles, including HRBA, are being looked into in the ongoing development cooperation practice reform, and its results would thereby form a good starting point for the HRBA evaluation.

In the MFA's programming, compliance with human rights standards and principles is ensured by reviewing compliance with the HRBA as part of the overall quality assessment of all interventions being considered for funding. At the first phase, this is done by the responsible geographical or thematic unit of the MFA and after that by the Quality Assurance Group of the Ministry where the level(s) of compliance with HRBA of the intervention are evaluated.

The ongoing reform of operations in the MFA department for development policy is expected to improve these procedures, according to an interview at the MFA. The plan is to develop the quality system in such a way that the Quality Assurance Group would assess the compliance with development policy, including the HRBA, in the beginning of the process, to logically ensure the direction of programming. Also, a support team is to be created for significant interventions, to strengthen the elaboration of programmes. In addition, instead of different forms and guidelines scattered in the MFA system, consistent guidelines are being developed for the desk officers' needs, including the practical phases of programming, whom to include in which phase in the preparations, etc. The support package will be complemented with training, advice and adequate leadership. Thirdly, the reform entails a process of enhancing strategic leadership to align the direction of development policy with the budget available. The aim is to improve results achievement and guide the allocation of funding.

6.2 Meta-analysis: evaluability assessment and information gaps

Conclusion 6:

Limited documented information makes assessing the plausibility of achieving the intended results challenging – some positive results were found, which indicates that there are more results, but they are not reported.

A majority of documents lack a clear statement of the human rights considerations that the intervention aims to address. Many projects implicitly embody human rights principles in their objectives (e.g. supporting participation, transparency or inclusion) but do not provide an explicit reference to the human rights situation in the country framing the intervention. Most do not define duty bearers and rights holders and although a majority do consider vulnerable groups, this is often a general reference without a diagnosis of what leads to vulnerability and how the intervention will impact them. The plausibility of MFA interventions leading to intended HRBA results is medium to low.

One of the key challenges identified in similar evaluations is underreporting, which has then resulted in limited availability of data. This is especially a challenge related to the data on outcomes. Whether lack of results is a result of underreporting, or that there are no results to report on, should be one of the key aspects to be investigated in the forthcoming evaluation and the methodology applied should reflect this need.

Conclusion 7:

Measuring impact is too ambitious and not feasible.

When reporting data is available regarding the HRBA, the focus is on activities and outputs rather than outcomes and impact. Almost half of the projects sampled did not have monitoring data available and very few provided evidence that there was a baseline conducted at the beginning of the project. There was little evidence of disaggregated data being collected and when it was, it was generally only by gender and not by other factors affecting human rights (e.g.

ethnicity, socio-economic factors, disability). There were only 15 project evaluations available and only those commissioned by the MFA (five evaluations) included specific questions on human rights and HRBA.

There is little evidence of impact or lessons learned from the implementation of HRBA. The limited number of evaluations available in the portfolio means that there was limited evidence of the impact of HRBA implementation. Most evaluations did not consider unintended consequences of the interventions and those that did provided only positive examples. None of the evaluations reviewed undertook impact evaluations framed by specific impact assessment approaches and there was no evidence that any included surveys of beneficiaries. A minority of the evaluations provided useful lessons learned that could be applied to future Finnish HRBA implementation.

The feasibility of assessing the impact of the MFA's interventions is low, based on the data available. This is also in line with the lessons learned from other similar international and MFA's evaluations. It is methodologically possible to assess outcomes to a certain extent within the MFA's regular resourcing and time allocations for centralised evaluations, but not to go beyond that.

Conclusion 8:

Information gaps are related to definition, contextualisation, analysis and monitoring of human rights.

There are significant gaps in the definition, contextualisation and analysis of human rights considerations that interventions seek to address. This study found that in the sample of 40 MFA projects, a majority of project documents did not include a clear statement of the human rights considerations that the development intervention aimed to address. While project objectives often implicitly include human rights principles (such as supporting participation, transparency or inclusion), the project documents do not include an analysis of the human rights situation in the country, do not define duty bearers and rights holders, and/or do not present a diagnosis of vulnerable groups and the factors that lead to vulnerability.

It is difficult to assess the extent to which the projects have been designed to contribute to human rights results without a clear analysis of the human rights situation in the country of intervention and without a demonstration that the project was designed with an awareness of the national strategies and policies on human rights. In addition, there is little consideration of the factors that contribute to the infringement of rights and whether these are targeted by the MFA-supported intervention.

In most of the projects reviewed, the role of each of the actors involved in the project in relation to human rights (with beneficiaries as rights holders and the state as a duty bearer) is not clear. It is not clear whether the projects aim to contribute to the recognition of rights holders and duty bearers, nor of their corresponding rights, responsibilities and obligations. As such, the plausibility of MFA interventions leading to intended HRBA results is medium to low.

Assessed evaluations did not properly and fully consider the human rights issues within programmes. This implies that specific, human rights -specific evaluation objectives and evaluation questions should be included in evaluation designs on a more systematic basis, and ensured by the MFA that these evaluation questions are properly addressed in the reports. In addition, this suggests that monitoring systems (including indicators) and evaluation tools should be redesigned in a way that captures human rights -specific outputs. Gaps identified based on international evidence are similar. Although certain results seem to have been achieved, these were often qualitative and took the form of case studies. Results were not systematically reported against indicators, suggesting that better results management systems need to be established at the organisational level, with a serious political commitment.

Conclusion 9:

Human rights related work is implemented by various departments and units of the MFA, which has partly resulted in different policy and conceptual interpretations and implementation practices.

It was not within the evaluability study to look at how the organizational structure of the MFA has affected implementation of the human rights. However, according to some interviews it plays a significant role and makes understanding the results (outcomes) more complex. The Political Department has a major role to play in promotion of human rights. In addition to the Department of Development Policy and Regional Departments, and relevant units, the evaluation should also cover the Political Department which is instrumental in implementation of the HRBA within the MFA. The Unit for Human Rights Policy within the Political Department is responsible e.g. for human rights policy and general human rights issues; human rights policy issues in international and regional organisations; and UNHCR support for human rights and democracy.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1:

Place the evaluation in the context of current development cooperation practice reform within the MFA to utilize to the maximum the results of the reform and inform its further development. Similarly, it should be put in the context of the work on results-based management (RBM), and inform the further development of results maps (theories of change) for Finland's Development Policy Programme priority areas (indicators, targets etc.) in terms of HRBA. Evaluation should closely cooperate with and/or utilize the results of the evaluation on knowledge management, and other relevant and recent evaluations and internal assessments (e.g. internal country strategy assessment).

Evaluating the HRBA in development cooperation is a complex and broad exercise. Thereby, the evaluation should be placed in the context of the already on-going work. This will reduce duplication and enable maximum utilisation of the already existing results. The evaluation would also inform this on-going work and its future development.

Many of the challenges found out in this study are addressed as part of the on-going work within the MFA (RBM/TOC, development cooperation practice reform and other evaluations, including internal assessments). The results of those efforts should be utilized to the maximum in the evaluation.

The evaluation should cooperate and take into consideration the current development cooperation practise reform led by the Development Policy Department. The reform addresses many issues identified as challenges in various evaluations, including in the HRBA evaluability study. The reform is on-going and e.g. looks at the utilization of theories of change in planning and monitoring i.e. thematic management for the implementation of the development policy; improving evidence-based decision-making i.e. the production and use of data and analysis; reform of quality assurance (incl. quality criteria, new practices and roles); and reform of process support i.e. guidelines, advisory services and management support. A tremendous amount of work has been carried out internally within the MFA related to the reform, and the evaluation should maximise the use of these results and assess the relevance of the plans from the HRBA perspective.

Similarly, it should be put in the context of the work on results-based management (RBM) and inform the further development of results maps (theories of change) for Finland's Development Policy Programme priority areas (indicators, targets etc.) in terms of HRBA. The results maps for humanitarian assistance and CSOs were not ready during the evaluability study and should be included in the evaluation (or plans, if not ready).

There are also some on-going evaluations which have HRBA aspects in-build. The evaluation should closely cooperate and make use of the knowledge management evaluation "Evaluation on How Do We Learn, Manage and Make Decisions in Finland's Development Policy and Cooperation?". This evaluation focuses on knowledge management emphasizing both decision-making and learning.

Its approach is broader than that of the development cooperation practice reform. Its focus is more on evidence-informed decision-making rather than evidence-based, more technocratic approach. It focuses also on how the MFA is able to collect, utilize and learn from information that is made available in different levels and parts of development policy and cooperation. Evaluation covers information used for accountability and communication (both internal and external), guidance (steering and decision making) and learning but emphasizes especially MFA's management and guidance processes, evidence-informed decision-making and learning from results. It pays special attention to the current M&E information, its use and usefulness from the KM perspective. Related to specifically to HRBA, the evaluation investigates to what degree information and knowledge help learning and decision-making towards a more effective HRBA.

MFA is also currently carrying out an internal country strategy assessment process on-going and HRBA is included as one issues to assess. The results of this process would bring a broader indication of how the HRBA is addressed in all of Finland's long-term countries. It can then be further assessed whether additional assessment is required as part of the actual evaluation. In case field missions to some countries take place, those country strategies could be looked at more in-depth.

Depending on the scope of the evaluation, there are also three other evaluations on-going which might be relevant for the HRBA evaluation: Evaluation on Agriculture, Rural Development and Forestry; Evaluation on Forced Displacement; and Evaluation of Finnfund (Finnish DFI). All these evaluations have HRBA issues in-build. Depending on the scope and whether private sector will be included, Finnfund is just finalizing its human rights strategy (final commenting round) followed by capacity development project for private sector investments and HRBA.

Recommendation 2:

The objective of the evaluation should be defined to generate learning that supports the MFA to improve their HRBA strategic and programming approaches further in view of the current context. It should also contribute to the preparation of the new Development Policy Programme.

The lessons learned from international, Nordic and also MFA's similar evaluation indicate that when the evaluability is weak, it is not feasible to focus only on evaluating accountability of implementation. Options are to focus solely on learning or a combination of learning and accountability. In our view, combination of both would be most feasible when setting the objectives. The focus should be on learning, as the challenges for evaluating accountability are difficult to overcome. Accountability (the extent to which stated goals or objectives are being met) should also be evaluated to the extent possible, focusing on outcomes and possibly illustrated by output level results.

The objective of the evaluation should be defined to generate learning that supports the MFA to improve their HRBA strategic and programming approaches further in view of the current context (development cooperation practise reform; RBM/TOC). Evaluation should also contribute to the preparation of the new Development Policy Programme.

Recommendation 3:

Consequently, the purpose of the evaluation should be two-fold: Firstly, it should produce a compilation of good practice examples and lessons learnt observed between 2012 and 2019 for sharing insights and learning from work done across MFA and potential communication with partners (learning). Secondly, it should provide an overview of results of Finland's HRBA policy initiatives and development cooperation at different policy and implementation levels (accountability) to the extent possible.

Recommendation 4:

Evaluation should be essentially a forward-looking evaluation and theory-based, taking into consideration the development policy practise reform and the RBM efforts by the MFA. It should employ the principles of utilization-focused evaluation.

In the current context of the MFA's own forward-looking work, the most feasible approach for the evaluation would be a forward-looking and theory-based, taking into consideration the development cooperation practise reform and the RBM/TOC efforts by the MFA. It should also be utilisation focused as it is tightly linked to on-going work of the MFA. Evaluation is very timely, in view of the RBM/TOC work (results maps) and the development cooperation practice reform. Recommendations should be forward looking and made in the context of this on-going work.

This would be in line with the proposed approaches for sensitive evaluations in the Chapter 5, and the MFA's work on the RBM and results maps for the development policy priority areas. Part of the evaluation process should be to reconstruct a results map for the MFA's HRBA. This would enable clarifying pathways needed to achieve long-term goal and so have logically compelling short-term outcomes to measure, portray actions and outcomes of many players, model complex change processes and identify indicators (qualitative or quantitative) for HRBA.

Recommendation 5:

Broad nature of the HRBA policy and its implementation make the forthcoming evaluation challenging – evaluation questions should remain focused on the current MFA context.

Based on the findings of this study and the current context of the MFA, the evaluation questions should focus on how the HRBA is perceived in the results maps (theories of change) and whether there is a need for improvement, if so, what kind; and how the HRBA has and should be taken into consideration in different aspects of the development cooperation practice reform. Accountability assessment should focus on what are, and to what extent have the results/outcomes (evidence-based/informed and/or plausible) of Finland's development cooperation materialized and what are the lessons learned.

What are, and to what extent have the results/outcomes (evidence-based/informed and/or plausible) of Finland's development cooperation materialized through different aid modalities and policy dialogue regarding the HRBA at different levels, and what are the lessons learned?

Evaluation should investigate how have the results (outcomes) materialized, what types of results exist and exactly by what means (aid modalities). Based on a very small sample of the evaluability study it was not possible to make comparisons between the aid modalities, so the evaluation should assess what are the comparative advantages/challenges of each selected modality. It should also investigate if there are linkages and synergies between aid modalities in addressing HRBA. Finally, it should assess whether there is comparative advantage and value added by Finland's support.

Evaluation should investigate two fundamental question related to results: whether the reason for limited results is under-reporting, especially at the outcome level, or whether the results just do not exist. Another question is around the actual benefits of using HRBA, and if they exist, what they are. This would be interesting particularly in those cases which are not HR specific. An important question is the meaning of HRBA at the country level because of its sensitivity as a topic, and how it best could be promoted also in difficult contexts.

Evaluation should find out how the HRBA and related concepts are understood and utilized. The different interpretations of HRBA, their backgrounds and effects in implementation should be investigated for conceptual clarity and strengthening coherence. Furthermore, the significant gaps in definition and analysis of the HRBA at different levels (upstream, downstream, implementation) are central in this regard. Interlinkages between HRBA and other frameworks, especially Agenda 2030, should be clarified.

Evaluation should also assess the financial flows and how the financial allocation reflects the HRBA as the overarching principle. Evaluation should also assess how the policy dialogue plans reflect the HRBA and how effective the different policy dialogue approaches related to HRBA are.

How is HRBA addressed in the Theories of Change (results maps) and how is it reflected in practice?

Evaluation could assess how the MFA can further break down its Theory of Change to more clearly define its strategic intent and conceptual clarity regarding the HRBA. It should assess how implementation of the HRBA is measured or planned to be measured and inform the on-going indicator development.

Evaluation could also assess how feasible the results maps are from the implementation perspective, in practise. It could also assess whether there are vertical impact pathways from policy level to programme level and vice versa in view of the Theory of Change. For example, it could look at how the country strategies and selected programme documents reflect the HRBA; whether they are based on the results map and an HRBA analysis and whether impact pathways are to be found. The internal self-evaluation of the country strategies is being currently carried out, which could provide some information on the HRBA and should be utilized. Assessment should also include implementation of the policy dialogue plans, and the programme documentation of the selected programmes/projects.

The HRBA evaluation should examine further the benefits and shortcomings of how the HRBA has been addressed in the theories of change (results maps), including having the HRBA as an overarching principle of the DPP and its

implications for the implementation of other concepts. The use of theories of change, and how consistently the HRBA approach has been reflected should be examined. The different interpretations of HRBA, their backgrounds and effects in implementation should be investigated, to make recommendations for the sharpening definitions and guidance, for increased coherence. Similarly, the evaluation should look at the indicators (or planned indicators) related to HRBA in the results maps.

How is, and how could HRBA be addressed in the development cooperation practice reform?

The reform looks at the development cooperation practices comprehensively, including management, structures, processes and systems and human resources. The evaluation should make use of the work carried out during the reform process. Evaluation should assess how practical guidance can best be provided on the use of the Theory of Change for planning, contextualised country level policy dialogue and programming on promoting the HRBA. It should assess whether the upstream strategic policy and downstream guidance documents on the HRBA are sufficient and clear, and if the concepts are clear and understood by different selected departments and units implementing HRBA (e.g. Department of Development Policy, Regional Departments and Political Department) within the MFA.

This study revealed that there is little sector or modality specific guidance on HRBA available. Therefore, the differences in adoption of the HRBA in different aid modalities should be studied to find out the comparative advantages and challenges in their implementation and reporting. It should especially assess the usefulness of the downstream guidance documents to actual users in different capacities and recommend most user-friendly ways to use the guidance.

The organizational structures and planned changes regarding the thematic management as part of the reform should be assessed to find out how well the organizational and structural features support implementation of the HRBA. In this regard, the functioning of the current and planned structures and measures to mainstream the adoption of the HRBA should be assessed. This should also include RBM and quality of knowledge management regarding HRBA. Evaluation should also assess the capacity of staff to support implementation of HRBA at different levels, and whether there are opportunities to enhance this capacity (internal capacity development).

Development cooperation reform includes also the quality assurance process, and the evaluation should assess how HRBA has and is planned to be addressed in the reform of quality assurance (quality criteria, new practises and roles), as well as process support, advisory and management support. It should especially look at availability of technical support regarding implementation of the HRBA.

The evaluation framework should be based on the results maps for each of the development policy priorities, including humanitarian assistance (under preparation) and the CSOs (not yet started). Evaluation should test the results maps in practice and make recommendations on how the implementation of the priority area should be further developed regarding the HRBA, and verify also

the assumptions of the Theory of Change. Evidence to support the claims of the different results maps (as well as evidence that may disprove them) should be collected. The evaluation should include reconstructing a results map for the HRBA based on its findings. Likewise, the evaluation should take into consideration the development policy practise reform and assess the plans of the reform from the HRBA perspective.

Recommendation 6:

Given the complexity of assessing human rights results and weak evaluability, the focus should be on outcomes, to be substantiated with output information gained through the selected sample. In this respect, a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods should be used, but the evaluation should mainly rely on and apply qualitative methods. Evaluation should not be method-driven, but used methods need to be applied to the evaluation context.

Based on the limitations identified in this evaluability study and lessons learned in Chapter 5 and also proposed focus on outcomes, mixed methods with emphasis on qualitative methods would be the most suitable option for Finland's HRBA evaluation. Mixed methods focusing on principles of outcome harvesting were used in the Evaluation on Improvement of Women's and Girls' Rights in Finland's Development Policy and Cooperation (MFA, 2018) to respond to similar challenges of limited availability of data as is the case with the data related to the HRBA, especially regarding outcomes. Lessons learned were that when strictly applied, outcome harvesting is not fully suitable for the strategic and policy level evaluations (within the available resources and time). The principle of focusing on outcomes and change was found to be feasible, though, and provides new primary data on outcomes. By discussing and agreeing on the pathway to observable HRBA changes the evaluators would be able to identify intended and unintended, internal and external factors that support or limit the integration of HRBA into projects design and implementation. The most significant change would be another possible method for the evaluation.

Contribution analysis was used in both the Danish HRBA evaluation (2018) and the above women's and girls' rights evaluation by the MFA. It was quite challenging to pin down the contribution in both cases, but still both evaluations were able to present plausible contributions. Attribution for major societal change is also challenging, if not impossible, as also the findings in the Chapter 5 imply.

Policy dialogue, in the MFA's women's and girls' rights evaluation was assessed according to different strategies: evidence and advice; advocacy and campaigns; lobbying and negotiations and fostering citizens' involvement (activism). This, or similar, would be useful also for the HRBA evaluation if policy dialogue will be part of the scope. If applied, it will also enable comparing the results of the policy dialogue regarding both women's and girls' rights and more generally the HRBA.

The quantitative methods would include a thorough thematic and financial portfolio analysis, to understand the types of HRBA initiatives and their categorisation in a 4-tier category from blind to transformative. Evaluation should also look at how feasible the 4-tier category is. Financial portfolio analysis would show the financial flow allocated to HRBA during the evalua-

tion period and whether it reflects the high priority given to the HRBA at the policy level. Context specificity has been emphasised in other similar evaluation as a challenge to make generalisations. Survey would be an option to get a more representative sample, which would then enable making more reliable generalisations.

As mixed methods with emphasis on qualitative methods are proposed, the evaluation questions should not strictly follow the OECD criteria. OECD criteria should be used as an analytical tool, but not as the overall framework for the evaluation. OECD criteria does not fit very well with qualitative methods. In the Evaluation on Improvement of Women's and Girls' Rights in Finland's Development Policy and Cooperation (MFA, 2018) evaluation it was challenging to make an evaluation matrix where both outcome harvesting questions and OECD criteria would fit. It is proposed that the evaluation framework and matrix will be issue-based.

It is proposed that a more thorough assessment and decision on the methods to be used will be included as part of the Planning Phase of the evaluation (with the selected team leader) and finalised during the Inception Phase. Emphasis should, however, be on the methods described above, or similar qualitative methods. Based on the lessons learned, the key issue is that if the above methods or similar will be adopted, they need to be significantly adapted to the evaluation context, rather than strictly following the principles of the specific method.

Recommendation 7:

The forthcoming evaluation should have a significantly broader scope than the evaluability study. Still, the scope should be restricted, thematically or otherwise.

Finland promotes HRBA through several aid modalities. As HRBA is an overarching principle of Finland's development policy programme, the scope of the evaluation in terms of aid modalities should be broad. The evaluability study was able to review only a very limited sample of the portfolio, and thereby the evaluation should include most, if not all aid modalities.

The adoption of HRBA in different instruments, sectors and departments of MFA should be examined, looking for the enabling and hindering factors, sector and instrument specific guidance, such as multilateral policy dialogue plans, to see where the differences lie and offer ways forward.

In order to enable lessons learned regarding both positive and not so successful examples, the evaluation should focus on both types of projects or programmes. Emphasis could mostly be on projects or programmes which could potentially provide examples of good practises, but both examples are needed e.g. to learn from mainstreaming efforts and where the intervention is not ranked very high on the 4-tier scale.

As in our opinion it would be imperative to include most or all aid modalities, and scope could be thematically restricted. In this selection and prioritizing, the recently carried out evaluations could be considered, and those thematic areas left out fully or included only as a desk study. As the Evaluation on Improvement of Women's and Girls' Rights in Finland's Development Policy

and Cooperation (MFA, 2018) has just recently been completed, the HRBA evaluation could mainly focus on other priority pillars, but also learn the lessons from evaluation regarding the priority area 1. The evaluation should also cover the relevant departments and units of the MFA directly involved with implementation of the HRBA in Finland's development policy and cooperation.

One option is also to include only 1–2 priority areas in the results map or other selected thematic areas, combined with policy dialogue and mainstreaming efforts. This selection requires internal discussions within the MFA, which then could be reflected in the draft Terms of Reference and/or further discussed together with the Development Evaluation Unit, Evaluation Team and the Reference Group through consultations and interviews during the Planning and Inception Phases.

Finland's cooperation with the European Union (EU) in terms of policy dialogue could potentially be included, but based on the experiences of other centralised evaluations, it should be carefully considered whether it is feasible. EU should only be included, if the evaluation team has a clear position on how it could be done so that it adds value. This should be decided during the Inception Phase.

Field missions should be conducted in two to three Finland's long-term partner countries to assess practical implementation at the country level of sampled projects/programmes under as many aid modalities as possible. In addition, a mission could be carried out to the selected UN agency headquarters, to investigate Finland's work at the global policy level related to HRBA. Field mission countries to be selected should have various types of on-going programmes with an HRBA focus, as well as Finland-supported multi-bilateral programmes and/or presence of the selected multilaterals in the country or implemented by the selected multilateral organisations. Results emerging from the two previous development policy programmes (2012 and 2016) should be incorporated in the evaluation scope, as well as the year 2019 in terms of looking forward.

At least multilateral programming at the global / United Nations (UN) level, bilateral cooperation including multi-bilateral programmes, private sector, humanitarian assistance and cooperation with civil society organisations (CSOs) should be included. As private sector is not included in the HRBA guidance, it would be important to include them in the evaluation.

The evaluation should not comprehensively cover all of Finland's work on promoting HRBA, though. A sample of partners, programmes, and projects should be identified and develop good practice examples and lessons learnt for learning purposes i.e. a case study approach is recommended. From two to three most relevant UN organisations from the HRBA perspective could be included, with focus on those with a possibility for potential positive outcomes. Evaluation should include Finland's efforts at the policy level at headquarters (policy dialogue plans) and country level, including policy dialogue and supported interventions in the selected countries from the HRBA perspective.

The organizational structures and commitment of MFA in promoting HRBA should be assessed in the forthcoming evaluation to find out how well the organizational and structural features support the policy-to-implementation cycle. In this regard, the functioning of the structures and measures to main-

stream the adoption of the HRBA and increase systematic commitment within the Ministry at different levels and in different departments, the resourcing of core staff to support implementation, availability of technical support, quality of knowledge management, and the factors related to the organizational culture, are important. The feasibility of the plans introduced within the development cooperation practise reform should be thereby part of the evaluation.

In addition to the Department for Development Policy and Regional Departments, and relevant units, the evaluation should also cover the Political Department which is instrumental in implementation of the HRBA within the MFA. The Unit for Human Rights Policy within the Political Department is responsible e.g. for human rights policy and general human rights issues; human rights policy issues in international and regional organisations; and UNHCR support for human rights and democracy. Finland's cooperation with the European Union (EU) can be considered given that there a clear understanding of how it would add value.

Recommendation 8:

Considering the complexity of the evaluation sufficient time, financial and human resources are required to carry out the evaluation in the proposed scope.

There should be sufficient time for a thorough desk review to enable reviewing also to the project and programme level documentation. This should be done in addition to the up- and downstream policy guidance documents. The policy analysis done as part of the evaluability study provides already some insights. There should also be sufficient time for proper in-depth interviews in Finland (policy and practical levels), including responding to the evaluation questions and understanding the development cooperation reform as well and work on results maps.

One of the key challenges identified in evaluations in which the availability of data is limited, is underreporting. This is especially a challenge related to the data on outcomes. Longer field missions, two weeks minimum, to get a better picture of reality is proposed. In these cases, it is not just validating and triangulating the data but also collecting primary data and/or digging out the project-specific information which might be collected and stored by the project/programme or just known to them.

During the field missions the evaluation team should have discussions with various stakeholders: Embassy staff; (selected and other) multilateral agencies and their implementing partners of the selected multi-bilateral programmes; relevant partner country ministries and governance structures; selected bilateral programmes' staff; and other aid modality implementation partners as feasible.

The relatively extensive interviews are required, and 2-3 weeks' field missions justify the size of the evaluation team. It has been a lesson learned, that two persons should travel to the field visits in selected countries to work together with the country specialist, as well as visits to the selected multilateral organisations. The evaluation team work should be based on jointly finalizing the methodology and include joint analysis.

The budget and time allocated for the evaluation should be at least at the same level or more as in the MFA's gender and women's rights evaluation which faced similar challenges of limited information available in reports, and used a similar approach to the evaluation.

Recommendation 9:

In the selection of the Evaluation Team, the key selection criteria should be in finding the balance between expertise on HRBA, methodology (mixed, with an emphasis on qualitative methods) and multi-and bilateral programming. The selection of the TL should be based on the proven expertise on team leadership, in addition to the thematic expertise.

The HRBA is at the core of this evaluation, and a challenge regarding the evaluation team is in finding the balance between expertise on the HRBA, methodology (mixed, with an emphasis on qualitative methods) and multi-and bilateral programming. Highly qualified HRBA experts should be recruited at the team leader and senior evaluator levels. Team leader should be an HRBA expert. However, the selection of the team leader should be based on the proven expertise on team leadership, in addition to the thematic expertise.

At least one of the experts should have extensive expertise on the multilateral side, preferably with direct working expertise with the selected multilateral organisations (and EU), and one on Finland's bilateral side. HRBA expertise within the evaluation team could be further strengthened with an additional senior HRBA expert with extensive field and sectoral expertise. At least one of the senior or evaluator level experts should be a Finnish speaker with in-depth knowledge of Finnish development cooperation. The team should be multi-disciplinary, and benefit from complementary competencies.

It is estimated, based on the previous evaluations of this complexity, that a team of a team leader, two senior evaluators and an evaluator could be an appropriate size of the team. This can be complemented with an emerging evaluator as well as country specialists in each of the field mission countries.

Recommendation 10:

Maximize lessons learned from the recent Danish and planned SIDA HRBA evaluations.

As SIDA is planning on carrying out a similar evaluation in 2018/9, it would be good for the MFA's Development Evaluation Unit to liaise with SIDA prior starting up its own evaluation and discuss the methodology they will be using. If the evaluations coincide timewise, it would be good for the evaluation teams to investigate possibilities of information exchange and lessons learned. Lessons learned could be in a form of a joint workshop at the end of the exercise, with discussing the results and brainstorming on the best ways forward. As Danish HRBA evaluation is also very recent, it would be advisable to utilise their lessons learned as well, and include them in a possible joint workshop.

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THE EVALUATION TEAM

Dr. Marie-Hélène Adrien is a senior consultant specializing in evaluation, governance assessment and programme and organizational evaluations in international development. Over the past 30 years, she has conducted more than 150 assignments for governments, multilateral agencies, bilateral agencies, the UN system, development banks and foundations. Dr. Adrien has led and managed numerous large and complex evaluation assignments, evaluability studies, meta-analyses and policy reviews, many of which examine the theme of human rights. Dr. Adrien has a PhD and a Master's in Administration and Policy Studies from McGill University. She is a Professor of Practice and a Founding Member of the Leadership Council of the McGill Institute for the Study of International Development. Dr. Adrien is a credentialed evaluator by the Canadian Evaluation Society (2012).

Ms. Maija Seppo is a senior consultant with a vast experience in development cooperation since the 1980's. She has a MSc in development geography and social sciences. Her work experience is with various aid modalities, UN system, academic research, NGO sector, and as an independent consultant. She has conducted numerous evaluations on programme and project levels, organizational evaluations, and some meta-evaluations for strategic purposes of Finnish NGOs. At present she acts as an independent consultant in organizational development and development cooperation.

Ms. Pirkko Poutiainen, Evaluation Management Services (EMS) Coordinator and Senior Evaluator, is a senior development cooperation practitioner with extensive experience on evaluation (especially related to MFA Finland), working with multilateral organisations (such as the World Bank and the UNDP). She is also expert on Finland's development cooperation.

ANNEX 1: TERMS OF REFERENCE

REVIEW ON HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH IN FINLAND'S DEVELOPMENT POLICY RELATED TO FORTHCOMING EVALUATION

The Constitution of Finland identifies human rights protection as one of the objectives of Finland's participation in international cooperation. This objective has been introduced into Finland's human rights and development policies. Human rights related work is carried out in different units in both Political Department and in Department for Development Policy in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (MFA).

MFA published an international Human rights strategy in 2013. A more specific approach to human rights in development policy and cooperation was introduced in development policy programme 2012. It was called human rights-based approach (HRBA), and thereof it has been one of the main principles of Finnish development policies and cooperation.

HRBA was defined first time in the 2012 development programme as follows:

> *"In line with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Finland's human rights-based development policy emanates from the idea that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and in rights. Value-based development policy promotes the core human rights principles such as universality, self-determination, non-discrimination and equality. All people have an equal right to influence and participate in the definition and implementation of development. The human rights-based approach to development includes civil and political rights and freedoms as well as economic, social and cultural rights. Finland emphasises the rights of women, children, ethnic, linguistic and religious minorities and indigenous peoples, the rights of persons with disability, people living with HIV and AIDS, and the rights of sexual and gender minorities. Finland is committed to fight against human trafficking and child labour".*

The current policy programme defines HRBA again as follows:

> *"The core goal of Finland's development policy is to eradicate extreme poverty and to reduce poverty and inequality. The UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. The realisation of human rights is a key goal in Finland's development policy. The aim is also to strengthen the capacity of individuals and authorities to promote human rights as well as to assure that development cooperation is not discriminatory and people have an opportunity to participate in decision-making. This is known as the human rights-based approach."*

In 2015 MFA published Guidance note "Human Rights Based Approach in Finland's Development Cooperation". This guidance applies to all Finland's development cooperation meaning that Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) must be adopted in every development cooperation project and programme. However, at the same time there are other cross-cutting objectives in Finland's development policy that overlap partly with HRBA.

Also some of the four priorities of the current development policy overlap partly with HRBA. These priorities are:

1. The rights of women and girls
2. Reinforcing developing countries' economies to generate more jobs, livelihoods and well-being
3. Democratic and well-functioning societies, including taxation capacity
4. Food security, access to water and energy, and the sustainable use of natural resources.

1. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (MFA) is responsible for reporting to the parliament on main principles, results and impacts of each of the developing policies. HRBA has been one of the main principles in last two development policies. Therefore MFA has decided to carry out a policy evaluation on implementation of HRBA in development policy and cooperation in years 2012-2018.

As the topic of evaluation is very broad, and the definition has changed during the time, an evaluability study is needed prior to the evaluation to analyse interrelations between different policies, strategies and guidelines as well as analyse what is already known through existing evaluations and assess the evaluability of the topic. The evaluability study is expected to transform evidence from different policies, strategies, guidelines and existing evaluation reports into accessible knowledge on HRBA implementation in Finnish development cooperation as well as to produce suggestions on relevant evaluation questions and scope for the upcoming policy evaluation.

HRBA may have been promoted in different ways during time depending on the focus of different governments. Therefore HRBA may have been evaluated from slightly different perspectives in different occasions. The meta-analysis will aggregate and analyse results and other information produced by different evaluation reports commissioned by different MFA units and other commissioners. The evaluability study will also summarize what is already known about HRBA implementation in Finnish development policies and cooperation and point out which areas are not yet covered and/or need to be studied further in the upcoming evaluation.

The purpose of the evaluability study is to inform the design of the upcoming evaluation by providing options for evaluation questions, methods, resources and expertise needed. The conclusions and recommendations of this assessment will be used for the planning and preparation of the evaluation, enabling a quick, focused and efficient start.

Time scope for the evaluability study is from 2012 up to date.

2. APPROACH AND TASKS

The evaluability study is mainly carried out as a desk study. However, some interviews of key informants in MFA may be necessary.

First, the evaluability study analyses interrelations between different policies, strategies and guidelines related to human rights and HRBA and their coherence.

Second, it studies and analyses a representative portfolio of evaluations commissioned by MFA (meta-analysis). The portfolio consists of policy, thematic, and programme evaluations as well as joint evaluations conducted by partner organizations on joint programmes. In comparison, some evaluations done by other Nordic countries will be included in the sample portfolio. Policy documents, research reports and other studies will be used as contextual background information. The Evalnet Derec database will also be consulted for other HRBA related evaluations commissioned by other donors.

Third, the evaluability study will do an evaluability assessment laying a special emphasis on human rights as an approach in development policy.

Based on findings of the meta-analysis and the evaluability assessment, conclusions and recommendation will be done. The study should also propose options for evaluation designs of the upcoming HRBA evaluation, including scope.

The study will focus, but not be limited, on the following questions:

- What are the interrelations between different policies, strategies and guidelines related to human rights and HRBA? Are they overlapping, are they coherent?
- What are the main differences in HRBA definitions in different Finnish development policies from 2012 onwards? What is included, what is left out?
- What are the lessons learned based on different evaluations, especially from the results and impact perspectives?
- What international studies have been carried out on the subject and what are the lessons learned based on them, especially in other Nordic countries? Are there some good practices that can be utilized in the upcoming evaluation?
- What has not been studied and/or what issues need further analysis?
- Is there evidence on impacts of Finnish HRBA?

The method used in this meta-analysis and evaluability assessment will be a literature review and some additional interviews of key informants in MFA. The main sources of information will be documented international and Finnish experiences i.e. evaluation reports, policy reports, studies, research papers and reports as well as data bases and other statistics related to HRBA.

The tasks of the meta-analysis and evaluability assessment will include:

- Mapping of key documentation (e.g. project evaluation reports, policy reports, research papers, studies and reports as well as data bases and other statistics) related to HRBA in Finland's development policy and cooperation.
- Mapping evaluations or assessment reports related to international ODA support to HRBA by utilizing OECD DAC Evalnet database and other sources.
- Based on the documented experiences, identifying the key issues and questions, approaches and methodologies, as well as possible results and recommendations.
- Producing a meta-analysis on the existing information.
- Preparing an analytical review report, highlighting the aspect of evaluability of HRBA in Finland's development policy and cooperation, areas of interest for the possible forthcoming evaluation and pointing out areas where in-depth study is still needed.

3. DELIVERABLES

In order to compile the findings, the consultant will prepare a review report. The report will be kept clear, concise and consistent (max 50 pages + annexes). The language of the report is English. The consultant is responsible for the good quality of the report as well as editing, proof-reading and quality control of the language. The report must be edited according to EVA-11's writing instructions and report template.

Deliverable: Evaluability study on HRBA implementation in Finland's development policy and cooperation

4. EXPERTISE REQUIRED

The EMS provider is invited to suggest a team of one senior evaluator and one evaluator level expert for the evaluability study. Successful conduct of the assignment requires from the experts a profound understanding and experience of international development policy and cooperation as well as conducting development policy/cooperation evaluations and knowledge on HRBA issues. Many of the documents are in Finnish and therefore a good command of Finnish language is required from at least one of the experts. The participation to the evaluability study will not form a conflict of interest to participate in the upcoming HRBA evaluation.

5. BUDGET AND TIMETABLE

The meta-analysis and evaluability assessment will not cost more than 50 000 € (VAT excluded).

The report to be produced is subject to the approval by EVA-11. The payment will be made only after the approval of the report. The tentative starting time of the evaluability assessment is in mid-March 2018. The final report will be submitted to EVA-11 by 31 May 2018.

6. MANAGEMENT OF THE META-ANALYSIS AND EVALUABILITY ASSESSMENT

As per EMS agreement, EVA-11 will be responsible for steering of the evaluability study, and the EMS provider for recruiting the experts and practical management and implementation of the evaluability study. Required resources and arrangements are presented in the Service Order. All deliverables are subject to being approved by EVA-11.

7. MANDATE

The consultant does not represent the MFA in any capacity. The consultant has no immaterial rights to any of the material collected in the course of the evaluation or to any draft or final reports produced as a result of this assignment.

The consultant shall not store any official documents given by the MFA, classified as restricted use documents (classified as IV in levels of protection in the MFA) in any cloud services and shall not use google translator or any other web based translators to these documents.

8. AUTHORIZATION

Helsinki, 20.2.2018

Jyrki Pulkkinen

Director

Development Evaluation Unit

Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland

ANNEX 2: ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

Stream	Evaluation question	Evaluation sub-question	Indicator	Interviews with MFA staff	Desk Review		
					Policy	Evaluation	International donors
1: Coherence	**1. How coherent has Finland's approach to HRBA been between 2012 and 2018?**	1.1 What are the main differences in HRBA definitions in different Finnish development policies from 2012–2018? What is included and what is left out in the different HRBA definitions in Finish development policies?	Evidence of changes to Finish definition of HRBA in development policy documents	✓	✓		
		1.2 What are the interrelations between different policies, strategies and guidelines related to human rights and HRBA and is there coherence?	Extent to which the MFA has defined its approach to HRBA in a coherence way across its various strategies, policies and guidelines	✓	✓		

Stream	Evaluation question	Evaluation sub-question	Indicator	Interviews with MFA staff	Desk Review		
					Policy	Evaluation	International donors
2: Meta-analysis	**2.1 What are the lessons learned based on MFA evaluations in terms of implementing a HRBA in development cooperation interventions?**	2.1.1 Is there evidence that Finnish interventions have achieved the desired results or impact?	Evidence that MFA interventions have had expected impacts on rights holders and duty bearers, including the most vulnerable groups Evidence that MFA interventions have had positive and/or negative unintended consequences			✓	
		2.1.2 What are the lessons learned, including in terms of results and impact?	Evidence that the MFA has identified lessons learned from its evaluations, including in terms of results and impact Extent to which the lessons learned are high quality and relevant for the development of future Finnish policy			✓	
	2.2 What international evaluations have been carried out on HRBA and what lessons can be drawn from these evaluations in terms of putting HRBA into practice?		Evidence that international evaluations have achieved intended results and impact Extent to which other donors identify the evaluability of interventions and methodologies for analysis Extent to which other donors have identified lessons learned from the implementation and impact of HRBA				✓

Stream	Evaluation question	Evaluation sub-question	Indicator	Interviews with MFA staff	Desk Review		
					Policy	Evaluation	International donors
3: Evaluability	**3. What is the evaluability of HRBA in Finland's development cooperation policies and interventions?**	3.1 Is it plausible to expect MFA interventions to have been effective in achieving the intended HRBA results?	Extent to which MFA evaluation reports contain a clear statement of the human rights considerations that the intervention aimed to address Evidence that the goals and intended impacts of MFA interventions were clearly defined as relevant to duty bearers and rights holders Evidence that duty bearers and rights holders were clearly identified and targeted by interventions Evidence that the most vulnerable groups were identified and targeted by interventions	✓	✓	✓	
		3.2 Is it feasible to assess or measure impact of MFA's interventions to support human rights?	Evidence that there exists sufficient baseline data, monitoring data and evidence to assess results and impact of MFA interventions Evidence that MFA interventions have been collecting disaggregated data on rights holders (sex, age, ethnicity, migration or displacement status, disability, religion, civil status, income, sexual orientation and gender identity) as part of their monitoring activities Evidence that evaluations were methodologically sound, e.g. availability of raw data, clear and robust sampling, availability of data collection instruments, evidence of HRBA components in data collection tools			✓	
		3.3 What has not been studied and/or needs further analysis?	Extent to which there are identified gaps in the literature regarding the policy and impact of Finnish development cooperation on HRBA, also compared to evaluations produced by other Nordic or international donors Extent to which MFA evaluations have been identified to lack relevant information, methodologies and/or data sources		✓	✓	✓

ANNEX 3: DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

List of documents for analysis of policy coherence (not including the ones used as references)

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Vandenhole, Wouter & Paul Gread. (2014). Failures and successes of HRBAs to Development: Towards a Change Perspective. Nordic Journal of Human Rights, vol.32. Issue 4, 291-311.

Wiman, Ronald (2012). Mainstreaming the Disability Dimension in Development Cooperation Case Finland - Lessons learnt. Presentation at the UN Commission for Social Development. National Institute of Health and Welfare.

Zürcher, Dieter, Roman Troxler, Heghine Manasyan and Giorgi Toklikishvili KEK-CDC Consultants (2018). Evaluation. Mid-Term Review of the Armenia and Georgia Country Strategies 2012-2020. Final Report. Imprint, Austrian Development Agency.

List of project documents sampled for meta-analysis

Abilis

Programme-based support through Finnish Civil Society Organisations III: Abilis Foundation, Kios Foundation and Siemenpuu Foundation, 2017/5g, FCG.

CMI

Evaluation of the programme-based support through Finnish Civil Society Organizations I: Crisis Management Initiative, 2016/4a, FCG.

COWASH

COWASH Annual report 2016-2017.

COWASH Phase III Project document 2016.

CPDE

CPDE Programme Report 2015.

CPDE Completion Report 2017.

DEMO

Evaluation of the programme-based support through Finnish Civil Society Organizations, Foundatons and Umbrella Organizations: Political Parties of Finland for Democracy - Demo Finland, 2017/5e, FCG.

ETH Environmental education

Environmental Education Project Proposal 2017.

Environmental Education Selection Process 2017.

ETH Interpedia

Final Terminal Evaluation Report of "Creating Access to Education for Children with Disabilities in 3 kebels of Bishoftu Town of Oromia National Regional State 2014-2016, June 2017, Berhan Lehetsanat.

ETH OMO

Omo Pastoralists Primary Education Selection Process 2014.

ETH soil

Mid-term Review of Improving the Food Security of Ethiopia: Assessment of Carbonate Rock Resources for Acid Soil Amendment and Balanced Application of Lime and Fertilizers in Oromia Region, 2017, Klaus Talvela and Zalalem Anteneh.

Soil Semi-Annual Progress Report Jan-Jun 2017.

Soil Semi-Annual Progress Report Jun-Dec 2017.

ETH SOS

SOS Children Villages Project Proposal 2016.

SOS Children Villages Selection Process 2016.

FNRMP – Introduction Project

Mid-term Evaluation of the Decentralised Forest and other Natural Resources Management Programme - Introduction Project, 2016, FCG International Ltd.

Human Rights Based Approach And Cross Cutting Strategy, 19 November 2015.

FORVAC

FORVAC Programme Document 2015.

FORVAC Programme Document May 2016.

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GEQUIP

GEQUIP Appraisal Report April 2018.

GEQUIP Project Document October 2017.

INGO FCA

Developmental Performance Evaluation: Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers, 20 March 2018, Laura McGrew.

INGO FCA Annual Report 2017 Programme Results table.

INGO FCA Annual Report 2017.

INGO Global Alliance

INGO Global Alliance progress report 2016.

INGO Hivos

The Digital Defenders Partnership at Two Years: Mid-term Evaluation, 2014, Eric S Johnson.

Innovation Partnership Programme, Phase II, Vietnam

Mid-term Evaluation of the Innovation Partnership Programme Phase II, Vietnam, Final Evaluation Report, November 2016.

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MENA MDTF

MENA MDTF Mid-term Review, April 2015.

MOZ programming

MOZ Programming Statistical Summary.

MOZ Strengthening democratic

MOZ Strengthening Democratic Annual Report 2017.

MOZ Strengthening Democratic Baseline Study 2017.

MOZ Strengthening Democratic Country Context.

MOZ Strengthening Democratic Appraisal Report.

Refugee Council

Evaluation of the Programme-Based Support through Finnish Civil Society Organizations I: Finnish Refugee Council, 2016/4d.

SOM Hiil Hooyo

SOM Hiil hooyo Application 2018.

SOM Hiil hooyo Project plan 2019–2022.

SOM IOM (MIDA III)

SOM IOM Lessons Learnt MIDA III.

SOM MIDA Final Report 2014–2017 MIDA III.

SOM IOM Project reach report 2015 MIDA III.

SOM MIDA Project Review 2013 MIDA III.

SOM IOM (MIDA IV)

SOM OIM Project Proposal 2017 MIDA IV.

SOM OIM Statistical Summary 2017 MIDA IV.

SOM Tuberculosis

SOM Tuberculosis Project Document 2016.

SOM Tuberculosis Assessment Report 2017.

SOM Tuberculosis Travel Report 2017.

SOM UNFPA

Evaluation of the Programme-Based Support through Finnish Civil Society Organizations I: Taksvarkki, 2016/4e.

Somalia Independent Country Programme Evaluation 2011–2015, UNFPA.

Taksvärkki.

SUFORD Scaling up

Project Completion Report November 2017.

Project Document 8 May 2013.

TAN Enhancing human rights

TAN Enhancing Human Rights Application 2015.

TAN Enhancing Human Rights Project Proposal 2017.

TAN Enhancing Human Rights Study Tour Report 2015.

TAN Health

TAN Health Application 2018.

TAN Health Project Plan 2017-2020.

TAN LUKE

TAN LUKE Project Proposal 2014.

TAN LUKE Semi-Annual Progress Report 2016.

TAN LUKE Semi-Annual Progress Report 2017.

TAN Mineral Resources

TAN Mineral Resources Completion Report 2015-2017.

TAN UN Women

End of Project Evaluation, Best Practices and New Project Development for "Wanawake Wanaweza" Project on Women Leadership and Political Participation: Report on End of Project Evaluation, 2017, Sambodhi Limited.

TIS

TIS Project Application 2015.

TIS Implementation Report 2014.

TRA Tanzania

TRA Tanzania Project Document.

UONGOZI Institute

The Institute of African Leadership for Sustainable Development (Uongozi Institute) Mid-term Review, 2015, Indufor.

ZAM AGS

ZAM AGS Project Document November 2017.

ZAM AGS Appraisal Report October 2017.

ZAM Dry Sanitation

ZAM Dry Sanitation Project Document 2017-2020.

ZAM Dry Sanitation Annual Report 2017.

ZAM PFF

ZAM PFF LCF Report 2016.

ZAM PFF Progress report 2016.

ZAM PFF Progress Report November 2015.

ANNEX 4: SAMPLING STRATEGY

Evaluations commissioned by the MFA

The meta-evaluation entailed a review of a sample of 40 MFA intervention project documents and evaluations. The original project database provided by the MFA for this assignment has a total of 3,272 projects. We proposed a stratified random sampling. The primary criteria for the sampling were those projects that began before 2012 and those Case Types indicated as important for the evaluation by the MFA (Multi-bilateral projects, Bilateral projects, International Nongovernmental Organization (INGO) support, Finnish Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs) receiving programme support, Finnish NGOs receiving project support, Fund for Local Cooperation). We used this reduced database of 1,321 records to add additional sampling criteria in order to reduce the size of the portfolio to fit the resources available for this review. We then performed a stratified random sampling of the portfolio to select the projects. Table 3 on the next page describes the primary and secondary sampling criteria proposed for the meta-evaluation.

Table 3: Description of sampling strategy

Priority	Category	Sampling criteria	Rationale
Primary criteria	Case type	The sample will include the following six case types: Multi-bilateral project (*Multi-bi hanke*), Bilateral project (*Kahdenvälinen hanke*), INGO Support (INGO-tuki), Finnish NGOs receiving programme based-support (*Ohjelmatuki*), Finnish NGOs receiving project-based support (*Hanketuki*), Fund for Local Cooperation (*Paikallisen yhteistyön määräraha*)	These six criteria have been referred to by the MFA as being the key areas of focus for the evaluation in correspondence with the evaluation team.
	Time period	Only projects that have begun between 2012 and 2018	HRBA policy was introduced in 2012.
Secondary criteria	Budget	Only projects of more than EUR 20 000 (based on "commitments EUR" column)	Significance of the investment and related impact.
	Programme Countries	The sample will include the following countries: Ethiopia, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zambia, Somalia	These are key partner countries referred to in Finnish bilateral aid policy. We understand that out of nine partner countries (Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Nepal, Somalia, Tanzania and Zambia), three countries – Kenya, Nepal and Somalia – have been recently evaluated through a gender evaluation. In the case of Kenya and Nepal, as they have been recently evaluated, they will be excluded. Somalia has been identified as an important country for HRBA by the MFA and so will be included.
	Language	Only evaluation reports in English	Feasibility
	General information	Only projects with complete information in the database i.e. eliminating any projects that have "not specified", blank entries	Feasibility

When this sampling plan was applied to the database, there were **101** records available. To have a statistically credible sample (95% confidence level with a 5% margin of error), the sample size comes to 74 projects. Due to time and resource constraints, we proposed reviewing **half** of this number.

However, a review of the characteristics of this sample indicated that some corrections needed to be made in order for the sample to cover all Case Types suggested by the MFA as primary criteria for sampling. Due to the way in which all of the secondary criteria cut across the portfolio, there were a number of issues that required correcting in order for the sample to be representative of all of the primary criteria, detailed in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Corrections to the original sample to improve representativeness of the portfolio

Challenge to representativeness of sample	Correction of our sample
The characteristics of the sample do not reflect those of the original database, meaning that some Case Types are not present, and others are over-represented.	We added records from any missing Case Types (detailed in rows below) and selected a stratified random sample (see Table 5 below).
Programme Support Case Type is not covered by the sample as this Case Type only takes place in Unspecified countries.	We added all 12 Programme Support records to our sample and randomly selected projects.
Multi-bilateral projects are under-represented as most take place in excluded or Unspecified countries	We added Multi-bilateral projects from Unspecified countries to our sample and randomly selected the additional projects needed to make the sample representative.
INGO support has only one record as most take place in excluded or Unspecified countries.	We added all 16 INGO Support records from Unspecified countries to our sample and randomly selected the projects.
During the approval of the Inception Report, the MFA indicated their preference for including an additional Case Type – Institutional Cooperation Instrument (ICI)	We added ICI projects to the sample and randomly select the projects.
Some projects had not yet undergone evaluations	We reviewed the sampled projects and replaced 4 projects for those with recent evaluations available.

After consultations with the evaluation management representative, the evaluation team proposed a stratified random sample of the projects based on an equal representation of each of the six Case Types, apart from the Institutional Cooperation Instrument, for which three projects was considered adequate. In order to make the total of the original 37 projects in the sample, the Case Types with larger funding commitments - bilateral support and multi-bilateral support - were assigned additional projects, while INGO support, Program Support, Project Support and the Fund for Local Cooperation were represented equally. The additional ICI projects were represented at a smaller sample size for feasibility. After the approval of the Inception Report, it was found that many of the projects selected did not have reporting details available. As such, the evaluation team added 4 extra projects of the MFA's choice. Table 5 details the overall breakdown of the sample.

Table 5: Composition of the sample

Case Type	Number of records to be reviewed in the sample
Multi-bilateral support	6
Bilateral project	11
INGO support	5
Programme support	5
Project support	5
Fund for Local Cooperation	5
Institutional Cooperation Instrument (ICI)	3
Total	**40**

ANNEX 5: SAMPLE PROJECTS

MOZ Programming 2015–2016
TRA Tax Administration Twinning
Sustainable Forest Management and Value Chains
Community-Led Accelerated Water Sanitation and Hygiene in Ethiopia phase III
Technical Assistance to the General Education Quality Improvement Programmme for Equity
Strengthening democratic institutions in the governance of natural resources
AGS Accelerated Growth for SMEs in Zambia
Omo Pastoralists Development Organization
Organization for Social Development
Enhancing Human Rights Culture in Corrections through Alternative to Imprisonment: Study Tour for eight officials to Finland
SOS Children's Villages-Ethiopia
PFF / Prisoners? Empowerment through Skills Training and Paralegal Services
Hivos/Digital Defenders Partnership
Project support to the Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves
The Network of Religious and Traditional Peacemakers
Transparency International Secretariat (TI-S)
CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness (CPDE), Civil Society Continuing Campaign on Effective Development
Support to women's political participation in Tanzania 2nd phase
Health and Education Sector Development through Skills and Knowledge Transfer in South Central Somalia
Somaliland Health Sector Support (MIDA Finnsom IV)
MIDA Health Northern Somalia Phase 3 (second additional funding)
UNFPA Somalia Wellbeing of Women and Girls
UNFPA Somalia Wellbeing of Women and Girls
World Bank Multi-Donor Trust Fund for the Middle East and North Africa Region
Youth as change agents
F.a: Frame agreement with NGO (Demo Finland)
F.a: Frame Agreement with NGO (ABILIS foundation)
Supporting New Beginning for Vulnerable Refugees & Host communities in Protracted Refugee Crisis &in Fragile Post-Conflict Contexs
Changing the Game - Peace by Peace
Public-Private-People: Joint and Inclusive Effort Against Tuberculosis in Somalia
Hiil hooyo – maternal healthcare project in Somalia
Health Tanzania. Capacity building for health care sector in Tanzania
Zambia Dry Sanitation Country Program (2017-2020)
Create Access to Education for Children with Disabilities Continuation Project
LUKE INFORES Implementation of Forest Data in Tanzania
Assessment of soil amendment rock resources phase II
Mineral Resources Potential and Small Scale Mining

ANNEX 6: PEOPLE INTERVIEWED

N.B. Titles and positions reflect the situation that prevailed at the time of the interviews in 2018.

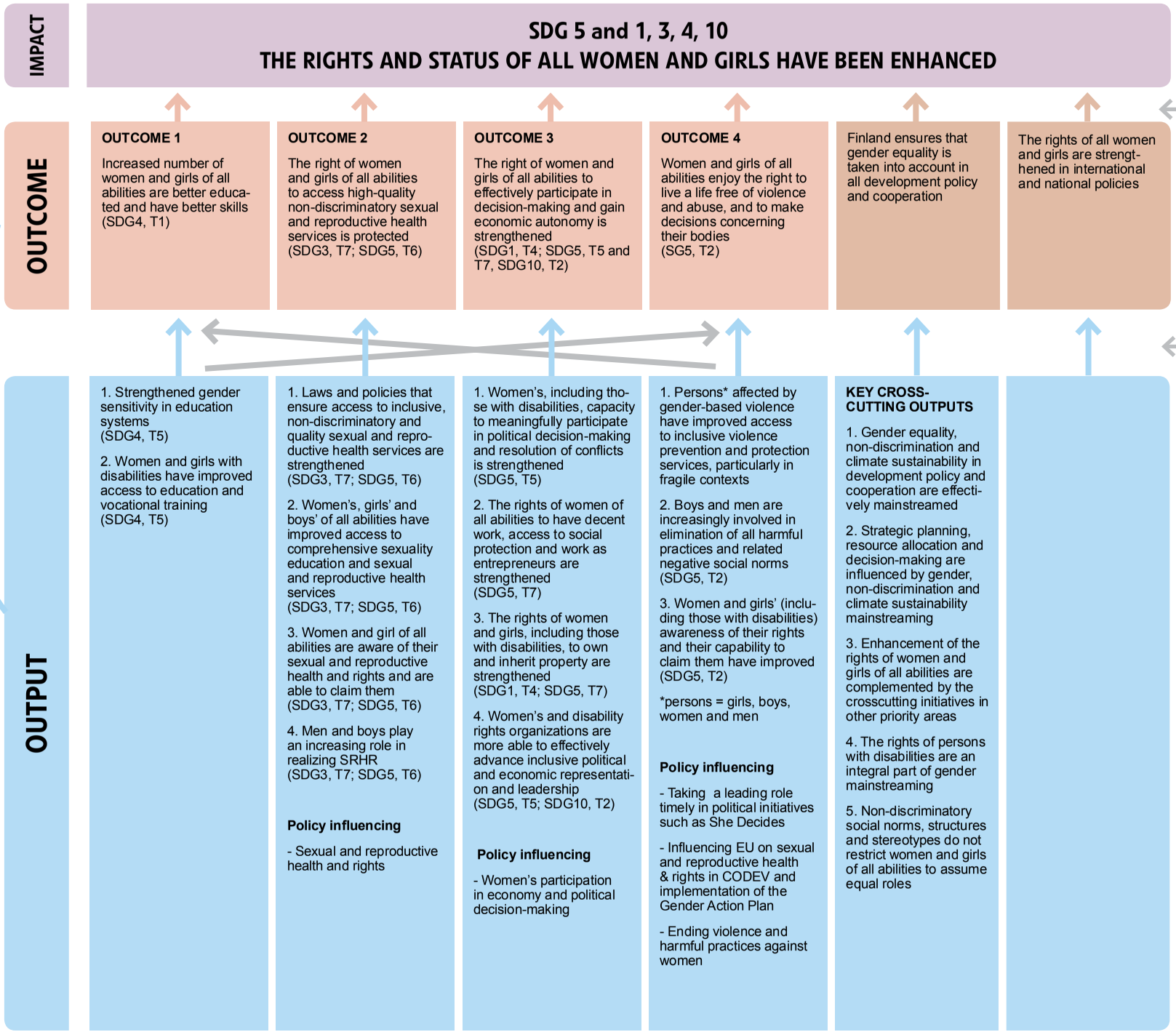
Table 6: List of people interviewed

Alva Bruun	Development Policy Advisor, human rights issues
Saana Halinen	Director, Unit for Sectoral Policy, Department for Development Policy, MFA
Kristiina Kuvaja	Director, ALI-02 (was in charge of creating the HRBA guidelines), MFA
Tiina Markkinen	Development Policy Advisor, rule of law and human rights
Rauno Merisaari	MFA Human Rights Ambassador
Nina Nordström	Director, Unit of Human Rights Policy
Riitta Oksanen	Deputy Director of the Department for Development Policy, MFA
Åsa Wallendahl	Counsellor, Finnish Embassy in Nairobi (Development Policy Advisor 2014-2017, developed the HRBA guidelines and was involved in implementation)

ANNEX 7: THEORIES OF CHANGE

Final versions of theories of change were still under development when this evaluability study was made. Final theories of change can be found at: https://kehityspolitiikka2018.um.fi/

Theory of Change – Development Policy Priority Area 1



ASSUMPTIONS

From Outcomes to Impact

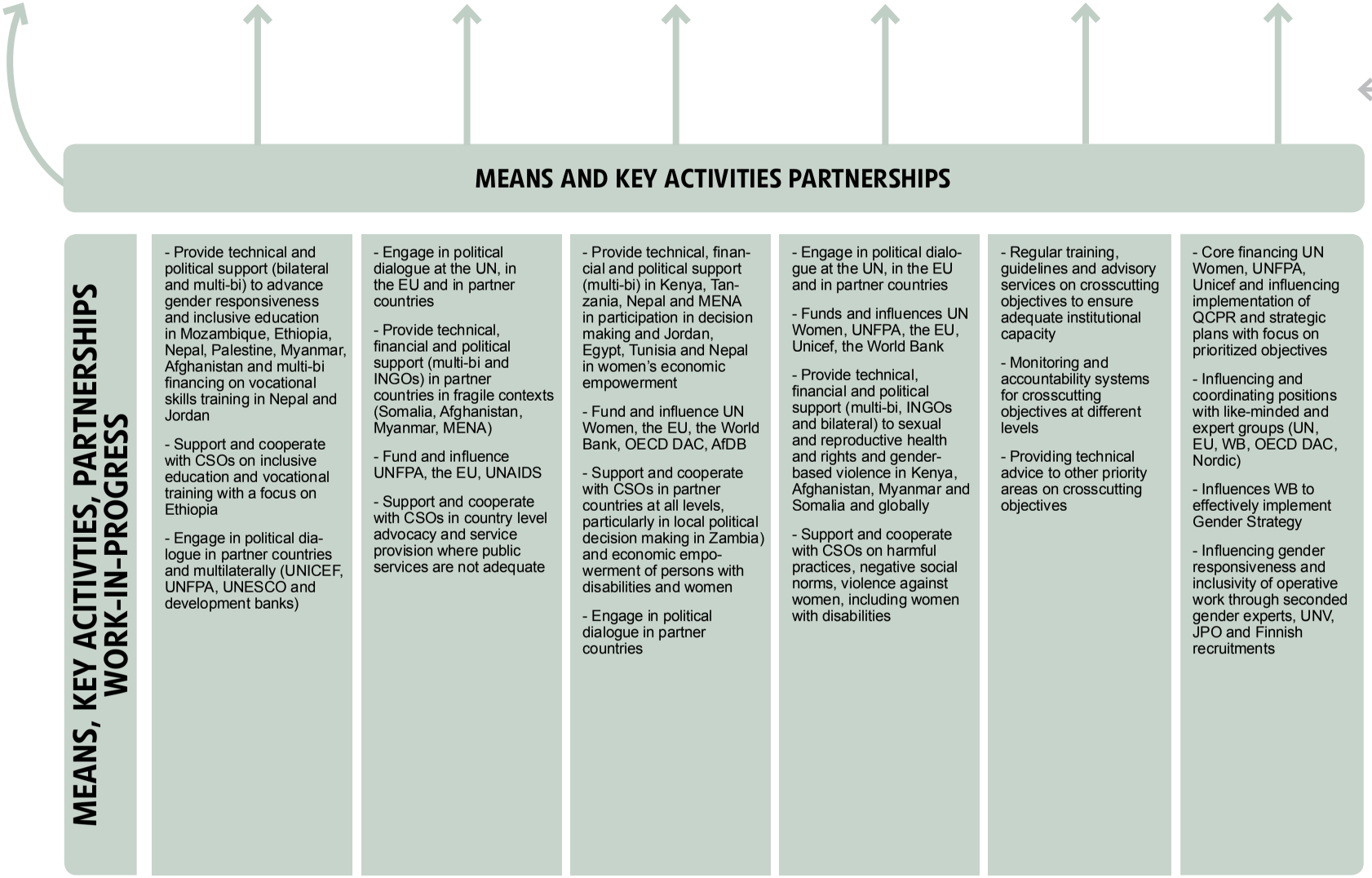
1. Partner countries and organisations remain committed to achieving gender equality as part of inclusive development outcomes.

2. Societies respect women's and girls' rights and are able to adapt to the improving status of women and girls (or when not, working to change this is a necessity).

3. Women's and girls' rights are supported broadly by other development actors.

3. International commitment to implementation and monitoring of Agenda 2030 remains strong as a joint agenda.

4. Political coherence for development strengthens efforts to achieve gender equality including persons with disabilities.



From Outputs to Outcomes

1. The education systems in partner countries allows for the improvement of women's and girls' education opportunities.

2. The economic environment in partner countries is supportive of women's increased participation in economic activity.

3. The political institutions are transparent and democratic enough to allow for women's more active political participation.

4. Change of existing social structures and attitudes that normalise gender-based violence and abuse.

From Inputs and Means to Outputs

1. Gender and non-discrimination analysis is part of all programme design, implementation and review.

2. Finland has long-term commitment to promote and invest in gender equality, including persons with disabilities, and has sufficient financial and human resources to achieve the intended results.

3. Finland's partners in SRHR are able to mobilize new funding. Other development partners take an active role in finding innovative ways to secure sufficient funding.

4. Finland has measurable and clearly defined advocacy objectives with adequate resources to influence policies.

5. "Leave no one behind" principle guides Finland's commitment to reduction of poverty and inequality as the overall focus of development policy.

Theory of Change – Development Policy Priority Area 2

IMPACT

SDG 1, 8, 9, 12

DEVELOPING COUNTRIES' OWN ECONOMIES HAVE GENERATED MORE JOBS, LIVELIHOOD OPPORTUNITIES AND WELL-BEING

OUTCOME

OUTCOME 1

Increased number of people, especially those in vulnerable situations, have better access to decent work, livelihoods and income
(SDG8, T5)

OUTCOME 2

The private sector and economic activity in developing countries are more dynamic and diversified in support of inclusive sustainable development

OUTCOME 3

International business rules are increasingly supportive of the development of responsible and sustainable business and the observance of internationally agreed standards in developing countries

OUTCOME 4

Better use is made of new know-how, technologies, and innovations for advancing sustainable development (SDG8, T3)

Gender equality boosts economic growth.

Economic activity and reduced inequality. increased resilience.

Responsible business leads to a more climate sustainable economy

OUTPUT

1. More widespread adoption of inclusive business practices by enterprises in developing countries

2. Increased access by SMEs and women entrepreneurs to services supporting business development and investments
(SDG1, T4)

3. Improved livelihood opportunities created for rural and urban poor

1. Targeted developing country governments have strengthened capacity to improve business enabling environment

2. Establishment and operations of especially micro and SMEs are easier (SDG8, T3)

3. Micro and SMEs in developing countries have improved access to finance (SDG8, T3; SDG9, T3)

4. Increased level of growth entrepreneurship based on climate-smart technology

5. Increased regional trade through enhanced regional economic integration

1. International standards of responsible business conduct are more widely known and have an effective monitoring system that is increasingly used and respected by international enterprise community.

2. More Finnish enterprises operating in developing countries have adopted international standards of responsible business conduct

3. Developing country governments have strengthened capacity to operate in accordance with international trading rules

1. Education and research institutions are better equipped to generate the know-how and skills needed by the private sector in developing countries

2. Increased adoption and use of digital and climate-smart technology by SMEs and society at large

3. Improved access by developing country SMEs to support services and financing of innovation and technology development

4. Finland's key multilateral partners give increased role and visibility to technology innovation and start-up entrepreneurship

GENERAL POLICY INFLUENCE OUTPUTS

The EU's trade policy supports livelihood, job and private sector development in developing countries as well as increase responsible and sustainable business and use of new know-how, technologies and innovations to advance sustainable development.

ASSUMPTIONS

From Outcomes to Impact

1. Macroeconomic environment globally and in developing countries is conducive to economic growth.

2. Developing country governments' economic and social policies and programs include explicit measures to secure significant employment gains benefiting also the poor, and the poorest.

3. Advances in technology will not have an adverse negative impact on jobs of the poorer segments of society.

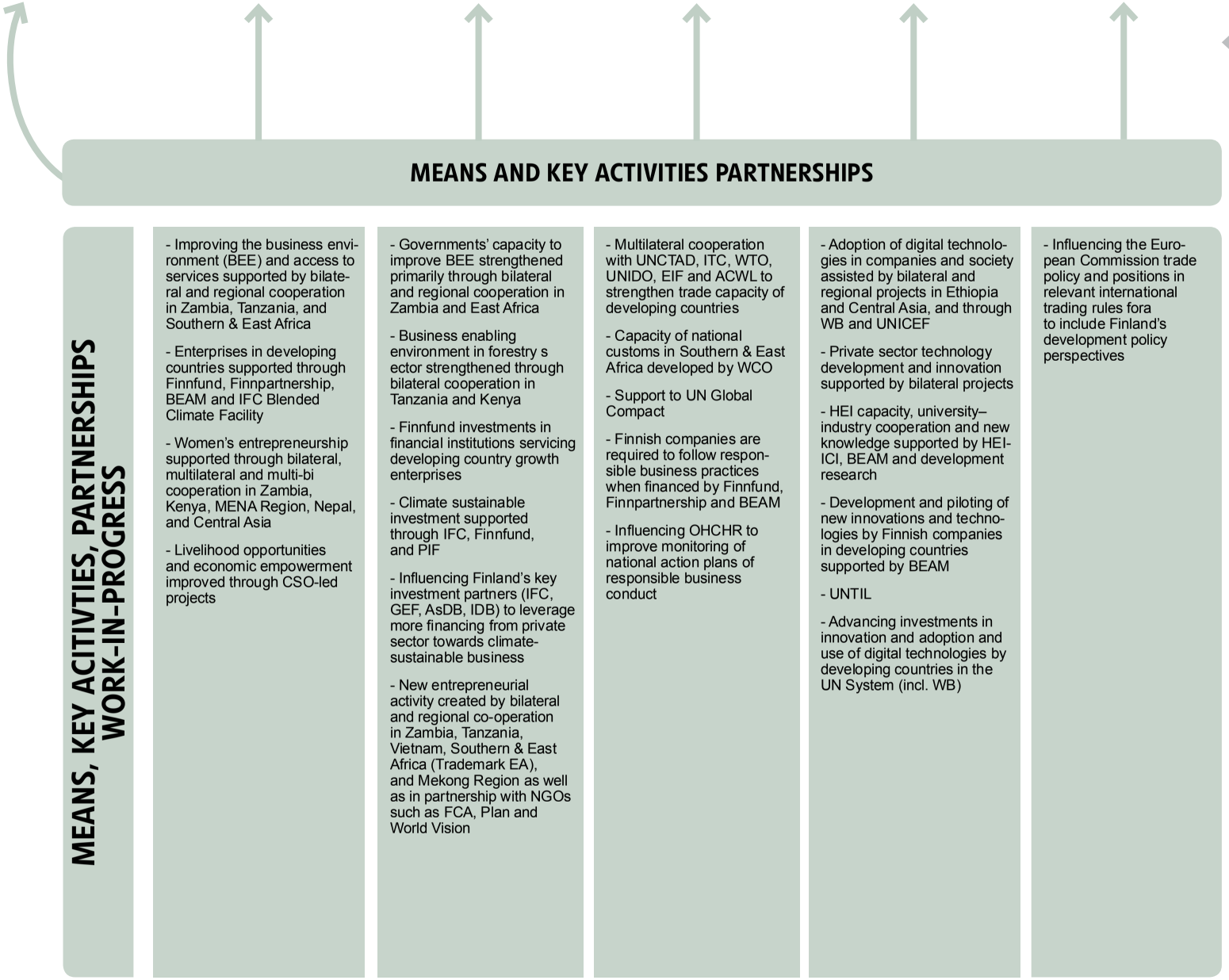
4. International aid community and developing country governments allocate adequate resources and work together in multi-stakeholder partnerships to strengthen developing country trade capacity, including operating in accordance with the international trading rules.

From Outputs to Outcomes

1. Country's BEE policies are implemented effectively, supported by adequate national financial flows serving a broad group of beneficiaries.

2. Developing countries have access to affordable know-how, sustainable technologies, quality education and skills development to support economic policymaking and private sector development.

3. Developing country governments, development partners and especially the private sector support business development in areas and ways in which he people in vulnerable positions have better access to decent work, livelihoods and income.



From Inputs and Means to Outputs

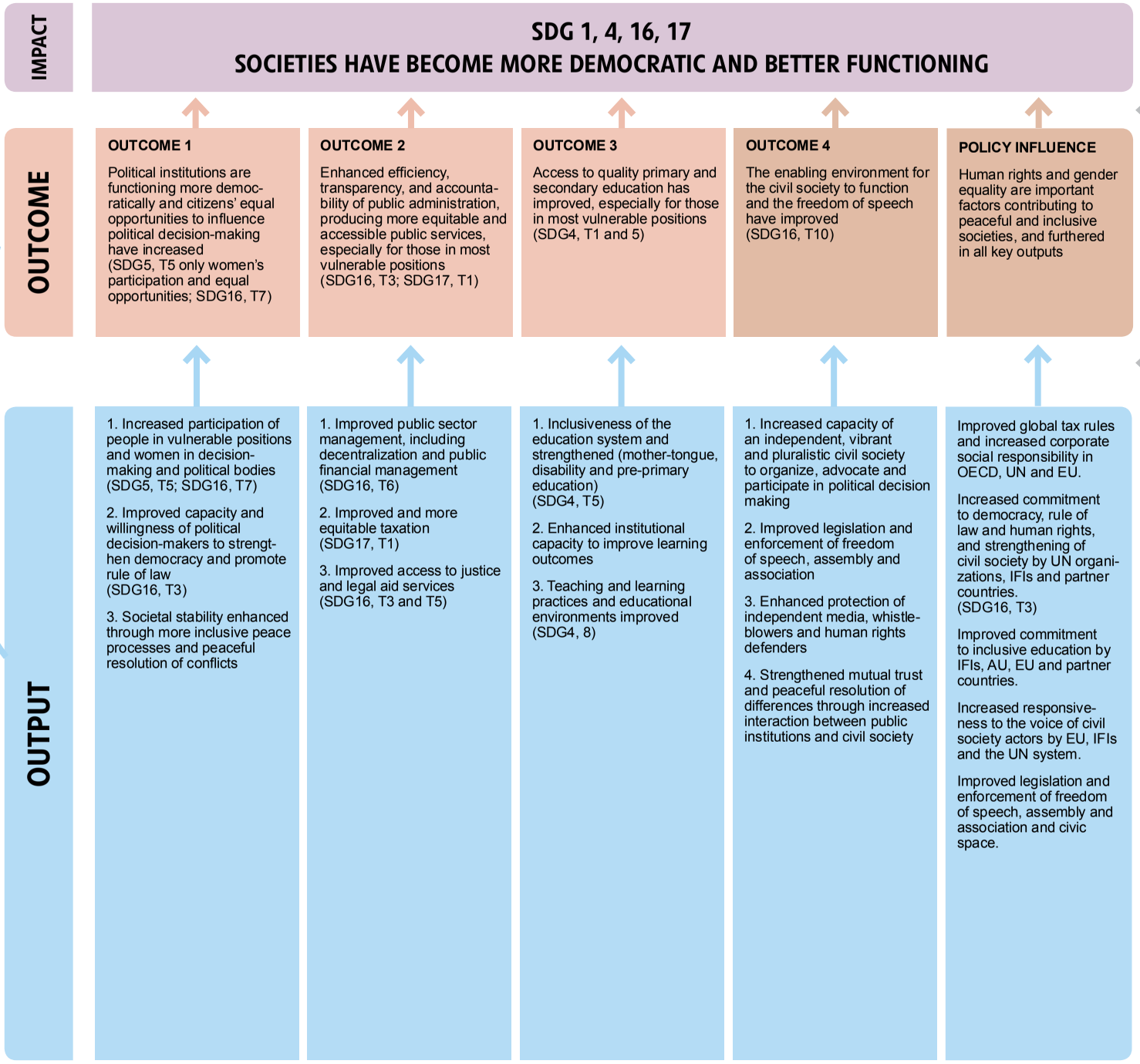
1. Finland can successfully crowd in the private sector financing and leverage investments and know-how from technologically and socially "progressive" companies.

2. Finland has sufficient human resources within the MFA to support programming and implementation of interventions in this sector, assert policy influence and put in action its commitment to work coherently across policy areas (particularly trade) in support of the expected outcomes.

3. Finland continues to invest in PSD-related programs and succeeds in "mainstreaming" private sector into other relevant thematic areas and development policy priority areas, including e.g. climate change, forestry, agriculture, water, and energy, as well as it country strategies.

4. MFA manages to identify the population groups in the most vulnerable situations and target its instruments, partnerships and strategies to support them in most appropriate manner. MFA requires Human Rights based approach and cross-cutting objectives' effective integration in all interventions from its partners.

Theory of Change – Development Policy Priority Area 3



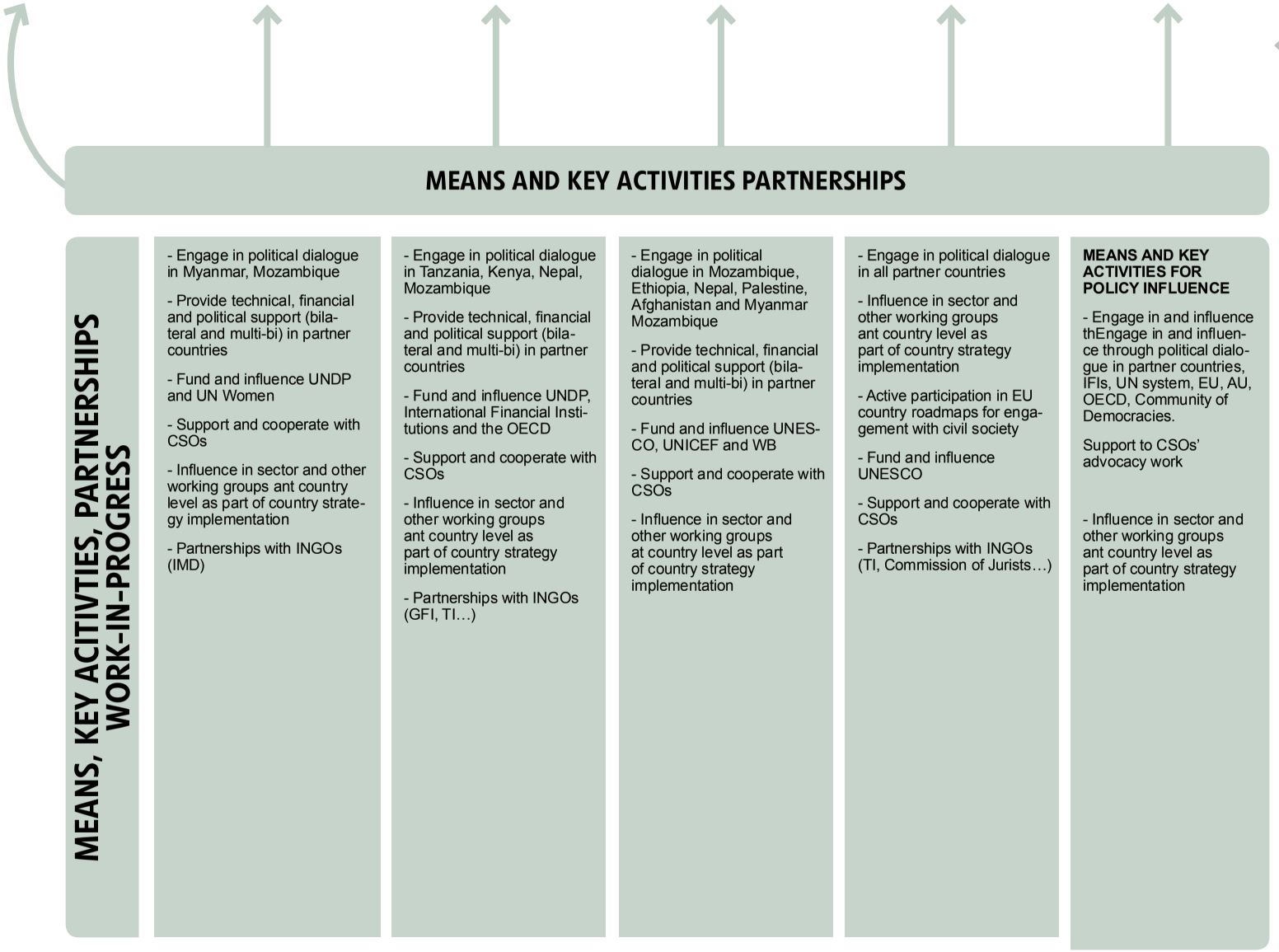
ASSUMPTIONS

From Outcomes to Impact

1. The increased freedom and participation of civil society promotes democratic governance, transparency and accountability which lead to better functioning administration and a more democratic society.
2. Tax revenue is used to increase equality and finance basic services.
3. Better educated and informed citizens have greater willingness, ability and opportunity to influence political decision-making in an enabling environment for civil society to function freely.

From Outputs to Outcomes

1. Partner countries finance recurrent costs for public services and take ownership of reform process.
2. Increased capacity, training and knowledge results are supported by better governance, including willingness and ability of authorities to implement democratic principles for an inclusive society.
3 Global tax rules are enforced and lead to better practic.e on international and national levels.
4. We manage to identify those in most vulnerable positions and target interventions to further their needs and inclusion.



From Inputs and Means to Outputs

1. Finland's policy influencing strategies at country level and for multilateral organisations are coherent with the intended objectives in this impact area supported by adequate staff and financial resources.

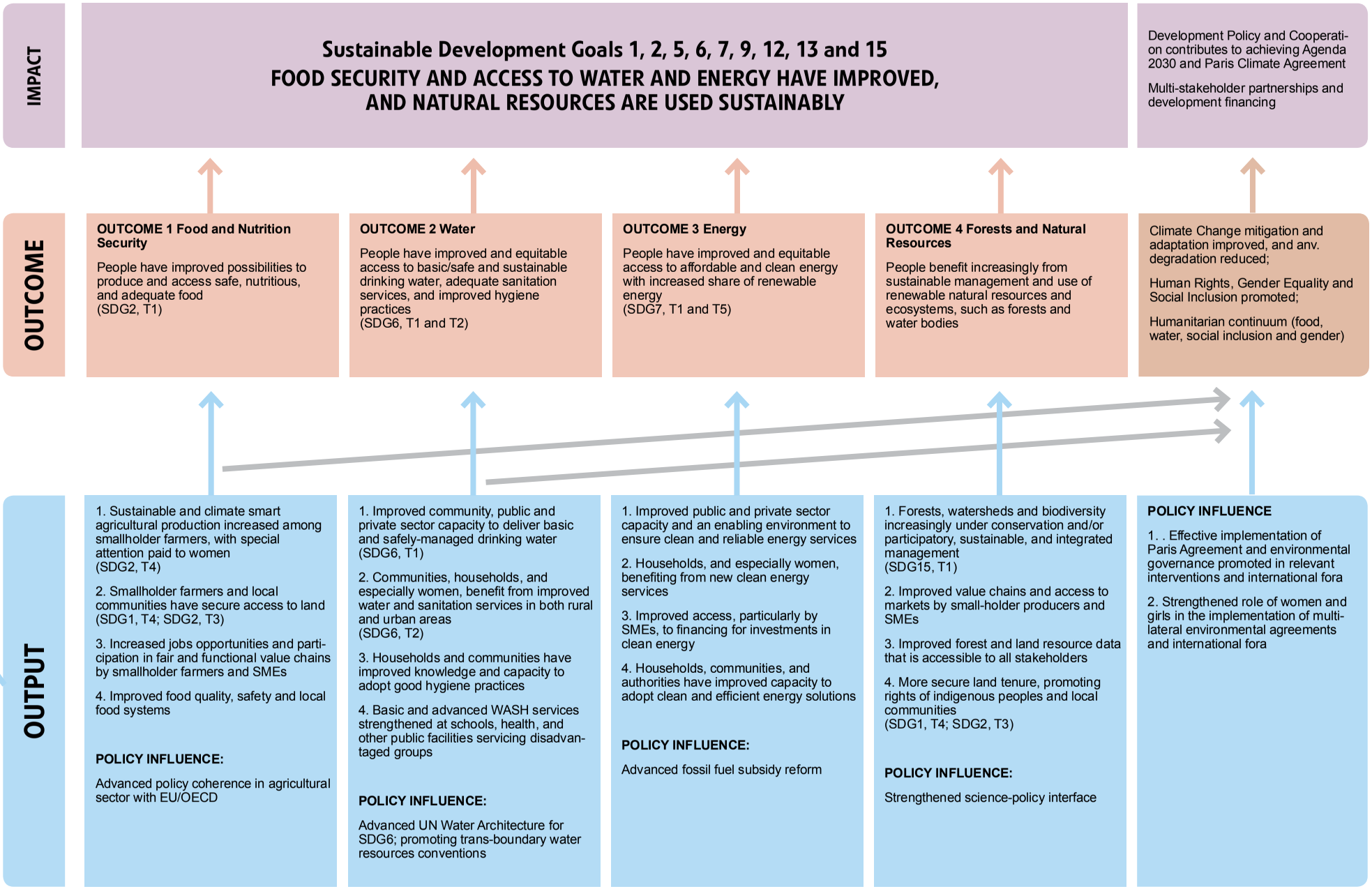
2. Civil society organisations supported by Finland strengthen civil society and contribute to an enabling environment.

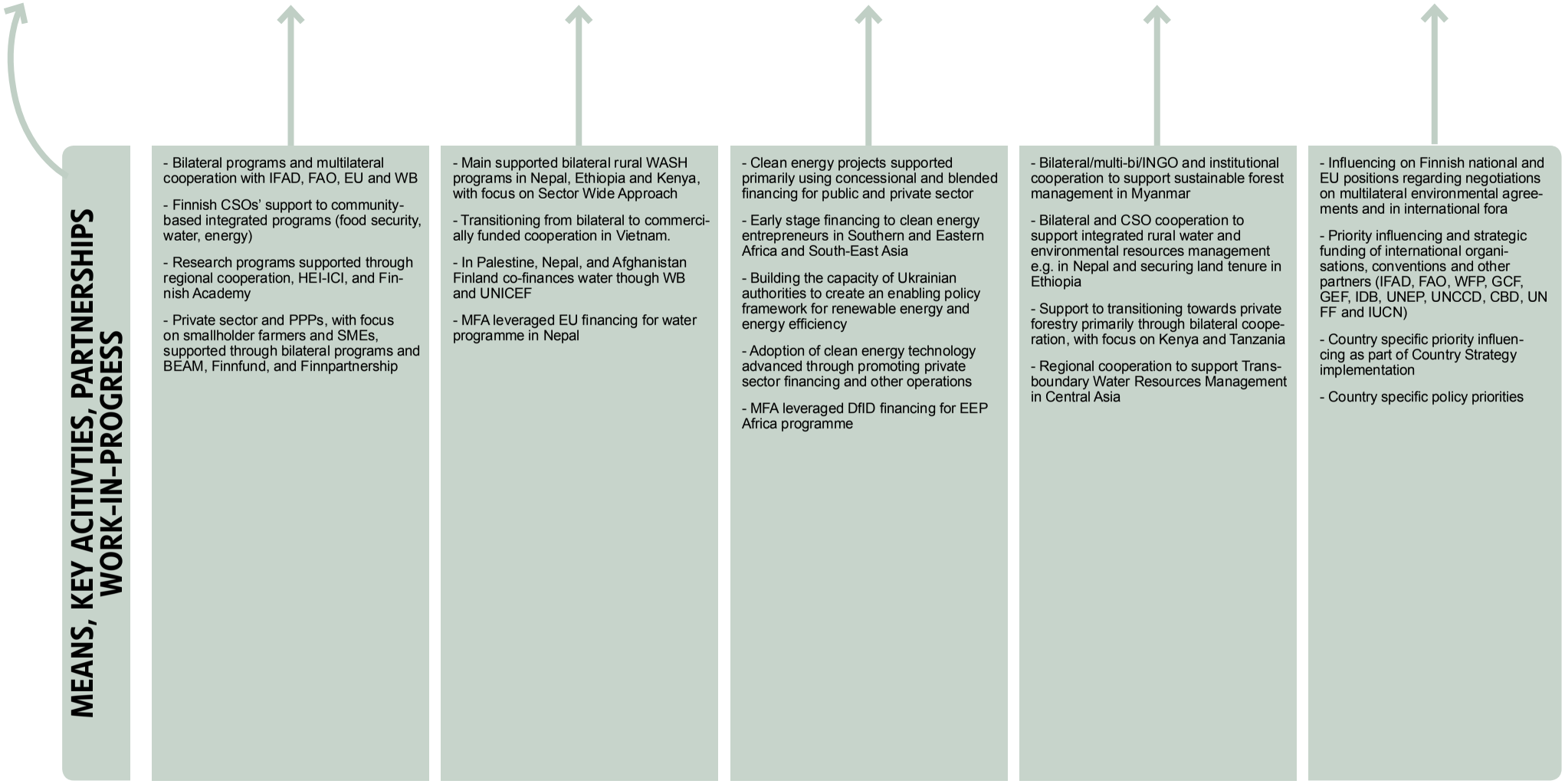
3. Finnish ministries, agencies, universities, research institutions and CSOs work have well-functioning networks, complement each others' work and work coherently.

4. Finland's financing for developing countries and relevant multilateral organizations is sufficient to meet desired outputs.

5. Good Finnish expertise is available for use in development cooperation.

Theory of Change – Development Policy Priority Area 4




MEANS, KEY ACITIVTIES, PARTNERSHIPS WORK-IN-PROGRESS
- Bilateral programs and multilateral cooperation with IFAD, FAO, EU and WB
- Finnish CSOs' support to community-based integrated programs (food security, water, energy)
- Research programs supported through regional cooperation, HEI-ICI, and Finnish Academy
- Private sector and PPPs, with focus on smallholder farmers and SMEs, supported through bilateral programs and BEAM, Finnfund, and Finnpartnership
- Main supported bilateral rural WASH programs in Nepal, Ethiopia and Kenya, with focus on Sector Wide Approach
- Transitioning from bilateral to commercially funded cooperation in Vietnam.
- In Palestine, Nepal, and Afghanistan Finland co-finances water though WB and UNICEF
- MFA leveraged EU financing for water programme in Nepal
- Clean energy projects supported primarily using concessional and blended financing for public and private sector
- Early stage financing to clean energy entrepreneurs in Southern and Eastern Africa and South-East Asia
- Building the capacity of Ukrainian authorities to create an enabling policy framework for renewable energy and energy efficiency
- Adoption of clean energy technology advanced through promoting private sector financing and other operations
- MFA leveraged DfID financing for EEP Africa programme
- Bilateral/multi-bi/INGO and institutional cooperation to support sustainable forest management in Myanmar
- Bilateral and CSO cooperation to support integrated rural water and environmental resources management e.g. in Nepal and securing land tenure in Ethiopia
- Support to transitioning towards private forestry primarily through bilateral cooperation, with focus on Kenya and Tanzania
- Regional cooperation to support Transboundary Water Resources Management in Central Asia
- Influencing on Finnish national and EU positions regarding negotiations on multilateral environmental agreements and in international fora
- Priority influencing and strategic funding of international organisations, conventions and other partners (IFAD, FAO, WFP, GCF, GEF, IDB, UNEP, UNCCD, CBD, UN FF and IUCN)
- Country specific priority influencing as part of Country Strategy implementation
- Country specific policy priorities

Assumptions

FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY

From Outcomes to Impact

1. There are increasing international and national financial flows and investments to end hunger and enhance food and nutrition security consistent with SDGs and Agenda 2030, including multi-stakeholder partnerships at various levels, and active engagement of responsible private sector investment, civil society, and local people.

2. National agriculture, nutrition and economic policies are supportive of sustainable agriculture/rural development and national budget provides adequate investments, e.g. in rural infrastructure and extension services.

3. Distortive global and regional trading policies are reduced and ultimately eliminated, benefiting agricultural production in developing countries.

From Outputs to Outcomes

1. Synergy strengthened between the different Finnish-funded programs using various aid instruments, and with the partner programs, including integration of practical gender, youth, HRBA and social inclusion elements into interventions.

2. Country strategy planning and project cycle management recognise the strong links between food security, water, energy and climate, as well as humanitarian cooperation to avoid a "silo" approach; e.g. sustainable supply of food crops will depend on sound water resource management.

From Inputs and Means to Outputs

1.Efficient use of Finnish funding available to support food and nutrition security through different modalities (bilateral/multi/research/CSOs),

2. Finnish private sector instruments are available for agriculture and rural sectors' innovations and initiatives

3. Complementary and coherent land tenure and social protection policies and investments exist within the MFA aid portfolio and policy influencing work.

4. Country strategy planning and project cycle management recognise the strong links between food security, water, energy, natural resources and climate, as well as humanitarian cooperation and themes (jobs, gender, migration and conflict) to create comprehensive approach to food and nutrition security.

WATER

From Outcomes to Impact

1. National budget allocations for WASH increase in partner countries.

2. Humanitarian crises caused by natural disaster and human turmoil do not overwhelm human and financial capacity in partner countries, and continuum is addressed as a crossing-cutting theme to improve disaster risk reduction and preparedness.

3. Water as a Natural Resource is addressed at least at the level guaranteeing sustainability of drinking water as well as in reference to Sub-Goal 4.4 also at Water Bodies.

4. Improved inter-sectoral policies across water-related sectors (water, education, health) to facilitate reaching the results.

From Outputs to Outcomes

1. Enabling environment strengthened to guarantee sustainability of initiatives, including attention paid to strong post-construction packages; focus on implementation activities only underpins both short and long-term sustainability.

2. Policy coherence in place at country level: in Sub-Goal 4.2 (i) Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) education, health and water sector are fully involved; and in Sub-Goal 4.4 (ii) Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) agriculture, forestry, energy and water sectors are fully involved.

3. Strong HRBA and social inclusion elements programmed into interventions, allowing approach towards WASH for All, including those most marginalised.

From Inputs and Means to Outputs

1. Resource allocation between MFA departments and units are coordinated allowing for a balanced approach towards planned results, as opposed to mono-programming (only sanitation or only water, only rural WASH or only urban etc.).

2. Diversification of use of Development Policy instruments is assumed (see above assumption 2), including instruments such as research, multi-bi, and multilateral cooperation, with special focus on multilateral influencing for strengthened water governance (incl. transboundary water) through water architecture initiative and for full implementation of SDG 6.

3. Regional and international elements are strengthened in MFA global water program portfolio.

ENERGY

From Outcomes to Impact

1. Clean energy solutions are widely acknowledged and accepted as a viable alternative to fossil-based solutions in developing countries supported by relevant legislation and regulation and removal of distortive subsidies favouring fossil fuels.

2. Cost reductions in renewable energy technology improve competitiveness against fossil-based and centralised solutions.

3. Urgency to act on climate change is translated into conducive policies at country level.

From Outputs to Outcomes

1. National policies enable entrepreneurship on distributed renewable energy.

2. Fossil fuel subsidies do not undermine economical sustainability of Finnish supported interventions.

3. Effective donor coordination, and coherent and complementary use of Finnish aid instruments, create synergies and avoid overlap.

From Inputs and Means to Outputs

1. The Finnish funding level for energy is maintained in the future, while paying more attention to the role of private sector and developing new portfolio to replace concessionary credit projects.

2. The MFA and joint ministry aid instruments are used in a more balanced manner, meaning also replacing over time the forthcoming reduction in concessionary credit energy projects and energy is integrated into MFA country strategies, where relevant.

3. Finnish private sector instruments succeed in mobilising competent private sector actors with access to technically robust and cost-efficient, affordable and hence more inclusive renewable energy technology, addressing also urban energy solutions.

4. MFA programs are perceived as efficient and relevant, and manage to leverage additional resources also outside the ministry.

FORESTS AND NATURAL RESOURCES

From Outcomes to Impact

1. There is improved common understanding, supported by scientific evidence and internationally agreed policy frameworks such as the 2030 Agenda and Paris agreement, among governments, private sector and civil society, that neither reduction of poverty and inequalities nor sustainable social or economic development can be achieved without sustainable environmental development, equitable natural resource governance and addressing climate change.

From Outputs to Outcomes

1. Government policies recognise the importance of rights-based approach, especially regarding land tenure, and gender equality and private sector in efficient and sustainable forest and other natural resources management and promote multi-stakeholder partnerships.

2. Governments and public-sector organisations adopt a more open and transparent approach to sharing information generated and maintained through systems established through Finnish support.

3. Government policies recognise that there is a connection between the lack of efficient and sustainable management and use of forests and other natural resources with conflicts and migration.

From Inputs and Means to Outputs

1. Balanced and adequate allocation of financial resources to address objectives related to biodiversity and water resources, natural resource and environmental governance, forestry, recognising interlinkages with conflicts and migration caused by climate change and environmental degradation.

2. Finnish aid mechanisms and instruments are used in a complementary and coherent manner recognising the inter-sectoral linkages between forestry, climate, energy, water and biodiversity conservation.

3. Finnish ministries responsible for climate, environment, and forestry recognise the importance of addressing developing country needs consistent with Finland's Development Policy and the principle of enhancing policy coherence.

4. Means and activities are gender-responsive and consider the need to enhance mobilisation of resources from all sources, multi-stakeholder partnerships and an inclusive participatory approach to empower especially the vulnerable such as persons with disabilities and indigenous peoples.

ANNEX 8: INTERNATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF A HUMAN RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH

The mainstreaming of human rights in development assistance is a legal and political obligation for all Member States of the European Union. As different development cooperation actors are increasingly promoting human rights in their policies, the number and scale of definitions has increased. There are "rather diverging - sometimes even inconsistent - definitions of the notion of a human rights-based approach" (Broberg & Sano, 2018).

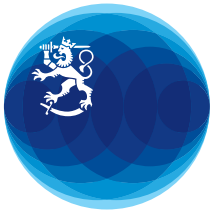
Table 7 compiles the definitions of human rights and HRBA by countries with approaches to international development and cooperation policy that are similar to Finland's (Sweden, Norway, Denmark, the UK, the Netherlands, Canada, Australia, Austria, Germany). Some definitions place most emphasis on individual empowerment (UK / DFID), whereas other definitions highlight the role of the state in respecting and protecting human rights and development (Norway) or focus on power relations (Germany). Some definitions highlight both individual empowerment and the responsibility of duty bearers (Sweden). Denmark's definition differs from the others in that it underscores pragmatism and realism.

Table 7: Human rights definitions and explanations for human rights-based approach (Definitions are taken from policy documents where available or from the respective government website.)

Country (year adopted) and source(s)	Definition of human rights	Definition of human rights-based approach(es)
Australia No formally adopted HRBA strategy for development context https://www.human-rights.gov.au/human-rights-based-approaches	The achievement of human rights is crucial to sustainable human development and the eradication of poverty	Turning human rights from purely legal instruments into effective policies, practices, and practical realities.
Austria (2010) Human Rights Manual. Austrian Development Agency (ADA) (2010)	Human rights number among the great philosophical accomplishments of the modern age. - Human rights define certain minimum standards and rules of procedure to which those in power should or must adhere in their treatment of people. (2010, 6)	"The human rights-based approach contributes to the emancipation of people who have been traditionally underprivileged and discriminated against, but it also affords a new way of looking at concepts such as development or poverty." (2010, 50)
Canada No formally adopted HRBA strategy / action plan / policy for international development context http://international.gc.ca/world-monde/issues_development-enjeux_developpement/priorities-priorites/human_rights-droits_personne.aspx?lang=eng	Inherent to all human beings, regardless of grounds such as race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression. Civil, political, economic, social and cultural; universal, inalienable, indivisible, interrelated and interdependent.	Inequality and marginalisation deny people their human rights and keep them in poverty. States must respect their obligations under international human rights law. A tool to help countries meet their human rights obligations and assist people in knowing their human rights and the processes available to claim them.

Country (year adopted) and source(s)	Definition of human rights	Definition of human rights-based approach(es)
Denmark (1980s/2012) The Right to a Better Life. Strategy for Denmark's Development Cooperation, 2012 Danida (2013): A Human rights-based approach to Denmark's Development Cooperation	Everyone has the right to a life with equal opportunities. The bedrock of democratic societies. Part of core values and a driver of change, as based on commitments made by the countries themselves.	Offers both ends and means to policy and development efforts. Balance between pragmatism and realism with the integration of four principles: non-discrimination, participation & inclusion, transparency, and accountability. They are indivisible, but it is important to avoid dogmatism.
Germany (2011) GIZ on behalf of BMZ (2014) The Human Rights-Based Approach in German Development Cooperation	Human rights are inherent to all people on the grounds that they are human beings. They may be violated or not fulfilled, but not taken away or given up. Human rights define what humans need for a life in dignity and freedom, relating to all areas of human development such as education, justice, health or personal security.	A conceptual framework based on internationally recognised human rights, and to promote and protect them. Integrates norms, standards and principles of law into the plans, policies and processes of development. Helps explaining (with unequal power relations and social exclusion analysis) why women and other specific groups are over-represented among the poor, and why often poverty is passed on from generation to generation.
Norway (1999) Opportunities for All: Human Rights in Norway's Foreign Policy and Development Cooperation. Meld. St. 10 (2014–2015) Report to the Storting (white paper)	The foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world. All people are entitled to, irrespective of personal characteristics. The rights of the individual in relation to the authorities of a country, whose responsibility is to ensure that these rights are protected.	Builds on individual rights set by the human rights commitments and obligations of the countries concerned. Serves to ensure quality assurance in development cooperation and contributes to sustainable results regardless of sector and theme.
The Netherlands (1979/2001) Justice and Respect for All. IOB (2013): Navigating a Sea of Interests. Policy evaluation of Dutch human rights policy 2008–2013 https://www.government.nl/topics/human-rights/human-rights-in-the-netherlands	Applies to all people, in all places, at all times. They are universal and indivisible. The cornerstone of human dignity, freedom and development, the basis for open and free societies all over the world. There can be no democracy or rule of law if human rights are not promoted and protected.	Points to the responsibilities of duty bearers and building the capacities of the rights holders. Protecting human rights is the responsibility not only of government, but also of individuals and businesses. They have a significant role to play, for instance in protecting personal data and preventing discrimination.
Sweden (1997/2003) Human rights-based approach at Sida Compilation of Thematic Area Briefs, 2015	A central element in international law and essential to maintaining peace and security, and to fair, gender-equal and sustainable development. Key to defining and upholding democracy and the principles of the rule of law, while depending on democratic systems under the rule of law if they are to be enjoyed in full.	The rights perspective implies both what is to be achieved and how it is to be done. Primarily applied through four principles (non-discrimination, participation, transparency and accountability). To empower boys, girls, men and women to claim their human rights (rights holders) and to increase the capacity of those obliged to respect, promote, protect and fulfil them (duty bearers).
The UK (1997/2000) DFID (2000): Realising Human Rights for Poor People. Strategies for achieving the International development targets.	For all people. Set out economic, social and cultural rights, such as rights to the highest attainable standard of health and education, as well as civil and political rights such as rights to life and liberty. Indivisibility and universality.	To empower people to take their own decisions rather than being passive objects of choices made on their behalf; to be active citizens with rights, expectations and responsibilities and to 'claim their rights to the opportunities and services available through pro-poor development'.

REVIEW OF HUMAN RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH IN FINLAND'S DEVELOPMENT POLICY RELATED TO FORTHCOMING EVALUATION



Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland